

## The Announcement

\*\*Elowen POV\*\*

I pulled my dress back over my still damp skin, adrenaline still thrumming in my veins from the bond claiming. My legs were shaky, my lips swollen, my heart thundering in my chest. Daxon, smug bastard that he was, had that cocky alpha smirk on his face as he pulled on his jeans and ran a hand through his messy, wet hair.

I glanced down at the glowing silver mark over my heart...the intricate swirl of moonlight and shadow that had burned into my skin when we sealed the bond. His was almost identical, except sharper and edged with flames.

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We stood in the mirror together in the bathroom of the guest wing, steam still curling from the rushed blow dry Taya helped with. My hair was twisted into loose curls again, the silver and blue tipped strands glinting under the lights. My makeup was redone just enough to hide the wild, post mate sex flush from my cheeks. Not that it would matter.

"You sure about this?" I asked, watching Daxon in the mirror. He buttoned up his shirt but left the top three undone, his glowing tattoo on full display. He didn't hesitate. "Fuck yes. I'm not hiding what's mine."

My heart stuttered. Lyssira purred with satisfaction in my head, smug and smugger. Hand in hand, we walked down the hallway toward the great hall where the rest of the pack was still dancing and drinking.

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The moment we stepped through the double doors, silence dropped like a goddamn thunderclap. Music cut off mid beat. Heads turned. Mouths dropped.

And then, the Alpha King saw us. Alpha Draven's eyes immediately locked on the glowing mate marks on our chests. He surged forward with his Luna beside him, both of them wide eyed.

"Elowen," Luna Aelira whispered, reaching for my hand, tears glistening in her eyes. "You're his..."

"Mate," Daxon said proudly. "We accepted the bond."

Alpha Draven let out a loud, booming laugh, pulling us both into a hug. The pack erupted into murmurs. Joy. Confusion. Shock. And then...

"WHAT?!" Vaela's shriek cracked through the air.

Everyone turned. The spoiled princess stood there, her face twisted in rage, her sister Soria clutching her elbow. Vaela's perfectly done curls trembled as she stormed forward, finger pointed at me.

"This is bullshit! She's nothing! She's not even a real alpha..."

"Enough!" Alpha Draven's voice cut through the noise like a blade. He turned to his daughter, and the shift in his expression made her flinch.

"You will not speak against your prince's mate. If I hear one more word of disrespect toward Elowen, I will strip you of your title and place you with the omegas until you learn what the fuck humility is."



Vaela's mouth flapped open and shut like a dying fish.

I smirked. Daxon wrapped his arm around my waist, pulling me against his side. I leaned in, unable to help the growl of satisfaction in my throat. For the first time in years... I felt seen.

And I wasn't going to fucking hide anymore.

\*\*Daxon POV\*\*

I don't dance. I fight. I train. I lead. I don't fucking dance. But Elowen? She's gliding across the floor like the moon is tied to her goddamn soul, and I can't take my eyes off her.

Every male in the room is looking at her. Every single one. And that dress? That shimmery silver curve hugging thing with the slit high enough to make my damn mouth dry? Nope. Not happening.

I pressed my palm to the small of her back, just above her ass, and let loose a growl loud enough for everyone in the room. "MINE." Every male close by rushed away in a hurry.

She laughed, soft and teasing, but her scent flared with arousal. Lyssira answered back in my head, a rumble of pure satisfaction.

We danced. We talked. We drank. But I never left her side. Not once. Jace tried to cut in. I bared my teeth.

He backed the fuck off.

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Elowen thought it was funny. She leaned in, whispering something about how she could handle herself. Maybe she could. But that doesn't mean I'm letting my mate be sniffed at by anyone who still has a damn pulse.

The night was a blur of moonlight, laughter, and the electric tether between us pulling tighter and tighter. She opened up slowly. Told me about her dad, about Caelan. Her voice wavered when she talked about his death, and I fought the urge to track down every last human hunter responsible.

She told me of her fae mother. That she'll be hunted. The address and witch in Scotland she has to go see. I immediately decided I'm with her till the end.

Then she hit me with it. "There's more," she said. "My father's letter said I'll have... mates. Plural."

My jaw tightened. Talon growled once, but it wasn't angry. It was... accepting.

"She's the Moon Goddess's chosen," he said in my mind. "She was never going to be ours alone."

It took me a full minute to speak. "I don't like it," I admitted. "But I'm not walking away. Not ever."

Elowen's eyes shone like a sky full of stars, and fuck me if I didn't fall even harder.

She cupped my cheek and whispered, "Good. Because I wasn't going to let you."

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We danced until our feet were aching. We talked until we forgot there was a world out there hunting her.

And for one night, she was just mine.

**\*\*Elowen POV\*\***

I was still floating when we left the hall. My body ached in the best way, my soul was buzzing with magic, and Lyssira was curled up like a smug cat in my head purring "mine mine mine" on repeat.

Daxon's hand never left my lower back as we headed up to his room. And once the door shut behind us, the quiet wrapped around us like a warm blanket.

We stood there for a second, just staring at each other. His hair was messy from the wind, his eyes tired but soft.

"Shower?" he asked.

I nodded. We peeled off our clothes in silence. Every inch of him was carved in heat and strength. The bond glowed between us like silver fire.

The water was hot. Steam clung to us as we stepped under the spray. He washed my hair like he was handling glass. I ran my fingers down his chest, lingering over his mate mark. No words. Just soft moans, quiet kisses, and whispered promises.

Afterward, I stole one of his T-shirts and curled into his bed, still damp and glowing. He pulled me into his arms and held me like he'd never let go. His

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lips pressed to my temple, and I let myself breathe.

"I love this shirt," I mumbled.

"It loves you more," he replied. And with my head on his chest, I finally let the exhaustion take me. Wrapped in his scent, his warmth, his everything, I slept like I wasn't being hunted.

Like I was home.

TheValkyrie13

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so far so good 😊 loving it.

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