# PROLOGUE

THE WEREWOLF KINGDOM: THE ROYAL PACK

Queen Areli sat in the office with her arms rested on the desk, staring at the king, her mate. Silence filled the room, just eyes locked with each other, promises being made with one smirking as the other fought a giggle.

The opening of a door pulled them from their staring game. Queen Areli, queen to the werewolf kingdom and goddess of darkness, beamed so brightly from the win against her mate in the stare game they were in.

The scent of Royal Beta Brum hit them hard, having been waiting for him for an hour. His hair was unkept, smelling of the woods where he always disappeared to. His face was blank as always, death haunting him, like a ghost wondering around with no direction at all. You did not have to look far to see that he had drowned long ago. The moody and proud beta was gone, leaving behind a shell with no one knowing what had happened or how to get him back. The room filled with tension just as fast, it seeping in every corner and suffocating like every space the beta occupied.

The chair by Queen Areli, also known as Raven, was pulled back. Beta Brum sat back, waiting to hear why he had been called there. Not wanting to stay there for longer than they needed to, the king and queen jumped onto the pressing matter at hand.

“The vampire king and queen made an alliance with the dragons twenty-three months ago.” King Conri said, him moving the report to beta Brum who was less interested, not taking it up but just staring down at it.

“We still don’t have an alliance with the vampires, if they retaliate on us, we are in for another long fight.” Queen Areli said out, her eyes on her mate, just waiting for this to be over so she could lock him in their room and turn his world upside down one more time.

“We should make an alliance with the vampires, reach out to them. We should also reach out to the dragons but we still won’t have a strong alliance with the dragons. Apparently, the vampire king has dragon blood and is related to the dragon royals. We can never compete with blood, the dragon princess was just there when the Vampire crown prince was born and the vampires also have their own dragons now which their queen gave birth to.” Conri said out. He was frustrated because he still had no heir, not that he needed one since he was immortal, but he wanted children.

“It’s scary how you know all that my love.” Queen Areli pointed out, the room getting hotter for her with her mate getting irresistible with each passing second.

“While the vampires were rebuilding, I was making connections and securing spies in there. They are building a whole industrial city in their land and I won’t lie, I am kind of impressed.” Conri nodded his head, hating it but he was impressed. His relationship with the vampires would never be mended. There were just some things that could not be forgotten nor forgiven. The way the vampires made him feel, he hated them for that. He hated them for how they slaughtered his people. He would never forgive, not in this lifetime.

“Well, we don’t really need the alliance but it won’t kill us to try, plus, the dragons will always be on the vampire’s side because blood is thicker than any alliance,” Queen Aline said, her hands waving in the air. The chair next to hers suddenly scraped the floor, snapping the couple’s attention to the tall royal beta who had be so quiet through the discussion.

“I will go to the dragon kingdom.” Beta Brum suddenly said, the first words he spoke to them for weeks. Their jaws were on the floor, so many shocking factors there.

“And?” Conri asked after snapping out of it. His heart was drumming hard because as hard as he tried to hide it, seeing his cousin like that killed him. There was nothing he did not try to help his cousin but he had begun accepting that the Brum he raised and ruled with for so many years was gone.

“Mate with their princess.” The Royal Beta finished off with the couple’s jaws dropping even lower than they had thought possible.

Their brains were fried, mouth opening and closing all at once. All they could do was watch Beta Brum stride to the door which he opened and closed after him with such force it snapped those left in the room from shock.

# ROYAL BETA BRUM

THE DRAGON KINGDOM, ROYAL GOLD CITY

PRINCESS ZISEALER’S P.O.V

It was the tiny patter of feet that let me know I was dreaming and even in my sleep I could hear and feel my heart drum so frantically with the distress falling on me. I could feel myself just turn over and over in my sheets with the sweat collecting on my skin.

An eleven-year-old me ran down the passages to go gardening with my mother. I wore my little black leggings and my favorite yellow t-shirt which I was gifted on my birthday. My giggles echo through the halls I knew like the back of my hand only for a foreign hand to quickly wrap around my mouth.

My young body thrashes, the shock leaving me shifting and screaming but my sounds are muffled as I am pulled into a room with the door closed shut. My watery eyes pull wide open just as my body is painfully pushed to the wall. The tears stream down my face just when my uncle wraps his hand around my neck. My eyes go wide, my little hands on his large ones, thrashing and fighting with everything I had.

I called to him, begged him but somehow, somehow, I knew he would not listen. It was in the way he had been staring at me ever since I was old enough to understand. It was in the way his eyes glistened with hate each time they lay on me. The shuffling of feet had my eyes turn, the room filled with other men, men I knew, some of them having been working very closely with my father— his advisors.

“Uncle.” My voice cracked, clawing and kicking as hard as I could. I had just began taking fighting lessons but nothing came to mind, feeling so helpless, feeling so scared with the hand around my neck tightening even more. My body was pushed up the wall and it was then I saw my younger brother. My eyes went wider, pleading with his eight-year-old self, thinking he would help me, thinking he would rescue and protect me like I had been protecting him ever since he was born. I wanted to call out to him but I could not breathe, feeling the lower part of my body grow cold and numb.

The thought that my neck was about to snap entered my brain and the horror of it was paralyzing. I could not even describe the fear that took over my body. The hand around my neck moved and soon I was being pinned down to the floor. My shirt was torn apart with the silver of a blade flashing before my eyes. The scream that pulled from my burning throat was one that poured even from my adult body as I jolted from sleep. My body pushed up, my hand running under my pillow to quickly retrieve my knife which I threw with such anger, hearing a gasp echo in the room.

I heaved so hard, shaking with the tears still streaming from my body. The bed sheets were all on the floor, just the fitted sheet left on the bed.

My eyes fell on Aisla—my royal messenger who the knife had missed by just an inch. She still stood pale, staring at the knife nailed to the wall that would have tore her face apart if she had just been an inch more to the left.

“Your majesty.” Aisla quickly bowed after snapping from her near-death experience.

“Your majesty.” The other women in the room also bowed, snapping my head around to see them standing by the walls with towels in hand. My head turned to the jacuzzi filled with water and I cursed because I had over slept.

My body shifted from the bed.

“Good morning.” I greeted back with them bowing even lower.

“Good morning to you too your majesty. His majesty the king has requested for your presence in the grand Cual.” Aisla said out with me pausing. What was he doing in his office? He was supposed to be sleeping yet I could not help the relief that washed over me. That message just meant he was still in the world of the living, that I still had him in my life. Death hung over the dragon king’s head and each day I woke up with the dreadful possibility of him having passed away in his sleep.

Aisla excused herself with the other women jumping into action. My bed was made, my body bathed and soon my meal was served. They all moved fast and I was grateful because I had to see my father. Every morning, I just woke up and ran to his room to make sure he was okay and as of then my anxiety was getting the best of me from not seeing him yet.

My eyes snapped down to my arm, seeing the scars. The scars were always there to remind me of the betrayal, of the day I realized my place in this court, the day I learned that if I did not learn to defend myself then the beasts in sheep’s skin would devour me. Enemies were always around, lurking and watching for an opportunity to strike.

I hated this, my enemies, they were all cowards. They could not just come out and challenge me to death. I knew them, they knew me and everyone knew they wanted me dead so why not face me instead of plotting and scheming. I craved it, craved for the chance to claim justice, to show those that plotted against me how powerful I was, how easily I could squash them.

Being the eldest daughter of a dragon king was the worst curse that could ever be bestowed on a person. By tradition, if the first born is not a male, they kill the baby. My mother had held me in her arms and screamed no. She had shifted to her dragon and burned all those that even tried to get to me. If only she knew, she would have just given up the fight. She should have just let them slaughter me. I was not worth the pain that she went through because of me.

I shook my head. Bathing in self-pity was my brother’s job, not mine. I was a warrior, I was the eldest daughter of king Zahhak. I never fear, they fear me.

Not only had I trained myself to be a force to be reckoned with, I had made sure to start a female army. No woman should suffer by the hand of a man. No woman should be called worthless by a useless man with a dick smaller than his brain cells. Not only did I teach them how to fight, I taught them to never depend on another, especially a useless coward man. They would never fall prey to abusive and psychopathic men who found pleasure in bringing them down. If one wanted a fully submissive woman, they would have to look elsewhere because the women I fought with were strong and fierce. They knew what they deserved and settled for nothing less.

I made my way out of my room to my father. I wanted to check on my warriors but decided to start with father. My heels echoed with my beads dancing on my waist. There were little to no people around because our royal clan stayed at the foot of the mountain while the royal family itself lived in the large caves of Magu which had been there for thousands and thousands of years.

My feet carried me up to my father’s office through the paths and into the caves. Nothing but Gold adorned the walls, every room stylishly furnished. When one stared at the mountain from outside they laughed but when they got inside, it was like heaven. It was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen. There was a large waterfall and a garden with trees at the center of the mountain, so high they nearly reached the peak of the mountain. This divided the inner side of the mountain into a circle. Rivers ran from the core of the mountain, out to the royal clan. Inside the mountain were thousands of caves which were our rooms. Each cave was decorated to the best of our styling team’s abilities and I had seen nothing else so stunning. Most would get lost inside because it was like a maze with all the caves and passages. It was so large that if you got lost, you would die with no one finding you for years.

I was proud of my home, the most beautiful land to ever exist. I had seen most of the different kingdoms, and none held a candle to our land. Our land was rich with minerals. Any you want, you could find. We had caves filled with stones and gold. Our vegetation was so humongous because of our rich soil. The animals reared were large, healthy and magnificent because of the quality of vegetation and environment we had. We were the richest kingdom and you would know the evil that comes with that.

My body straightened up as I reached the door. I did not even knock, wanting to see why father was out of his bed where he should have been. I was ready to give him a piece of mind only for me to freeze as the door swung open, showing two people occupying the grand office.

My anger hit the roof, me swallowing. I could have been jumping to conclusions but I just knew father was up to it again

My feet moved, suddenly cursing for not carrying my weapon.

“My princess, Zisealer please sit.” Father said, his eyes shying away from me because he knew he was just about to start a war with me.

“I would rather stand father because it seems like I might kill someone today.” I spat out.

Only a man carrying a promise of mateship would pull my father from his bed rest. He was all cleaned up, wearing his royal suit which meant we were in the company of royalty. Father sat up and you would never guess that he was dying in pain. A low sigh pulled from him, his face finally turning to mine, a plea on his face but he knew me too well. When it came to me, he had bent a long time ago and learned to curve his stubborn nature.

I don’t know why he kept doing this, it never worked. He could not just mate me off. It went against everything I had been teaching the other women. He could not just toss me around like I was property. When I was ready, I would mate with whoever I wanted but that was probably never going to happen which was why he took things into his own hands.

How many suitors had I sent running back to where they came from? Too many to even count.

