

Chapter 10

**He stilled in the hallway, his expression unaffected. Slowly, he lifted a hand to his collar, inhaling. Her scent still lingered faintly there—sweet, stubborn. His wolf stirred, restless. **

***"I'll send a jet," he said at last. "In a few days."**

***"Why not now?" She pressed, almost pleading. **

***"Because I said a few days."**

**He ended the call without waiting for her reply, sliding the phone back into his pocket. His wolf growled low in his chest, a sound only he could hear. **

**He strode down the hall toward his chambers, pushing open the heavy door with more force than necessary. Inside, silence pressed in. He stripped off his cufflinks, setting them down with military perfection, and exhaled a sharp breath. What he needed was rest. What he needed was control. **

**A shower, he told himself. The heat would bleed the tension from his muscles, wash away the scent that clung no matter how hard he willed it gone. **

**He undressed swiftly, letting each piece of clothing fall where it may. Steam billowed as he stepped beneath the cascade, water pounding his back in relentless sheets. **

**But the moment he closed his eyes, she was there—straddling his hips,

hair clinging damp to her flushed face, lips parted as she sank down onto him inch by inch. His breath caught. He could still feel her—tight, molten—gripping him so fiercely he'd sworn he might lose his mind. **

**The memory was merciless: the sway of her body as she rode him hard with a desperation that matched his own; the way he stretched her snug, little pussy to its limits when his knot locked them together, her cry breaking as ecstasy consumed her. **

**Julian's hands shot out, bracing against the tile, his head dropping forward under the punishing spray. His cock jerked, hard as stone, the ache almost savage. He swore under his breath, dragging a hand down his torso until his palm wrapped around the thick length straining for release. The first touch tore a groan from his chest, deep and guttural. **

**He tried to fight it, to push the image from his mind, but the harder he pushed, the clearer it came—her moans, the feel of her silk skin, the way she came around his cock until she was a shivering mess. **

**"Fuck..." His head shot back, water cascading over his face as his strokes grew harder, rougher. His hips snapped forward into his fist, chasing the phantom rhythm of her riding him. **

**His wolf prowled beneath his skin, snarling approval, urging him to give in. To remember. To claim. **

**Julian's breath tore ragged from his chest, muscles taut with the violence of need. Every pump dragged him closer, every glimpse of her flashing in his mind pushing him further off the edge he swore he wouldn't cross. **

And then he came—hot and furious—spilling into his hand as his body shuddered under the onslaught.

He braced against the wall, chest heaving, water washing away every trace except the truth clawing at him from inside.

No amount of control. No amount of denial.

She was still under his skin.

Julian stood there, chest heaving, water beating down as if it could scour away the conflict raging within. He looked down at the evidence swirling down the drain, and his jaw hardened.

Pathetic.

He shut off the water with a snap, dragging a towel across his face and chest. His breathing slowed, steadied, until the ragged edge of what had just happened dulled into silence.

***"Jace," he called through the mind link.**

"Yes, Alpha."

***"Arrange a jet for Elara in one week." His voice was steady, unreadable. "Have the omegas prepare a banquet for their future Luna's arrival."**

***"Understood, Alpha."**

Julian severed the link, leaving only silence in its wake. His reflection stared back from the mirror—expression carved from stone, every trace of weakness buried deep.