

SHATTERED BONDS: THE OMEGA'S RECKONING

Chapter 4 - THE FREAK FINALLY SHIFTS

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Dax POV

My wolf Havoc goes completely silent the second Wren shifts.

That's wrong. That's never happened before. Havoc is always loud, always aggressive, always pushing me to fight harder, hit faster, dominate more. But right now, staring at that massive silver wolf standing where the pathetic omega used to be, my wolf isn't making a sound.

He's... afraid?

No. That's impossible. I'm the strongest Alpha in this pack. My wolf doesn't fear anything.

But Havoc is pressed against the back of my mind, completely still, like he's hiding from something.

"Look at the size of it," Flynn mutters beside me. His voice sounds weird. Shaky.

He's right. Wren's wolf is huge—bigger than any female wolf I've ever seen, maybe bigger than mine. Her fur glows silver-white under the moonlight like she's made of metal and stars. When she moves, power rolls off her in waves that make the crowd step back.

This doesn't make sense. Wren is weak. Broken. I've spent six years proving it, breaking her bones, watching her cry. She's supposed to be nothing.

But that wolf standing in the center of the circle is definitely not nothing.

"Silver wolf," my father breathes from beside me. "I thought they were just legends."

"They are legends," my mother hisses. Her hand grips my arm so tight it hurts. "That thing can't be real. It's some kind of trick."

I want to agree with her. I want to believe this is all fake, that Wren is somehow fooling us. But the power radiating from that silver wolf is too real. Too strong.

Too dangerous.

"Dax." Mother's voice drops to a whisper only I can hear. "Kill it."

I turn to look at her. "What?"

"That's not natural." Her perfectly calm face is cracking, showing the fear underneath. "Kill it before it corrupts the pack. Before it gets stronger. Do it now."

Everything in me hesitates. Killing packmates is forbidden by wolf law. Even omega packmates. Even Wren.

But then I look at that silver wolf again and something cold settles in my chest. She's different now. Powerful. What if she tries to take revenge for all the years we hurt her? What if she challenges our authority?

What if she's not the weak little omega I can control anymore?

NO! Havoc suddenly roars in my head, slamming against my mental walls so hard I stumble. *DON'T HURT HER! DON'T—*

I shove him down, hard. "Shut up!"

My brothers look at me like I'm crazy. I ignore them.

The silver wolf—Wren—is turning in slow circles, looking at the crowd with glowing eyes. She seems confused, like she doesn't understand what's happening. Her wolf is huge but she moves like a newborn, uncertain and shaky.

Still weak. Just in a different package.

I can work with that.

I shift before I can think about it too much. My bones crack and reform in seconds—I've done this a thousand times. My black wolf emerges, twice the size of a normal wolf, built for war.

The crowd gasps and moves back, giving me space.

I lock eyes with the silver wolf. She freezes.

Then I charge.

NO NO NO! Havoc is screaming in my head, fighting me, trying to stop me. *STOP! SHE'S—*

I block him out completely.

The silver wolf doesn't fight back. She turns and runs.

Of course she runs. She's still Wren underneath all that pretty fur—still the scared little omega who's been running from us for six years. One shift doesn't change who she really is.

I chase her across the ceremonial circle, past the shocked crowd, into the forest. She's fast—faster than I expected—but I'm faster. I've been training for war since I could walk. She's been scrubbing floors.

She reaches the tree line and I lunge, my claws finding her flank. They slice through silver fur and hit flesh. Blood sprays across the leaves.

The silver wolf yelps and crashes to the ground, rolling twice before sliding to a stop against a tree.

I land beside her, standing over her trembling body. She's whimpering, making these pathetic little sounds that remind me exactly who she is.

Weak. Broken. Mine to control.

I shift back to human, standing naked over her wolf form. "Did you really think one shift would change anything?" I ask in wolf-speak, knowing she'll understand even in wolf form. "You're still nothing, Wren. Still the pathetic omega who can't even fight back."

She doesn't respond. Just lies there bleeding, her silver fur matted with red.

"You should've died six years ago with your parents," I continue, the words flowing easily. I've said worse to her before. "You should've stayed dead in that basement this morning. But don't worry—next time you won't be so lucky."

I shift back to wolf form and turn away, leaving her bleeding in the dirt.

Havoc is howling inside me, tearing himself apart, screaming words I don't want to hear: *Mate! That's our mate! Go back! Protect her!*

"She's not our mate," I snarl out loud. "She's nothing."

I run back to the pack house, leaving Wren broken in the forest like the trash she is.

The pack is buzzing with confusion when I arrive. Half of them look scared. The other half look excited. My father is trying to restore order, but everyone's talking over each other.

"—silver wolf means she's special—"

"—probably cursed, we should banish her—"

"—never seen anything like that power—"

My mother appears beside me, back in human form. "Is it done?"

"She's bleeding out in the forest," I report. "She won't make it back."

Mother's smile is cold and satisfied. "Good boy."

But something feels wrong. Havoc has gone completely silent again, but this time it's different. This time it feels like he's... dying. Like I killed something important and now my wolf is fading.

I shake it off. Wolves don't die from killing omegas. That's ridiculous.

Flynn and Kade emerge from the crowd, both looking shaken. "Was that really necessary?" Kade asks quietly. "She finally shifted. We could've just—"

"Just what?" I snap. "Let her get strong enough to challenge us? Let her think she's equal now?"

"She's still packmate," Flynn points out, and that's weird because Flynn usually loves violence. "Father took her in. We can't just—"

"I can do whatever I want," I interrupt. "I'm the future Alpha. And that freak needed to remember her place."

But even as I say it, something in my chest feels like it's breaking.

I ignore it.

Hours pass. The pack slowly disperses, the ceremony ruined. My parents retire to their chambers. My brothers avoid me, which is fine. I don't need them questioning my decisions.

I'm heading to my room when a pack warrior bursts through the front door, gasping for breath.

"Alpha Corbin!" he shouts. "Emergency at the northern border!"

My father appears instantly. "What is it?"

"The omega—Wren—she crossed into Northern Crescent territory." The warrior's face is pale. "Alpha King Thorne's patrols found her. And sir... they're claiming her as a refugee. They say she's under his protection now."

The room goes dead silent.

Alpha King Thorne. The most powerful, most dangerous Alpha on the East Coast. The one who's hated our family for twenty years, ever since the territorial war that killed his parents.

And we just handed him the perfect weapon.

A silver wolf who has every reason to want revenge on us.

My father's face goes white. "What have you done?" he whispers, looking at me.

Havoc suddenly surges back to life in my head, but this time he's different. This time he's laughing—wild and broken and furious.

You killed our mate, he snarls. You threw away the one thing that could save us. And now she belongs to our worst enemy.

"She's not our mate," I say out loud, but my voice shakes.

Then why, Havoc asks quietly, does it feel like you just ripped out your own heart?