

The Alpha King And His Second Chance

Chapter 61

Jackson

“What are we going to do?” Ella asked, her voice laced with panic.

I looked around the hospital room we were in, there was one window that was too small for either of us to fit through, and we were a few stories up. Figures. I had to think fast, if the hospital was on fire for as long as I thought it had been, it’s a miracle that it hasn’t collapsed by now.

“Grab those sheets, we need to get them soaking wet.” I instructed my mate. I went to the bathroom and turned on the shower while she stripped the bed.

“Here,” Ella said, helping me soak the sheets. I could hear crackling and a few snaps, clearly indicating that the fire was still spreading.

“Your clothes too,” I said. I was still very naked, but Ella was fully clothed. She hopped in the shower without hesitating, soaking herself to the bone. “Okay good, get under the sheets with me. Don’t breathe in any smoke if you can help it. We need to move fast.” I instructed my frightened mate. I used a wet towel to open the hospital room door, flames and smoke immediately greeted us.

“Jackson...”

“Watch your step, we need to get to some stairs.” I began leading the way, my confidence in my plan faltering the further into the burning building we went. Ella started to cough pretty hard, the smoke was unforgiving. “Where are the stairs?!” I growled, not seeing any exit.

“There!” Ella pointed.

Another crack sounded, this time a flaming beam falling in front of our exit point. Shit. “Is there another exit?!”

“Back that way.” Ella coughed, pointing towards the far end of the floor we were on.

“Let’s go!”

We trudged forward, dodging falling debris and flames. The smoke burned my eyes and filled my lungs, my body begging for clean air. Ella wasn’t doing much better either. But we just had to keep moving. By some miracle, we made it to the stairs and down four flights before we needed to go back into the majority of the burning building, the place

where I guessed the fire had started. And unfortunately, the most unstable part. Our wet blanket was dry and its edges were burned, having served its purpose.

“We need to run through it, Ella. No stopping, just get out as fast as possible.” I said to my mate, grabbing her hand.

“Okay.” She nodded, her voice filled with fear.

“Dont let go of my hand. Ready?” I asked, grabbing onto the doorhandle. Ella took a deep breath and nodded. The handle was hot enough to burn my skin, but I ignored it and flung open the door, rushing into the flames with my mate. We pushed forward while the fire licked at our skin. We had to go around lots of fallen debris, under a few beams too. There was no point in us trying to stay low to the ground to avoid the smoke. The smoke was everywhere. Ella breathed into her shirt and me into my arm as best as we could. I felt myself getting light-headed, Ella tripped a few times too. We just had a few more feet before the exit. I scooped up my mate, sprinting to the front doors with everything I had left. The glass doors were already partially broken, giving us a clear exit. I crashed through the glass, landing on the rough pavement. We coughed and gasped for air, a group of people surrounding us.

“We thought we cleared everyone out!” A familiar face yelled. One of Sierra’s friends...Cyrus, I think his name was.

“We..Jackson...needed blood.” Ella coughed hard. Her skin was covered in ash. “Seth sent us here.”

“You two need oxygen and medical attention. We are sending the injured to surrounding packs for help, we can put you on a transport-” One of the doctors said, he looked like he was in part of the fire too. His clothes looked singed.

“No, I can’t leave.” I coughed. Someone came over and covered me with a blanket, while another hooked Ella up with a portable oxygen machine.

“Fine. Send them to the tent. If they get worse, send them out.” He sighed, moving onto the next injured person who was being brought to the hospital.

“Yes doctor.” The two nurses working on us said. We were quickly moved under a massive tent where dozens of others were already setup. They had me sit on a stretcher and gave me oxygen and a bag of blood. My body was grateful to be sitting somewhere that wasn’t on fire.

“How did this happen?” I asked, taking a few good deep breaths into my oxygen mask.

“The Purebreds. Your witch friends took care of the bastards who started the fire. They are in pursuit of more. We were on cleanup detail,” Cyrus said, flicking his head towards a covered pile. I assumed dead bodies were underneath. “The fire was too much when we

got here, and everyone except you two were out. There was no sense in stopping it from burning down. The hospital is shot. Plus, if any of those bastards come back and decide to light up another building, we'll need the water supply to be ready to go."

"Thank you Cyrus." I nodded, lying back onto my gurney. I laid there for about ten minutes, almost falling asleep from pure exhaustion.

"Beta." Gwendolyn said seriously, quickly approaching my bedside. "Where is King Edward?" She asked.

"Why? What is it?" I sat up, coughing a bit.

"I sense a shift in power. All my sisters do. We believe whoever was aiding the Purebreds with magic is dead."

"How? What?" I asked, confused.

Gwendolyn rolled her eyes and let out a frustrated huff before continuing. "We magic folk are all connected by earth. We cast spells and they will last until someone stronger comes along and breaks them or we die. There was a massive surge of power that was just absorbed into the earth many miles east of here. We could all feel it. And since we are the only ones in a war right now, I would think its safe to assume that whomever is behind the magic that helped the Purerefs take Queen Sierra was just killed in that direction." She said, finishing her montage and pointing to the east.

"Edward?!" I linked, praying I wasn't distracting him in the middle of a battle.

"Yes?" He answered immediately, an edge to his voice.

"Gwendolyn says she thinks whoever was behind the magic is dead. She felt a disturbance east of here. We think Sierra might be there."

"Meet me in the safe room. Is Ella with you?"

"Yes"

"Have her come with you."

"Ella! We have to go."

"Sylvia just linked me, she needs me to grab some supplies first." My mate said, already digging through the bins of salvaged medical supplies under the tent we were in.

I still need pants, I thought to myself. I swung my legs over the edge of the gurney, Ella tossing a pair of scrub pants my way, already one step ahead of me.

“Thanks babe.” I said while I pulled on the blue pants. I helped her grab a few things and we booked it to the palace. I probably looked over my shoulder a dozen times, paranoid that something else terrible was about to happen.

We passed many dead bodies, some injured too. The few survivors were being tended to by others already, so Ella and I didn’t feel the need to stop. Edward didn’t say why he needed Ella. Sylvia also didn’t elaborate as to why we needed medical supplies, but I was guessing it couldn’t be good. I don’t know how his end of things went, hopefully better than being stabbed and placed in a burning building.

“Edward!” I yelled from down the hall.

“Bathroom!” He called back.

I could hear a small pup crying, it almost sounded like a newborn. Ella and I exchanged a worried glance before picking up the pace to the bathroom. Edward was sitting on the floor, he had a few good injuries himself, but that’s not what caught our attention. It was the tiny pup wrapped in a pink blanket that he was feeding a bottle. She didn’t look more than a few hours old. I assumed it was a she from the pink blanket. The pup looked exactly like Sierra but with Edwards’ hair.

“Oh Goddess!” Ella whisper-yelled.

“She hasn’t been seen by a doctor yet. Could you make sure she is okay?” Edward asked, handing over the pup to Ella.

“Of course.” Ella nodded and carefully took the pup, getting to work on checking her over.

“Thank you.” Edward sighed. He looked defeated, but from what I could tell, we seemed to have won. If we didn’t Edward wouldn’t be here with his new pup right now. He would be fighting or dead.

“I’ll sew you up in a minute Edward,” Ella said over her shoulder.

“Where is Sierra?” I asked.

“I don’t know.” Edward sighed, awkwardly getting up off the ground.

“What? I don’t understand.” I shook my head, looking towards the pup.

“Seth was one of them,” Edward said darkly.

“What?!” Ella exclaimed a bit too loud, making the pup jump.

“I guess that would explain how we ended up in a burning building,” I sighed.

“You what?”

“Wait, where is Abby?! Seth said she was safe-”

“Jackson-”

“We have to find her! The witch said she thinks he is dead-” I began to panic.

“Jack-”

“Why are we still here?!”

“Jackson!” Edward yelled, a grim look on his face. “Abby isn’t....she didnt....she is gone Jackson.”

“No, your wrong! Seth is dead, she is probably just hidden somewhere. We need to send out teams-”

“Jackson, my boys saw her die.” Edward blurted out, knocking the wind from my lungs without even touching me.

“That can’t be right...they..they must be wrong.” I stuttered.

“Abby sacrificed herself for my mate and pups. She cut her own wrists and used the distraction to kill Seth. They are both gone.”

“But...” My lip quivered, my mate handed the pup back to Edward, giving her a clean bill of health, then came over to me, wrapping her arms around me, tears falling down her face.

“Rachael and William are with the pups, Mom and Andrew are in our guest room.” Edward sighed.

“Oh goddess...mom...” My heart broke for our mother, who was always very close to Abby.

“They could use the support right now.” He said, walking past us towards the safe room, in the opposite direction of the guest room.

“Where are you going?” I asked.

“My mate is still out there. I’m going to find her.”

Sierra

I watched in horror as my sister-in-law and brother took their final breaths. I just sent my boys away with their new sister, putting my faith in two six-year-olds to get themselves and her back home and into the safe room. I tried to use my magic to heal Abby and Seth but it was too late, plus my magic was spotty at best since having just delivered. I felt lightheaded, I knew I lost a fair amount of blood and would continue to bleed out if I didn't get help soon. I carefully got up off the floor and gingerly sat down on the bench in my cell. I needed to come up with a plan to get out of here and fast.

Since Seth was dead now, the magic barrier hiding this place would be gone. That was one thing working in my favor. I searched his body and didn't find any keys or tools or weapons. I only had my broken collar and the pair of scissors that were still lodged in Seth. I didn't plan on grabbing those unless it was absolutely needed.

"Oh my..." A man's voice said. He sounded perplexed, like he wasn't looking into a prison cell with two dead bodies and what looked to be a murder scene from my delivery in the corner of the room.

"Please sir, can you help me out of here?" I begged. "I need medical attention."

He stared at me thoughtfully for a moment, but then nodded. "Give me just a minute, I'll be right back."

He went back from where he had come from, bringing a wheelchair and a set of keys with him. He unlocked my cell door and it took everything in me to not kiss the man.

"Where exactly are we?" I asked, taking a seat in the wheelchair.

"Eastern territory. Near the ocean. Beautiful view at sunset." He said, wheeling me down the hall.

"And who are you?"

"I beg your pardon, where are my manners? I am Dr. Hemsworth." He said, extending a hand over my shoulder for me to shake.

"Nice to meet you. I'm Si-Claire." I caught myself. I hope he didn't notice.

"Claire huh? No wonder they could never find any of your medical records." He chuckled. "I know who you are, I know what you are. No need for smoke and mirrors around me."

"Where are you taking me?" I asked, nervous to hear the answer.

"Medical bay. You said it yourself, you need medical attention. You will be useless to me dead, so I have no problem fixing you first." He said kindly.

I felt like I was with a serial killer. But I did need his help. If I could heal up enough, I just might be able to get out of this place. Or maybe someone will find me in the meantime. It took us a good ten minutes to weave through the building, we passed many guards on the way. Dr. Hemsworth eventually led me into a small room. It didn't look anything like a mad scientist's lab where experiments were conducted, so I figured I had some time before I needed to really worry.

"On the table please, I'll make this as quick as possible." He said, grabbing some supplies.

I watched his every move like a hawk. He noticed but didn't acknowledge it. He set everything down on the table and proceeded to explain what everything was, from the numbing medication down to the gauze. Dr. Hemsworth even offered me a mirror so I could see exactly what he was doing. While it was a nice gesture, I knew for a fact I didn't want to see what I looked like down there or worse, watch him try to fix it.

"What goes on here? I asked, hoping to get as much information out of him as possible.

"I'm happy you asked, its quite wonderful really. This is the crem dela crem, the most cutting edge laboratory in all of the world. I am the lead scientist here. Our primary purpose is to eradicate hybrids. We want to purify the werewolf bloodline." He said while he began to work on me. "This building is responsible for everything. All of our experiments and research, it's where we control our army from, where our meetings are held, everything."

"You control your army from here?"

"Yes, we have taken many wolves over the years. I insert a microchip into their neck and with the push of a button, their will is my command. One of my favorite inventions." He boasted.

"What else have you created?" I pushed.

"The device your brother had, which allowed us to control his magic. We also pumped him full of a serum that would strip him of all emotions. I have created hybrids out of regular wolves in my lab as well, they haven't lived very long. But they helped me understand you hybrids more. It helped me make the collars that prevent you from using witchcraft."

"So what, you have a plethora of information and research already, what do you need me for?" I winced in pain from the initial sting of the numbing shot.

"You are mistaken, we don't really need you for anything. You are a gift to me though. There is so much I can learn from you. We simply needed you out of the way so we could collect your twin pups with ease."

"But you don't have them." I said, praying that what I had just declared was still true.

“No, not yet. But it won't take much to get them now.” He shrugged. “I remember when your brother was first brought here.” He added, abruptly changing the subject.

“Yeah?” I was less than happy with my fallen sibling at the moment, it was hard to feel sorry for someone who put your pups in danger. Yourself in danger. Caused your sister-in-law to kill herself to stop him. Helped start a war. Empty was thrown out the window at the moment.

“He was a young pup, hadn't even shifted yet. He was awfully frightened, weak too. But he was able to barter his way up, eventually becoming second in command, with restrictions, of course. Perhaps if you play your cards right, you could one day end up like him.” He shrugged.

“A murderer?”

“Powerful.”

“I'm more powerful than you might think.”

“Then what are you still doing here? Asking for my help? If you were so powerful, I'm sure you would never have been taken prisoner. Yet here we are.”

“I will get out of here, you can't stop me.” I growled.

“There, good as new.” He said, setting down his tools. “A word of advice, many have been in your position, claiming that they are powerful and will escape. Many have tried, none have succeeded. We will break you, my dear. Let your brother be an example. Don't fight it, things might work out for you. We might let you live.” He said smoothly. “Now, let's get you over to the lab. It's not often I have a twin in my possession. I would love to compare your DNA to your siblings.”

“No!” I yelled. I hopped off the table and shoved Dr. Hemsworth as hard as I could, bolting for the door. It swung open before I could even reach it, three large men with guns aimed at my head.

“Careful dear, don't want to pull a stitch.” He said, standing up from the ground.

I was placed in my cell soon after, but not before Dr. Hemsworth placed another collar on me and took a vial of blood. The bodies had been moved, the cell cleaned. There was even a plate of food waiting for me. They wouldn't feed me if they planned on killing me soon. They planned on keeping me. The thought was nauseating. I wasn't going to end up like Seth. No matter what, I wasn't going to be someone's lab rat. And I certainly wasn't going to let them take my pups.

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Edward

“You can’t get anything?” I asked Gwendolyn.

“Im afraid not. The boys never saw the outside of the building. We can look into their memories all we want, but without knowing what the outside looks like, I don’t see how we will find their lab. Not quickly at least.”

“Cant you have a vision?” I pleaded.

“Not all witches can have visions, those who do have them can’t always control what they see and most who have them are not accurate like your mate.” She frowned.

“Are you two sure you don’t remember anything else? A landscape painting on a wall, a refrigerator magnet with places on them? Car plates?” I asked my boys.

