

Chapter 174

I pull her hand down smiling. "I won't say a thing. His masculinity is safe with me."

"Who's masculinity?" Sarah walks in writing something in a notebook. Then she looks between Cindy and me.

I gesture for Cindy to tell her. I'm curious what she means.

"Uh, the alpha was kind of adorable this morning. He told me to take good care of the Luna and keep her healthy enough to carry all the pups he gave her last night."

"Oh! Thank the Goddess!!! It's about time! I thought he was going to be a pansy forever."

Now I am laughing. Mostly at the way these two are talking about Ryker as if he's a little boy not their alpha and partly to hide the awkwardness of the idea that my s*x life is an open conversation. 1

"Where is he anyway?" I need to change the subject and lock away the freak out my mind really wants to have for when I am alone. I didn't even consider protection last night and shifters can't get pregnant until they are in heat, so he probably didn't even consider it and was just joking around. That thought brings on a whole new wave of emotions though. Why was he joking around about something so special? Out loud...With other people...No! Later, I will talk to him later. For now, I need to see what Sarah is up to. She's never here for no reason. And she has a giant notebook. 2

"The boys have some work to do. They are out with Ryker's dad checking on two new buildings that should have been completed by now, but have been stalled." She gives me a look. 3



"Who stalled them? And why didn't he take me with him?"

"I think you can answer both of those questions." Another look. She's like a teacher giving me a quiz where I have to puzzle piece a bunch of different lessons together. 1

"That Claude guy?" She nods. "He gave me the creeps at Rory's party. What's his deal anyway?"

"The short version is, he thought he could take on Ryker after he took over, but lost terribly. Then Ryker did more with his pack and it is thriving. But Claude thought he would be able to pull one over on Ryker, have him make the pack he drove into the ground better and take it back. He has spent the last ten years trying to work behind Ryker's back to take over. The problem is, the people love Ryker. He's known as this big, scary Alpha, but he is kind to his pack members and protects them fiercely. Claude didn't plan on people not wanting him back. Now he is causing trouble wherever he can. I don't know a lot of the details. Ryker doesn't want me to worry."

"He never really got the chance to explain any of that. I do know something happened as we left the party, but Ryker wouldn't or couldn't mindlink me to tell me what was going on. Even Jeeves, er, Grant said 'that was a close one' but it all seemed fine to me." 4

Sarah just nods her head, meaning she knows what happened, but she's keeping her mouth shut because it will probably piss me off. Just another thing I have to ask about. This list is getting long. I change tactics, maybe she let things slip as we work on whatever she has up her sleeve today.

"So what are we up to then?" Her expression lights up and her whole body is vibrating with excitement.

Well a very tall and handsome birdie told me your birthday is mid-

summer and since Ryker's is only a few weeks before, I thought it would be the perfect time to throw a party." She squeals like a little teenager. "It can just be for your birthdays or it can be your Luna ceremony... whatever you're comfortable with. We have to invite Jeremiah and Rayna, of course. Oh, and your Aunt and Uncle and any other friends from Silver Crescent. But you have to help me. I refuse to throw something together and find out later you hated it or hate parties or anything like that." 1

"What about Ryker?"

"What about him?" She actually looks confused. 1

"He hates parties and being the center of attention." I laugh while showing my own confusion at her reaction. She should know this about her son. 2

"Oh, that. That doesn't matter. He's an Alpha, it comes with the territory. He'll do whatever I, and by 'I' I mean 'you,' tell him to do and he will cooperate without any whining. Now, Rayna told me your measurements and I have seen pictures of you her at the party and at her Luna ceremony. I have a few dress ideas, but we can get to that later. Do you have a color scheme you would like?" 2

That is how I spent the rest of that day. I think I was asleep before my head hit the pillow when I finally made it up. I had enough energy to pull on one of Ryker's t-shirts, but that was it. I wanted to stay up to at least kiss Ryker good night, but my eyelids are heavy and this bed is so comfy. I don't think I am going to make it.