

To ruin an Omega

Chapter 267: Patterns

FIA

I took a breath. It felt like the only steady thing in the room as I waited for an answer from her.

The words made the room drop dead quiet.

Morrigan's face shifted. Not dramatically. Just enough that I could see the amusement creeping in at the edges. I was even sure why she would be amused. This was a fucking serious issue. But she did and she let out a soft laugh, the kind that wasn't quite mocking but wasn't quite kind either.

"Aldric did say you had it out for him."

I felt my jaw tighten. Of course he did. Of course he had planted that seed before I could even get a word in. He was always three steps ahead, like he said, always preparing the ground so that when someone like me came along and tried to speak up, the soil had already been turned against me.

Morrigan reached over and took my hand again. Her grip was warm, reassuring. The kind of touch meant to soothe.

"I assure you," she said, "Madeline Blossom will not be staying here. I assure you I will find somewhere that isn't here for her to be at. So you can forgive Aldric."

What the fuck... After that touching tale I had heard about her husband, did Luna Morrigan actually believe I would somehow use this as a selfish noose against Aldric?

I scoffed before I could stop myself. The sound came out louder than I meant it to, sharper. But I didn't apologize for it.

"Goddess, he is good."

Morrigan blinked at me, confused.

"Is that what he told you? Did he tell you I have it out for him because he's the reason that Cian's ex, Madeline is here?"

I scoffed again. I couldn't help it. The audacity of it. The precision of his manipulation. It was almost impressive if it wasn't so infuriating.

"That is so far from the truth," I said. "I have it out for him. Because..."

I paused. The words sat heavy on my tongue. I knew how they would sound. I knew how I would look saying them. He was claw deep into them and it was hard enough to let Cian see the light. I did not know what that would be like for the grand Luna who would have been even closer to him. Nonetheless, I said them anyway.

"I know it will sound insane. And I know he has gotten to you before me. I know you don't know me as long as you know him. Hell, he is your family. More than I am."

"Nonsense," Morrigan cut in. Her voice was firm, almost fierce. She detested that I even nurses that idea. "You are family too. You are my daughter. You know that, right? You have to know that."

I looked at her. Really looked at her. There was sincerity there. Real, unfiltered sincerity. It made what I was about to say even harder.

I sighed.

"So will you believe your daughter if she tells you that Aldric is not an ally of this pack?"

Morrigan didn't answer right away. Her face had gone still.

"What if I told you he was the one who was responsible for poisoning you and not Gabriel?"

Her eyes widened, just a fraction.

"I don't even think Alpha Gabriel is in the picture anymore," I continued. "If he is, they're most likely working together."

Morrigan's hand slipped out of mine. She leaned back slightly, her posture shifting into something more guarded. Not defensive exactly, but cautious. Like she was trying to decide if I was serious or if I had lost my mind.

"Maybe you believe what you are saying," she said slowly, "but I assure you, Aldric is not like that."

I wanted to scream. I wanted to shake her. But I didn't. I stayed still and kept my voice level. I had gone through these same motions with Cian. I wasn't new to this. It was still frustrating though.

"He is good," she continued. "He might make questionable decisions like bringing Madeline here. But I assure you. I am a good judge of character. And Aldric has shown time and time again that he is worthy of trust."

"He is good," I said. The words tasted bitter. "That part I will agree on. But he is not worthy of trust. If he didn't see me as an enemy he is keen on taking out and wanted me close, I would most likely believe this too. But I have witnessed things."

Morrigan frowned.

"Before Madeline Blossom healed you, I did."

That stopped her. Her entire body went rigid. Her eyes locked onto mine, sharp and searching.

"What?"

"I know... It is hard to believe. But I did."

"It was alchemised poison," she said. Her voice had gone flat, almost clinical. "I know you have a healer background, and I know you are talented, but that would have been impossible."

"I thought so too," I said. "But after last night, I hold no doubts about it. Last night, I saw her. The goddess. And that night before you coded in the Infirmary, I prayed to the Goddess with the cure we made in my hands. And I know now that she answered me."

Morrigan stared at me. I could see her brain working, turning over the words, trying to fit them into something that made sense.

"I know it sounds crazy," I said. "I know I sound crazy right now and you look like you are doing everything in your power to compartmentalize and stuff. But you have to hear me out."

She didn't respond. She just watched me.

"Look at the accident and what happened," I said. "You said you were there when Cian felt me die."

She nodded slowly.

"What if I did?" I asked. "What if I did die? What if by some divine power, I was restored?"

Morrigan opened her mouth and then closed it. She looked at me like I had just spoken in a language she didn't understand.

"It was a miracle," she finally said.

"Yes," I said. "It was a miracle. So why would it be hard to believe that I did fix you? Another miracle. You were going to wake. But Aldric was there that night. He came in after me. I know he noticed. And I know he poisoned you again. He said it himself to me."

Morrigan seemed to ponder that. Her face had gone distant, like she was sifting through memories she hadn't touched in a while.

Then she said it.

"Why would he want to kill me? What for?"

I leaned forward. I needed her to hear this. I needed her to understand.

"He tells me things. Because he is so sure he has y'all wrapped around his finger that he will be fine regardless."

Her brow furrowed.

"He once told me that he did want you to live despite poisoning you for a long time," I said. "But I don't think that was the goal at first. I think that only became a goal because we figured out you weren't suffering from the rot. But poison."

I could see her processing that. Slowly. Painfully.

"I know there is a reason he wants Madeline here," I said. "She might not even know herself. He uses people. That is what he does. So believe me, mother-in-law. Alpha Aldric is a monster."

Morrigan sat there for a long moment. Her breathing had changed. It was deeper now, slower. Like she was trying to hold something down that wanted to rise.

Then her face changed.

It wasn't a big shift. But it was enough. Something in her eyes flickered. Something in the set of her jaw went loose.

She took a deep breath.

"I don't want to believe," she said. Her voice had gone quiet, as it was now fragile. "It's too much. Because... Why would he... I know him... I trust him the most... He is my confidante... It doesn't make sense."

Her eyes started darting around the room. Not looking at anything in particular. Just moving. Like she was searching for something that wasn't there.

"Aldric was against his brother when Gabriel went on a vendetta against Nocturne," she said. The words came faster now, spilling out like she was trying to convince herself. "It was him who got the royal wolves involved. He even personally bent on behalf of Skollrend to apologize to Nocturne after. He was the reason it all got... better."

She looked at me then.

And I saw it.

The exact moment the realization hit.

"Oh my Goddess."

Her voice cracked. Just barely. But I heard it.

She pressed a hand to her mouth. Her eyes had gone wide, glassy. Not with tears yet, but they were coming.

"Oh my Goddess," she said again.

I didn't move. I didn't reach for her. I just sat there and let her have the moment. Let her feel it. Because this was the kind of thing you couldn't rush someone through. This was the kind of betrayal that needed space to breathe before it could be dealt with.

Morrigan's hand dropped from her mouth. She stared at the wall behind me, her gaze unfocused.

"He was the one who pushed for the investigation," she whispered. "He was the one who made sure the tribunal happened. He was the one who..."

She stopped. Her jaw clenched.

"He was the one who made sure Nocturne forgave Skollrend."

The words hung in the air like something dead and heavy.

I nodded; Slow and steady.

"Yeah," I said. "He was."

Morrigan looked at me. Her face had gone pale.

"In all of it, he offered a way out. A solution. He fixed things."

"No... " The words died in her throat.

"He set it up," she said. "He set all of it up."

I didn't answer. I didn't need to.

She already knew.