

CH 9

Oriana

She drove into the pack a full hour ahead of schedule. She had not only achieved her job but completed it with ease and time to spare. Her brother could suck it. Ori returned the car to Lindal with a full tank of gas like she'd picked it up, smiled at her. "I made good time."

"You did, you're not going to like what I have to say though." She'd sighed and handed her back her own car keys.

"Yay, what did he do to it?" Ori asked simply.

"Nothing life-threatening, likely wouldn't risk Slade being injured. Just something to close out your window of time was all. A slow leak in the back tire. So, you would have gotten, like I don't know, a quarter, maybe halfway there, before you got a at."

"Just a at? That's easily xed."

"Yes, if you had a working spare, it wasn't he punctured that beyond repair, so by the time you got a tow and a replacement tyre or two, which could take hours out there in the human world. You'd have not gotten home on time. Likely wouldn't have even gotten Slade to Alpha College on time either."

"Right, so regardless I'd have failed." Ori muttered.

"Yes," Lindal nodded "He really does want your title and rank, doesn't he?"

"It does seem that way." Ori nodded and got in her Nissan "Thanks for letting me know." She stated before driving up to the packhouse in her car, like she had left it.

Ori smiled right at her brother as she hopped out of the car, he was up there waiting alongside her father, Anders. Her father nodded to her "Well done girl." He told her simply. Hayden, on the other hand, looked more than annoyed by her early return.

"Did you speed, daughter?"

"Maybe just a little bit, managed to catch every green light. Slade arrived early, and I got back within the allotted time."

"You did." He smiled at her.

"Not a single thing went wrong." She chirped happily "though I'm beat, it was a long drive." And it was they'd left at 8am, and it was now 8pm, and she'd not had much sleep last night. She was actually tired.

"To be expected. Go and get some sleep." Her father told her.

She walked right passed Hayden, "What's wrong brother, did you think I would screw up my mission?" she smiled right at him. "Not going to happen. Dad told me to plan for all contingencies. And I did, all of them." Then she turned and headed inside and up to her suite.

She showered and crawled into her bed, at least her body no longer ached, and she didn't have to worry about dealing with Slade anymore. Though how it would go when she had to go back and pick him up in a month, she didn't know.

She was intending on just letting it go and pretending it never happened at all. She had a full month to gure out how to act normally around him. She might well be over it by then and able to just be her normal self, no awkwardness with him.

She had plenty of things here to keep her occupied and help her forget about it, so that was always good, and with him not here to remind her every day or ask questions about that night. It was likely she could just let it go.

There was also a full moon just two days away, her rst one since she turned 18, a pretty big deal for most wolves, the rst time they would feel it set and be able to scent out their Mate if they had one here in the pack.

Most wolves were excited to nd their Mate, but really, who paired up at 18? It rarely happens, once or twice a year. Ori didn't think she would be so lucky, her life here, though it had been pretty cushy for the most part. A fun, enjoyable childhood.

She always had Hayden in the background, breathing down her neck, trying to take what was hers, she had to ght to keep everything she had. To be the future Beta to this pack. She felt like she had to ght every day sometimes, to retain what was her actual birthright. Being the rstborn into the Beta bloodline.

She let it go and allowed sleep to claim her. Slept like the dead until her alarm went off at 5am, got a solid eight and half hours sleep. Was up and dressed, bright-eyed and raring to go. A bounce in her step even.

Maybe she'd just been tired and grumpy, stressed out yesterday with all that had gone on. She felt much more like herself this morning. She grabbed a banana and water and headed off to the training grounds. Was the rst one there and shook her head at Palmer and Yuri as they jogged over to her.

"Sleep in boys?" she asked with a snort "Punishment for being late. Five laps, no wolf assistance. Off you go now." She grinned at them, she was in charge without Slade here. He'd normally set ten laps as punishment for being late. They all hated that.

She, however, had a whole year to make the boys want her in charge of training, like her that little bit more than their own Alpha. She watched the two of them laugh, "Oh, playing the nice game are we?" Palmer grinned at her.

"You'll love me more than Slade and by the end of the year, you'll think he's too hard a task master. I'm a delight." She winked at them and even joined them, on the ve laps, something Slade didn't do.

She was going to train them hard like Slade did, and do the hours as well, but there would be a bit of fun thrown in. Slade was all Alpha out here on the training ground and, honestly, it wasn't necessary. As long as they trained and learned, built on the skills they already had, it was ne.

"You're in a good mood." Yuri smiled at her.

"I slept like the dead. Am wide awake and raring to go." And she really was. "I also beat my brother at his own game."

"What?" they both asked with a slight frown.

"Don't worry about it." She smiled. "Come on boys, pick up the pace. This is punishment." She told them and ran off ahead of them for them to keep up. She was fast even without China, liked having that pure Beta blood, kind of gave her an advantage over both of them.