I hated men, I hated them all, except for my father.

“Okay, I will just get to the point to save us all time. Royal Beta Brum, I apologize in advance for all that my daughter will say and do. She is not always this rowdy.”

“Yes, I am father, and I am not rowdy. I defend myself and it’s a shame I have to even do that. Whatever you want here, royal beta Brum, I advise now that you take your stupid face, your overbearing ego, your tiny dick and fuck off from my land.” I spat out, turning around to stare at the man seated at the opposite side of my father’s desk.

As soon as my eyes lay on him I got the shock of my life. The man was not a child as the other men my father had brought nor an old hag. He was a man in all aspects. I found my body heating up just from staring at him and it pissed me even more. It was suddenly hard to pass off the next words from my mouth, them heavy on my tongue.

“Any man that goes straight to my father to negotiate for my hand is not worthy to be called a man. If you want me, come to me, look me in the eye and tell me you want me so I can tell you to fuck off. I am not some piece of property to toss around. And you better pray we never cross paths again because only one of us will walk away unharmed.” I shot out, turning on my heel. To think I rushed all the way thinking it was important when father just wanted to push my buttons again.

My father’s sigh filled the room again and I did feel guilty but I had to speak up and fight for myself or I would have been mated off a long time ago to some stupid idiot wanting to make an alliance with our kingdom. I shut the door with much force than I had planned, turning with my hand on my chest. My heart was out of control, the room seeming to be spinning all around. My legs got weak, my whole body shaking. The whole passage was spinning so fast, the urge to cry so intense yet I would never. I was Zisealer Dragonstone, First daughter to king Zihhak, princess to the dragon people—The warrior princess, The death princess. I did not cry, I did not wither. I fought hard every time until I claimed victory. My body straightened up, my eyes clear, eyes only filled with rage and determination to survive. All that mattered at that point was surviving the war my brother called on me.

# FORCED TO MATE

“Father, I just saw Royal Beta Brum. Why is he still here?” I burst in the room so fast only to halt in my steps.

“Father, what are you doing up? You should not be up.” I cried out, rushing to him, taking the traditional long chest chain from his hands.

The room was never altered ever since my mother died. Father had loved her so much. Their love was something I had never seen before and I had dreamed of it myself until all my dreams crushed and burned. It was all my fault, it was my fault she was gone.

I clipped the chain, moving to take the traditional jacket with all the royal orders, pulling it over him and then I fixed the traditional shirt under the jacket. My eyes did not fail to notice his leg shake from the pain. My head shook, swallowing. His health was deteriorating faster than he could even find suitors for me. Each day I woke up and ran to check on him because I didn’t know what I would do if I lost him.

“Father, please, stop this.” I said out with him clearing his throat.

“Zisealer. You cannot run from this one. You cannot threaten this one away. This mateship will happen whether you like it or not.” Father spoke out with such finality in his voice it shocked me. He had brought the suitors but he had never forced me to pick one. My hands froze, my eyes tipping up to his, a flame burning in there.

“I am sick Zisealer. Anything could happen any day and all I want is for you to be secure. If I die, your brother will kill you, you know he will. I can’t protect you, you need someone to protect you.” Such heart tearing words poured from his mouth.

“Father, I can protect myself and I have my army. I dare him to come and face me. He is just a coward.” I spat out, praying he comes so I could put an end to his pathetic life.

“You cannot protect yourself against a dragon army my child. As soon as he becomes king, he will own everything in our kingdom, including your army. All dragons will be loyal to him whether they like it or not. You will have no one and nowhere to go.”

I swallowed, the thought that the people I had helped and fought with could turn around and kill me did not sit well with me but I learned very early in life to never trust anyone.

“I have Flavia and Dante.” I spoke out, my head held high.

“If you will be able to get to them I don’t doubt that they will fight to death for you. But after the loss they suffered many months back, they are still far from gaining their numbers. The werewolves have a Goddess in their mist, they are immortals. We need them more than they need us. You will have the vampires and the werewolves by your side to fight with you when your brother comes for you.” Father spoke out with my stomach turning.

I was going to be sick, wanting to just pour out the food I ate in the morning.

“It’s wrong, it feels like we are using them. I don’t need any help from anyone else. If I die, so be it. I will fight my own battles father and die with dignity.” I spat out, my head held high. I was not going to be at the mercy of a man who will think he owns me. The moment I let that man bite me, I will be bound to him forever no matter how he treats me. We were not even in love, I did not know him and that made the situation worse.

“Zisealer. You know I love you. You are the spitting image of your mother yet me in every other way. The day you were born, you made me a father and I will never forget it. I ran as fast as I could down the mountains of Hazala, fought of large lions in the grass lands just to get to you my child. When I got there, your mother had coiled herself around you and you were the loudest child ever but so smart and beautiful. Every challenge that has been put in front of you, you have hit and surpassed anyone’s expectations. I would have not asked for a better daughter. You are special my child and you have such a beautiful heart which you have buried under thick walls. It is my duty to protect you so you can find happiness too. Let me protect you Zisealer. This is my last wish for you, let me protect you my beautiful daughter, let me free you from this burden that you should not even carry. I want you to go live a normal life, be free, have fun, love, laugh and be happy. Please my child. I would not insist if I did not think Beta Brum was not worthy. Do this for me Zisealer then even I will be free.” Father said out, his hands gripping my body firmly. Seeing his body shake like this had my world just break apart. I was fighting tears, his words tearing me to shreds.

My arms went around him, hugging him so tightly.

It killed me to even say it but there was only one way this would end. What was even the point in fighting, father knew I would do anything for him.

“I love you too father.” I said out, him holding on tighter.

“My princess.”

“Always papa.”

We pulled back, his lips moving and pressing on my forehead.

“If there was anything I did right in this world. It was you Ziss.” He said with me smiling like an idiot and I hated it but I could not help myself.

# THE LAST NIGHT

“You threw a dinner party, did you not?” I chuckled, hearing the music from where the dining hall as we descended down to it. My arm was hooked around my father’s arm, lanterns lit all through the passage, father’s guards right behind us. He never had them accompany him before because he was such a proud and powerful man but since his deteriorating health, he began moving around with two guards just incase my brother emerges. I would not put it past him to kill our father.

“Only the best, my daughter is leaving, she needs to be celebrated.” Father whispered out, me giggling and tightening my hold on him. He was seven foot nine and I was just six foot five which made walking next to him one of the best things ever. I could just lean my head on him and feel like a little girl again.

“But I am not dressed for the occasion. I am under dressed.” I cried out, the sound of my heels echoing all through the halls.

“What are you talking about? You dress up for everything, you are never under dressed.” He said chuckling out with me nodding my head because no matter the chaos in my life, I would always face my problems in style. I wore heels that had me way taller than I was, six inches more. The strapless black leather dress hugged my body, squeezing all of me in. What was beauty without pain, right? Beads of different vibrant colors sat around my waist, hanging to my lower region so stylishly. I looked amazing and I knew it. My waist swayed from side to side even next to my father, a force of a woman, a beautiful goddess brought from heaven to light up the whole world. When I looked good, my confidence was a hundred and there was nothing I could not tackle with such confidence.

I felt as if I was walking on top of the world, my head so high, never to be brought down. The double doors to the dining hall were opened, the guards there bowing and singing praise.

It had been a while since we had an event and I guess this had been needed.

My eyes took in all in the room, our officials in their best, standing tall and proud. My stomach ached, wondering who was on my father’s side and who was spying for my brother? You could never relax, not knowing who was sent to end your life.

All in the room bowed down, their knees hitting the floor with my father’s praises sang out so loud. I had been fascinated with them ever since I was young, sure some of the praises were made up like him going to the dark mountains and coming back with a blood snake’s heart. No one had even seen a blood snake since the existence of time so how could he have gotten one? I shook my head, turning it around to stare at him. My father was a strong man who had been said to live the longest life but sickness had swooped in, turning such a force of a man to one who needed assistance when walking. I hated it, my body quivering as I held on tightly.

His praises poured from my lips with such pride. My father turned around to stare at me with a bright smile on his face. His head lowered, a pair of lips on the tip of my head.

I was a proud daughter, and I was happy I had a father like him who had trained me and taught me the ways of life.

My head turned back, staring ahead with the whole room seeming to stop for me. My eyes locked on grey orbs, orbs that seemed to have lost their spark. As much as I tried, I could not stop looking and the infuriating Beta seemed not to care. He seemed not to care about anything actually and I tried to recall if he said anything in my father’s office but it never came to me. I frowned, still staring at him. Was he those spoiled entitled men who think they are above everyone else? Something was brewing inside me, just bubbling in my chest. I was not sure if it was hate, frustration or something else but I was getting irritated. I wanted to pull my eyes from him, not wanting to give him the satisfaction but I could not help myself. Something about him just drew me into him yet I was a person that prided herself in having immerse control, so as hard as it was, I pulled my stare away, going back to my father.

Why was my heart drumming so hard? Stupid Royal Beta Brum. I suddenly cursed father for not finding someone less, just less in everything. I hated feeling these foreign feelings, my eyes wanting to take him in again but I would rather die.

We reached the throne, my father taking a seat. I bent my body before him, a wide smile on my face as I bowed before him.

“My king.” I said out, my head bowed down until his royal and feathery horse tail fell on my shoulders, blessing me as always. I lived for these moments.

“My child.” He said back with my head finally tipping up. He held his hand out, me taking it to stand up and move then lowered down on the queen’s royal chair. The first time I did this, the people jumped up in a roar yet stubborn me sat none the less, legs crossed, head up high. My brother had nearly died in anger.

Since I was not even meant to live, I did not have a royal chair. It was my father’s chair at the center, my mother’s on the left then on the right was my brother’s royal throne chair. According to my brother, I should not have even carried the princess title because to him I was a ghost, a bug that he would crush.

My hand tightened around my other, taming my anger because even thinking of it pissed me off.

“You may all rise and take your seats.” My father said, all those in the room picking up and taking their seats around the large table. The royal table was brought into the room, set before us where different foods were placed on it. My heart just jumped around so fast. Food was the love of my life, always there for me and loved me just as much as I loved it. I stood up, plating for father and filling two plates for him then I sat them down. He waited for me as I plated my own food then I sat down. We gleamed together, him digging in first and I dived in right after. When food was before me, I lost all manners. We just dug in with dad like animals, tearing our food apart. I took the habit of eating like a starved dog from him, just eating everything with my hands until none was left.

I licked my hands with my dad doing the same and we turned to stare at each other only to burst out laughing. He was my first love and none would ever have my heart the way he had it, such unconditional love.

He picked up his goblet, and I would have objected if not for the smile on his face so I let him be. He drank the alcoholic beverage down. I picked up mine and did the same.

