

One Night with the Alpha King

Chapter 3

Aurora's POV

I went straight home and picked up Cody from the neighbor who'd been watching him. I held him close, breathing in his scent, trying to calm my racing heart.

He looked like the Alpha King. My son looked exactly like the *most powerful wolf in the Northern Territory* .

Which meant the stranger I'd slept with that night wasn't a tavern worker at all.

It was him—Alpha Jack Blackthorn! I felt sick.

"Mummy, why are you shaking?" Cody asked, touching my face with his small hands.

"I'm just tired, sweetheart." I forced a smile. "Let's get you dinner."

That night, I couldn't sleep. I stared at the ceiling, my mind spinning. What was I going to do? The Alpha had fired me without even knowing who I was. If he ever found out about Cody, what would he do?

Would he take my son away? The thought made my blood run cold. I'd die before I let anyone take Cody from me. My phone rang, startling me but I didn't recognize the number.

"Hello?"

"Aurora? It's Richard. Richard Delmark."

I sat up—Richard was a doctor I'd met in the human territories. He'd helped me when I was pregnant, never asking questions, never judging. We'd become friends.

"Richard? How did you get this number?"

"You gave it to me years ago, remember? Said to call if I ever visited the Northern Territory ." He paused. "I heard you moved back."

"I did. Just a few days ago."

"How are you managing? Do you have work?"

I laughed bitterly. "I had work. For about two days."

"What happened?"

I told him everything, leaving out the part about recognizing the Alpha. Richard listened quietly.

"I might be able to help," he said. "I have connections at Blackthorn Holdings. The Alpha's company. They're always looking for designers."

"No." The word came out sharp. "Anywhere but there."

"Aurora, it's the best paying job in the kingdom. You'd be set for life. Let me at least get you an interview."

I wanted to refuse again, but I thought of Cody. Of the shabby apartment. Of the school fees I couldn't afford.

"Fine," I whispered. "Set up the interview."

Two days later, I stood outside Blackthorn Holdings, a massive tower of glass and steel that dominated the kingdom's business district.

My hands were sweaty. My wolf was agitated, pacing inside me. She could sense him, the Alpha was somewhere in this building.

I pushed through the doors and checked in at reception. A woman named Clara, the head of human resources, met me in the lobby.

"Miss Bluey?" She smiled warmly. "Dr. Delmark spoke highly of you. Come with me."

She led me through corridors lined with expensive art and plush carpets. Wolves in business attire hurried past, all of them radiating power and confidence.

I felt completely out of place in my simple dress.

Clara showed me to an office and explained that I'd be taking over projects from a previous designer. "You'll need to meet the Alpha eventually, but for now, just focus on getting settled."

My stomach dropped. "The Alpha works here? In this building?"

"Of course. His office is on the top floor." She tilted her head. "Is that a problem?"

"No. No problem."

After Clara left, I tried to focus on the work in front of me. Sketches, half-finished designs, project notes. It was overwhelming, but I could handle it.

I had to handle it. Around midday, Clara returned. "The Alpha wants to meet you. Come with me."

My heart stopped. "Now?"

"Yes, now. He likes to meet all new employees personally."

No. This couldn't be happening.

But I had no choice. I followed Clara to the elevator, my legs shaking. We rode up in silence, the numbers climbing higher and higher until we reached the top floor. The doors opened to reveal a reception area. A woman sat at a desk, elegant and poised.

"Is he available, Vera?" Clara asked.

"He just stepped out, but he should be back shortly. You can wait inside."

Clara gestured me forward. "Go ahead. I'll leave you to it."

I entered the Alpha's office alone. It was enormous. Floor to ceiling windows overlooked the entire kingdom. The furniture was dark and expensive. Everything screamed power.

And there, on his desk, sitting in plain sight, was my mother's necklace.

I stopped breathing.

The golden pendant caught the light, familiar and precious. I'd thought I'd lost it forever that night. But he'd kept it. Why would he keep it?

I moved closer, drawn to it. My fingers reached out, trembling.

"I wouldn't touch that if I were you."

I spun around.

Alpha Jack stood in the doorway, his silver eyes fixed on me with an intensity that made my wolf whimper and bare her throat in submission.

He stepped inside and closed the door behind him.

"So," he said, his voice soft and dangerous. "We meet again."