“No.” They answered together, frowns on both of their faces. They hadn’t smiled since returning. I asked them if they could open a portal to go back, but they said they couldn’t, they didn’t remember much of what the inside of the building looked like to get themselves back there. I think they both had a bit of PTSD going on inhibiting their memory. I couldn’t blame them, what they had to endure was a lot, even for an adult, and they were only six.

“We will continue our search towards the east.” Gwendolyn said, disappearing a moment later.

What was I going to do? It could take forever to find where they had Sierra, which I would gladly spend the rest of my life looking for her if that’s what it took, but I knew we didn’t have forever.

“Ouch!” I yipped. Ella was doing her best to sew me up while Jackson was consoling our mother. I couldn’t focus on the dead right now. I needed to find the living. I needed to find my mate.

“Sorry, that one was deeper.” She apologized, finishing up another stitch.

“Edward! Edward!” William called out, barging into my office. He snapped his head in my direction, his hair a wild mess, probably similar to mine. “Tracker, the tracker!” He yelled, a crazy look in his eyes.

“Tracker?” I asked. William frantically pointed to his arm, practically jumping out of his skin. “The tracker!” I leapt out of my chair, making Ella gasp in shock.

“Tracker? What tracker?” Ella asked while I began unlocking my secure record room.

“Sierra has a tracker!” William beamed with joy. “We can find her!”

“Im such an idiot! I cant believe I forgot she had this!” I said, digging through a few boxes in search of the device that went with hers. Sierra had gotten it over six years ago. We, thankfully, never had a reason to use it, so it completely slipped my mind.

“What are we looking for?” Ella asked, opening a random box.

“Size of your hand. It has an orange case, antenna, and a few buttons on it.” William explained, tearing through boxes with me.

“Like this?” Ella asked a few minutes later, holding the tracking device. Thank Goddess!!

“Yes!” William said excitedly.

She handed it to me and I pressed the power button. Nothing happening. “Batteries, I need two AA batteries!” I said, running to the living room. I searched high and low for the TV remote, eventually finding it in the kids’ toy bin. I ripped the back cover off, finding exactly what I needed. I loaded the batteries into the tracker, trying the power button again. The screen lit up, ready for action. I hit the location button and the screen lit up, a single dot lighting up on the map. Below it were coordinates.

“Get everyone ready to move out!” I barked. I looked up the location on my phone. It was a three-hour drive from here. Three hours in the middle of nowhere. I gathered a group of fifty men, taking ten vehicles along with us and as many weapons as we could grab. I didn’t know what was in store for us there, but I wasn’t chancing anything. I left William in charge of cleanup with Cyrus while I was gone and Jackson was mourning with our parents. I wished I was close enough to link my mate and let her know I was on my way. Maybe she would be able to feel my glimmer of hope through our bond, I prayed that we would get to her in time.

Sierra

I was left alone in my cell for several hours. I felt like pacing but my body was still weak from birth and blood loss. My mind, on the other hand, was racing a mile a minute. I finally decided to meditate, something that didn’t require magic or much physical exertion. It took some time, but I finally managed to relax a bit. I felt calm for a moment. I thought back to all my visions of the future. We will get through this. I just had to keep telling myself that.

“I thought I would bring your dinner tonight.” Arthur said, strolling down the hall, stopping in front of my cell. I narrowed my eyes and watched as he pushed the tray of food through the slot that was parallel with the floor. “Its a shame really, I expected more of a fight from you.”

“Sorry to disappoint.” I shot back, my anger rising.

“Dont worry, you can make up for that with Dr. Hemsworth. He has many new ideas that he is looking forward to trying out on you.” He smirked.

“Bite me.” I spat.

“My spies tell me that your mate is on his way. He should be here in less than an hour. I think I’ll send him a welcoming party.”

“You leave him out of this!” I growled.

“He is the one who desecrated our bloodline, and he is the one coming guns loaded to our lab.” He spat back. “Once he is gone, nothing will stop us from taking those pups of yours. The legend will be just that, a legend.” Arthur stormed off, the heavy metal door slamming on his way out.

“Fuck you!” I screamed. I could feel my veins constricting. I was ready to blow a gasket. That’s when I noticed the same familiar red glow spreading through my body.

“I thought this collar was supposed to stop magic?”

“Magic, yes, but you are also part vampire. Your powers from your father’s line are not made of magic,” Sienna noted.

“Youre telling me that all these years, this advanced lab and my own twin never realized he had a vampire gene? That this collar will only stop parts of my abilities?”

“You didn’t know until you marked your mate, maybe Seth had even less of the already recessive gene and never even knew it.”

“Sienna, I think I just figured out how to end this.”

“Unfortunately, I know what you are thinking. And it might be our only option. You had better eat, you’re going to need the energy.”

I ate my entire cold barely edible meal, trying to get every last calorie out of it. Sienna and I had spent that time thinking of every possible scenario. What could happen, what could we do about it, and what the outcome could be. I only saw two possibilities, one being that

Edward would arrive with a massive army to fight the Purebreds. The other would be that the Purebreds would overthrow my mate and his men, but I wasn't about to let that happen. I took an oath as Queen and Luna to put my people before myself. If that is what needed to be done, then so be it.

"Sierra?" My mate linked me.

"Edward! Are you okay?" I answered back, grateful to finally hear from him.

"I have had better days." He half laughed in my head. "Are you okay? We are just a few minutes away. Can you escape?"

"I'm okay...I cant get out." I said, trying to open my cell door once more. It was lined with silver and bit at my skin immediately. "Edward, they know you are coming, they are waiting for you."

"Do you know how many?" He asked, worry in his voice.

"Probably too many." I said, a lump forming in my throat. "How many of you are there?"

"Fifty."

Shit.

"Turn around, save yourselves. I'm not worth it. The pups will need you." I begged him to turn back.

"Not up for debate, I came here to bring you home. I'm not leaving without you." Edward said firmly.

"Please...."

"I have to go, we just got here. Whatever happens, I love you."

"How many Purebreds are there?" I swallowed hard, already knowing deep down what his answer was going to be.

"Too many." He answered honestly.

I used my vampire abilities to break the collar. That part of my powers was mostly unphased by my delivery. My vampire side seemed to work solely off my anger and rage. Birth wouldn't have affected that too much, except maybe make it stronger with all the additional hormones. Whereas my witch genes were mostly based upon balancing my emotions.

“I love you Edward. Please forgive me for what I’m about to do.” I said, cutting the link with my mate.

I sat cross-legged on the bench and thought back to all those years ago when I was first practicing magic. The first and only time I used a weapon spell. Although it was from a witch’s book, my vampire abilities had responded to it. Whatever forces of nature were out there, they must have known that I would have needed all my powers to work together for this moment in time. Adaline told

me not to use this spell until the right moment, and if I had to guess, now was the time. I channeled all of my energy, and began reciting the spell.

“Use my body as your temple, show no mercy to those who conspire, let your wrath be known among everyone, in death may I find your favor.”

An overwhelming feeling took over my body, much like the first time, but far more powerful this time. I felt a burst of energy clawing its way out of me, it was painfully suffocating. “Aahhhh!” I screamed, a blinding light taking over my senses.

Edward

“Sierra?! Sierra?!” I called out to my mate. She severed our link. I hardly had time to focus on that though, with the number of Purebreds lined up outside the building just waiting for us. There were so many, too many. We didn’t stand a chance.

“I won’t ask you to stay and fight. It is obvious we are outnumbered. The first chance you get, leave this place.” I said to the men in my car.

“We won’t be leaving you behind, King Edward.” One warrior said.

“None of us are going without you.” Another added.

“Sierra is in there somewhere, I am only trying to get her out. We can worry about tearing this place to the ground another day.” I said, feeling proud of my men for their willingness to fight after everything that had happened, and being grossly outnumbered at that.

“We’ll bring her home.” William patted me on the shoulder. “What is our plan?”

“Well, we brought grenades and guns. I suppose we can start with that.” I said, pointing to the boxes in the trunk.

“Lets fuck em up!” The youngest of our group howled, hyping the rest of the car up.

All of my men began exiting the vehicles which they came in, ready for what might be their final battle. I just wanted to find my mate.

“Attack!” One of the Purebreds yelled, commanding the rest. He gave off an alpha aura. He would be my first target.

The mass began swarming towards us, my men holding their ground, using the cars as shields while they took aim with their weapons. Suddenly, a deafening boom and a blinding light came exploding out of the lab. A shock wave threw us back, but my men and I managed to recover quickly and took cover from the flying shrapnel and debris that followed. The building went up in flames, a perfect mushroom cloud forming where the building once stood. The Purebred army came to an abrupt stop, all of the bodies collapsing to the ground. All except the Alpha, who was commanding them, and two of his men.

“What the fuck was that?!” William asked, rubbing his head.

“Sierra!!” I yelled. I ran towards the building, or what was once a building. The place was completely leveled. “What did you do?” I said out loud, dropping to my knees. I looked around, hoping that I would find my mate somewhere out here and not there. To my utter surprise, I watched in shock as the Purebreds began to sit up, looking fearful and confused.

“Where am I?!” one asked.

“I don’t understand?!” Another questioned.

It seemed like they had no idea where they were or how they got there. Hysterical crying and pure chaos erupted, the mass trying to evacuate the premises in search of familiarity. I got up and began running towards the demolished building, not knowing where or how to begin looking for my mate.

“King Edward” Gwendolyn called, appearing next to me in an instant.

“Sierra....in there....” I could hardly bring myself to say the words. My body and mind were in overdrive.

“Let’s start searching!” Gwendolyn yelled. Half a dozen witches joined her and began carefully removing pieces of rubble with their magic while I watched in stunned silence.

“This can’t be real.” I said to no one. Edmund howled in despair in my head.

“Edward!” I heard my name being called. I turned and saw that William and a few of my other men had the Alpha held as prisoner, along with the two others. I couldn’t focus enough to even begin to decide what to do with them.

“I found a body!” One of the witches yelled. My head snapped back to her direction, watching her move a dead body onto the grass. I ran over and was both relieved and disappointed to see a man and not my mate.

“Here! I found her!” Gwendolyn called. She and two others carefully extracted my mate’s body from the rubble, setting her gently on the grass.

“Sierra!” I dove to her side, resting my head on her chest, trying to find a heartbeat. Nothing. I felt her neck for a pulse, and again, nothing. “You have to help her!” I yelled.

“King Edward, my condolences....” Gwendolyn said grimly.

“No! Youre wrong!!” I snapped. I began doing CPR on my mate, refusing to believe that she was gone. But from the lack of pulse, the far off look in her unmoving eyes, and her pale skin, my head told me she was gone. My heart just hadn’t caught up yet.

“Edward...” William said carefully, coming from behind me. He tried to place a hand on my shoulder but I slapped it away, still trying to revive my mate.

“She is gone.” Gwendolyn said softly.

“Edward, stop.” William said again. This time three of my men pulled me off of her. I fought them for a moment, but after seeing her lifeless face again, and watching the witches cover her with a blanket, I finally broke down.

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Edward

The drive back home was grim and long. I felt numb. The witches said they wanted to take Sierra’s body. They wanted to honor her by cleaning her up and dressing her in a burial dress. I don’t know how my mate even had a body left after the explosion which I had no doubt came from her. I think Gwen mentioned something about a glass casket. My head was too foggy to comprehend what they were saying but I reluctantly agreed to let them take her body. We were only a few minutes from home and I had no clue how I was going to tell my pups that their mother was gone. I had been so wrapped up in losing my mate I didn’t have any clue how to tell my pups. Levi and Xander would be able to understand, Stella I wasn’t too sure about. Hunter and Abby were far too young. Goddess, Abby. We weren’t able to find her body or Seth’s in the rubble. I wouldn’t doubt it if they had already been disposed of by the Purebreds.

After speaking with some of the survivors, we realized that these weren’t actually willing participants of the Purebred army. William questioned the three men who weren’t

affected by the lab exploding and was able to get them to talk. They were true Purebreds bearing their groups signature tattoo. The others we fought today were your plain old average Joes who had been taken to the lab and were given a microchip implant without their knowledge. The men who came with me to battle graciously offered to help the innocent. Some were injured, others just needed to be pointed in the direction of their home. We advised each of them to seek medical attention to remove the chip just to be safe.

William pulled in front of the palace, which had definitely seen better days. There were many people cleaning up the mess our war had left behind. I could see a bon fire on the side of the palace, probably burning the dead bodies. Outside, people were moving debris into a dumpster and using a hose to get the dried blood off the pavement. Some were also scrubbing the side of the palace in an attempt to bring it back up to par. The front doors were wide open, allowing workers to come and go with ease. I could see the wooden boards had been removed from the windows and doors and my staff was busy bustling around inside. I sighed and exited the car, not ready to face any of the aftermath, but I was the King. I didn't have a choice but to face this now.

"King Edward!" Someone called my name the moment I shut the car door. He looked like a contractor with his neon colored vest, steel toe boots, and hard hat. Steve I think his name was. He helped build the training center for Sierra several years ago.

"Yes?" I sighed.

"The hospital burned down, the injured were sent to smaller packs for help. There is a crew removing the rubble now, we need you to sign off on the new building." He said, handing me a clipboard and pen.

I skimmed over the papers and signed. I trusted him enough to do his job. We also needed a new hospital immediately. I didn't care what it looked like at this point, it just needed to be functional.

"Here." I said, handing it back to him.

"Thank you Alpha!" He said, running off towards the hospital.

"Alpha!" Someone else called just as I reached the threshold of the palace.

"Hm?" I grunted. My mood was darkening by the minute.

"King Derek is looking for you, I think he is in your office with Beta Jackson."

"Thank you." I nodded.

"Edward?" A soft voice called out.

“What?!” I snapped. I felt guilty when I saw who it was who had called me. Queen Amber, King Jesse’s mate. Shit. “Queen Amber, my apologies. King Jesse-” I began.

“No need.” She said quietly. She looked as broken as I did. “I know he is gone. My men have collected his body already. I came here to give you this.” She said, handing me an envelope with a wax seal on it. “Please give this to Queen Sierra. It will explain everything.”

“Queen Sierra....she, she....she is gone.” I struggled to get the words out, my eyes burning from unshed tears.

“Oh Goddess....I am very sorry for your loss.” She said, looking over the envelope in my hands. “It falls to you then.”

“What falls to me?” I asked, confused.

“Read the letter. I wish you the best.” She said, giving my arm a reassuring squeeze and leaving in the direction she came from with a suitcase in hand.

“The best for what?” I called out.

I brushed it off and headed upstairs to my office. Derek and Jackson were waiting for me, both wearing grim expressions of their own. I wordlessly sat down at my desk, the two men looking at me expectantly while I began opening the letter.

“Did you find her?” Jackson asked carefully, seeming to already know the answer.

“Yes. She sacrificed herself for our men. She destroyed the lab and freed the innocent. Her funeral will be in three days.” I deadpanned. I felt numb saying it.

“Edward...” Jackson began.

