

Chapter 24

Nicola's POV

I should be more embarrassed by the fact that everyone is staring at me while being carried out of the ball room by my borderline feral mate, but I can't pry my eyes away from Zander. The way he's looking at me could make any girl forget the world around them. Once we are outside the doors, I snuggle in closer to his chest and let out a sigh of content.

We walk into his bedroom and he carefully sets me down as his hands explore up my back and into my hair. He wraps his fingers around my dark wavy strands and pulls me in for a deep kiss. His tongue enters my mouth and swirls around mine, causing him to let out a low groan before we both pull back and try to catch our breaths. As he stands up I go to protest but he's already made his way across the room.

"Let me get you a shirt to sleep in." He says and pulls out a large white undershirt of his.

I take the clothing from him and go to his bathroom to change and wash my off my makeup. When I come out, he's sliding out of his dress pants and is down to nothing but his boxer briefs. My wolf is going crazy at the sight of our mate practically naked in front of us and I think I've even started to drool a little. He has a smirk on his face as he walks over and scoops me up before placing me on his bed.

After a long, heated make-out session, we finally fall asleep tangled up together. I wake up to a heavy arm draped across my body and soft breaths tickling the back of my neck. I lay there for a while in silent bliss and my wolf has also decided she has no intentions for us to get out of bed.

"Good morning beautiful." A deep voice grumbles in my ear and I smile.

I roll over and look into his shinning green eyes. Reaching out, I run my fingers through his hair, causing him to close his eyes and hum in contentment.

"Let's go eat some breakfast." He says, grabbing my hand and places a few kisses across my palm.

Zander and I are soon sitting at the kitchen bar eating breakfast when Kane bursts into the room.

"Good morning Zander." He says in a hurry "Nicola." He nods to me.

I smile at him and give a short wave.

"Sorry to bother you both, but this is urgent." His voice is clipped.

Kane looks like he's ready to spill whatever it is but then glances to me before eyeing Zander, unsure if he should talk in front of me.

"Go on." He nods to him.

"We've found another warrior, unfortunately this time he's dead." He speaks and I immediately stop eating.

"Who is it?" I ask, hoping it's not someone I know.

"His name was Peter. He was relatively new." He says and while I'm slightly relieved, the loss of one of our own still hurts.

"But that's not even the beginning. Each alpha has contacted me this morning and reported the same thing. They all have a pack member dead and the same note attached. It says 'All hail the King'."

I can see Zander's jaw clench as he listens to his Beta talk.

"I want a conference call with all the alphas by the end of the day." He says, pushing his food away from him.

Kane leaves and we are once again left alone. Zander walks over to me and presses his lips against my forehead, pausing momentarily as if I'm the one thing keeping him grounded at the moment.

"I was hoping to spend the day together but that seems like it won't be possible."

"That's okay." I say "I really need to finish the final touches on that armor anyway. Looks like we are going to need it."

"Let's have dinner together." He squeezes my hand "I can't go all day without seeing you."

"Sounds great." I feel myself grow a bit more happy knowing I'll get to see my handsome mate soon.

It's around 7:00 pm when my office door slowly opens and my heart rate picks up as I see his face.

"Are you ready?" He asks.

I smile and walk up to him, taking the hand he offers to me.

We walk to a small bistro in the middle of the pack town and sit down as a waiter approaches.

We both ordered drinks and our meal, already starting to enjoy the warm night. Stars speckle the night sky and I'm in awe at how clear the sky is. His warm hand grabs mine and I look over to see a light sadness in his eyes.

"What's wrong?" I frown.

"I- well I-" he starts to rub the back of his neck and I know I'm not going to like what he has to say.

"I have to go away for a few days." He finally gets it out.

"A few days? For what, where?" I start firing off questions, confused as to why he has to leave so soon.

"I need to visit the other packs and talk to some of the alphas about the recent events. This isn't something that can be done over a phone call and I'll probably have to be gone for a week or two." He says sadly.

"Oh." I look down at my plate. "When are you leaving?"

"I have to leave in the morning." He says with a long sigh.

Just when things were starting to look up for us it feels like we get pulled back down again. I know he has duties that he needs to fulfill,

he's an alpha. And he's not just any alpha, he's the king. I'm not sure why the moon goddess paired me with someone like him and sometimes I wonder if she really knew what she was doing.

"I'm sorry Nicola, I really want to be here with you. Believe me when I tell you there's literally nothing I would rather do than be here with you, but I have to do this." He explains.

"I understand." I say but it's hard to hold back the disappointment.

I do understand though, and even if I don't like it, I know he needs to be there for the people. And as much as I'd love to be there with him, I also have duties here and a tight deadline to meet.

"I promise you will be the first person I see when I get back." He says and presses a kiss to my fingers.

We stand up and start to head back as he wraps his arm around me. I feel the hair on the back of my neck start to rise as we walk along the path and it has Freya on edge. A soft wind blows by and I swear I can hear my name being whispered in the wind. I immediately freeze and spin around fast in the direction of the voice.

"What's wrong?" Zander asks, already in a defensive position as he looks around.

"I- I heard someone whisper my name. And it felt like we were being watched." I say to him while searching the tree line.

"I didn't sense anything." He says with a scowl as he continues to survey the area as well.

"Maybe it was nothing then, sorry." I say hesitantly, but even I don't believe it.

"Hey. You're safe with me." He says as he pulls me to him.

Zander leads me the rest of the way home until we get to the front door of my apartment. He brings me into a tight hug and buries his face into my neck, breathing in deeply.

"I can't wait until I make you mine." He murmurs.

His words heat my body and Freya is in my head begging him to mark us now.

His lips press to mine and move slowly against my mouth. The slow kiss is full of desire and passion and leaves me breathless when he pulls away.

"I'll see you soon love. Goodnight." He whispers before slipping away into the night.

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