Those at the different tables ate their food, chatting with themselves. My eyes trailed to one man as I placed my goblet down. He was the shortest man in the room. Dragons were taller and larger than werewolves, taking after our animals. We had all the abilities werewolves had and more. My eyes narrowed because he had barely touched his food, his eyes just staring ahead. What was wrong with him? Something was not right, shifting in my seat. I frowned deeper, reading his body language, trying to read him but he was closed off tightly, nothing, no emotions.

“Now we dance. My daughter is getting mated, we need to celebrate, more music!” Father shot out, pulling me from my thoughts.

“Father no.” I cried out, he was supposed to be in bed, not dancing.

“Come on,” He called out, standing up. I rushed to hold out my arm so he could find support there. He fully stood up, all the men clapping and roaring out in excitement. I shook my head, we going down to the dance square at the other side of the room. I loved dancing but I don’t know why I was suddenly so nervous.

My hands were in my father’s, him standing up straight and together we began dancing. The music got faster and louder with us dancing as if we were young, my head thrown back with my laugh escaping me just as I had done when I was five years old. It felt as if my body was floating, knowing my dad would never let go, that even if I fell, he would catch me. My beads jumped around, everything blurring away as we danced probably for the last time. The tears drowned my eyes so much, for once, just this once, I let them go. My head tipped forward, just taking my father in as he smiled in a way I had not seen in a long time. My heart exploded, my own smile too bright it would light up the whole world with so much of my tears flooding down. It seemed as if we danced the whole night, never stopping, not even seeing any that joined us in the square. No one even asked to dance with me, them just letting us have this night. No sickness could stop us, dancing until we could not dance anymore, both out of breath, both sweating and even then we just stared at each other and burst out laughing.

No matter what happened after, at least I would always have the memories, memories of father teaching me how to hunt, teaching me how to fight, how to survive in the wild. He was there for my first shift, holding my hand and cheering all throughout. He showed me what love was, what happiness was. I would never forget. I would forever be grateful.

# CLAIM ME

The lanterns were burning low, the halls quiet with all those living in the royal mountain having retired into their caves. My feet were bare, kissing the cool ground as the sound of the water sang for me. My beads were all that I heard, so many of them piled over each other. My eyes were set on one direction, one direction only.

Moisture from the water sank into my freshly bathed skin, my perfume having even me nearly weak to my knees. I smelt so good and I was sure I looked even better. My body was curve and nothing else. My hips and ass had my waist look even thinner than it was, large breast moving with each step I took. I had not thought the night was going to end with me doing this but there I was. Never in a million years had I thought I would give myself away in the way I was yet again, there I was. There was no turning back, I had accepted my fate and I could not tame the happiness that just bubbled up inside me. My walk was slow, building my own anticipation as my shadow followed me on the walls, so stunning.

Long legs ate the distance up until I turned and stood right before the golden door. I knew the occupant of that room heard me up from my own room. I knew he had smelt me as I made my way to him. Did he know what was about to happen? Was he waiting for me or was he just dead asleep? Did he snore in his sleep? I hoped he did not because we would have a problem.

The door was pushed open, stalking in to let the door close, it shutting hard on it’s own.

My body turned, not nervous at all. I had longed for this way too many times in my whole life and had begun thinking I would never have it. My eyes ran over the large cave only to stop as my heart stopped along with them. It was as if my vagina had also grown a heart, just pounding with such force. It got even hotter in the room, a splash of water heard from where I stood. I nearly jumped up, my eyes wide and eating the naked man just pulling from the large jacuzzi. He was naked, all there for me to see. I had never seen a man naked before. Even my fingers buzzed to touch, tongue burning to taste and folds wet to take all that would be given to me.

It took everything in me not to drool. I ate every inch of him up. He was magnificent, muscled in all the right places and I was not going to be disappointed even in the slightest. The water dripped from his golden skin, having him hotter than before. The scars all over his skin had my heart jolt and also my pussy to just drool so hard. I appreciated a man with scars because they showed a battle fought and won. I loved a man with ink, seeing the black markings on his wrist. His body was something else and it just set me alight.

My eyes went down to his feet, wanting to just put that toe in my mouth and suck. My body never stopped moving, walking all the way, eating up the space between us. My eyes then moved up, feasting on what I would be getting for the rest of my years in this bloody world. At least I would be full to the brink, satisfied. My eyes moved higher and higher, a scar on his chest as if a hand had driven in. Actually, it really seemed like claws had ran into his chest. I would analyze the scars later while riding that cock. As of then, my eyes continued their journey and he was one magnificent man. He was impressive in every way, his looks making this way easy. My hips moved even more and finally, I let go of the gown covering my body, it flying in the air and kissing the ground, leaving me standing there in my lingerie and beads. I knew how I looked and even I would come just from thinking of it.

My eyes locked with his, seeing a storm brewing that was about to swoop me up.

“Come here.” It was the first time hearing that voice and fuck!

“You don’t tell me what to do.” I shot back yet I could not resist taking the last steps with him meeting me half way. My body was merely inches away and surely a fire would erupt and kill us both. My heart was drumming as if to tear from my chest.

I never tore from his stare, my hand moving to his large erect cock begging for me. I grabbed it full force, still staring at him, letting him know that I would carry those balls in my hand for the rest of his life.

His strong large scarred hand wrapped around my throat so hard. The air was immediately cut off, my eyes tearing up yet I would not give him the satisfaction of panicking. I had been held like that so many times before, it did not scare me anymore. I just stared, my folds flooding even harder as I squeezed on his dick. We would see who would give in first and I was willing to die than lose the first enforcement of who was in charge in this relationship. We were nearly the same height, me just a few inches shorter and it pissed me off because he slightly looked down at me. Fuck that. I squeezed harder, his chest heaving up and down. My head was light, feeling as if I would faint but I was not going down like that. His eyes were as if reading me, him seeming angry, seeming as if he was just roaring with such anger he would bury me alive but I also had so much anger we would bury each other down.

His hand pulled me closer only for him to smash my lips on him, claiming them with such force I was compelled to match his deep passion.

My hand let go, his going down to my ass, grabbing it so hard I cried out in his mouth, taking in his breath and drank him in. His hands were rough, just devouring me and I loved every inch of it. I dug my own nails in him, needing more, wanting more. This was not enough, wanting more of him.

A slap came on my ass and I peed myself just a little I swear. His hand hooked and rang down my lace underwear thong. He ripped it apart so fast my legs shook, needing him inside me now, giving me thick beautiful babies.

I purred out, my legs around his waist in no time as he stumbled back. His cock was pressed just against my wet dripping pussy, rubbing myself on it, wanting it’s fatness in me, wanting to swallow all of it and let it choke my pussy as I milked it dry.

His body hit the bed and I did not wait any longer. My hands ran down, grabbing that wet cock, my juices having it drenched and I brought it to my delicious and chocolate thick pussy folds. I could take him, I would take that large cock and dominate it.

I held him right against the mouth then let him just sit there, longing, wanting my creamy pussy. He would not have it so easy. The kiss went deeper in a way I never thought it would get, all of me just sizzling with need. His hands spread my butt cheeks apart, his teeth sinking on my lower lip hard as I groaned out. Fuck’n bustard. I could not hold on any longer, I needed him, feeling as if I would die. I let go, his cock strong enough to stand on it’s own. I then lowered slowly. My upper body pulled from him, sitting up as he sank in me as if in quick sand. I just kept taking him in. His cock was long and large, it seeming as if it would never end.

A gasp pulled from me, pain shooting through but pain to me was pleasure. So much pleasure erupted, looking down at him to tell him that I was going to devour him. Words could not escape me but my eyes said it all. My hands were on his abs, sinking lower it felt so good. My eyes closed, my head thrown back only to moan so hard as he reached the very end of me.

I was stuffed full, so full it was the best feeling ever. His hands gripped my sides, him shifting left and right to sink even deeper, and oohh my, I moaned so hard.

He was such a fucking bastard for making me moan like this. My back arched with him just making a home in me and soon, I heard a snap and my breasts were let free from the bra that barely held them in. They were too large for him but who was I kidding. He grabbed them with his large hands, feasting on them and it had me so wet I felt myself coat him. A groan pulled from me, him having taken one of the precious things I had, my virtue, only to be tasted by him, my mate.

My dragon stirred with such power inside me and we wanted to show him the mate he had. My hands lay on his chest with me pushing him back onto the large bed then I began moving.

My waist and hips moved with such skill, my beads dancing with me, making music for me which I danced to as I rode that dick. I ate him up like I eat a sausage, just sucked him in my throbbing pussy and let him think he could own me. I felt as if I was ontop of the world. The pleasure rippled in waves, just waves of pleasure I could never be able to explain.

A groan pulled from him and I nearly died, moving harder and faster. The slap of skin on skin echoed in the room, groaning with him to gasp and moan all at once. It felt so good, his cock sliding in every inch of me, and rubbing off my sensitive bundle of nerves. My body shook, my breasts dancing up and down as he lay down, just watching me turn his world upside down. He was enjoying the show, fighting to stay cool but he was not going to win this one. I wanted him to lose his cool, I wanted him to erupt in pleasure just as I was about to. His hands came at my waist and gripped hard. It gave me more power, just riding up and down, back and front, all around, nothing off bounds.

The sweetness building was getting too much, feeling as if I would die but my stubborn head refused for me to stop. I kept moving, arching my waist even more as his cock hit so deep in me it should have been impossible. His body pushed up, his mouth on my large breast, sucking and biting my hard nipples until I cried out, wanting to cry out for mercy but never. His hands were at my back, supporting me as I moved like I was dying.

“Shit shit shit—I am cuming, shit!” I screamed out, him sucking harder on my nipples until I thought I felt his sharp teeth grazing them. His head pulled back and my closed eyes snapped open to his gray eyes gone, just darkness in his eyes, so black they should have scared me. His long teeth were out to play and I knew it was coming. My eyes closed again, an image of him branded in my head forever. I anticipated for it, begged for it, plead for it as my wall collapsed down. His teeth sat at the foot of my neck before he sank them in, claiming me as his.

I lost it there. Dragons never bite their mates but my teeth sank into his neck as I splattered. My mind had left me, exploding with him as he met me halfway with those powerful sparks, nailing himself in me while I worked my body on him. Everything just exploded so hard I screamed right into him, my mouth pulling back, searching for his mouth which I found bloody, taking it and tasting the fire of my own blood. He thrust so hard, spilling his seed inside me as my whole body burned so hard we were sweating buckets and I would soon burn the sheets.

We rode and kissed the aftershocks away until we stopped. His arms circled around my body so tightly, holding me as if he would die and I held on just as tight.

# WIPED OUT

You let your guard down and you get stabbed hard, in the heart.

I don’t know how or when I fell asleep but when I stirred awake I was alone, the other side of the bed cold as if I had imagined the whole night in my head but I had not because I was not in my room and I was sore all over.