“Stop. I don’t want to hear it right now.” I said, fighting back the lump in my throat. “King Derek, what is it you need?” I asked, opening the envelope and unfolding the papers from King Jesse’s letter. Out fell a key with it all, which was odd.

“The Southern Kingdom is a mess and I have no idea what I’m doing. Half of the wolves who live there are corrupt and need to be stopped and the other half are slaves to those monsters. I am asking for your help.”

“Yeah, I’ll help you.” I grunted. I half expected him to ask for some form of help. King Bruno left the poor kid a sinking ship.

“Really?!” His face lit up.

“I was in your shoes once. I wish I had someone who had been there to help me. Plus, if our suspicions are correct, you were my mate’s half brother, am I correct?” I asked bluntly.

“...Yeah” He sighed. “My father had a habit of kidnapping women. He wanted to be responsible for the legend. So he took as many gifted women as he could from every and any species, and got them pregnant. When he found out they only carried one pup inside of them, he would kill them. I was supposed to be a twin, which is why he let my mother live past delivery.” He sighed.

“Shit.” Jackson said.

“My father was an awful man, he did nothing to help our people. I don’t know much about how to rule but I am willing to learn and I am confident that I will do better than him,” Derek said.

“If Jackson is willing to hold down the fort here, I can come to your kingdom and help you establish yourself. Teach you, train you.” I offered.

“I can temporarily act in your absence.” Jackson agreed, his voice emphasising the ‘temporarily’.

“Its settled then. I will leave here in a weeks’ time and we can begin reforming your kingdom and training you up.” I said.

“A week? A bit soon, don’t you think?” Jackson asked. “You do have pups who will need you.”

“I worry that there will be an uprising in my kingdom. My father has many enemies but also many who would follow him to the death. Not many know where I stand, but the minute they do, all hell will break loose.” Derek interjected.

“Jackson, I need to do this. I can’t be here at the palace surrounded by everything that reminds me of her. I have too much anger and I don’t want to take it out on my pups who so closely resemble her. I don’t plan on abandoning them, but I need to blow off some steam first,” I said.

If I was being completely honest, my sadness was dissipating with each passing moment. Of course, I was sad that my mate was gone. But more than that, I was angry. So angry I didn’t even notice the mate bond break. She promised us a long life together! She promised not to do anything stupid! Yet here we are, here I am about to plan my mate’s funeral! The moon goddess must really have a cruel sense of humor, giving me two fated mates and taking them both away from me so soon.

“Understood.” Jackson nodded.

“I will see you in a week then,” Derek said.

I nodded and he left my office. I turned my attention back to the letter in my hands from the fallen King Jesse. It wasn't very long, and it was hand written.

“What's that?” Jackson asked.

I frowned as I began to read it. “A letter from King Jesse to Sierra. Dated from over six years ago”

“What does it say?” Jackson pushed.

I cleared my throat and began reading King Jesse's letter to my mate.

“Dear Queen Sierra,

If you have received this letter it is because I have unfortunately passed on from this life and have moved on to be with our loving moon goddess. I wrote this letter the night I first met you, the night you became Queen. Before I get into the nitty gritty, let me first tell you a story about myself. I was not always king. I was once a young boy, second born to my father, Alpha Frederick. My father was a hybrid, his genes passed down to my brother and I. We were taught from a young age to hide our powers. We were told to never procreate with someone outside our dominant race. It was far too dangerous. I found my mate on my 18th birthday, my childhood best friend, Amber. Stop reading the wrong and incomplete storyline; j o b n i b . c o m has the correct and complete book. She was the love of my life, and a regular old werewolf. My brother, on the other hand, found his mate in his early twenties. She was a hybrid who threw caution to the wind and refused to hide her abilities. My father warned him not to pursue the relationship. He encouraged him to reject the fated bond. But my brother didn't listen. So, in a final attempt to protect his first born, my father denied him the position of Alpha. My brother and his mate ran away and we cut off contact in the hope of protecting ourselves and them from the dangers that were lurking around us. That being said, the title of Alpha fell into my lap.

I was excited about starting on this new journey. I never thought I would be made alpha of our pack. I could have potentially started my own pack but it was so much work, I never thought I would peruse it. But fate had other plans. I was loved by my people, I even enjoyed ruling more than I thought I would. We lived in peace for many years, until the former Eastern King, King Garrett, passed down his title to his arrogant, hot-headed son, Prince Micha. Our once easy lifestyle was soon turned upside down by this pup who had no business being made King. So I challenged him for the throne. And I won.

Several years passed, I watched from afar as many hybrids were mysteriously plucked off the face of the earth. I worried about my brother and his family, but refused to get involved. I couldn't risk bringing attention to them. I even refused to have any pups with my mate, which didn't go over well. Thankfully, the moon goddess blessed me with a very forgiving mate who stayed by my side even through hard times. She didn't fully

understand until one of the packs in our kingdom was brutally attacked, leaving no survivors. We later learned that they had several hybrid families living in that pack. Amber seemed more understanding after that.

So why am I telling you all of this? Well, if you haven't guessed by now, my brother was Alpha Andrew, your father. You, Sierra, are my niece and who I have assigned as my heir to the throne. Amber has no family. She has also expressed that if something should ever happen to me before she passes, she refuses to take over as ruler of the Eastern Kingdom. I know this might come as a big surprise, having two kingdoms to run, but I have faith in you and your mate.

I am a very organized man. All of the pack's finances are in order and generally we are a peaceful kingdom. I keep all of my important documents locked in a safe in my office. The key inside this envelope will unlock it. In the safe, there is a clear will notifying the council that I chose you and your mate to rule the Eastern Kingdom. Although it has never been done before, there is nothing in any of the councils rulebooks that says this isn't possible.

I wish you all the best. I hope you live a long and happy, prosperous life with your mate and family.

Until we meet again,

Uncle Jesse."

Jackson and I stared at each other in horror. I just had an entire kingdom thrown in my lap. How could I possibly run two kingdoms, help Derek reform his kingdom, be a father to my pups, while also dealing with my own grief and the aftermath of war?!

"Where is Andrew?" I said, already heading out of my office. Jackson's eyes glazed over, probably linking someone.

"Mom says he went to the kitchen to grab food Anita made for the pups." Jackson said, confirming my suspicions.

I all but flew down to the palace kitchen in search of my father-in-law. "Andrew!" I barked, looking around for him. Everyone else cleared out like there was a fire.

"Edward?" He said, looking perplexed. "Did you find Sierra?!"

Shit. I forgot, I hadn't told anyone yet.

"Come with me." I softened my tone and took him into my throne room with Jackson following closely behind. He took the news better than I expected. Though he was still a complete mess. He lost both of his pups so close together. I let him have a few minutes to grieve before I asked the question burning in my head. "King Jesse...was he your brother?"

“How did you find out? I thought he died too.” Andrew said grimly.

“He did, but he left his kingdom to Sierra and I. It was highly unexpected,” I said with a twang of irritation in my voice. “Why didn’t you say anything?”

“He may have been my biological brother, but he chose to support my father in outcasting my mate and I. He was no longer my brother after that. There was no sense in bringing it up.” He sighed. “Though I am a bit taken back that he would have left it to my hybrid daughter. Its against everything he ever followed.”

“Maybe it’s his way of apologizing,” Jackson shrugged.

“Whatever it is, I don’t know how I’m going to pull this off.” I said, running my hands through my hair. “Two kingdoms to run and one to reform.”

“What if your mother and I cover for you in the eastern kingdom until you get your affairs in order?”

“And I already promised to hold down the fort here, temporarily.” Jackson reiterated.

“You’d do that?”

“Of course, you do for family.” He nodded. “And it’s what Sierra would have wanted.”

The Alpha King And His Second Chance

Chapter 64

Edward

Today was the day I would say goodbye to my mate. I reluctantly got off the couch, stretching my aching muscles. I couldn’t bring myself to sleep in our bed. Her scent was everywhere and it only served as a reminder of the pain. My pups, on the other hand, were snuggled up on her side of the bed, missing their mom. Levi and Zander took it the hardest, as expected. Stella kept asking where mommy was, which drove my older ones crazy. There have been a lot of sibling fights in the house lately. Ella and Rachael stepped up and helped me with my five, little Abby and Hunter needing the most hands on attention.

Andrew and my mom left for the eastern kingdom after I read the letter to Andrew. They needed to retrieve King Jesse’s will and present it to the council on my behalf before another ruler was picked and things got messy. They said they would be back for Sierra’s funeral, which would be in just a few hours. King Jesse was accurate in his letters, he was a very organized man. Mom raved about how clear and to the point he kept everything. Part of me wonders if he had a feeling he wouldn’t make it off the battlefield and prepared

everything ahead of time. Everything was up to date, every report, bill, document, treaty, pack information, everything. Between Andrew and my mother, they would have an easy time maintaining the already neat and tidy eastern territory.

Derek will officially be crowned king tomorrow. He has been very anxious about it. The more he goes through his father's office, the more disturbing things he finds. Whatever his father was involved with ran deep apparently. Poor kid was going to have to sleep with a knife under his pillow for a while. I'm not entirely sure what help I will be in that case, unless there is a mass genocide. If he is right about half his kingdom being corrupt, we might just have to clean house. I don't doubt that there will be those who will challenge him for his title, not only because he was only twenty-one, but also because of the legacy his father left behind. I know from personal experience how discouraging it can be to be challenged for your title. I hadn't even been king for a month and had eight challengers. They didn't know how I would rule, but because I was young they thought I wouldn't succeed and they could take away my birthright. I don't think Derek fully realizes how much work he is going to have ahead of him. Next week should be interesting, to say the least.

I reluctantly dragged myself to the kitchen, already dreading today, and poured a stale cup of cold coffee from yesterday's pot. I nuked it in the microwave and started to get ready. It tasted like shit, which matched my mood.

"Edward?" Ella's voice called from the elevator.

"Kitchen," I answered.

"Hey, are the pups up yet?" She asked.

I asked her to help me get them ready for the funeral today, which she thankfully agreed to. Ella and Jackson were going to be watching my pups while I was away helping Derek. I didn't know how long it would take to get his kingdom straightened out, and although I did plan on traveling back and forth frequently, my pups needed someone constant to look after them. To someone not in my shoes, I'm sure that I looked like a piece of shit dad leaving my pups after their mother had just passed. But if I couldn't get Derek on steady feet there was a good chance that another wolf might overthrow him and that could affect my pups in the future. It was too important for me not to help him. I just needed to spend a few months to ensure a good future for our kind, and then I would be by my pups' side until they leave the nest.

"Not yet." I shook my head.

"Is everything all set for today? Do you need me or Jackson to help with anything?"

"No, the witches were highly insistent that they wanted to arrange her funeral. They asked me to pick out flowers but said they would handle the rest."

“And you are okay with that?” Ella frowned.

“I trust that they will treat her with the dignity and respect that she deserves. Sierra spoke very highly of them, even though I’m always a bit skeptical, I decided to trust my mate on this one.”

“Okay...so where is she being buried then? I noticed the cemetery behind the gardens wasn’t prepped for a casket.”

It was customary for the royals to be buried behind the palace. My mate, of course, would be the exception to the rule. She was always a rule breaker, even in death she had made her own way.

“The witches mentioned something about a glass casket.” I shrugged her off.

“Hi Aunt Ella,” Levi and Xander said in unison, coming from the hallway in their pajamas.

“Morning boys. Sleep okay?” She asked sympathetically.

“Not really,” Levi said, climbing up into one of the kitchen chairs.

Xander only shrugged and came shuffling over to me. I scooped him up and he rested his head on my shoulder, his eyes still sleepy looking. “How about I make some waffles for breakfast?” I asked my boys. And by make, I meant I would throw a few frozen waffles into the toaster. I never did improve my culinary skills. I didn’t need to since I always had Sierra around.

“Sure,” Levi sighed. I think Xander fell asleep in my arms, evident from the lack of response, dead weight, and even breathing he had. This pup could fall asleep anywhere, anytime.

“Momma?” Stella asked, rubbing her eyes with one hand while the other dragged her favorite stuffed wolf down the hallway with her.

“Mom is gone, Stella,” Levi said with a bite in his tone.

“When will she be back?” She asked, again.

“Stella, remember our talk last night? Mom is with the moon goddess now.” I sighed, feeling just as frustrated that I had to keep telling her this. She was only four. I didn’t expect her to understand a lot, but I figured after telling her a dozen times she would get the message.

“When she comes back, I want her to go to the playground with me.” Stella said with a yawn.

“Stella-” Levi’s voice almost sounded like a growl.

“Levi, why don’t we go for a walk?” Ella interjected, saving me from breaking up another fight.

“Good idea.” I said firmly to Levi, who rolled his eyes and left the table. Goddess keep me patient.

I carefully set Xander down on the couch and began toasting the frozen waffles. Stella didn’t seem to have a care in the world. She sat at the table by herself, happily munching on her waffle and coloring in her book with her stuffed wolf on her lap, kicking her feet in delight. I envied her.

Hunter and Abby woke up half an hour later and our home soon became filled with chaos, trying to get five pups and myself ready. The twins complained about having to wear suites, while Stella was delighted to put on a dress. Abby spit-up on her dress and needed to be changed, but by some miracle we made it out the door right on time.

The witches were vague about what they had planned, but they did ask us to meet them in the cemetery behind the palace. My mom and Andrew were already waiting there, along with Jackson and his pups, William and his family, the entire council, King Carson, and the almost king, King Derek. More wolves, witches, and vampires ended up showing up, the group so large I didn’t know how or where we could possibly fit everyone for the funeral. Sierra was truly loved by all.

“King Edward.” Gwendolyn greeted me. She wore a fancier version of her typical flowing gray dress with a single white ribbon tied around her waist.

“Are we ready?” I asked.

“Right this way.” She nodded.

Three more witches joined her and they all used their powers together to open a massive portal big enough to get our large group through. I could sense a lot of unease among my people, but they followed my lead without hesitation. I stepped through the portal, my jaw falling slack at the pure wonder before my eyes. We were in a clearing in a forest, it looked like something out of a book I would read to Stella. Whimsical, enchanting even. There was a pink hue everywhere I looked, the forest floor had nothing but beautiful flourishing wildflowers. The surrounding trees were all cheery blossoms, beyond those were willow and birch trees with a variety of others that weaved along a stream that circled most of the area. In the center of the clearing there was a monument in the shape of a wolf, Sierras wolf, Sienna. The only difference was that her eyes had colored stones, one being purple, the other red, unlike her normal vibrant blue ones. I carefully approached the statue, afraid to step on or touch anything.

“Wow.” I whispered to myself. Blown away by the witches’ work.

“Alpha.” Gwendolyn gently called me.

I looked around the monument to her and caught a glimpse of the glass. Goddess I wasn't ready for this. I swallowed the lump in my throat and approached my mate's casket. The top was made of rounded glass, the base a beautiful white marble. Inside laid my mate, her hair done in soft curls with a variety of pure white flowers placed around her entire body. She wore a beautiful royal purple dress that complimented her skintone and figure. Her hands were folded on top of her, holding a single white rose. She had natural looking makeup on, and goddess, if I didn't know any better I would have thought she was sleeping, she looked so beautiful even in death.

