

Fatal Temptation: Between Two Alphas

novel Chapter 15

Given that I don't really want to deal with this mess, I do take my time. I shift and prowls Eric's room. The walls are deep blue. The woodwork is dark and everything looks modern and expensive.

I don't smell other females. I mean, there are remnant scents of sex and sweat, but if he has a girlfriend or something, she hasn't been here recently.

Funny, the thought makes me jealous.

I think about Cameron for a second, but it's like pulling the stopper on a water tower—tons of memories and feelings and regrets wash over me.

Nope. Not going there.

I stretch and curl up on Eric's bed. It's a nice bed. It was nicer still waking up with his arms around me.

My ears twitch. There's yelling from outside, no doubt Jace is growing impatient. I wonder who else is here? My pulse quickens a bit with excitement. My stupid tail has the urge to wag. This is foolishness.

None of them stood up for me. No one tried to stop Cameron or to intervene. They cut me out like a cancer and didn't give a thought to what might happen to me.

Go, Nala urges.

She's right. I'm just putting off the inevitable. I can't run from my past, and, really, this reckoning has been a long time coming.

I shift back to human and pad into the bathroom. It's huge. Easily the size of my whole bedroom and marbled from floor to ceiling. The shower has dozens of heads and big fluffy towels are rolled and next to the sink.

I still have some gouges and my eye has a bluish tinge.

Why didn't the shift heal me fully?

When I'm dressed and approaching the hall, I'm hit with the welcoming scent of fried chicken and apple pie.

I wish Jace had picked another day to show up. This is my first time on Eric's lands, and I would've appreciated the chance to explore.

Eric sits at the head of the table with his men fanned out behind him.

Jace sits at the opposite end. He brought Declan, Michail, Tyler and Liam. Michail and Liam are our most ruthless fighters. Just what kind of 'visit' are they expecting?

Platters of chicken and fixings—mashed potatoes, green beans, corn, biscuits, and bowls with gravy are spread at the center of the table. It's Southern fare and smells like it's been done authentically, which has me glancing at Eric again. I don't know his background or ancestry. I'm not sure where his pack originates or how they came to dominate the whole west coast.

I've known him less than twenty-four hours.

I'm grateful for the angle I enter the room because it lets me approach dead-center. I don't have to make any immediate choices, although as far as decisions go, I'm leaning toward a new future—not revisiting the ghosts of my past.

"It's good to see you," Jace says.

His whole face lights up and a part of me wants to run into his arms, knowing he'd pick me up and hug me hard. Jace gives the best hugs. His green eyes are the mirror image of Cameron's—so like my son's.

"We've missed you." Jace's brow creases with concern as he notices my bruises and abrasions.

“Mia...” Jace’s green eyes beseech me. “Please. *We* are your family. Cam calls for you in his sleep. He won’t stop calling for you. He’s dying. Can’t you come back and help him, or at least just come home and give him peace?”

“I’m sorry,” I tell him.

Jace slaps his hands on the table. His eyes flash to the gold of his wolf. “I didn’t want to do this,” he says slowly. “But you’re not leaving me many options. And I know you’re the victim in all of this and *I’m* sorry for it, but time is something I don’t have to give. You need to come home, Mia. *All* of you.”

I suck in a breath. He can’t know...he can’t possibly mean...

Jace waves his phone. “I have the photos. The birth certificates. I’ve checked the dates, and they match up. He’s your Alpha, and you can’t keep his children from him.”

You can hear a pin drop in the room. Michail and Liam, their mouths hang open.

Eric freezes beside me. “Is it true? Are the kids his?”

He doesn’t come right out and say it, but we both know this complicates things. Alphas are royalty, and while Cam chose to cast us out, he does *not* know of his offspring, and they’re the rightful heirs to his pack. A fact I know every male in this room is thinking.

“Mia...” Jace shakes his head at me.

“Don’t look at me like that,” I snarl at him. “None of you helped me. I was beaten and bleeding and cast out with nothing—not even clothes. Cam didn’t give a fuck about me. He swept me aside like dirt. How was I to know he wouldn’t do the same to my children? Or that your new Luna wouldn’t try to kill them—the same way she attempted to kill me?”

Eric takes my hand. “I’m sorry for what happened to you.”

His dark eyes hold compassion and something else? I'm not sure what he is feeling or what I am supposed to see. "This is a decision only you can make. You'll have to choose, Mia," Eric says quietly. "Cameron or me..."