Flashes from the night before came and left me burning yet again.

Where was he? Well, that was not how I imagined my morning after. I swallowed the bitter taste in my mouth. What had I been thinking? That we would wake up and cuddle, do some pillow talk and just melt away like a normal couple. I hated myself because I felt such gut wrecking pain in the realization of the life waiting for me. It would be as cold as his side of the bed. My hands quickly moved, pulling the sheets to cover my body.

One of the rules I taught my warriors was to never let a man make you feel less, feel ashamed of yourself and that was how I felt as I sat there. I felt used and discarded. I was not used to this, I did not know how it worked but I knew newly mated couples spent weeks away in their cabins or in the resort not far from the royal mountain. My head shook, scrambling up only to curse as the pain hit hard. It was as if someone was hammering me in the vagina, but actually, someone had been hammering me hard in my pussy and I had been the one riding him like there was no tomorrow.

My head shook, turning to see the blood on the white sheets, blood I could feel smudged between my thighs. Did he even notice he had been my first? Did he even care? To me it meant everything, it was a pride to keep yourself for your mate. I knew some other species did not do it but I had kept myself for my mate. I cursed in my head as I realized how deep I was in this. My walls had crumbled down and I had to build them back up. It was me against the world, he was just there because he had to be otherwise it was still me against the whole world. I was alone, just me, just me alone! I kept chanting in my head as I picked up my robe and angrily just throwing it on my body. My underwear was ruined, my bra ruined, just doing the walk of shame.

I could hear my people walking all around. The guest rooms were on the fifth floor and my room was way up, I had to run up in some flimsy night gown. My anger had my hate for this beta just grow higher. He was pissing me off even when he was not there.

I opened the door and shut it close to turn. A few eyes snapped to me but they knew better, snapping their eyes away quickly. My head was held high, walking slowly and majestically through the halls. I was doing the walk of shame in grace. I would not scurry around like a rabbit as if I did something wrong. As I walked, I suddenly realized the burning ache of a certain someone just butchering my neck with his disgusting teeth. But why did I want him to do it again? I wanted to do it all again. If I could go back to the night, I would. I would take him in me and moan hard for the first time again. I even wanted him to lay me down and take control of my body, worship it. I shook my head in anger, already seeing myself lose this war. Shit, I hated him for this. It was just a day and he already had me this worked up, what about in a week, a month or year? My frustration ran high, damn him.

Never had I realized how far my room was and the burn between my legs intensified. I wanted to slide in my sheets and just fold myself with sleep claiming me but as I walked into my room, it was chaos in there. My help was running all around, packing, bags scattered everywhere.

At first, my heart nearly jumped out, my hands clenched to fists with me at the brink of groaning out in anger. I hated people touching my things, my room was my sanctuary and not anyone could just walk in and do as they wanted but the fact was, it was no longer my room. As the others packed, two men and a woman ripped my bedding off, ripping every shred of me left in the room. That room no longer belonged to me. The moment I slid inside the beta, that room stopped being mine and that castle stopped being my home.

The pain that struck me! The utter pain was unbearable. I knew father did it to protect me but the gut wrecking pain was still there. I felt like I couldn’t breathe, just standing there staring at them all move so fast as if they couldn’t wait to see me leave. I no longer had a home. I no longer had a place I belonged to. The second I left the boundary, I would not be welcomed back. I was losing everything I knew. I was losing everyone I knew. I was being cast away by my own people, my own father. I would never fly over the rugged terrains, the tall mountains, the rolling hills and see the large waterfalls from the sky. How was this winning? I was the one running away this time, running away because of my evil brother that wanted my head. How was this a win? I felt disgusted even with myself. I felt the emotions run high and I knew tears were near. I shook my head, never to cry again. I was already weak, I was not going to go any lower by crying.

My head inched high again, pretending as if I wasn’t seeing them all turn my life upside down and packing it all away into trunks. The door to the bathroom was shut, fighting to stay strong, fighting to stay standing when all I wanted was to crush everything all around. I wanted to hammer my fists in everything in the room and just shutter it all apart. My eyes flickered up as I stood before the double vanity free standing sinks. I stared at my reflection from the mirror and nearly cried. Never had I felt so alone. Never had I felt so sad. I felt like a piece of me was dying. There was also this bond, this new feeling in me. I knew it should have been warm, it should have made me feel safe and loved but it just felt cold. It just added to my coldness, like a shadow of what should have been.

I blinked the tears away until I could no longer see anything from the reflection, until just cold eyes stared back at me.

My teeth were brushed, peeing then I took a long bath. I had a long journey ahead of me and some part of me was stubborn and being rebellious. I knew my father told them to pack fast so I would leave as early as I could but why not delay. Why not delay the inervetable, just make my father sweat a little bit.

Who would take care of him?

Who could protect him?

Who would check if he woke up each and every day?

Who would make sure he got the rest he needed?

I bit my lower lip to stop it from trembling because yet I again, I knew the fate that waited for my father. I feared my brother’s influenced had reached many people in our royal village and anything could happen. Anyone could betray my father in the worst possible way and that was why my father was fighting so hard for me to go. He can not save himself but he could save me.

My body slipped in the large tub, sinking under the water and just stayed there with eyes closed. My thoughts cleared and I just existed there, getting closer to the edge where my body would be fighting to stay alive. I stayed even when my brain hurt from holding my breath for so long. I felt the pain explode and I wanted to scream so much but I let myself only explode in my head, screaming so hard in my head and when I felt like death was knocking at my door, I pulled up the tub and took a huge gulp of air.

I finished taking my bath and dried my skin. When I got out of the bathroom, my bags were gone, just my small toiletry bag and a flimsy dress left for me. My anger rose to the point where my skin was red, just burning hard. There was a cleaning crew, them scrubbing the floors, the bed bare, all doors opened with just nothing in there. They had successfully wiped me out even before I had left the castle. How nice dad, how nice! I opened the toiletry bag, not much left there, just deodorant and moisturizer. I shook my head, applying it. They did not even leave beads for me or shoes. I pulled the dress on then walked to pack the little toiletries I left in the bathroom. Twenty-three years in the room, all wiped away.

My toiletry bag was in hand, walking out of the room and down. I sniffed to get a sense of where my father was and it led me right down to the foot of the mountain where him and his officials waited, waiting for me,. If I had known I would have delayed longer. He was in a conversation with one of his council men.

For my farewell, I would expect a lot of dragons there but there were only a few of our people. It was not that they hated me, or maybe they did, I don’t know. The dragon world was not one for women. I had to prove myself over and over again all through the years. It had not been easy. I had to put down a lot of men who had not wanted to be bested by a female. I had clawed my way to hold everyone’s respect which many had but they did not like me that much and I was okay with that, as long as they respected me.

“ Father.” I said out, him turning with a sad smile on his face.

“ Zisealer my child.” My father greeted with his arms held wide open. I walked closer, sliding into the hug that lasted for a second. Anything that had to be said was said the previous night. We danced, cried and made idiots of ourselves and that was over now. Now we were dragon royalty and what a brutal thing it was.

“ Where is my mate?” I questioned, my eyes moving over the dragons standing around and he was not there.

“ He left early in the morning.” My father replied with my eyes going wide. What the hell? What kind of fucked up thing was that?

I could not even believe, my dad’s hands on my shoulders.

“ It will be okay my daughter, give it time, eventually love will grow.” My father said with me shaking my head. There would be no love growing there. He just did not care, after the night we had, I would have appreciated a least a shred of care but no, he left me behind to venture on my own. Fucking piece of shit.

It’s me against the world. I reminded myself.

My head turned, staring down to see all my luggage stacked up. It was a lot, huge trunks just there, my whole life packed in there.

“ Let me go.” I said. “ He went on his own?” I asked with father saying yes. I nearly scoffed, I would definitely catch up in an hour. He could run all the way there and I hoped he fell in a ditch somewhere.

“ Okay, let me leave.” I said, turning back to stare at dad.

The words were stuck at the tip of my tongue, just staring at him.

“ I love you.” I said out.

“ I love you too my girl,” He said back, bending down to place a kiss on my forehead.

“ Always my child.” He added with me closing my eyes, holding tighter to him.

“ I know dad, I know.” I said, my arms holding on tighter to him as we hugged.

“ I am sorry.” He said.

“ I am sorry too.” I whispered back, sorry it would end this way. I took a whiff, took a whiff of him.

“ Here, take this,” He said, giving me a small box. I stared down at it then back up at him.

“ Thank you dad.” I said, him kissing my forehead again then he stepped back. It was hard but I had to. I took steps back, moving away backwards while still staring at him. I walked away until I was near my luggage. I took one last look at him before waving. He waved back with me swallowing then I turned around, putting the tiny box and toiletry bag in one of my luggage trunks before bending down. I shifted into my very large and dark red dragon. I was one of the largest dragons because of my royal blood and very well trained.

Men walked up to pile my luggage on my back. They then tied it up tightly to make sure it did not fall off. When all was set, I did not even look back, I just stalked off, my heart ripping apart, shredding into tiny pieces. My feet pushed off the ground, my large and powerful wings batting through the air and soon I was flying away.

# A PLACE BETTER THAN HOME

I flew in the skies, over the trees, still not believing that my mate left me to venture on my own. I could be shot down from the sky for crying out loud but what would you expect from a man, a stupid egoistical man. I groaned out in my head, knowing I had flew past him long ago but still looking out because a part of me, a stupid and tiny part of me still wanted to see him even though I was sure the distance between us at that point was one he would cover over days. With so much time between us, I decided to take a detour. My anger was already in flames again seeing that I would see Flavia. In my head, I was already telling her all that had happened and I could even see her face turn red with anger. She was the only person that understood me, the only person that never judged me and someone I could just relax and be myself with.

With that in thought, I moved faster, just heaving over and over until the familiar smell and grounds came to sight. I would never say this out loud but there was a bit of excitement as I entered the vampire territory. My egoistical self already held a puffed out chest because in the vampire kingdom I was like a goddess. I was valued and appreciated. There were no whispers behind as I passed, I don’t know, I just felt at home and as if rubbing it on my face, a welcoming party already waited just before the castle.

The smiles were genuine, seeing my cousin and Flavia in his arms carrying baby Kia, Kaida and Kyded. My heart melted instantly, feeling all the anger evaporate as I lowered down. My second family stood there and you could see the excitement. I could even smell it. Flavia and I talked as much as we could. Letters were the only way for us and it felt like our little rendezvous, just our own thing. I had them all stacked in a jewellery box, them one of my most treasured items ever.

A dress was already in hand with Dante taking the babies and turning away. He left the scene, having done his job there. All the others there also left, me landing down to sigh because they needed to untie me and remove my luggage. Flavia was literally gleeing, jumping up and down in excitement. I had not see her since the birth and that was many months back. I was kind of nervous a little because our relationship mostly developed through the letters. Would we still click even in real life? But seeing her that excited had me even more excited.