“Thank you.” I gulped, all the tears I had been holding back starting to fall.

“We will begin momentarily, please have a seat.” She said, gesturing to the rows of chairs I was just now noticing on the other side of Sierra's casket.

The seats quickly filled up, but no one was left standing. We were in a crescent shape around her casket. Most of the guests were so awestruck by the beauty around us, the grim mood suddenly seemed much lighter.

“We are here today to lay to rest Queen Sierra. She was unlike any other being I had the pleasure of knowing. When we first met, I wanted nothing to do with her. But as time passed, I grew to love her as a sister.” Gwendolyn began. “She sacrificed herself to save hundreds of innocent lives, some who might not have even known that they were in danger. She was a selfless woman, a fierce mother, a loving mate, and a good friend. We would now like to invite anyone who wishes to say something to the front at this time.”

Andrew was the first person to leave his seat, almost knocking it over in his hurry. When he got to the front, he took a steadying breath and pulled out a folded piece of paper with shaky hands. “My daughter was one in a million. As a young girl, she loved life, loved animals and exploring. She was an easy pup who simply loved life. I failed her as a father when she was only a pup, but the moon goddess gave me a second chance. I got to know my little girl as the woman she had become. She welcomed me with open arms into her home. I couldn't have been more proud of her, seeing the life she had made for herself. Getting to spend time with her and her pups, watching her care for them. Her love was unconditional. I didn't deserve her. I pray that the moon goddess will one day reunite me with my little pumpkin, and until then, may she find comfort and rest.” Andrew said. He took his seat just as quickly as he had gotten up, the next person already heading towards the front.

“Hello everyone. My name is Derek. I was Sierra's half brother. I didn't get to meet her until I was a teen, and we only spoke a few times, but when we did, I always left feeling hopeful. She was an example of what a leader should be. She showed me that there was hope for a better life, no matter what your circumstances. I wish I had gotten to know her better, but I am thankful for our few moments together.” Derek said, fidgeting nervously.

One by one, almost every single person in attendance came to the front to tell their story about how Sierra impacted their lives. Funny stories were exchanged, and even a few jokes cracked about her sassiness and quirkyness. Overall, there was an overwhelmingly positive atmosphere. I had thought about what I was going to say, I even tried to write things down, but nothing felt right. I knew we were nearing towards the end, and I was going to be the last to speak.

“Is there anyone else who would like to say something?” Gwendolyn asked.

When she was met with silence, I knew it was my turn. I handed Hunter off to my mom, much to his disapproval, then headed towards the front. I cleared my throat when I reached the spot where everyone else had been standing, the grass matted down from everyone before me. All that was left was to speak my mind.

“Sierra was my best friend. But she was also so much more than that. She was the mother of my pups, my Luna, my partner in crime. Every day I spent with her was the best day of my life. Even on crummy days, she made everything seem more manageable. Many of you might not know this, but when we met we agreed to reject one another. Thankfully, that never happened. But it took months of us living together before we finally accepted each other. We were both afraid that our baggage would bring harm to the other person. When we finally got past our fears, we built a wonderful life together. We had beautiful pups together. She showed me what true love was. We stood together on the good days and on the bad. I am thankful for every moment I had with her here on earth. I love her with every fiber of my being. I hope the moon goddess will find favor in me one day and reunite me with my mate when I am called home. Until then,” I said, looking at her casket, my voice dropping to a whisper. “Rest in peace my love.”

I took my seat and waited for Gwendolyn to continue. She went to the front again, this time with six other witches who formed a circle around my mate’s casket and monument. “Sierra will go down in history for her strength and courage.” She began. The other witches started mumbling a spell, frost coming from their hands. “Let this place serve as sacred ground.” An ice globe formed around my mate’s casket and monument, snowflakes slowly falling from the top to the bottom. It looked like she was in a snowglobe even though it was summer. “Let no man disturb her rest....Sierra will remain here, as a reminder of all of her sacrifices. The globe and frost will protect her from the outside world. May she rest in peace.”

The Alpha King And His Second Chance

Chapter 65

Edward

“Do you have to go?” Stella asked, a little pout on her face.

“Yes baby, I need to help King Derek. But I will be back in a few days.”

“We are gonna have lots of fun together though.” Ella said, trying to encourage my pups.

I felt guilty leaving, I was going to miss them. It wasn't the first time I had even been away from them, but it was definitely going to be the longest I would be gone. Ella and Jackson temporarily moved onto my floor with all of their pups so my pups still felt at home while being cared for by their Aunt and Uncle. My plan was to help Derek during the week and spend the weekends with my pups. That is if everything goes according to plan. I don't know what King Derek's kingdom will throw our way. Hopefully, I won't need to spend so much time there, but I highly doubt that.

“I love you all. Please be good for Uncle Jackson and Aunt Ella. Listen to them, follow their rules. I'll be back before you know it.” I said, giving each of my pups a hug goodbye.

I managed to pry my pups off of me with just enough time to get to the airport to catch a flight to Derek's palace. I still had to drive an hour to get to his kingdom, but it was still the fastest option. The plain ride was uneventful, thankfully, and it was easy to pick up my rental. So far so good. I drove an hour into the forest on off-road paths that eventually led to the southern territories pack lands. I was greeted by pot holes and a guard station with no guards. Lovely.

Not only did I not see any guards, but the few people that I did see in the run-down-looking ghost town were all angry-looking, like they wanted to start a fight. That wasn't reassuring. I slowly drove through the city, weaving around potholes and getting more and more dirty looks. When I finally found what I assumed was the palace, I pulled up front and parked the car next to a fallen over tree, thankful I paid for the extra insurance the rental place offered. It has been years since I have visited the southern kingdom. I was a pup the last time I came here, actually. It was never as nice looking as our kingdom, but now it looks like it just needed to be demolished and built from scratch.

I walked up the broken concrete steps that led to the worn-down-looking wooden double doors. I knocked and waited for someone to let me in. After a minute, I knocked again, feeling a bit irritated from the lack of response. The door creaked open, I could see half of a young man looking back at me through the small opening.

“What do you want?” He snapped.

“I'm here to see King Derek.” I clicked my tongue, fighting back the urge to teach this pup some manners.

“Who are you?” He said, eyeing me warily.

“King Edward. King Derek is expecting me.” I said firmly.

“Uh...wait here.” He said, slamming the door in my face. I could hear his steps start to fade, followed by some yelling and finally the front doors swung open with Derek there to greet me.

“Edward, thank goddess you are here, please come in.” He stepped aside, welcoming me inside. At least someone here has manners.

I looked around, very unimpressed by what I was seeing. There was obvious water damage, shown by the stains on the ceiling. It smelled like smoke and maybe even weed. The palace was dimly lit, probably doing me a favor from seeing the rest. We passed through several rooms, all needed patchwork and a fresh coat of paint, electrical too.

“Sorry for the mess...” Derek apologized.

“No need,” I dismissed. It wasn’t his fault after all.

“Please have a seat.” He said, leading me into a small office with tons of paperwork just lying on the ground in a heap. I sat in the torn-up leather chair across from his desk while Derek took calculated steps to get to his spot behind his desk. “Where should we start?” He asked, looking at me like a deer in headlights.

“Do you have bank account information?” I asked, figuring that he wouldn’t know the numbers off hand.

“Uhh...I think I saw a statement somewhere...” He said, tearing through the piles of papers on his desk.

It took him a few minutes to find the papers, but once he did, we called the bank and asked for account information. It was a werewolf run bank, making it easy for us to transfer everything from King Bruno’s name to Dereks. All we had to do was fax over his title as king and they allowed him access to all the accounts. Unfortunately, they were all in the negative.

“I guess we wont be updating things anytime soon...” Derek sighed.

“No, this place needs help and fast. I’m not convinced that the building won’t give out at any moment. I will loan you the money.” I said while dialing my contractor Steve to get some quotes. He said he would be available to come look at the palace next week. Goddess I hoped this building could last that long. “What staff do you have here? What are their payscales?”

“So about that...”

“What?” I asked, already hating what he was about to tell me.

“The people working here used to get paid in other ways besides money....so I fired them all. My only ‘worker’ is my Beta Jeff, who I just hired this morning.”

“Well, at least you have a Beta.” I said, running my hands through my hair. “What are you paying him?”

“I told him he could live here for free as payment,” Derek said proudly.

I thought a vein might burst in my temple from the pure unawareness Derek seemed to have. I’m convinced Levi and Xander would know more about running a palace than Derek did right now.

“Okay.” I nodded “You might not know this, but Beta’s, Gamma’s, Delta’s, and all other on-site staff get to live in the palace for free. It’s a courtesy and an expectation, because their primary job is to serve you. So we will need to revisit Beta Jeff’s payscale.” I said nicely.

“Oh...really?” Derek asked, preplexed. “Thats pretty cool.”

“Why dont we start from the top? I don’t know how things were being run here or what you know and don’t know, so forgive me if I ask some trivial questions.”

“Okay.” He nodded, looking more relieved than ever.

I started with the basics. I asked him what he thought the job of the King was, then corrected him on what he was actually supposed to do. Then we worked down the line; Beta, Gamma, Delta. We even talked about him finding a Luna which he seemed less than interested in at the moment. Everything he thought was wrong. Everything he grew up with and was taught was wrong. It was sad to see how someone as smart as him was set up for failure. Derek was thankfully eager to learn and a quick learner at that. He had good manners and speech, which would help when he had to conduct negotiations one day.

We spent several hours just going through paperwork. Goddess, I hate paperwork. More than half of it was junk, all outdated and useless. What we did find had red flags written all over them. Past due balances, loans up the ass, a few questionable treaties. King Bruno fucked everything up. The kingdom didn’t even have a reliable source of income. In my kingdom we had a tech company that brought in a hefty chunk of our finances. The remainder came from a few other smaller companies and, of course, tax dollars. This pack had next to nothing. We needed to find something and fast to get this place back on its feet or soon the bank owners would be crowned king.

“Bro! There is a mob outside!” A very frazzled looking Jeff said, bursting into Dereks’ office. We would need to work on him too.

“What do they want?” Derek asked. Jeff just shrugged and ran to the window, stepping over our junk pile of papers to get to the window. Goddess, I don’t know if he was even old enough to be a Beta now that I have got a better look at him.

“Dude I dont know.” Jeff said, peering through a broken spot on the dusty blinds.

“You will address him as King Derek or Alpha in the presence of another.” I repremanded Jeff. “Now lets go see what they want.” I stood and casually walked down the hall. Derek and Jeff followed behind me like scared little pups. When we reached the front lobby, I stepped aside so Derek could take the lead.

“What, me?” He asked with a worried look on his face. I sighed and flung the door open, gesturing for Derek to go first. He gulped but headed towards the mob with his head held high like how I had coached him earlier today. Unfortunately, that’s all he did.

“What is the meaning of this?” I asked from behind Derek using my booming alpha voice.

“We are here to challenge King Derek for his title.” A young pup said, his voice less than confident, his eyes refusing to meet mine. He had to be a teen still. I could sense he had a wolf, so he was at least sixteen, if I had to guess, he was maybe eighteen or nineteen at best.

“On what grounds? What reason do you have to challenge your new king?”

“Well-”

“Because I imagine that you are aware that a challenge for the king’s title is to the death. Are you prepared to die for your cause?”

“John stop!” A female around his age pleaded. “We are sorry, we are just scared.” She said.

“Why are you scared?” I asked.

“We don’t want another king like the last one.” The girl said shyly, tucking a loose strand of hair behind her ear. Her face was flaming red in embarrassment.

“I am nothing like my father.” Derek finally spoke up. “He was a monster. I’m not entirely sure what I’m doing but I’m working on it. King Edward is helping me figure things out. But I promise you, things are about to change for the better around here.”

“Dude, I cant believe that worked!” Derek said excitedly, putting his hand out for a fist bump. I humored him and returned the fist bump. After speaking with the group, they left peacefully, happy with the news of change on the horizon.

“Communication is everything. Openly talking with your people will help avoid many misconceptions. We should send out a letter to all of the kingdom and packs informing them of the changes to come. And get ‘dude’ out of your vocabulary.” I said, taking a seat back in his office.

“Got it. What changes are we making?” Derek asked.

“Get a pen and paper.” I said, flicking my head at his desk.

“Okay....got it.” He said, looking at me expectantly.

“What would you like to see changed around here?”

“Well, no more slavery for one...” He snorted.

“Write that down. What else?” I asked. Derek looked stunned for a split second but proceeded to write.

“Crime is pretty bad around here...”

“Write it down. What else?”

“We don’t really have any businesses around here....maybe encourage people to open their own shops?”

“Add fixing the roads and abandoned buildings to the list too.” I nodded.

We continued making a list of all the changes Derek wanted to make during his rule. It took us over an hour. Once we had the list, we came up with a timeline and expectations for the packs. Derek wouldn’t be able to fix everything himself, he would need all the alpha’s in his territory to step up and help make these changes. We composed it all into a detailed letter and addressed them to each of the packs and the residents who lived in his kingdom. I warned Derek that he would more than likely have a three-way split. A third would love the changes, a third would hate them, and a third would be indifferent or have another idea in mind. He needed to prepare himself for all the curve balls that were about to be thrown his way. This is when real challenges for his title would start to appear, not half-ass challenges from pups who didn’t know how to fight. It would come from dangerous men who enjoyed killing their prey.

Along with the letter, we also sent out enlistment forms for any interested wolves to fill out, since my men and King Jesse’s men had just killed most if not all of what would have been Dereks warriors. I called Andrew and had him look over the number for the eastern kingdom and they had money that they were able to loan as well, so we were able to hire warriors and pay Derek and Jeff and even a few more staff members for the palace.

Derek was a strong and skilled fighter, as shown on the battlefield, so he would begin leading training for the new warriors while I watched and tweaked things here and there. This wasn't going to be an easy task, but it needed to be done.

"Thank you again for all your help today," Derek said while leading me to a guest room.

"Of course. I am happy to help." I nodded.

"Here we go." Derek said, stopping at one of the less awful looking rooms.

"Thank you. I will see you at 6am tomorrow morning for morning training." I said, heading into the room. It had a musty smell to it. I wasn't too sure if it was from mold or maybe something had died in here.

"Six...in the morning?" Derek asked, not seeming too fond of early mornings.

"Better get some shut eyes." I chuckled, shutting my door and turning to face my room.

I threw my suitcase down on a dresser and then went and laid down on top of the old-looking bed in my clothes from earlier, not wanting to contaminate my clean clothes that were safely tucked away in my luggage. I let out a deep breath, my body thankful for the bed, even in its less than sanitary condition. I briefly heard a crack and a second later my mattress was dipping in the middle. In all my years I never broke a bed by simply lying on it. If I broke a bed it was from some good hard work and was well worth it. I could only hope this was a good sign that all of this work I was putting in would be well worth it too.

