

My Alpha's Retribution: Rising from the Ashes of his Vengeance

C 11

My Decision

CHARLENE

I HADN'T BEEN ABLE TO sleep all night. Alpha Hunter seemed to have been satisfied with my response and had ordered wine to be brought in celebration of my agreement. I ran my fingers through my hair, watching the men train far below, lost in thought. I hadn't gone to breakfast this morning, unable to face him.

I had gotten dressed in a black dress with a plunging neckline and a flared umbrella skirt, but all I wanted to do was get into bed and hide from the world, so I could have some time to comprehend and digest everything that had happened. Raiden and Gamma Grayson had mind-linked to ask if I was okay, which I had cheerily told them I was.

Living in this place so far from everything I was used to was going to be different. I had always thought Westerfell would always be my home...

I sighed heavily. Hunter wasn't a bad person, and he was handsome. I blushed at the realisation that getting married also meant... My heart thumped, my cheeks burning even more at the idea of being intimate with him. My stomach felt funny, and when there was a knock on the door, I jumped in alarm. I exhaled. Walking over to it and smoothing my skirt, I opened the door.

My heart skipped a beat at the sight of the tall, muscular man before me. His hair was sleeked back and tied; it was obvious he had just showered from the smell of the woody shampoo that mixed with his own scent. He was dressed in a black shirt and brown pants, and he was smirking slightly. Did he always have that look on his face?

"Alpha Hunter..." I said, smiling politely.

"Princess Charlene," he replied, almost sounding mocking. Was he teasing me?

“Can I help you?” I asked, tucking my hair behind my ear and looking down to avoid his intense gaze. To my utter dismay, my gaze fell on the front of his pants to the very noticeable bulge that was packed away. My cheeks burned as I looked up at him, only to see that small smirk had become a full-blown grin. Oh, my Goddess, he had seen where my attention had fallen! “Uhh, I didn’t mean help like that! Can, can I ask why you are here?” I asked, knowing my entire face was flushed. He stepped closer, and I jumped back, my heart thumping as I pressed my lips together. He bent down slightly until his lips were close to my ear.

“I would tease... but I don’t think your fellow pack members will appreciate me having an unconscious princess in my hold,” he growled huskily, his fingers running through my hair. He chuckled, moving back, and I let out the breath I was holding. My heart thundered extremely loudly. “Fear not, Princess, I’m only here to ask how you are since you did not come for breakfast. Are you nervous?”

Nervous? Of course I was nervous! I was going to get married! I had made the decision myself... it felt strange. Usually, someone or other always made decisions for me.

“A little,” I replied bravely, smiling slightly. His smirk vanished, and my stomach sank. Did I upset him? “It, it’s nothing to be worried about, I’m perfectly fine, and it is an honour to be chosen by the Alpha. Please don’t think that I’m backing out or -” He placed a finger to my lips, cutting me off before he cupped my face in his large, calloused hands.

“You ramble when you’re nervous.” If my face wasn’t red already, it must now be a terrifyingly plum colour! Oh, how he must think I look awful! “Look, I’m not one to charm women, but my mother always told me to be faithful and respectful to the one whom I choose to keep by my side. I will treat you well, Princess, and give you anything that you wish for. The only man I will ever challenge will be if your fated mate shows up,” he said, his eyes flashing possessively. I didn’t think that would happen. Mated women usually didn’t venture out on full moons once they had taken a chosen mate. That wouldn’t happen.

“Forgive me if I’m out of line, but the Alpha doesn’t really know me, and marrying me does not get you any assets. I am not the king’s biological daughter, so why would you choose me?”

“The first time I saw you, you caught my eye, and with you walking right into my pack... it was such an opportunity, why wouldn’t I take advantage of it?” He had already marked his claim, and it was clear, for some crazy reason, he wanted me. “You might not see it, but a woman with a good heart is far more valuable than jewels or

assets. I have that already. All I need is my Luna by my side.” I couldn’t argue with him, he seemed to really want this, and I couldn’t deny it made me feel all warm inside.

“Then, I hope I can be the Luna you deserve. If I’m out of line, please guide me. I am willing to learn and become better,” I replied. “I sometimes speak up when I think something is not right, and I apologise in advance, but I never mean to offend anyone.”

“I need a woman who does. A Luna is meant to stand by her Alpha’s side as an equal. I can be pretty hot-headed. I need a woman who is confident and just, yet, at the same time, willing to be submissive when the time calls for it...”

His gaze dipped to my breasts, my heart hammering loudly, and I knew what he meant; in bed. My cheeks burned once again, but what more was I expecting? He was an Alpha, and their sexual energy was even more than a normal werewolf.