They did the ve laps and then the regular run all the way round the pack's perimeter at full wolfen speed. She really did like being able to beat them both. They may be taller and bigger, but China was faster. Also, didn't want to be big and buffed up either, like they were. Like most Betas were; didn't need it.

Both her parents were Beta-blooded, and she was, due to that, a pure Beta-blooded wolf. China actually was faster in wolf form than even their own dad. Only the Alpha and Slade could actually catch China. Though she could not actually catch either Alpha Roman or Slade, though she had tried many times, as had China, it frustrated her wolf a little that they could pull away from her.

Not many could outrun an Alpha wolf, she knew that, and China could keep up, as could both Palmer and Yuri, but Slade could and often did just bolt ahead of them and win at everything.

They arrived back at the training ground and her dad, and the Alpha unit were all there with Hayden standing next to them. It ruined her good mood in an instant; the boy was dressed for training. She and the boys were called over and told that seeing as Slade wasn't here, they were in need of a fourth member for group training and Hayden was going to be it.

Today they'd all trained together and put Hayden through the paces of full Alpha Unit training. She didn't like it. Didn't want him in her group and within just an hour of being in there, he was trying to throw his weight around and tell her and the unit what training they should be doing.

She pulled him up quickly and reminded him she was the actual future Beta, and he was just the second. That he was here to learn and was not in charge of anything. He'd glared right at her and told her she would see, that it was going to be his job, and she needed to accept it.

Alpha Roman had gotten between them and actually sent Hayden back to the packhouse, when he'd rolled his aura at her to try and show he was stronger, "Sorry Ori." He murmured.

"It's going to be like this the entire time." She told him, because she knew it was going to be.

"He'll calm down, is just itching to be the Beta, is all."

"Oh, I know that." She muttered, after they were all dismissed, and she did, also understood if it was up to her father and not Slade himself, she would be the second and Hayden would be the future Beta, even though she was the rstborn.

"Don't stress Ori, you are Slade's choice for his Beta. It's his choice who his Beta is, you know that," Palmer told her.

"I know." She murmured, and she did. Slade could choose whoever he liked when he got back from Alpha College. But she'd paid that man, her future Alpha, the biggest of insults. Right to his family jewels. She might have burnt that bridge, squashed her own future. She could only wait and see when he came home.

Training those couple of days was a nightmare. Hayden was constantly trying to talk over the top of her and dismissing her, trying to run training. He had no idea how to actually run. He'd never trained with Slade and the boys as a unit, and didn't understand how they did things.

Annoyed her so much that she'd just punched him at one point with all she'd had, and actually hurt him, got in trouble for it and the punishment was half a day in the cells. That was the day of the full moon even, to her mother and father's complete disappointment.

She, however, was allowed out with just one hour before the moon set, and her mother pretty much grabbed her and ran her all the way back to the packhouse. Where she was shoved into a shower, she came out to nd a dress laid out for her and her mother telling her to hurry up and get ready.

Ori didn't really care all that much, didn't want to put that bloody, over-the-top dress on and look all girly like her mother was making her be for this, the rst full moon after her 18th.

She was practically dragged downstairs to the ballroom, where a whole bunch of newly turned 18-year-old wolves, seven of them were all dressed up and standing around, including Lindal herself.

"I see you made it." Lindal laughed at her.

"I'd rather be in the cells than in this." She muttered, plucking at the owing skirt of her dress. It was too much, an A-line V-necked knee-length chiffon dress with a full tted bodice that had tiny shiny gems under her bust and around her natural waistline. It was very formal and, though yes, pretty, not what she would have chosen herself.

Ori felt the moon set and there was nothing, no scenting of a Mate. She damned near sagged with relief and only heard one person growl the word 'Mine' and it didn't come from one of them, though she did feel Lindal latch on to her with a death grip as one of the pack's warriors, Beckham, stepped through the crowd and walked right towards her.

He was a few years older than Lindal, 22 if she recalled correctly, and he was liking the look of his Goddess Gifted Mate. Lindal stepped right behind her "He's freaking huge." She half whispered, sounded a little on the terried side.

"Warrior on the way to being Elite status." Beckham stated, "Come here, Lindal, and claim what is yours." He even knew who she was.

Lindal was barely ve-seven and only of a slight build, whereas Beckham had the height and size of an Alpha wolf at six-four, he was actually taller than Slade and more buffed up as well. He was already in Elite warrior training and those warriors trained a lot longer than they were allowed to at 18.

Lindal squeaked as Beckham tried to reach round Ori to snag her, and then she was just gone, a ash of deep purple chiffon eeing the ballroom. Ori shrugged up at him, it wasn't a rejection. "You'd better catch her I guess."

He shook his head and strode all casual like out of the ballroom. She'd never escape him. He could not only track her with the pack tether, but her Mate scent as well. It was just a matter of time before she was cornered. Though knowing Lindal she was headed for the workshop and her father. The girl's mother was here and chuckling away, thought it was very funny.