The Alpha King And His Second Chance

Chapter 66

Six months later....

Unknown

BEEP BEEP BEEP

"Shut up already...." I groaned at my obnoxious alarm. I hit my nightstand a few times trying to get the darn thing to shut up, only to knock it onto the floor. I sighed and reluctantly got out of bed to silence the alarm and get ready for class.

I was studying to be a surgeon, though I wasn't sure about what specialty yet. I was in my second year of many so I had plenty of time to decide. I lived in a rented house a few miles away from the college with two other roommates. We split the rent, making it more manageable for us to live there as opposed to on campus or a shoebox apartment. It was cool living with Chris and Darren, they were nice guys. They loved to party. Our house

was usually filled with people on the weekends. During the week, it was pretty quiet. We all had school and work to get to. I was thankful I had roommates like them. They were serious about their futures but also liked to have fun.

The only downfall I had with them was sharing a bathroom in the morning. Chris always took forever and Darren would stink it up. So I set my alarm early so I could avoid both problems. I finished getting ready in record time, hopped in my beat-up junker car, and headed to class. It was a long morning filled with painfully boring lectures, but I got through them without falling asleep. I ran home and did as much of my assignments as I could before I had to leave for work. Thankfully, tomorrow I can sleep in and do nothing. It was a rare occasion that I didn't have class or work on any given day. But for now, it was time to head to work.

I worked at the bar down the street from my home. It had its perks, but I mostly stayed for the tips and flexible schedule. I quickly punched into the time clock on the computer and threw on my nametag, heading for the bar where I would be for the next eight hours.

"Hey Trey, you here all night?" My coworker Sandy asked.

"Yep. Now till closing, minus my lunch break." I chuckled.

"Cant forget the lunch break." Sandy laughed, knowing how much I loved to eat.

The first half of my shift was less than eventful, but it was still early. After my break, things would start to pickup until we practically had to kick people out at midnight. I ordered a steak dinner for myself to eat during my lunch break and an order of mozzarella sticks. The owners gave us a massive discount on food and I took full advantage of that luxury. My break went by faster than expected, I was almost late punching back in. While it wasn't a big deal to the owners if we were a minute or two late, I felt guilty. My punctuality affected the other servers who had to cover for me.

The bar was packed when I came back, I was swarmed with drink orders right away. I didn't mind though, it kept me busy and made the time go by faster. I especially liked people watching. So many strange and interesting people come here.

"Hey, I need three beers and a water." Sandy said, flying past me with a tray full of empty glasses.

"Water huh? At least someone is responsible tonight," I snorted.

"Its for that girl over there." Sandy flicked her head towards the corner booth. "She came in by herself. She seemed upset."

"Huh," I said, filling the drink orders. Typically, when someone comes to a bar past 9pm by themselves while they are upset, water was the last thing they asked for.

“Thanks!” Sandy said, taking the drinks and delivering them.

I went about my night. Nothing unusual happened besides the girl in the corner booth ordering water and nothing else. Sandy eventually brought over a water pitcher for her so she wouldn't have to go back and forth to refill her drink so often. I found myself looking her way more than once, feeling perplexed. I had to push my thoughts aside though and start to shut everything down. It was my job to close up tonight and I still had a few things to put away. There were also a few stragglers who were just starting to head out. Sandy cleaned their tables and left shortly after, leaving me and the water girl behind.

“Miss?” I called from the bar. I saw her head cock slightly but she didn't answer me. I rounded the bar and headed to the corner booth where she was sitting, determined to get her to leave so I could finish locking up and go home to enjoy my lazy day tomorrow. “Excuse me miss, we are closing now. I'll need you to leave.”

Her head was down, her brown hair covering her face. I heard her snuffle. Was she crying? I looked at the empty water glass at her table, her hands clutching onto it for dear life. Her knuckles looked cut and bloody. Her dress was torn too. Jeez. Who did she beat up in the parking lot?

“Hey, are you okay?” I asked. Praying she wasn't a crack addict that I would need to kick out again.

“I-I..” Her voice sounded raspy, like she was sick or something. She cleared her throat. This time her eyes met mine. They were red and puffy, probably from crying, but that's not what caught my attention. What caught my eye was how vibrantly blue hers were. I had never seen such beautiful eyes.

“Why don't I make you some tea? It might help your throat.” I said, heading to the kitchen to put on a pot of water.

Part of why I wanted to be a surgeon, the biggest part, was to help people. The owner might not be too happy if I kept this place open much longer, but this woman seemed to be having a hard time. She wasn't drunk, and I was pretty sure she wasn't on any drugs either, so I wasn't worried about her going nuts in here and blowing the place up. A cup of tea wouldn't hurt. Come to think of it, she has been here for several hours and didn't order any food. There were some leftovers in the fridge...maybe she would want something. The extra food usually gets tossed in the morning anyway. The cook never served 'leftovers' as he referred to them. I found a crock of chicken noodle soup and a few rolls. It was something at least. I heated those up with the tea, then grabbed our first aid kit, and took everything out to her. Her hair was tucked behind her ears, her eyes a little less puffy.

“Here is the tea. It's lemon with some honey. And I bought this too, in case you were hungry. It's chicken noodle.” I said, sitting across from her.

“Thank you.” Her voice croaked. She didn’t hesitate to eat the entire bowl of soup and all the rolls, she even downed the tea in record time. Her hands shook as she ate, probably from hunger.

“May I?” I asked, holding the first aid kit and pointing to her hands.

She hesitantly agreed and placed her hands on the table for me to take a look at.

“So what brought you here?” I asked, trying to make small talk. I opened the first aid kit, threw on a pair of gloves, and got to work on cleaning and bandaging her wounds.

Her face fell at my question, but she cleared her throat and began speaking, her voice clear sounding. “It was the first place I found.” She said cryptically.

“Are you lost?” I asked.

“I don’t know...I cant remember anything. I woke up in a glass box in the forest. I broke out of it and ran, but I cant remember anything.”

“Jeez...Sounds like something out of a horror movie. Should I be worried?” I laughed nervously, trying to break the tension. “You don’t remember how you got there or where you live or your name or anything?” I asked.

“No, nothing.” She sighed, her eyes getting glassy.

“Well....you could crash at my place. My roommates and I have a spare bedroom we were thinking of filling. You could stay with us until we figure out what to do.” I offered. Hopefully, the guys wouldn’t be too upset. We were thinking of making the spare room a game room, not filling it with a complete stranger.

“Really?” She said, her expression looking hopeful.

“Sure. But I need to lock up here first though. It’ll only take me a few minutes,” I said. I finished bandaging her up, then closed everything down in record time and led the water girl to my house. Lights were on, I figured both guys would be up. I guess there was no waiting to tell them about our new roommate.

“It looks nice here.” the water girl complemented.

“Thanks.” I said, even though I had no part in the aesthetics or curb appeal. “Hey, before we go in, maybe we should pick a name for you? I might call you water girl by accident if we don’t soon.” I laughed nervously.

“That’s probably a good idea.” She laughed. “What do I look like?” She asked, shrugging.

“Hmm...how about Sophie?”

“Sophie....I can work with that.” She shrugged and smiled.

“Alright, well then, Sophie, let’s go meet your other roommates. I’m Trey, by the way.” I said, holding out my hand for her to shake.

“Nice to meet you.” She smiled, taking my hand in hers. Her eyes looked funny for a second, but it could have just been my eyes seeing things. It was dark outside. She pulled away quickly, looking confused. “Who is Sandy?”

“Sandy? She is a girl I work with at the bar.”

“Girlfriend?” She asked.

“No, why?”

“It’s nothing, ignore me, I’m crazy.” She shook her head and followed me through the front door.

“Nice” Chris said, looking over Sophie like she was a meal. He had a habit of frequently bringing home women at night that would then leave before breakfast.

“Chris, this is Sophie. She is going to be crashing here for a little while.” I came right out.

“Umm...” Chris said, dropping what he was doing in the kitchen and coming over to me.

“Dude meeting!” Darren called from the living room, having overheard my introduction.

“I’ll be right back, make yourself comfortable.” I said to Sophie, who now looked very uncomfortable.

We went to my room, the guys bombarding me with questions as soon as I closed the door.

“Is she your girlfriend or something?” Chris asked.

“I thought we agreed to make the extra room a game room?” Darren said frustratedly.

“Okay, look, I met her at the bar tonight...”

“Ugh!”

“Here we go!”

“No listen guys, she doesn’t remember anything about herself. She isn’t a drunk or a druggie, from what I can tell. She just needs some help. I plan on calling the police station

tomorrow morning for missing persons reports. This won't be long term." I reassured them.

"Trey.."

"Come on Chris, you bring more girls through here and don't even know their names! And Darren, you plan your video games in your room most of the time anyway."

"Alright, point made. But since she's not your girlfriend, alright if I tap that?" Chris asked with a devilish grin.

"Fine" Darren agreed. "But I hope she can cook."

"Shit! My food!" Chris said, bolting for the kitchen. Darren and I followed him out, a delectable aroma filling the air.

"I hope you don't mind, I kinda took over." Sophie said from behind the stove.

"What smells so good?" Darren asked.

"The chicken was a bit over-cooked looking, so I added a few things so it wouldn't taste too dry." She shrugged. "Try it." She said, holding out a spoon with sauce on it to Chris. He let her feed it to him, immediately, shamelessly flirting with her.

"Welcome home." Chris smirked.

Although I didn't want a relationship at the moment, I felt a pang of jealousy. I took her home. Technically, she should be mine if I were to want her. Finders keepers. Chris got to have anyone he ever wanted and more. This was the first girl I brought home in months, and she didn't even remember her own name. Figures, that would be my luck. I guess I'll just have to play the game better than Chris.

Sophie

After a long night of tossing and turning, I finally got up and decided to make breakfast for everyone as a thank you for letting me stay here temporarily. All night I felt like I needed to leave here, but I didn't know where to go. The guys seemed nice, the house clean, no overly alarming red flags. I just didn't feel at home. Hopefully, whatever was stirring inside of me would eventually spur my memory on. I got to work making a massive breakfast fit for a king, or three college guys in this case. Within minutes, they started to emerge one by one, drooling over the smell of freshly cooked bacon.

"Good morning beautiful, sleep okay?" Chris asked. He was obviously interested in me. I don't know if I could say the same. Something just didn't feel right about it.

“Not especially, actually. Hopefully tonight will be better,” I answered honestly, ignoring his flirting.

“You should have woken me up, I would have stayed up with you,” Chris continued.

“Not necessary.” I dismissed, again.

“Woah! This looks amazing!” Darren said, already grabbing a plate and loading it up with food.

“You didn’t have to do all of this.” Trey said, taking a bite of bacon.

“I wanted to. I appreciate you helping me.”

“About that, was thinking we should stop by the police station today and see if anyone filed a missing persons report on you.” Trey said.

“Um....” I dont know why, but the idea of getting the police involved seemed like the wrong thing to do. Hopefully, I’m not some mass murderer and I just don’t know it. But I couldnt be. I told Trey I was in a glass box, which wasn’t totally wrong. The box just happened to be a glass coffin. Next to a statue of a wolf. Whatever I was, however I got there, I doubt it was from killing people.

“Today is Saturday. Wait until Monday. Why dont we go sight seeing instead?” Chris suggested.

“That sounds nice.” I said, taking the bait.

“Be ready in an hour.” He winked.

I chuckled softly. His shameless flirting might work on others, but apparently not me. Maybe I already had someone out there. It was strange and scary, not knowing anything about myself. What did I like? What did I hate? Did I have a family? A mate? Mate. That word rung in my head. I repeated it over and over and over again in my brain. Just one word, one small word. But it felt like it held so much meaning. Mate. Mating. Mated. I felt myself getting frustrated, not knowing what that word meant to me. It could have so many different meanings, but what did it mean to me?

The Alpha King And His Second Chance

Chapter 67

“Mommy’s coming home soon! Mommy’s coming home soon!” Stella proudly proclaimed, shouting her mantra as she skipped through the house.

“Stella...” I reprimanded while I wiped Huner and Jane’s faces down from lunch.

I was at my wits’ end with this little girl. Levi and Xander were tough for a while, but one day it was like a switch flipped and yes, they still missed their mom, but they didn’t seem bitter anymore. Stella, on the other hand, I just couldn’t get through to her. Every other day she would talk about all the things she was going to do with her mom when she came back. She said she had a dream about it. Goddess help me with this pup.

Taking on five pups all at once was a huge undertaking. Fortunately, we already knew their personalities and had the funds and room for us to all live together, but goddess, it has been a lot. Jackson had been busy running the kingdom in Edwards’ absence and his parents in the eastern kingdom. William stepped up and began doing more to help Jackson. Edward stops by on the weekends, which his pups look forward to more than anything. He said he shouldn’t be much longer with King Derek, and I can believe it. He has been coming home more frequently and staying longer. There was, however, still a ton that needed to be done. Derek should be on his feet soon though. I didn’t envy either of them. I was secretly grateful that Edward left to help Derek and didn’t send Jackson instead. Although Jackson hated the idea of being king, he sucked it up and did it well. He checked in with Edward frequently and I was able to see my mate every day and not worry that he was on some killing crusade.

“Aunt Ella, we’re bored.” Levi and Xander said in unison. “Can we go outside?”

“It’s raining really hard outside, maybe tomorrow? Why don’t you play hide and seek? Or make up a new game?” I suggested.

“Okay.” They answered disappointedly and walked away.

I finished cleaning up from lunch and got Hunter, Jane, and Abby down for a nap. Ben was watching TV and Joy and Stella were playing with their dolls. Levi and Xander were off doing something. What, I don’t know. But they were quiet. This was a rare moment these days. I flopped down on the couch hoping that I might get a twenty-minute cat nap before one of the eight pups under seven years old needed something from me.

I did end up drifting to sleep. I woke up when I heard crying, but thankfully, my mate was back and took care of it. “Thank you.” I yawned, lifting my legs so Jackson could sit down with Abby in his arms.

“Rough day?” Jackson asked quietly.

“No... it’s just catching up to me.” I yawned again.

“It won’t last forever.” Jackson reassured me. I knew he was feeling worn down, the weight of the world on his shoulders. We hadn’t had any alone time together in what felt like forever, which also put a strain on our relationship.

“Uncle Jackson, whats this?” Xander asked with Levi in tow.

He handed him an orange device that I didn’t recognize. I took Abby from Jackson and finished feeding her while he looked over the mystery item.

“This was a tracker to find your mom. It was locked in your dad’s desk. How’d ya get it?” Jackson asked. The boys’ faces turned red and they shrugged sheepishly, caught red-handed.

“We found a key and tried it on the desk.” Levi caved in first, as always.

“Where did you find the okay?” Jackson asked.

“On your keychain in your nightstand,” Xander said. “How does it work? Can we keep it?” This pup knew how to talk his way out of things. Always trying to divert the heat off of himself.

“You know your dad doesn’t want you going through his desk.” Jackson sighed, but caved none the less. “This button turns it on. The screen lights up and it gives you coordinates to where the tracker is located.”