Flavia was my kind of girl, already jumping over me, undoing my ties. She needed no help, she was a strong and fierce queen I could follow anytime and she could fight. I would know, I once upon a time took many of those punches from her.

“Did they finally get rid of you?” She laughed while she singularly took off each case which was heavy by the way but the love of my life, her, was not even sweating. If only she knew how hard her words hit home. It suddenly just clicked that they did finally get rid of me and how it hurt.

“ Do you need any help love?” King Dante, the vampire king, my cousin, asked from the castle door, having Flavia to laugh out loud.

“ You are asking because there is only one case left, not a chance!” She shot back, the king turning back into the house with the babies because I would soon shift. I did not waste time, having a lot to say. It only took a split second and I was standing up straight.

Flavia held out the dress for me which I took.

“Did you not have anything fancier?” I asked with my eye corked up for her.

“ So you can rip it apart with those curves, I don’t think so.” She shot back, having me laugh out loud. She was the only one I could say anything to and she wouldn’t be offended. With others, I just picked my words but not her. Flavia was crazy, she was just as crazy as I was and together, we were something else.

“ Looks like Kaida threw it up.” I shot back with her laughing out loud. Kaida was their eldest son but he was a pure dragon so others don’t count him but I do.

“ He actually would, I don’t trust that one. I am starting to keep him away from my closet.” Flavia said out with me shaking my head.

“ Just wait until they can breed fire then you will see how fast a house can burn down.” I said back, watching her face turn to horror as she stared back at the house.

“ I am ready for anything now.” She cutely said, her love for her children just shining through. I was actually proud of them—Flavia and Dante. Most would just chain the pure dragons then in a cave somewhere but not Dante and Flavia. Flavia literally gave her dragon babies breast milk and meat sometimes but mostly breast milk. It seemed a bit crazy for me but hey, this was Flavia we were talking about. She would die for her babies and her mate, my cousin, who had stepped out from the house, seeing that I was dressed.

“ Enough about my babies!” It was the only warning I got before arms flew around my neck, being hugged tightly. I would never get used to the foreign show of affection when it was not from my father. All my life I knew everyone else as an enemy so it was taking time getting used to affection from others. My body was as stiff as a board, it an after thought to also hug her back. God knows I missed her too, missed both of them and the babies. The vampire kingdom was my escape, a place where I could just relax and stop looking behind my shoulder.

“ What is that? What is that smell? Ziss!!!”

I thought my ear would fall off, my body tensing even more.

“ Dante!!!” The scream got louder.

“ Ziss is mated.” She finally said out, pulling from me, her eyes to my neck, analyzing every part of me with her face turning red.

“ To a werewolf.” Dante cleared, the distaste heard, even felt. Vampires and werewolves were not friendly at all. Flavia’s face turned sour even with her being part werewolf herself. I felt a bit guilty too, like I betrayed them. If not for my situation, I never would have picked a werewolf myself but beggars can not be choosers.

“ At least tell me he is handsome and good in bed, at least that. And I hope he treats you right. How did that even happen? Ziss have you been keeping secrets from me? Did they force you, did they force you?” Flavia kept the questions coming, her already dragging one of my cases with her voice packing heat and death to all that crossed me. Her other arm hooked around mine, dragging me into the castle, leaving Dante to deal with the rest and the babies. Serves him right. I would have laughed, Dante left standing on his own until vampires came to get the rest of my luggage which was a lot.

“ Where is he? Did you run from him? Girl! You did, and I hope you kicked his ass first?” I shook my head, wishing it was that epic.

“ He was the one that left me, stupid ass left me to make the way on my own after we mated just last night. Guess what, I woke up alone!” I exclaimed, getting mad all over again.

“ No he did not! What is wrong with him?!”

I knew my girl would understand. She opened a door, me walking in only to stop.

“ Did you decorate the room for me?” I did not mean to put myself on a pedestal but the room was me as a room and I recalled she asking me how I would style a room. My body turned, narrowing my eyes at her.

“ Psshh, get over yourself, this room is just a guest room. Okay, okay, maybe just maybe I had you in mind when decorating it. Do you like it? It’s your room when you are visiting” She asked, placing down my case, eyes wide with excitement.

“ I love it. It’s stylish, a lot of color, edgy and sexy. A four poster bed, I love!” I could not help myself because the room was stunning. There were flowers here and there to give it that earthy vibe but so much mesh of colors, color blocking but not in a disgusting kind of way.

“ I really love it actually.” I said back, nodding my head because I was very impressed.

“ Great. Should I start unpacking your case? Please tell me you are going to stay with us forever now. Just imagine how fun it would be. You could find yourself a cute boy toy and live free everyday.” She said, already opening the case.

“ Girl, you just want to steal my clothes.” I said back laughing out loud.

“ It wouldn’t be stealing, I thought me and you were best friends, family, we share everything.” She cried out.

“ We can share your man then?”

A throat cleared, both Flavia and I turning to find my cousin Dante standing by the door with a deep frown on his face while the vampires walked in with the other cases. The laugh that exploded from both Flavia and I killed me. It was too much fun teasing Dante, he always fell for it, always our victim.

“ It’s a good thing he sleeps like the dead, I will call you when he drops dead asleep.” Flavia said, Dante narrowing his eyes at her as she laughed harder. He was too easy.

“ Okay, okay, sorry love.” Flavia finally gave in, walking to Dante to stand on her tip toes and jumped when she could not reach him to place a kiss on his lips. She then kissed the three children all carried by Dante.

“ Love you.” She tried her luck, Dante chuckling.

In that instance I felt my heart sink because I would never have that. Dante adored Flavia. Their love was strong and always made me green with envy. I was mated too but such love was not in the stars for me.

“ Come on Ziss, Dante made dinner.” Flavia suddenly said, ready to walk out of the room.

“ That was supposed to be a romantic dinner between us two.” Dante tried, he really did but when I was there, Flavia was all mine.

“ Don’t even try cousin, she is mine now, go play with the babies.” I said back as I passed him, just holding in the laugh as Dante groaned out then I realized how much more fun and happy I actually was being in the vampire kingdom. All that surrounded me was love, just pure love and acceptance.

# YET ANOTHER BETRAYAL

Flavia and I didn’t sleep a wink. We were in my room, half of the night fuming and planning how to kill my mate. The next half we were laughing our assess off for being silly. We trashed the kitchen trying to cook. Flavia did anyway because her cooking skills were a zero.

At the first sight of the sun, we went to the field where we trained until late morning. After refreshing and spending quality time with the children, we passed out and woke up late. Dante was creepily hanging around here and there, him not knowing what to do with himself without Flavia on his side. It was so cute my heart just fell in love with them all over again. He would go do paper work but two hours would be a lot and he would be back, showing his handsome face.

It was easy to forget all that waited for me but I had to leave. After two days I began getting worried that my mate had passed and was at the werewolf kingdom already. Because he couldn’t be bothered, I doubt he would come fetch me. The man gave me anxiety I never knew I had. What if he wasn’t there and I would just be standing there like an idiot? I hated this, I hated how pathetic he was to let me travel alone, what was his problem!

I couldn’t concentrate anymore, just a bundle of anxiety which was eating me up so I decided to leave for the werewolf kingdom as stressful and scary as it was. I knew no one there, I did not know how they were, barely knowing anything about werewolves and there I was about to fly in their territory on my own.

“ I am so sorry Ziss, we really want to come with you but the last time we went to the werewolf kingdom things didn’t go well. I don’t think it will help you if you walk in with us, they may just hate you because you associate with us.” Flavia said, eyes wide with such sadness as I stood before the castle, all my luggage before me.

“ I get it, it’s okay, don’t worry guys.” I said back, trying to smile besides the fear that was clouding me. I would have loved if Flavia and Dante came with me but them and the werewolves did not mix. I did not want to be hated in my new home by association.

“Maybe we could leave you near the kingdom boarder.” Dante chirped in with my head turning to him, smiling. As much as he wanted his mate back, he still cared and I appreciated that.

“ It’s okay guys, I can fly the rest of the way on my own and face my future, there is no point running from it.” I huffed out, suddenly coming face to face with the fact that I was not as strong as I thought I was. The fear was deep and I was just confused on why my mate would do this. Yes, we were not friendly but I deserved a bit of compassion especially because he was the only one I knew when it came to his people.

“ I am a fighter, I will fight my way through this one too.” I said out, cursing myself for being such a cry baby. I was a warrior and I would face what was coming with my head held up high.

“ You will Flavia and if things don’t go well, you always have us. Come to us, or send word, we will be there to get you or fight for you.” Flavia said, me moving closer.

“ Thank you. Thank you so much.” I whispered out, truly touched. You would not believe I had been ready to kill them a few years back. I had burned all their villages and massacred their people. I did feel guilty about it and I had taken it too far. The blood I had split, the families I had destroyed, there was no excuse for that.

“ We love you.” Flavia said, just the final straw to my emotions. I was pulled into a hug then I kissed the babies and hugged Dante which was weird, we were not that close.

“ Please keep an ear out on what happens with my father and people?” I asked because they were related and favored so any news that came got to them first than me in the werewolf kingdom.

“ We will. I will write every night.” Flavia said, me feeling a bit better. The fact that I would be constantly communicating with her had me feel a bit better.

“ Okay, bye,” I said, waving, with them waving back. I really hoped our relationship did not strain because of the werewolves. I did not want to lose more family.

Why did it feel like the final goodbye? Why did it feel like I was breaking family bonds yet again? I swallowed the lump in my throat before bending down only to rise as my dragon. My luggage was piled up by Dante this time, him tying it tightly before stepping back. I nodded my head, that being my last goodbye before turning around. My large feet leaped a few meters before I pushed up. My heart was tearing apart once again. Strong large wings flapped, wind carried as I pushed higher and higher until I was one with the clouds. My head tipped down but the castle was already far with me barely seeing it but surely, Flavia and Dante were still there, waving me away.

My head turned ahead, looking forward, no going back. I really hoped my mate had arrived or it would be the final straw. I flew past forests, it getting dark. The night moved on and by the time I crossed through the werewolf kingdom it was the next morning. I did not know the kingdom so I did not know where to go, where to find the royal pack. I was so pissed I thought I would explode, my dragon—Oula was so pissed.

We flew over many packs, just lost to say the least. Many ran out of their houses. If they had dragon spears, they would have shot me down, seeing them run in panic, not knowing how to bring me down. Would you blame them though? They thought I was attacking.

My heart drummed harder, flying and just looking for the best looking pack. That was the only thing I thought of to help me find the royal pack because I was lost. I couldn’t even land to ask for directions because I was sure that if I landed in a pack, they would attack and my dragon was too angry, she would burn them all to crisps.