“I will aim to please,” I found myself whispering as I nibbled on my lips.

“Goddess, you’re a tease,” he growled, surprising me before he pulled me against him.

My hand instantly went to his chest, very aware of every single ridge and curve of his body. My pussy clenched, and I bit my lip to stop the sigh that threatened to escape. His arms tightened around my waist before he leaned down, his lips brushing my ear, making my breath hitch.

“I think we will get along perfectly... the wedding will be held at the end of this week.” He turned away from me, and I looked at his back, concerned at the way he had suddenly turned.

“Of course,” I replied.

A week... Goddess, that was soon, but we didn’t have time to waste.

“I’ve already sent out my men to secretly pass messages to some of Andres’ most loyal allies and those who are my own. We will gather the army we need, have no doubt.”

“Thank you, Alpha Hunter,” I replied politely.

“Hunter,” he corrected.

“Then please call me Charlene. I’m not really a princess anyway.”

“You’re still one in my eyes,” he replied. “Excuse me.”

“W-wait...” He turned to look at me from over his shoulder, and I looked down, ready to brave the question I had in my mind. “Will you mark me at our wedding?” I asked nervously. Obviously, it was to be expected, but the thought scared me.

“I intend to take you as mine and to show the world that. My pack will expect a marking.”

“Of course. Sorry for my ignorance,” I replied, feeling foolish.

Naturally, there would be a marking. How else could we guarantee that I wouldn’t break the marriage after we got what we wanted? He turned back to me and closed the gap between us.

“Do not apologise to me for voicing your thoughts. My people need a marking. You can mark me, and I will mark you when you are ready. How about that?” He suggested, raising an eyebrow. I looked up at him in surprise. Was an Alpha really allowing me to claim him first?

He smirked at my amusement and placed his hands on my hips, pulling me against him. My cheeks burned up again as I felt something rather big and long against my lower stomach. I dared not look down, realising why he had jerked away from me before. The Alpha desired me. Just the thought made me feel even more nervous and somewhat excited.

“But, as an Alpha, you should claim me first. It’s fine, you may -”

“Hush. An Alpha is said to have to claim his mate because he’s an Alpha to show his position, dominance, and power, correct?” I nodded, and he smirked confidently. “I already am all those things, and allowing my chosen mate to mark me first is not an issue. Does an Alpha not submit to his Luna?” He replied.

I couldn’t do anything but stare at him in awe. If he had not had an effect on me before, he did now. I don’t know if he was simply good with words or if he actually meant those things... but he had made a warmth settle within my chest. I couldn’t help but smile, a faint blush coating my cheeks.

“Thank you,” I whispered softly.

He didn’t reply. Instead, he leaned down, his lips grazing my cheek in a soft kiss that made me gasp. My head felt light before he stepped back and left the room, leaving me lightheaded and oddly happy. I shook my head, touching the spot on my cheek that he

had kissed. His touch remained, and I did a twirl, trying to contain the happiness that had filled me.

“Smiling like that, and I was worried for no reason,” Raiden’s voice came, making me look up, startled, as he knocked lightly on the open door. He sniffed the air and raised an eyebrow. “I thought I saw Alpha Hunter leaving.” I blushed and shook my head.

“He just came to say the wedding is in a week!” I said quickly, making Raiden chuckle.

He had taken good care of me, and I knew although he was a wonderful person, it was also because of the fact that I meant a lot to Yileyna. Deep down, I wished she took Raiden as her mate; he would be good for her. He’d treat her like the queen she deserves to be treated as, and he would always cherish her.

“So soon. Clearly, he seems impatient,” he smirked as he came over to me, crossing his arms, a look of concern on his face. “Are you sure, Charlene? I don’t want Yileyna coming for my head.”

“Don’t worry. I’ll make sure when I see her again that she knows it was my decision,” I reassured softly. I really missed her.

“I miss her too,” he murmured, looking down at his hands, knowing what I was thinking.

“We’ll see her soon enough,” I replied with confidence, looking out of the window.

The weather was still freezing, but it wasn’t as bad as it was in Westerfell. I knew I was doing the right thing. This marriage would promise me an army and the support that Yileyna needed.

“He’s a good person,” Raiden said quietly. I nodded, remembering what Hunter had said about his mother.

“Gamma Grayson said Alpha Hunter became an Alpha at an extremely young age. What happened to his parents?” I asked Raiden suddenly. He frowned, tilting his head.

“No one really knows. This pack and Alpha Hunter have always been very private.”

I nodded, yet I couldn’t help but be curious. After all, it was clear that Alpha Hunter held his mom in high praise. Perhaps I’ll ask him if I get the chance.