“Cool!” Xander exclaimed.

“We use them when people go on special missions or when we want to keep an eye on someone.” Jackson said, handing it to Xander.

“Why is the dot moving?” Levi asked.

“What? It shouldn’t be....” Jackson frowned, taking it back.

“Its moving? Is this one Edwards?” I asked.

Jackson flipped it over and it had a label on the back with Sierra’s name on it. We exchanged a weary glance.

“What does that mean?” I asked via link.

“Maybe an animal got her body? We should probably check it out...” Jackson sighed.

“I’m gonna hang onto this for a little while...why don’t we go find something more interesting for you guys?” Jackson said.

He took the boys and disappeared for an hour, which was a nice break for me now only having to watch over six pups. Ha! When they came back, Levi and Xander had walkies-talkies in their hands, plus a few extras for the other pups.

“I spoke with William, he and Racheal are going to come over after dinner and me and you can go look for...this.” Jackson said, showing me the tracking device in hand.

“Got it.” I nodded.

Although it wasn't the date night I had in mind, it was alone time with my mate. Even if it was to look for a dead body. The afternoon dragged on, the pups seemed extra needy, but it was probably just because I was excited to get out, but also nervous about what we would find. William and Rachael showed up with their pups shortly after dinner, adding to the unbridled chaos.

“Thank you for watching them.” I smiled, handing Abby to Rachael and grabbing my shoes.

“No problem.” She said, snuggling up to Abby, who cooed in her arms.

“Who is ready for a movie night?” William announced, getting the pups all riled up.

“Have fun!” Jackson yelled while we snuck out.

We hopped in the car, Jackson had already grabbed a body bag earlier today, just in case. We weren't sure if we would find her body, or if anything would even be left of her. Maybe the tracker was just stolen. The witches had put her in a special glass coffin, essentially in a snowglobe, to preserve her body. Obviously, something was tampered with for the tracker to be on the move. We were going to her memorial first to see if there were any clues left behind. It was dark when we got there but our wolf's eyesight gave us a clear look.

“Someone took her body...” Jackson said, scrubbing his hands over his face. The coffin was clearly broken by someone, there was even some dried blood left behind.

“Who would do such a thing!” I scoffed. I felt bad for my friend, even in death she couldn't be left unbothered.

“Lets go find out.” Jackson sighed. He pulled out Sierra's tracker and grabbed the coordinates. Fortunately, they seemed to have stopped moving. We pulled up our gps which guided us into a human town just over an hour away.

“Do you think we'll need backup?” I asked.

“In a human town? Doubt it. Probably just some stupid kids.”

“I just don’t understand why they would do it.” I sighed and shook my head, scared of what the human race was becoming.

“People are sick, humans especially.” He said, putting the car in park. “It looks like this is the place.”

We were parked in front of a modest two-story house with a nice yard. It was filled with humans, music was blasting, and drinks were flying. Why would they steal a body and then throw a party? Goddess humans were awful. I got out of the car with Jackson, who shot me a look, but I returned it right away. “I’m coming with you.”

“Fine. But stay close.” He said, holding my hand. “We should be able to blend right in.”

And he was right. Although we were in our thirties, no one batted an eye at us. Most of the party was comprised of humans in their early twenties if I had to guess. Thankfully, our supernatural genes slowed our aging process, so we fit right in. We were able to go right inside without a single person stopping us, which was fascinating to me. I guess since meeting Jackson I have become accustomed to going places where our names were on a list, or we had to RSPV, or even show ID. Royal living I guess.

“I think its safe to split up...I’m confident most of these humans are almost too drunk to stand, let alone pose a threat. We can cover more ground and get the hell out of here.” Jackson linked me. I nodded and we split up. I headed towards the stairs while Jackson cleared the first floor and then went outside.

I got a few cat calls on the way upstairs, and someone spilled their drink on me by accident, but I managed to make it to the second floor. There were five doors in the long hallway. It shouldn’t take me very long to check. The first was a bathroom that had fresh vomit in the tub. Disgusting. But nothing else out of the ordinary. The next was a bedroom. It had a ton of electronics in it, an unmade bed, and empty chip and pop containers, it looked like a total guy’s room. Next was another room with a few people inside. They were all on the floor staring at the ceiling. I’m positive they were high on something. Three down, two to go. Next was a cleaner-looking guys’ room, nothing to report. The last room was locked, I could just barely hear people behind the door telling me ‘its occupied’ over the music.

“Anything?” Jackson linked me.

“One room left to check upstairs, but it’s locked.”

“Break it down baby.”

As much as I admired my mate’s enthusiasm, I chose the more subtle route. I gripped the handle and turned until it snapped, the door effortlessly swinging open.

“Hey! I said occupied!” A topless male said. He tried to shut the door on me but I stopped it with my foot.

“Just looking for something, I’ll only be a minute.” I said, pushing past him.

“This is my house! Get out!” He snapped.

I rolled my eyes, ignoring him. My blood ran cold when I saw who was sitting on the bed looking flustered.

“Sierra?!”

“Sophie actually, who are you?” My once dead sister-in-law asked.

“Do you mind?!” The guy snapped.

“Get out.” Jackson growled from behind me. “Find anything?” He asked, his attention on the guy who ran out of the room like his life depended on it, which really it kinda did. I grabbed his chin and faced him towards Sierra.

“Sierra?! How is this possible?! How are you here right now?! You were dead!” Jackson exclaimed.

“I’m sorry, who are you?” She shook her head.

“We are your family.” I said just above a whisper, my eyes filling with tears.

“Hey listen man, you and your girl need to go, we’ll call the police for trespassing if you don’t.” The same guy from before said, a group of five other men with him.

“You’d have to be breathing still.” Jackson growled back.

It was instilled in all werewolves to protect their Luna. Sierra was no exception. When Jackson saw a topless man leaving Sierra, who was comfortably sitting on the bed in nothing but a tank top and shorts....well, it didn’t sit well with him. Even if nothing happened yet, there was the prospect of something happening. And Luna aside, she was his brother’s mate, his own sister-in-law, and queen. This frail human was a threat.

“Dont talk to him like that!” Sierra said, getting off of the bed. It was still shocking to see her alive. Jackson and I just stared for a second, our brains still playing catch up.

“Ella, Sierra, lets go. We can discuss this in the car,” Jackson said. The last thing we supernatural people wanted to do was get the police involved. Things only got messy after that. There is an unspoken rule for us to not tell humans about our kind for a reason. Jackson grabbed Sierra by the arm and began pulling her to come with us.

“Hey-” She protested.

“You don’t have to go with them if you don’t feel comfortable,” A different male said to Sierra.

“We are her family!” I yelled, fighting back a growl.

“Fine. Then where do you live?” The second male asked.

“Um..”

“Do you have pictures together on social media?” He pushed.

“Well-”

“Is there anyway you can prove you are related.” He frowned. Sierra pulled away from Jackson looking like he was some pervert.

Of course, we could prove it, but we couldn’t do that in front of all these humans. Give away the location of our kingdom, show them pictures where there are probably shifted wolves in the background. I yanked out my phone and began discretely going through the photos, trying to find one of Sierra from months ago that wouldn’t expose our race.

“Here!” I said, finding a picture of Sierra and Edward sitting together while she was pregnant with one of her five pups. “This is your ma-husband.” I corrected myself.

“If he is my husband, why isn’t he here?” Sierra asked.

“He is helping someone right now...” I began.

“Too busy to help his own wife? How terrible.” The topless guy said.

“I was pregnant?” Sierra asked, her head cocked to the side.

“Yes, you have five perfect pu-children.” I corrected myself again.

“Who is watching them?”

“Well....we are right now.” I admitted.

“So I have a husband who can’t be here for me or our children? I’m staying here.” She said firmly.

“Sierra please,” I begged.

“Tell my husband if he wants me he will have to come and get me.” She said, slamming the door in our faces.

“Shit.” I said under my breath.

“I think its best you two leave now.” One of the guys said.

Jackson and I reluctantly left the house, staying close in our car while we came up with a plan. Jackson tried calling Edward a dozen times, each time it went right to voicemail. We were too far to link, so Jackson decided to catch the next flight to the southern Kingdom while I called Dr White and Gwendolyn to see what the heck happened that caused the dead to be living again. Sierra had no memory of us or her mate or pups either, which was concerning. I left vague voicemails for each of them, asking them to come to the palace tomorrow morning to figure this out. We didn’t want word to spread about this before we could figure out what was really going on and tell Edward and their pups. Hopefully I wasn’t having some sick twisted dream. A dream...Stella!

“Stella, sweetie, wake up.” I said quietly, doing the unthinkable and waking a sleeping pup.

“Momma?” She said in a sleepy voice.

“No sweetie, its Aunt Ella. Can you tell me about your dream about mommy?” I begged the pup, her eyes rolled back into her head, the little girl fast asleep again.

“She saw mom break out of her glass bed.” Levi said from the doorway, rubbing his eyes.

“And then she came back home.” Xander finished, yawning next to his brother.

“You two knew? What else did Stella say?” I asked, going to the hallway to talk.

“Not much.” They answered together.

“Her dream was a vision, wasn’t it?” I asked. That would explain so much.

“Yeah.” They mirrored again.

“Thank you boys, go back to bed.”

“Is mom going to be back soon?” Levi asked, walking back to his room with Xander.

“I hope so, buddy.”

I felt like a complete idiot, ignoring the fact that these pups were anything but normal. If I had listened to Stella, really listened, maybe things would be different right now. She spent six months, six freaking months talking about Sierra coming back and I totally

dismissed her. Goddess, I felt like shit! Hopefully, Edward could get her to come home and we could get her memory back soon...

The Alpha King And His Second Chance

Chapter 68

Edward

“Nice job today.” I said, patting Derek on the back. We were walking to the lake so Derek could clean up after a rather messy altercation.

“It doesn’t feel like it.” He sighed.

“He was abusing his power, more than half his pack was comprised of slaves. We gave him a chance to change his ways and he chose not to.”

“Yeah, well, it doesn’t change the fact that his mate and pups were watching.” He said with a guilty look on his face.

“Our job isn’t always easy,” I said, trying to reassure him.

I knew all too well where Derek was coming from. It was good that he was an empathetic leader, but he would need to reign it in. Otherwise, someone might come along and take advantage of his trust and sympathy. I speak from experience. I was a young king once too. It was only because I made the mistake of trusting people who said they would change and later getting bit in the ass because of it that I was pushing Derek to follow through with enforcement immediately. That, and he had far too many scummy alphas who decided to ignore Derek’s new way of running things to wait to enforce. His army was growing rapidly, but he still had a weak kingdom. We didn’t need to give those bastards time to come together and try to overthrow Derek.

Derek quickly rinsed off and we drove in silence back to the rented home where he was staying while his palace was under construction. The newly built palace was nearly complete, thankfully, and would have plenty of room for him to grow into. For now though, he, Jeff, and I have been living in a 950 sq-foot home with three tiny bedrooms. We used the small dining room for our office space as well as part of the living room. It was very humbling. I couldn’t wait to go back to my home. Speaking of which, I needed to charge my phone. It died yesterday afternoon while we were gone and I forgot my charger. I made a point to call my pups every day and didn’t want to miss talking to them over a dead battery. I quickly plugged it in and turned it on, the ringer going off over fifteen times. My stomach formed in knots seeing they were all from Jackson. I prayed my pups were okay. I dialed his number but it went straight to voicemail. I quickly pulled up my own voicemails and started listening to them.

“First new message...”

“Edward, call me the second you get this, its really important...”

“Me again, call me immediately.”

“I know you are really busy but this cant wait...tell him the pups are fine so he doesn’t freak out.....oh yeah, your pups are fine. But this is still really important.”

“Bro, pick up your fucking phone!!”

“Okay look, im obviously not getting through to you, I’m catching a flight. I’ll see you soon.”

“The airplane is leaving now. I should be there tomorrow afternoon, be ready to leave.”

“Just landed, see you soon.”

“I’m fifteen minutes from the palace.”

“Where the hell are you?!”

Shit. Shit. Shit.

“Jackson?” I linked, praying he was close enough to hear me.

“Where the hell are you!?” He snapped back.

“In a rental a few miles from the palace, what’s going on?”

“I’m heading to Dereks palace. Meet me there. I’ll explain in the car.”

“Something is wrong, I need to go.” I said, grabbing a duffel bag and heading out the door.

“Do you need us?” Derek asked.

“No, you hold down the fort here. I have faith in you,” I said over my shoulder.

I quickly stripped down and threw my clothes in the bag. I let Edmund take over and he grabbed our things and ran to the palace like the devil himself was chasing him. We arrived quickly, I was able to get dressed and still had time to wait outside the palace for Jackson. What could possibly be so important? Were we under attack? No, he wouldn’t have left the palace for that, and he could have called our father for reinforcements. He and Ella had already said the pups were fine. Did someone die? Goddess I hope not. But if someone did die, he could have just told me over the phone, there wouldn’t be much

urgency if they were already dead. Plus, I have already lost two mates. Not much else would ever be close to the grief I felt for them.

“Get in.” Jackson said, his tone laced with irritation.

“What’s going on?” I asked, jumping into the car. I barely had both feet in before Jackson started to take off again.

“Something unbelievable has happened and I need you to keep an open mind.” He said, glancing over at me wearily.

“Okay, what happened?”

Jackson sighed and pulled a familiar looking device from his pocket. He handed it to me, keeping his eyes glued to the road.

“Sierra’s tracker?” I said, flipping it over, her name displayed on the back.

“Turn it on,” Jackson said.

I turned it on and looked at the dot on the screen. “Okay, what about it?”

“That’s not where she was put to rest.” He said.

“Well then, where is it? Did someone seriously grave rob her body?!” I gritted my teeth in anger, fighting back a growl.

“Ella and I thought that, so we went to go collect whatever remained. I don’t know how to tell you this, Edward. I don’t think you’ll believe me. But Sierra is alive.”

Time seemed to stand still for a moment, his words registering in my head. “There must be some mistake, you’re wrong. We were at her funeral, Jackson.” I huffed.

“Yeah, I know, which is why this is such a touchy subject that needs to be discussed in person. So here I am.” He said. “We went to her memorial, the casket was broken. Your mate broke herself out. We found her an hour away in a small town.”

“How can you be sure it was her?” I asked.

“Well, unless Sierra was a triplet and had a sister, it’s her. Same voice, scent, body, attitude, everything.”

“So why didn’t you bring her home then?” I asked, still skeptical of what he was suggesting.

“We tried, she refused. She can't remember anything, Edward. She is living in a human town with three single college guys.”

“What?!” I growled, unable to hold it in any longer.

“Yeah, I know. William is there keeping an eye and ear out to make sure no funny business happens.”

“Why didn't you just force her to come with you?!” I asked, my emotions colliding within me.

“Oh I don't know, maybe because she could level the fucking building if she wanted to! We were surrounded by humans who could easily record our ‘suspicious behaviour’ or call the police and get them involved, completely exposing our race!” Jackson snapped.