I kept moving, doing rounds over and over until I saw a large group of wolves carrying white flags and running to a certain direction. I followed, them directing me. Just imagine the shame, this was so embarrassing. I followed slowly until the pack came into view. It was exactly what I had been looking for, a large castle with beautiful landscapes but I had been so far from it and I had been moving in the wrong direction.

I fought with all I had to not sigh in anger because my dragon would blow out nothing but fire. The anger just kept piling up, wishing I could lock myself in my room and flip it outside down in anger. My whole body was burning hot that if anyone touched me they would burn.

My dragon lowered down, the heat evaporating from me, rolling off in waves such that I could feel the metal from my trunks melt on my back and it hurt so much. This just kept getting worse and I could not lower down anymore because the heat around me would burn the vegetation spreading miles and would also burn anyone near. I had to suspend in the air as tired as I was, all just watching and wondering what the fuck was happening. If this wasn’t the most embarrassing thing ever, I did not know what was. I was fed up, I was fed up to the very brink.

It took an hour, a whole hour for my dragon to cool down, imagine! An hour of the werewolf king and queen just standing there, watching along with others! I wanted to die over and over. And in that hour, my mate had not shown his ugly face which meant either he still hadn’t arrived or he just didn’t care at all. The heartbreak. I did not know your heart could break even without loving someone. He hurt me in the simplest way yet so cruel. How could he be so heartless and selfish?

My luggage was untied, my dragon back hurting so much from the melted metal and that would definitely transfer to my person, just more scars for me to wear.

When all the luggage was undone, I literally had to shift in front of everyone but lucky for me, the werewolf queen came with a sheet which she quickly wrapped around me as soon as I shifted. Her gasp could be heard, knowing my back was burnt.

What did I even say after that, as broken down as I was, how did I move from what just happened? My hands clenched the edges of the sheet, standing up straight as the queen stepped away. My body straightened up, my head tipping up with my shoulders squared. Never show defeat, ever. My face was left blank. My walls were back up, an exterior built up to protect myself from all.

I could feel the eyes, already feeling the judgement. I knew it too well, I knew those looks, I grew up with them. Once again I was an outcast. Once again all were whispering about the odd girl out, poking each other to glare at me.

My body moved. It did not matter that I only had a sheet wrapped around me but I walked as if I owned the world. I walked as if I had the world in my fingers, a smile on my face, a sadistic smiled others would say. Once again I would enforce myself and I would win. I would not be belittled or mistreated. I would be respected one way or another by the people who were staring as if seeing a dangerous creature.

My body lowered. I had never bent a knee for another besides my father and it felt wrong in every aspect but here, in the werewolf kingdom, I was no princess. In the werewolf kingdom I was a no one, a foreigner, no crown or title, just me.

My knee hit the ground.

“ Your majesties.” I paid my respects, head bent, the storm about to wipe me out. Too many things were happening, too many changes, too much lost and it was all a whirlwind I could not escape. I was getting dizzy with every spin, no hand to hold onto and pull me out of the chaos in my head. My feelings and emotions were a maze but I was not a child, I would fight my way through as I told Flavia and Dante. It was me, myself and I.

“ I am Princess Zisealer of the dragon people and I have recently mated with royal beta Brum.” Look at me trying to cling onto the little title I had, reminding me of what I had lost— a home family and I felt as if I had lost my dignity too.

“ We are pleased to have you Princess Zisealer, where is beta Brum?” The king asked, my heart drumming harder, my hands clenched into fists at my sides. It took everything in me not to shake so bad.

“ I do not know your majesty, he left me back in my kingdom.” I said, not sure how my voice was strong and steady when all I wanted was to just scream and tell them how useless their beta was.

The silence that followed after left even me dizzy.

“ And your people let you fly all the way by yourself?” The werewolf king questioned, making me realize yet another betrayal. My father should have sent me out with others to make sure I made it safely to the werewolf kingdom but no, he sent me out alone knowing my mate had left.

My heart sank, yet another betrayal.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

I was led to Brum’s room. He had a whole floor but it was not used besides his room. I opened the door, his scent hitting me hard and just nearly having me groan. My luggage was already in the closet, the room dark and not habitable to me.

There was black and gray everywhere, looking as if a corpse’s tomb with web cobs here and there. It was disgusting, dust on the furniture. It was either the man hated himself or he never slept in the room. My frown got deeper, not able to even hold my disgust face.

Fatigue was killing me but I just couldn’t. The state of the room should have been a crime.

I began ripping off anything that I could rip off; the curtains, the bedding and the awful carpet. I hated going down to ask for cleaning supplies, too many questions would be asked but luckily for me, there was some cleaning detergents under the sink and there was a small dust bin which I collected water in. I took the beta’s body wash clothe and used it to clean the floors. To me, he was dead. I used a brush to scrub hard, literally on all fours for the first two hours of being there. It destructed me from my burning back. It would take a bit longer to heal because both my dragon and I were hurt. The furniture was cleaned, walls dusted with windows cleaned and left wide open. The room already looked a million times better. All the movable furniture was moved to one side, letting the floors dry. As they did that, I went to the closet.

The closet was large but I could not help pulling all the beta’s clothes to the floor and piled them up in the corner before opening my trunks and hung or folded mine. He was lucky I was not burning all his clothes. It took hours to say the least but when I was done, the closet looked stunning. There was so much color, everything like art and it smelt even better. My dresses stored away, my beads too. A shock came when I opened one trunk and it had a crystals and stones inside. I did not know how I felt about my dad at that point but I was grateful for the crystals and stones, I would use them to buy some things which had me jump up. I put my toiletries both in the closet and bathroom then jumped in the shower. I was too exhausted to even think. My mind was no where at all, using all the energy I had to stand up straight. Sleeping would be nice but I would not sleep on a bare bed even if my life depended on it.

I hopped off the shower, rushing to the closet where I pulled on my sexy lace underwear and bra. I would never be caught dead in awful underwear, never in my life. My skin was oiled and shiny, pulling on a tight dress that looked stunning on me. I paired it with heel sandals and beads. I was good to go, looking like a goddess, ready to take over the world. I did not need anyone, I had me. I felt a bit better, as if I could do this. My head was held up high, legs out to play as I walked out of the room as messy as it was. There was no one else on that floor, taking the elevator down. In hand was a tiny purse which held a few gold coins.

I did not know if I had to tell anyone I was going out, not even sure where I could find them so I just walked out of the castle. All the werewolves I came across scurried away which had me pull on my mask to fend them off. If they were going to reject me then I would reject them back, problem solved.

The sun was out and warm, loving the feel of it on my skin. The land was flat and stunning. There was green everywhere you looked, stunning gardens with the forest nearby. The air was just fresh and populated with so much oxygen.

I was about to ask one of a men where the nearest town was when my name came loud from behind me.

My body stopped, turning around to see the queen literally running towards me. She looked stunning to say the least. Her hair was pure black, as if the black was bleeding from it. Her eyes were just as black, her skin pale white with her fingers black. She was a beauty to say the least.

I did not know if to bow and I was not comfortable with it but I did it anyway.

“ Your majesty.” I said out, my head bent. I was not used to it and it was eating me alive.

“ No, please, you don’t have to do that at all, we are family. You can call me Areli but don’t be shocked when some call me Raven.” She said with me straightening up and grateful for it. I then just stood there awkwardly because I did not know what to say after that. I was not really a chatty person but I could just smell that excitement from where I was.

“ I am so happy you are here. It gets lonely with all these men. I truly am happy and I am sorry for Brum. Since he woke up from the dead, he has been, well, dead really.” Areli continued with me frowning. What did that all mean? Then I recalled all the scars on him but the one on the chest looked life threatening.

“ What happened?” I asked.

“ Were you going somewhere, could I accompany you?” She asked with me turning to stare ahead.

“ Town.” I answered with her nodding her head happily. She was not how she looked. She looked hardcore and mean but she just reminded me of Flavia which reminded me that I had to write to her that I had arrived safely or she would worry to death.

“ It was during the war with the vampires years ago….should I tell you this? Maybe he wouldn’t like me telling you, Brum is complicated.” Areli suddenly said, nearly making me groan out.

“ Well, you have begun, and I don’t care what he wants or not. He is a dick, an asshole and I hate him.” I spat out, just waiting for him to show his face so I could punch him until he bled.

“ That he can be. Do you want to walk to town? I could just teleport us there.” Areli said, having me to stop in my tracks. My body turned back around, eyes wide.

“ Now why didn’t you say? I am so tired, please do, we have a lot of shopping ahead of us. That room needs a lot.” I said out with her smiling so hard I could see all her teeth. She giggled, taking my hand and leaving me frozen. I did not liked being touched without warning and it took all my control to not strike her hand off.

“ I actually have not done this since the war. I kind of forgot about it.” She said with me wide eyed. I wish I was so powerful that I forgot about some of the powers I had. I liked her, she was cool.

One second I was standing not far from the castle and the next, I was standing on a paved road with shops on either side of the street. It was the coolest thing I had ever experienced.

“ That is nice, we should do that often, waltz in on Brum taking a shit.” I said back, already seeing it in my head.

“ No thank you, I think that would torture us more than him.” She said with me nodding my head, she was right, I had to think bigger.

We began moving and I definitely noticed that she still held my hand. I was so uncomfortable yet let it be.

My strides were long, my hips swaying. The few werewolves around turned to stare, not able to look away and that was the effect good looking, sexy, smart, and gorgeous women had. My head tipped even higher because I fed off such attention.

“ Maybe we could grab coffee here first?” Areli asked, me already frowning. The thought of sitting down with so much adrenaline on my body seemed wrong on all aspects.

“ Can we do that later?” See why I hated doing things with people, you then had to consider them. I was selfish, only me existed in my little pretty head.

“ Okay. We have a general store there. We have a home and decor store there. We have grocery store there and a furniture store there. We have a flower shop there, clothes shop right there.” Areli pointed as I smirked. I was liking her more by the second.

“ Home and Decor please.” I stated, us making our way in. We spent two hours there. They just didn’t have all the colors I needed but I worked with what I had. I liked bold colors, everything of mine was a statement. We moved on to the furniture store and I picked a new and bigger bed because why not. I bought new furniture, everything new, bigger and better. All would be delivered in a few hours which was great and I did not have to pay for anything because it was all put in the royal account. The day was not so bad.

Areli and I sat down for lunch. She had a fruit salad with the conversation going. I was shocked at how much we were chatting and once again, the guilt chirped in. It was obvious Areli and I clicked and were would be friends soon. Was I betraying Flavia by making new friends, especially with someone she did not really like? I was not sure. I never had this kind of drama in my life before.

# USED AND DISCARDED

Areli took all the hours of the day and spent them on me. It was when we were setting up the room that I realized how pissed off and how beta Brum had really betrayed me. Areli being there helped, the dark thoughts filling my head but they were pushed back with Areli having me engaged in conversation all through out. If she had not been there, I would have gone further down the rabbit hole. As hard as it was, I held up the conversation and tried to think very little of what had been done to me by my so called mate.

The new bed was set up, putting on the new sheets and it looked amazing. The new tub chairs were stunning, putting the decor around and we laid out the new carpet. Of course we couldn’t do it all in one day but the whole room already looked stunning. Areli called a few men who took out the old furniture and the dread fell as she finally bid me goodbye. Dinner would be held in the dining room which I had no clue how I would find it but I would. It seemed I had no choice in attending. In my head I kept playing it and it killed me, walking in there alone, all eyes on me, if I would be able to find my way anyway.

The huff pulled from my lips, the door closed, Areli gone with me left with just my dark thoughts. I span around, so tired because I had not slept in more than twenty-four hours, doubting I would even be able to even if I tried.

My feet moved, standing by the window to stare out into the forest. It seemed so quiet, so dark as if calling me to it. My head was somewhere dark but I would never be able to tell you where. There was just this hole, this dark black-hole sucking all color from me.

The desk had not been set up yet or I would have began writing the letter I would send to Flavia. I knew she was worried sick about me. My arms wrapped around my waist. I was lost at what to do with myself, not finding a purpose in this new life of mine. My body turned around, the darkness having taken over the land, the outdoor lights turned on. I switched on those in the room then made my way to the closet where I peeled my clothes off one at a time. My feet pat the floor, walking straight to the bathroom where I jumped into the shower.

I had so many products and I could not wait for my hair to grow. As dragon women, we were not allowed to keep hair until we got mated. We shaved our heads every month, it left bald and shiny as a baby’s bum. Just add to the list of the unfairness we faced as women in my kingdom. Bubbles erupted, the bathroom just smelling so good it nearly made me moan. I scrubbed my skin, washed, dried and oiled it. I stepped out of the shower, a bit better yet so tired. I walked to the closet butt naked, bringing the door just a little before taking a sit before the vanity mirror. I had a whole routine for my face but I paused as a certain warmth spread all over my body. It came with a sweet sensation that threatened to consume me. There was a fake sense of joy. Everything seemed to go on a high, leaving me perplexed and just then, I heard the main door of the room open.

There was a pause then the door was closed. My head turned around but I could barely see from the small space left ajar yet I knew who it was. My body was screaming at me, telling me who it was. There were so many things I wanted to say, things I wanted to do. The anger just bubbled back up, my body left shaking and glued to the chair.

The bathroom door opened and closed shut having my anger burn even more. No hello, no apologies. Brum was proving me right, that all men, no matter what species were trash. Werewolf and vampire men were supposed to be the best since they had mate bonds but our mate bond wasn’t stopping him from being mean even to me.

I sat there for a good ten minutes just fuming until I chuckled, such a dark chuckle, deciding to get on with my skin care routine. My facial skin was so smooth with such a glow many would kill for. I was done in the next fifteen minutes. My body oil had dried, putting on some moisturizer and deodorant before spraying my body spray. My legs stretched with me walking to my underwear drawer where I pulled out a black matching set. I pulled it on, not sure what I would wear but you know me, always turning heads.

What I was sure of were the heels so I slipped them on. They had leather ropes going around my legs, tying them just under the calf.

My body straightened up as the door opened, it swinging to bang on the wall, nearly having me jump but I bit my lower lip hard, hands folded to fists to stop myself from busting out. Why even bother? Why even bother with him? I did not know his reasons for mating with me but I was sure they were there. I also had my own reasons so I would just pretend he did not exist for the rest of our lives. He could die for all I care, taking my aching heart and just crushing it.

My body moved, my waist moving with such elegance, my hips swaying with it. I bent, opening my jewellery box to take out my earrings. I wore them along with my necklace and rings.

Brum’s scent was intoxicating especially with him straight from the shower. My heart which was supposed to be dead was drumming way too hard. There was a voice that kept telling me to look, to stare at him but I fought so hard not to. I picked up my perfume, spraying it on certain points of my body.

The voice was getting stronger, just tearing me apart with my whole body shaking.

It was a war I would never win, knowing how to pick my battles. My body turned around, my heart freezing from finding dark, cold and angry gray eyes staring at me. There were promises there, promises he was throwing straight to me. A shiver ran down my body, a certain uneasiness washing over. There was something dark in the man. He was starting to scare me. My body turned around, moving to see what I would wear.

One second I was walking and the next, my body was pressed to the wall hard. I did not know how I got there, I did not know how fast he could have gotten me there but my face was pressed painfully to the cold wall, hands flat on it, heaving with dread washing over me.

How many years had I trained? How many people had I slaughtered? One of the most decorated warriors in my kingdom but there I was, my body paralyzed.

His hands gripped hard, him pressed on my body hard. His hot breath fanned my skin, his hold getting loose. A few seconds passed, his hands moving up my body to cup my breasts. The only thing between us was all I was wearing. His hand ran down, hooking around my thong and I knew what was coming.

A voice in my head screamed for me to push him off, to tell him to stop but I never did. A part of me wanted this, a large part of me wanted it as painful as it was. My body craved him, my legs trembling with the horror filling me. I hated myself even as I let him push my legs open. He nestled in, his hard dick pressing against my wet folds. The thong was pushed to the side with his cock sliding in without warning.

I gasped, feeling a part of me shredding away, a tear slipping but still needing more of him. My legs opened wider, his arms around my waist, pulling me more to him where he thrust in me hard. The pain mixed with the pleasure, rippling through me so intensely I cried even harder. He pound in me with such hunger, like a starved beast rummaging through. My toes curled, heaving with each thrust unbelievably sweet. My whole body sparked, burning hot for him as my throbbing pussy clenched around him and sucked him in. Each thrust shook me even harder, the pleasure reaching heights I never thought could be reached. My hands were left gripping his hips from behind, not wanting to think, not wanting to feel anything besides the pleasure he was giving me. I was desperate, desperate to feel what only he could make me feel as we climbed the steep mountain together. Something in me tightened, my pussy clenching harder with Brum groaning out. His face lowered and buried in the crook of my neck, him pounding with no mercy at all. It was fast and hard.

My legs buckled, him holding me up with his arm, digging deeper and faster. I came so hard it was maddening. I felt as if I was losing my mind, everything tingling so much it should have been deadly.

Brum groaned once, twice, his pumps fueled by such anger only for him to spill hard in me. He kept moving as both of our bodies jerked, jerking from the after shocks.

His body stilled after a few seconds with mine suddenly so cold. He seemed frozen as I was, turning so cold. I began shaking again, just trembling so hard. He pulled his dick out, his arm slipping from around my waist. My legs would crumble, him the only reason I was standing yet carefully, he was pulling away as if it suddenly killed him to hold me.

My eyes shut so hard. I felt the tears burn, feeling them burn in a way they never had before.

*Stay strong Ziss, stay strong.*

A voice kept screaming in my head but I could not. I could not and in a second, Brum pulled his hold away, his body moving from mine. He was done, having got what he wanted. How could a person feel so used? It was a feeling like none other, eating me alive.

My body straightened up, feeling myself so wet, the liquids running down my thighs to my legs. It was all shaking all around me, the whole room shaking. I heard him wipe himself before pulling on his briefs, done with me.

My head pushed up, turning around to walk away as disgusted as I felt, with him and with myself. I closed the bathroom door behind me, my legs shaking harder, my ankles bending with the heels I was wearing and finally I decided to lower down. My ass hit the cold floor where I sat, legs folded over. My eyes were glassy with tears but they never fell, just sitting there staring ahead with folded fists.

# 10.THE OTHER WOMAN

A plain black, ankle length slip dress was pasted on my body, every curve, every dip so smooth like my skin. My body moved side to side with each step, head held so high with eyes sharp yet I could not see. I blinked and found myself before the doors where the clutter was coming from. I had no idea when I took all the steps down, just blinking and I was staring at the large doors.

I could not just stand there. My palms kissed the doors, taking a second before pushing them wide open.

I don’t think I had a heart anymore, feeling so numb, feeling so dead. The click of my heels echoed, hearing the clutter and chatter stop with me walking as if I owned the place. I was in my own stage, stealing the show.

My hands were in fists, them seeming to hold in all the feelings I was supposed to feel. Shadows were all I could see yet my brain having took in where the king and queen were. I walked until I was near the edge of the table, my head bending down with my body soon bending over.

It was as if I had done it a million times, not even caring that I was bending my knee to another king. At that point I did not even care for anything, just getting everything over and done with.

“My king.” I spoke out, my voice firm and loud enough. “ My queen.” I greeted, no feelings at all, no emotions. I felt dead inside.

“ Princess, we were getting worried.” King Conri said, having me nearly flinch at the mention of my old title. A title I had carried so proudly suddenly felt like salt to an open wound.

“ My apologies your majesties.” I said out so plainly, feeling the tension in the room climb high. A minute passed I swear, feeling the eyes on me.

“ Please, take a seat.” the king said, me nodding my head respectfully then I rose up. For the first time being there, I could clearly see with my eyes taking in the large room with thousands of people just eating. I stared at the table the royals sat in, seeing Brum seated right next to where I stood. I don’t know how I felt as I stared at him but it was a knife to my heart, shredding it apart. I moved, walking past his chair, pulling the one next to it. My body lowered, the silence in the room sickening, eyes moving from Brum to me.

An empty plate sat before me and I had no appetite at all. My mouth tasted as bitter as I felt, wanting nothing to slip through it but I could not just sit there so I picked a single roll and placed it on my plate.

The chatter on the other tables picked up but ours was dead silent.

Brum next to me was eating with no care, happy with himself. I did not know how I would be able to spend a whole night in the same room with him, not even wanting to think of it.

Cutlery hit plates, it seeming louder than normal as the roll I set on my plate just stared back at me.

My head tipped up, the table vacant from us till the centre of it where other members of the pack sat eating. I watched the man occupying the first seat half way down the table open his mouth and close it until he gave up, deciding to eat his food which was the best choice he had made that day. My lips were sealed shut, the only words to escape my lips being curses straight to Brum.

“ Uhm, Zisealer and I went shopping today, bought new things for the room….” Areli said awkwardly, a nervous laugh falling off her lips, not sure herself what she wanted to say as she trailed away.

“It’s quite pretty, the room looks better.” A nervous laugh pulled out again, no one joining her.

“ What did you think Brum?” She finished off, her eyes on Brum who stopped eating for a second then resumed back.

My heart came to life from the grave, Areli waiting for a response even she knew she would not get but hope never killed anyone. She stared until she gave up, going back to her bowl of fruit before her. Her mate turned to her, sure they were holding hands or something as they sadly smiled at each other. My eyes trailed back to Brum just in time to catch him finally staring at Areli. He knew she wasn’t looking, staring for a second but the world seemed to stop for me.