“Drive faster!” I yelled.

Could this be real? Or was I dreaming? When Hope died, I felt part of my soul go with her. The agony accompanied with her death was unimaginable for months. But with Sierra, I never felt that. I was angry, so angry I assumed it overruled the feeling of our bond breaking. What if I was wrong?

Jackson and I got to the airport in record time, and our flight took off shortly after that. It felt ten times longer than normal, my mind racing with possibilities. We had a half-hour drive to get to the human town where Sierra was staying. I still had doubts, I was naturally a ‘see it to believe it’ kind of person. But any doubt I had disappeared the moment we pulled in front of a home in the suburbs, my stunning mate working in the garden. I wordlessly exited the car, my jaw slack, my feet moving on their own.

“Sierra?” I said just above a whisper.

She picked her head up and looked my way, flipping her hair over her shoulder, her fresh apple scent hitting me like a ton of bricks.

“I guess that's me.” She said. “Who are you?”

“I'm Edward, I'm your mate.”

“My mate? What's that?” She said with a confused look on her face. “I thought the other people said you were my husband?”

“Well, yeah, a mate is the human version of a husband.” I answered carefully. It concerned me that she didn't even remember what a mate was.

“The human version? As opposed to what?” She asked innocently.

“Why don’t I take you back home and we can talk and have the doctor check you over? We can talk on the way.” I nodded.

“Okay....but can you tell me about myself first?”

“Absolutely,” I agreed, taking a seat on the bottom step of the porch. Sierra sat next to me, looking at me expectantly. “What would you like to know?” I asked.

“Everything.”

“You are my very sweet, very sassy mate. We have five pups together. You love to cook. You have some unique talents that keep you busy.”

“What are pups?” She interjected.

“You really don’t remember anything, do you?” I asked.

She shook her head and took a deep breath. “Its like I feel like I forgot a word and its on the tip of my tongue but I just cant remember it. When you say mate and pups, those words hit something deep inside me, but I don’t know what they mean.”

“Well, that’s something,” I said, taking her hand in mine. She gasped and her eyes turned black with lust for a split second.

“What was that?” She gasped, pulling away quickly.

“We belong to each other, that spark you felt was from our bond.” I said, taking her hand back and rubbing small circles over her hand. Goddess, if we weren’t in a public setting in a human town, I would have my way with her here and now. I still couldn’t fathom that she was sitting there in front of me.

“I like that.” She hummed.

“Well, I would be more than happy to show you more, but I think we should head home first.” I tried again.

“Yeah...okay.” She nodded, not taking her eyes off of me.

“Lets go.” I said, pulling her to stand.

“Let me just go say goodbye...” She pulled away, heading inside. I followed closely behind her, not liking the idea of her being alone with three single college guys. “Hey guys?” She called out. The three emerged from different parts of the house. Two of them were looking at her longingly before sizing me up. I was easily a foot taller than all of them, I was also ripped with a ‘dont fuck with me’ look plastered on my face.

“Is this the deadbeat dad?” One deadpanned. I growled, making his eyes go wide. He and the other two even took a step back.

“This is Edward, my mate. Or husband.” She corrected herself. “I wanted to thank you guys for letting me stay here, it really means a lot.” She thanked them.

“Anytime.”

“I’ll miss your cooking.”

“If he doesn’t work out, you are always welcome back.”

“You guys take care.” She smiled softly.

We were soon in the car homeward bound. Sierra had one hundred and one questions to ask which Jackson and I were happy to answer. I called Derek when we got home and told him I wouldn’t be back for a while. There was a lot to do still, but he has grown so much in the past six months I was confident he could handle things.

“Can you tell me what you do remember? If anything?” Dr. White asked while shining a light in Sierra’s eyes.

“Not much. I remember a bright light. And then I woke up in a glass tube. A lot of things seem familiar though,” Sierra said.

“Have you tried to use your powers yet?” Gwendolyn asked.

“I have powers?” Sierra asked, her mouth hanging open.

“We haven’t gotten that far in our conversation yet,” I said sheepishly. I didn’t think telling her she was a hybrid werewolf was the best way to start off when she couldn’t remember anything.

“Have you had any visions?” Gwendolyn asked frustratedly.

“Visions? Well, now that you mention it, I thought I saw my roommate with a girlfriend he apparently works with. He said they weren’t dating though.”

“Maybe not yet, but probably soon,” I said.

“Has your wolf given you any suggestions as to what might be wrong?” Dr. White asked while he checked Sierra’s blood pressure.

“My wolf?” Sierra frowned.

“A little voice in your head, not your conscious but very similar. Yours is named Sienna. She can be very mouthy.” I chuckled at the last part.

“No, I don’t have that.”

“So she has her powers but no wolf...” Dr. White said to himself. “I would like to get a few head scans and some bloodwork but I will need time to figure this one out.”

“I will consult with my sisters and see what we can come up with. I would bet that whatever spell she cast at the lab caused this.” Gewndolyn said.

“A spell could really take away her wolf” I asked, perplexed.

“Its very possible. There is a reason why our species don’t typically cross breed. The results can be unstable.” She said, eyeing up Sierra. “Even our higher deities don’t normally have their followers matched with a different race. Most times it’s our own will that makes it happen. But you two were fated, the gods and goddesses surely have favor in you.”

“Edward, are you forgetting? This has happened before. Years ago, when you two first met, it’s in my notes here.” Dr. White interjected. “Besides the memory loss, of course.”

“He’s right, she cast a spell then too. Her other witch friend was pissed that she tried the spell.” I said.

“But she got her wolf back?” Gewndolyn pressed.

“Yeah, after we marked each other.” I mulled over.

“Maybe you should try that, see if it works again.” Dr. White shrugged.

“Try what?” Sierra asked innocently.

“We’ll talk about it at home.” I said, saving the room from the sex talk.

“Will I see our pups there?”

“I asked Jackson and Ella to take them out for a movie and then a sleepover at a hotel so they wouldn’t overwhelm you immediately. Tomorrow you will see them.”

“So what are we going to do tonight?”

The Alpha King And His Second Chance

Chapter 69

Edward

“Here I brought you this.” I said, reaching into the back seat of the car and handing my mate my hoodie.

“Mmm, it smells just like you.” She hummed in appreciation.

“I was thinking you could wear it when we get to the palace, avoid any unnecessary attention for the moment.”

“Good idea.” She said, snuggling into it.

After a bunch of theories being bounced back and forth between Dr. White, Gwendolyn, and I, we came to believe that the reason Sierra woke up was from her vampire genes. Technically, in order to kill a vampire, you cut off their head and burn the body. Since neither happened to Sierra, her body took the time it needed to heal from any and all internal and external damage. None of us even thought about that when we assumed she had passed away, there were no real signs of life either. Her body basically shut down for repairs and reset itself when it was ready to go again.

“Okay, we’re here.” I said, pulling in front of the palace.

“Its beautiful.” Sierra said, staring intently.

“Familiar?” I asked.

“Very. Like from a dream.” She said, looking over the palace, absent-mindedly walking towards the gardens.

“Hang on.” I said, flipping her hood up. She gave me a small smile, tucking herself under my arm as we walked.

“What happened here?” Sierra said, stopping abruptly. “I feel...anxious being here.”

I looked to where her eyes were fixed and I immediately knew why. “It’s where they almost took our son, Xander. You took his place. It’s when the war began.”

“Oh...” She frowned. “Who were they?”

“The Purebred Guardians. They were a group of extremists who hunted down hybrids, like yourself and our pups.”

“So I’m part werewolf, vampire, witch.” She said, more like a question. “I have a wolf, powers, and the ability to survive death...Its kinda hard to believe. But deep down it feels right.” She shrugged.

“Would you like to see my wolf?” I asked.

She nodded right away, I had a feeling she would. She, like me, wanted proof before she would really buy into something. I started to strip, Sierra’s face turned a beautiful shade of pink as she not so discretely check me out.

“Sorry...” She said sheepishly and turned away when she saw I had noticed.

“Nothing you haven’t seen before.” I winked. “You are my mate, and we have had five pups together.” I added, trying to warm her up for the conversation we would need to have in a little while.

I shifted and let Edmund take over. He was overjoyed to see our mate again. Edmund licked her face and she petted his head, his tail wagging profusely. They spent about an hour together. Edmund let Sierra ride on his back and then let her use him as a giant pillow while she watched the clouds go by. It was early spring time, so it was a bit cold outside for the average person, but for us werewolves the cold didn’t bother us.

“Edmund, can I see Edward again?” She asked.

I quickly shifted back, my head racing. I never told Sierra my wolf’s name. “You remembered his name! I never told you his name! Goddess there is hope!” I said, grabbing Sierra and pulling her into a big bear hug. She laughed and blushed, taking in my naked form again. Stop reading the wrong and incomplete storyline; j o b n i b . c o m has the correct and complete book. She stared into me with her signature ‘fuck me’ eyes, her normally blue eyes turning pitch black. I leaned down, stopping just short of her lips, giving her the option to continue or back out. Although we were mates and had done it all, I wasn’t going to force her into anything physical until she was ready. Thankfully, she met my lips without hesitation, sparks erupting when we touched. A small moan escaped Sierra’s lips, it seemed to surprise her, enough for her to pull away, her face flaming red.

“Dont be embarrassed, I love hearing you moan.” I said in a husky voice. Reluctantly, I retrieved my clothes and began dressing, not wanting to make her feel more uncomfortable than she already seemed.

“What is marking?” She asked while I dressed, taking me by surprise.

“That is a conversation for inside.” I said, taking her hand and leading her to a more private place.

We got a few glances on the way to the elevator that led to our floor. I ignored them all and continued to lead a hooded Sierra upstairs. I could worry about them later. When we finally got upstairs, Sierra carefully looked over every photo that hung on our walls while I tried to pick up a few toys that cluttered the floor.

“They look just like you.” She smiled.

“They have you in there too...and actually, Abby is your twin.” I said, coming up behind her. I could hear her breath catch in anticipation, but I made sure not to touch her.

“Which one is she?”

“She isn’t on the wall yet actually. Things have been chaotic lately.” I sighed.

“Im sorry.” She frowned. I could feel her guilt through our bond.

“Dont be, if it weren’t for you, none of us might be here right now.”

“Hm...Will you tell me now what marking is? You and the doctor said it worked before? Maybe we could try it again? I want to remember, I can feel it, my memory is right there.” She pleaded.

“We can. But know that there is no pressure for us to mark each other until you are ready.” I said, walking towards the couch.

“Okay.” She said, following my lead and taking a seat next to me.

“So for werewolves, we have something called mates. You are mine, and I am yours. When we find our mate, to seal the bond, we mate and mark each other. What that basically means is that we engage in sexual intercourse, and during that our canines will extend and we bite each other, leaving a permanent mark on the other person.”

“That sounds a bit savage.” Sierra laughed nervously.

“Well, it’s a two-sided coin. The initial bite comes with a blinding pain, but it disappears so quickly and turns into, well, excasty.”

“And we’ve done this before?” She asked.

“Yeah, this is mine here.” I said, turning my head and pointing to my mark. “And this is yours.” I swept her hair over her shoulder and placed my fingers over her mark, a gasp escaping her. She brought her hand to mine and felt the raised scar tissue.

“Huh...so if we were to do this again, it would be while we were...”

“Yeah.” I nodded. “It’s been done without mating, usually by force, but the pain for the recipient doesn’t get replaced by pleasure. It would normally end in them passing out in pain. Sex kinda sets the scene for the pleasure to take lead during a marking. At least among werewolves, if a wolf mates with a different species, it’s usually just painful.”

“I see...”

“But like I said before, there is no rush for us. I’m just happy to have you here, alive.” I smiled.

“No, I want to...it seems like the right thing to do. If I’m being honest, everything in me wants you right now.” She blushed. Goddess, I missed that blush.

“Yeah? Right now?” I asked, taken back. I thought it was just me who was feeling the pull, but she was too. Of course, I always wanted to sink into my mate, but this feeling was different. It felt like a need more than a want.

“Yes.” She nodded. “But go easy on me.” She laughed nervously, her eyes raking over my body.

“Lets go.” I stood, taking Sierra with me.

I led her to our bedroom. Her eyes were set only on me. I discarded my shirt first, then reached for the hem of hers. I slowly lifted it over her head, her arms instinctively raising to help it come off easily. My lips met hers, our kiss deep and needy. I unhooked her bra next, her perfect breasts greeted me with pebbled nipples, my calloused hands roaming freely, savoring the feeling of having my mate again. Sierra surprised me and started unbuttoning my jeans and pulling them down along with my boxers, my erect manhood springing free. I returned the favor and finished stripping her down to her birthday suit. My hands found her hips, pushing her back onto our bed. I left her legs dangling off the edge, dropping to my knees and spreading her wide. I nipped the inside of her thighs, getting an immediate reaction. Sierra tried to close her legs on instinct, but I kept them apart, burying my tongue in her weeping flower.

“Goddess...” Sierra moaned, her hands gripping the sheets.

“If you like that, you’re going to love this.” I smirked, diving in deeper, my tongue playing with her clit while I slipped a finger into her. She moaned louder, I could feel her clamping down on me already. “Dont cum yet.” I warned, slowing my pace to drag things out. Sierra growled in protest, the first real sign of her wolf lurking beneath the surface. I kept her going, bringing her to the edge, then slowing things down, driving her wild. When her legs started to shake, I knew it was time to send her over. I added another finger and picked up the pace, finger fucking her sense less.

“Edward!” She cried out, her back arching off the bed while her pussy threatened to snap my fingers off. I let her come down from her high before withdrawing my fingers and lapping up her sweet nectar.

“Your turn.” She said, sitting up and pulling me onto the bed. She didn’t waste any time, taking my dick in her mouth, licking off the precum that had made its way out. My eyes rolled back into my head, I felt like a teenager ready to bust a nut already.

“Fuck” I hissed, grabbing a fistful of her hair and slowing her down. She responded by cupping my balls with one hand and using the other to massage the base of my shaft. “Don’t stop.” I growled. I could feel Sierra smirk while she continued to suck me off. I got lost in the feeling, forgetting to warn her that I was about to come, but she took it like a champ, swallowing every last drop I had to give.

“Mmm. You taste good.” She hummed.

Something inside me snapped, maybe the way she said it or seeing her wiping the cum off her lips and sucking it off her fingers. I wasn’t sure, but a feral feeling washed over me. I pulled us off the bed, bending Sierra over and spreading her legs. I was already ready for round two, entering her in one quick thrust. Her head snapped back, her arms bracing themselves on the mattress. “Tell me if its too much.” I said, knowing she said she wanted to take things easy, probably because she couldn’t remember ever having sex. Luckily, I knew exactly what my mate liked. I slowly pulled out of her and thrust back in quickly, repeating this until her knees started to buckle. I flipped her over, taking her to the middle of the bed, where I began pounding into her. She latched onto me like a vice, her arms and legs wrapping around me while her mouth claimed mine. My canines were aching to come out and sink into her, again.

“Mark me.” She growled, her eyes slammed shut.

That was all the encouragement I needed. I licked her neck and sucked hard, preparing her to be marked. Without another thought, I bit down, my teeth practically tingling from the feeling of being inside her again. She cried out, her pain morphing quickly into pleasure, her body trembling beneath me from reaching her climax. She surprised me and bit me back, her vampire teeth having a similar effect, causing me to bottom out inside her.

“Goddess, that was amazing.” I said, catching my breath. I was still inside her, my dick interested in the prospect of going again. I couldn’t get enough of her. Time hasn’t changed that in the slightest. If anything, it only made my need for her even stronger.

Sierra

I held my neck where Edward marked me while I came down from my high. So much had happened over the past few days I could hardly believe it. I really cant believe I just slept with a guy, who, to me, I had just met. But the family pictures didn’t lie. The stories all added up, there was no doubt in my mind that he was mine, and I his. Everything felt right about being here. If only I could remember...

“I’ll start us a shower.” Edward said, pulling out slowly and kissing my forehead. It was then that my head started to spin. I grabbed onto Edward for support, even though I was

already lying down. “Sierra?” Edward asked. I couldn’t focus enough to even see his face which was right in front of me, it was all a blur, until it wasn’t.

Thousands of memories came flooding back to me, from my childhood to adult life and everything in between. The feeling was so overwhelming I held onto Edward even tighter. He was trying to say something to me but he sounded like he was underwater, or maybe I was. I gasped for air as soon as the memories stopped, panic coming over me.

“Sierra? Sierra baby are you okay?” Edward had concern written all over his face.

“I remember,” I said. Chills running up my spine. “I remember everything.”

“It worked?!” He said in happy disbelief.

“It worked, I remember.” I began to sob on my mate. He held me tight, his own quiet tears landing on my shoulder.

“You remember!”

Every good and bad memory came back to me in one overwhelming moment. The only thing I could do was cry. I cried for the joy of finding my mate, the joy of my pups and family and friends and I cried for the loss of dear friends and family who should have had more time. I cried for the ugly and painful moments in my life. But I mostly cried in relief, I remembered. It was scary not knowing who I was or where I came from. I felt so lost, so vulnerable. And then I remembered the day I was taken.

“It was Arthur!!” I exclaimed, practically shaking Edward.

“What was Arthur? And which one? Councilman Arthur? Or the Arthur who mows our lawn?” He asked, confused, trying to keep up with my insanity.

“Councilman Arthur, he was behind it all! I couldn’t believe it!” I said, figuring they probably couldn’t, or maybe didn’t even care to, identify the dead bodies at the lab.

“Wait, what?” Edward said, turning serious in a nano second.

“He is the one who tried to take Xander, he was using my brother’s powers to help himself all along! He revealed himself at the lab, Goddess, I couldn’t believe it!”

Edward flew off the bed, practically jumping onto the pile of clothes on the floor. He pulled out his phone and started dialing.

“What’s wrong?” I asked, dread washing over me.

“Councilman Arthur is still alive.” He said, the only sound between us was the ringing at the other end of the phone. I could hear a muffled voice a moment later and then Edwards’ snappy response “Bring the pups home now.”

The Alpha King And His Second Chance

Chapter 70

Sierra

“Okay, we all know the plan, right?” Edward asked for the tenth time.

“We’ve got this.” I nodded.

We needed to expose Councilman Arthur for not only being part of an extremist group who goes around killing and experimenting on hybrids and wolves, but also leading it. The problem was his current position. Being a councilman, or woman, came with special privileges. They were put into place to keep kings and other leaders accountable. Therefore, they didn’t take orders, they gave them. They had a commanding aura as well as heightened strength to ensure the kings were kept in line. We didn’t initially have any solid proof of his involvement, but with a little digging, we found some compelling information.

We had to convince the rest of the council of Arthurs’ heinous crimes. If Edward tried to kill him like he so desperately wanted too, they could sentence him to death and all of the fighting and war would have been for nothing. We also didn’t know if any other councilmen were involved. Edward and I always found it odd that King Bruno never had a steady mate, that his kingdom was running a muck. Now it makes sense, Arthur was in charge of his sector. The southern kingdome was the only sector that had only one council member running it too, how perfect was that? He was able to watch King Bruno kill off hybrids left and right while trying to breed a set of gifted twins. Arthur had a front row seat and would have taken his pups if he suspected them to be the ones from the legend.

“How long until Councilwoman Leslie gets here?” Derek asked.

“Hey guys, she’s here, are we ready?” Jackson said, jogging into the private room we were in.

“Lets do it.” I nodded.

Edward, Derek, and Jackson left the room like normal, while I concealed myself so no one would see me. In our fear of our pups being taken again, Edward had Jackson bring them home last night. They were overjoyed to see me, and me them, but because of that, they couldn’t be trusted to keep their mouths shut about mommy being home finally. We didn’t

want to alert the whole palace and risk Arthur finding out I was still alive before we could reach out to the other members of the council, so the pups were on house arrest.

I stood in the corner of the conference room that Leslie was waiting for us in. Edward, Jackson, and Derek greeted her and got through formalities before bringing up the topic of the hour.

“Councilwoman, there is something we need to discuss with you,” Edward began.

“I assumed. It’s not often you call me, Edward. Though I am surprised to see you here Derek, perhaps we should call Councilman Arthur here if this is about your kingdom also?”

“Actually, this is about Councilman Arthur.” Derek spoke up.

“Oh? Is there a problem? We do have protocols to follow. Have you submitted a formal complaint?” She asked.

“Councilman Arthur is behind the Purebred Guardians. He runs it, or ran it rather,” Edward said bluntly.

“That is a bold accusation. Do you have evidence to back your claim?” She looked at Edward expectantly.

“I am a witness,” I said, showing myself to the room.

“Queen Sierra?!” Leslie gasped.

“Arthur was the one who took me, and he wants to take my pups. He admitted everything to me.” I fought back a growl at the mere thought of someone trying to take my pups from me.

“I was at your funeral, how are you alive?” She asked, her scrutinizing glare raking over my body.

“That doesn’t matter right now, what matters is that we need to stop Arthur before he has the chance to build back his army and take my pups.”

“Alright, let’s see the proof then.” She nodded.

“We don’t have any paper trail, but don’t you think its odd that my father was allowed to rape dozens of women and dispose of them and their unborn pups for years?” Derek said coldly. Leslie frowned as if it was news to her.

“Derek,” Edward warned. We didn’t want Leslie to think we were going strictly off emotion and the way Derek was presenting things was starting to head that way. “Arthur has turned a blind eye to many concerning things.”

“I can show you my memories.” I said, ready to give her the full picture.

“Alright.” She said skeptically. I placed my hands on her temples and showed her my memories. Afterwards, she sat back in her chair looking worn out. Derek brought her a bottle of water and she sipped it while mulling things over. “I always knew he was trouble.” She sighed.

“So you’ll help us get rid of him then?” Jackson asked.

“I don’t see how I can. You have no proof.”

“But she just showed you-” Derek began.

Leslie held up her hand to silence the room. “Her showing me her memories means nothing. Memories are subjective. Even though yours is hard to deny, the council isn’t very trusting of supernatural creatures, even if they are part of our own race. Even if you show the other members, they won’t do anything about it except maybe keep a better eye on Arthur.”

“So what, we just wait until he tries to take my mate and pups again?” Edward growled.

“There is one other option, though I don’t recommend it.” She sighed.

Edwards’ face immediately turned into a knowing look. “A challenge?” He asked.

Leslie nodded and finished the rest of her water before standing to leave. “If I were you, I would think long and hard about your next move...I wont discuss this meeting with anyone, and, as always, I will help you how I can within my power. I wish you all the best. Good day.” She gave a curt nod and left the palace just as quickly as she had come.

“Shit.” Derek said, running his hands over his face.

“What are we going to do?” I asked.

“I’m going to challenge the bastard, and I’m going to win.” Edward said, storming out of the room. I let him go, he needed to cool off before we could talk rationally.

“What’s involved in a challenge for councilman?” I asked Jackson, who looked just as winded as Leslie was when she told us.

“Its similar to that of challenging an Alpha or King in that its to the death, but its not just about physical strength. It requires a thorough knowledge of werewolves and

supernatural laws and policies. Edward might be able to win in strength, but he must first go before the rest of the council and prove himself to them. If he answers anything incorrectly, they will dismiss him and the challenge will be over.”

“Goddess...”

“Thankfully, our father beat the laws and policies into Edward and I at a young age. He said it would pay off one day. We thought he was just being paranoid. Edward should only need a brush up.”

“So we might have a change?” I asked.

“We just might.”

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“Anything I can help you with?” I whispered.

“No, your presence is more than enough.” Edward said, breaking his gaze from his book and looking over at me. We were sitting in bed together, all of our pups were sprawled out all around and over me or in my arms in Abbys’ case. They hadn’t let me leave their side for very long, it made me feel good, but I also got next to nothing done. But that was okay right now, everyone else thought I was still dead, so it wasn’t like I could help with anything. I was basically on house arrest with my pups. But that would all change tomorrow when Edward challenged Arthur for his councilman position.

We spoke with Leslie again, who told us where and when the council would be meeting next, which happened to be in only a week’s time. The challenge for councilmen needed to happen while all the council were present. We decided we would ambush him there. Leslie said she would back us up as well. We were afraid if Arthur knew he was being challenged ahead of time, as was customary, he might go missing or do something rash. The week flew by, Edward spent a lot of his time in his office studying his father’s law books. I was proud of him but also terrified that something might go wrong.

“Do you remember any of what you are reading?” I asked.

“A lot actually. My father used to make us copy pages of this lawbook as punishment if we did something stupid.” He chuckled.

“Well, it seems that it paid off.” I shrugged slowly, careful not to wake the pups.

“Yeah, maybe we will start having our pups do it too.”

“Goddess, Xander would flip.” I laughed softly. Xander hated writing.

“Then it’s a perfect punishment, should we ever need it.”

“I still can't believe King Jesse was my uncle.” I said. When I asked where my father was, I was shocked to hear he was currently keeping the Eastern Kingdom afloat with Sylvia in Edwards' absence. We have two kingdoms to look after now, while also helping Derek, who confirmed that he is in fact my half brother. He had one picture of himself and our mom Lorraine when he was only a few months old. She was killed shortly after she stopped nursing, King Bruno saying she had no use for him anymore.

“I know, that was a surprise. But I don't think it's a bad thing. Now Levi and Xander can have their own kingdoms to rule over.”

“You think they will be okay so far apart? They are quite attached to each other,” I noted.

“I think it'll be good for them. They could use some independence from each other, so many people call them 'the twins' and not even by name. I don't think our staff even know which is which and they see them every day. By the time they are ready to take over as kings, they are probably going to want their own identity. I would rather they be apart and like each other, than together and hate each other. But if they choose to rule together, we can pass the title to one of our other pups.”

“I guess I never thought of it like that. It makes sense though. Speaking of pups, how is Derek doing on his own?”

“Well, it's been what, a week now? And he had only called a dozen times.” Edward laughed. “He just moved into his newly built palace two days ago and is working on hiring staff now.”

“It's a good thing you were there to help him.”

“He is doing well, Derek deserves credit for himself. He has grown up quite a bit in a very short time. More alphas have challenged him and he has effortlessly beat each one.”

“I know I was only asleep for six months, but I feel like I missed so much.” I said, holding Abby a bit tighter.

“What matters is that you are back, and we have a bright future ahead.” Edward reassured me.

“I love you.” I whispered.

“I love you more.” He said, leaning over and kissing me. “I'm almost done with this page. I'll help you escape in a few minutes.”

“It's okay, I'm fine.” I said, though I lost feeling in multiple spots from the odd position I was in to accommodate all five pups.

“Maybe you are, but I have something I need your help with and need these pups out of the room for it.” He said in a husky voice.

“Shh...they’ll hear you.” I laughed, my mate’s boldness taking me by surprise. I could feel his desire for me through our bond, spurring on my own libido.

Edward shut his book and began the extraction mission. He carefully took each pup back to their own bed, moving at a snail’s pace to ensure he didn’t wake them. Then he spent the rest of the night making me lose my voice. Not a bad way to end an otherwise stressful week.

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Edward

“Are you sure you feel ready?” Sierra asked again.

“Yes love, I’m ready.”

“I’ll wait right here for you.” She nodded.

“I won’t be long.” I winked and headed inside the courthouse where the council was meeting.

The building was all white, made almost completely out of marble. It was both stunning and daunting at the same time. I followed Leslie’s directions and weaved through the empty hallways until I found the door leading to where their meeting was happening. I stood outside with my hand on the handle, took a deep breath, said a prayer to the moon goddess for wisdom, and then went inside.

“King Edward? What are you doing here?” Councilman Howard asked.

“I am here to challenge Councilman Arthur for his title.” I said in a booming voice, the room falling deadly quiet.

“Under what grounds?” Councilman Chester asked.

“I believe that Councilman Arthur is responsible for leading the Purebred Guardians and is therefore unfit to be a member of the council and should be sentenced to death.” I said confidently, staring straight at Arthur. I saw his lip twitch the slightest bit.

“And what proof do you have?” Councilman George asked.

“My once dead mate who is waiting outside said he revealed himself to her when she was taken prisoner.” I answered.

A fit of mummers and weary glances broke out amongst the group. Arthur just stared at me the entire time, an unreadable look on his face.

“Do you understand the terms you agree to under which a challenge takes place?” Councilman Frederick asked.

“I do.”

“Okay. Well then, when shall we schedule this challenge?” Councilman Frederick asked.

“Here and now.” I demanded.

“Edward, we normally allow at least thirty days....” Councilman Howard frowned.

“I’ll do it now. If this pup thinks he is ready, we shall proceed.” Arthur said confidently.

“I’m ready.”

“Alright then. We will reconvene in the arena in one hour. That should give us enough time to prepare. The first part will consist of a series of questions. Should you pass, you may then have one witness in the speculation area of the arena during battle, Edward.” Councilman Howard said.

The council stood and exited the room. Leslie gave me a quick wink on her way out. This just got real. I quickly went back outside and told Sierra and Jackson what was happening. We each stayed outside though, making sure Arthur didn’t try to run away. But from his overconfident answer, I doubted he planned on running. I wouldn’t be surprised if he tried to cheat somehow. I needed to stay sharp the entire time.

“We are ready for you,” Councilwoman Leslie said from the entrance.

“Good luck, I know you’ll do great.” Sierra encouraged me.

“If it doesn’t, we’ll just hire a hit man to make his death look like an accident.” Edmund snarled.

I nodded and headed back inside. Leslie led me to a different room. It resembled a court room. How appropriate. The council were all seated on the bench which had enough room to fit all seven members. They had dozens of thick books stacked around them, which did give me some unease. If I fail this, I won’t be able to rechallenge for Arthur’s title.

“The first part of the challenge will consist of four hundred questions. Good luck,” Councilwoman Leslie said earnestly.

“Goddess help me.”