The glance was shorter even than a second yet I just knew, something in me just knew. The way his eyes flickered to her. My hands folded harder, feeling my nails dig in to my palm.

The betrayal hit hard, trailing my eyes back to my plate before me, seeing it vibrate right before me until it stopped. Slowly, I calmed myself down. Why did anything even shock me at that point? It was clear where his feelings were but had anything happened between them two? Was I just a means for release? Was he acting like this because he couldn’t have the woman he really wanted? Had they forced him to mate with me and he was taking it out on me?

I did not know if to be sorry for him or angry at him, just feeling so tired. I could not think. I could not process anymore. I was just tired, tired of this pain which left my chest feeling as if it was being pulled out of my body, so intense I could barely even breathe. Too much, it was all too much.

A chair scrapped right next to mine, having me to slightly jump because my ears were more sensitive than normal. I had a pounding head that just made all of me ache. Brum stood up, the whole room coming to a stand still but I was too tired to care.

Brum walked away from there, having finished eating.

I heard the door open and as it did, the king shot up.

“ Brum.” King Conri called with such anger, him marching right after Brum, the door closing with a loud bang after him.

All the energy, all the anger that had been driving me drained out, my body left limp on the chair. The adrenaline, everything gone, leaving me so tired. Queen Areli slipped from her chair, rushing to the men who had left the room and I could careless. In my head I was thinking of the bed waiting for me yet I did not know how I would get there.

After minutes, more werewolves got up, all done eating. One by one they left until nearly none were left yet to me it was all just cloudy. From the growing hole in my chest, I knew Brum had left. After all he had done, I should have been happy but I felt more drained.

It was when a group of women began tidying up that I finally forced myself to get up. No part of me wasn’t aching badly. I walked on, seeming as if I would never get to the room but I did, after a long struggle. Never in my life had I slept in my day clothes but I was too wiped to care. I slipped in bed, my heels untied and clattering on the floor. I pulled the free pillow to my chest, clenching it as if it was my lifeline.

My eyes closed, a breath let out as I melted into the bed so fast. My energy drained to a zero, knowing something was wrong as I drifted away.

# 11.FAKE IT UNTIL YOU ARE IT

I could feel myself twist and turn all through the night. I could feel the sweat collect on my skin as disgusting as it felt. I heard myself whimper and groan. I could mentally see myself fold into a ball to unfold over and over again. At some point the whole room was spinning and I felt as if I would vomit but I was stuck in this state where I was aware of what was happening but still unconscious.

It never ended, just going over and over until I thought I was stuck in a loop that would never break. My body turned during the night, feeling another body brush against my skin with my heart drumming harder. I truly thought I was dying, wanting to ask for help but no help came, just drifting away into the darkness until my eyes painfully peeled opened.

My chest pushed up and down, sweat trickling down with me heaving hard. I was too weak to even shoot up, my hand running to my chest because I felt as if my heart would arrest. My eyes were wide open, not even in the right head space to think of what I had just went through or what was wrong with my body. I felt like a stranger in my own body. Everything seemed foreign, everything seemed different.

My head turned, not caring that we were not in good standing but in that weak moment I found myself needing Brum, even if it would be just staring at his angry gray eyes. To my shock, the side of the bed was empty. I sniffed the air, maybe not the best when it came to the sense of smell but his scent was stale, not getting anything new which had me frown because I swore I felt a body next me through the night.

The frown got deeper, not recalling any sparks but who would it be?

My head was pounding way too much for me to be thinking that deep in that time.

I was at a point where I was too tired and sick to get up but also too sick it disgusted me. I needed to shower and change the sheets. My head kept screaming for me to get up but my body was just lying there, feeling the muscles in me lose all their strength. There was no way I could support myself and that alone had me so frustrated and pissed. It was all I needed to get up, all I needed to groan out in anger.

I was not going to just lie there so everyone would think I am weak and crying over my mate. I was not going to be weak, never. Since I could not push up, I literally rolled out of the bed, my legs tangling with the messy sheets. My body hit the floor hard with a thud. It was an added injury but I was already in too much pain to care. My feet wiggled until I untangled myself from the sheets. I had to fight to get to the bathroom, using the walls to keep myself up. My stomach was turning, my mouth sour. A groan pulled out, just stumbling around until I fell over the toilet seat, hurling nothing but saliva out my mouth. It had my stomach turn even more but I kept barfing. Once I began, I couldn’t stop, the more I did, the more it hurt with the bile rising higher, tasting it’s burning taste in my mouth.

There was no way I was getting more sick. There was no way I was letting myself get that sick. I got up, stumbling back down to push up immediately. I was so loose I was just swaying around to all directions. My body was burning so hot yet I felt so pale, like death was hanging over me. I had to clean my mouth, brushing it four different times until it burned. I rinsed and hauled myself to the shower, letting the water wash over me before I scrubbed my body. I felt a bit better under the cold water, not wanting to get out but I knew I had already wasted too much time. I dragged myself to the closet, just skipping a lot of steps in my routine. I did the essentials; getting my skin oiled, getting my deodorant and sprays on me. I pulled the first clothes I saw, sitting down every five minutes with my breath running out. I just wanted to collapse down and never get up but I kept pushing as hard as it was. I was not going to be defeated, I was not going to give them all reason to talk some more about me.

The bed itself took me an hour. It was a lot to change the sheets but a mess to me was an irk which was why Brum’s clothes were irritating me at the corned where they were spread. I had wanted to burn them all but a part of me knew I would never be able to do that. I knew I would fold and hang them back up at some point and it just had me even more sick.

Where was he?

What was he doing?

And where was he all night long?

I should have been happy but I was not at all. It would not be the first time for a man to betray his partner with another woman.

Queen Areli’s picture rushed to my head only for me to shake it off. I did not even want to think about it. The messy part of me wanted to ask about them two but making friends would be the smart thing for me to do and besides, from taking one look at Queen Areli, you just knew she was inlove with her mate, king Conri. This whole thing just had me feel sicker.

For the first time in forever, I found myself wearing flat shoes. It did not feel right at all but at the same time, I was too weak to wear heels.

I was not ready to see everyone. I was not ready be around everyone. At that point I just hated everyone but none the less, I walked out of my room. My head lifted up high, my hands folded to stop them from shaking so much. I was strong, I was not going to fail, putting one foot in front of the other as I took the steps one at a time. I knew it was nearing lunch time which already just had me so pissed on how much time had passed me. I could imagine the news they had already passed around about me.

As much as I hated it, I decided to take the elevator. It had me feel queasy as it rushed down to open on the first floor. I actually wanted to go to the offices but did not know where they were so I got off the elevator, walking to find anyone who would direct me. I did not even know how I would even talk. It was one of those days where you don’t even want to talk, my lips preferring to be stuck together than parting.

The only person I wanted to talk to was myself, poisoning myself deeper and deeper into a hole while also building my walls high and thick.

I was not wearing heels but I was still taller than most. My head was tipped up, looking taller than I actually was, shoulder’s squared, looking relaxed when I was actually dying.

Many stared from where they were, feeling their eyes drill in me, just digging into my skin. I could feel the judgement, the criticism. Those near did not know if to bow or not, just stuck fumbling around until most decided to bow awkwardly. All I wanted was to walk away and ignore them all but I actually needed them.My nails dug into my palm, surely drawing blood.

“ Good day.” I greeted, the words feeling like acid on my tongue. My walls were definitely at their highest, my defenses sharp and ready to attack.

“ Good day your highness.”

“ Good day Princess.”

A few greeted back, shocking me a little. I had not been expecting them to greet me back in that manner and it threw me off for a while but I shook the shock off. I was armed and ready, and they were smiling at me, actually smiling! Was it a trick? Were they playing some kind of long game? I was not sure and I did not like it one bit. I liked my enemies to straight up show their intentions so I knew where I was with them.

“ Can you tell me where the queen or King’s office is?” I asked, wanting to get to work straight. I had already slept way past the supposed time. I had to pull my weight, show my worth and fight my way up. There was no time to be sick, only surviving.

“ They are on floor nine your highness.” A woman answered, still taken back with how polite they were. Was I hearing things, surely I was.

“ Are you okay your highness, you look pale?” Another asked, them being nice had me even sicker. Could they just stop being nice! I was getting frustrated, my head pounding even more and it made me so dizzy. It was all a trick, I knew it was all a trick. I knew they did not like me, no one liked me and that was fine. Not even my mate liked me and I could not compete with a goddess, I would never win. Areli was on her own level, she was just a goddess by every definition of the word and me, I was just princess Zisealer, the warrior, the black stain in my kingdom, the unwanted child. Yet I did not feel like a warrior, I did not feel like a princess, I felt like throwing up.

A minute longer there, I would have screamed or something. My heart was drumming way too much, I needed to be busy. My body turned, wanting to say bye but the words just filled my mouth and got glued in there. I was fighting to stay up nonetheless be kind. Kind and me did not go along. Where I was from being kind would have got me killed and I was not risking it now. I would stay sharp, I would stay focused and strong. If I did not feel strong, I would fake it until I was. With that, my body moved like with such grace, embracing the fierce warrior I was said to be.

# REPORT FOR DUTY

The door swung wide open, my head pushing up to find two pairs of eyes just staring at me, so wide I thought they would pop. One was packed with anger, the other just shocked.

“What?” The word spilled from me. I had just walked in, surely I had not pissed them yet. I knew I would eventually but I had just got there. Something bumped onto my chest, my eyes running down to frown. A chubby cute ball of black fur with pure white eyes stared back at me and it was the cutest thing ever. My chest tightened. I had a thing for babies and that was the cutest small creature I had ever seen. My hands were wide open, it settling and bouncing on them. My heart was stolen. The fur cutie was so soft, just heaven, a bundle of joy which left me feeling a turd better.

“There is something called knocking.” The king said out as my head tipped up to him. He was pissed to say the least, seated behind a large desk, papers before him. He was not friendly at all, my kind of people.

“And what would that be?” Of course I knew what knocking was but never in my life had I ever done it. Why would I?

My body moved on, eyes going to Areli with me swallowing. Her hair was long, thick and all black. She was a sight for sore eyes, there being a shine to her. I knew she was powerful, not one to piss off but she was trying to hide her powerful aura which should have been a lot of work on her side.

Conri stood up, wearing a shirt and suit pants which I appreciated. Him and Areli were definitely my people, ready to work. He walked out, closed the door then knocked and opened it to walk in. My head turned back to Areli, her face just burning with laughter. I shook my head, hand on my waist to stare at the king.

“But we did not say you can come in your majesty, did you my queen?” I asked, my lazy voice at play. When I turned to stare back at the king he was fuming and oohh wow, it made my day. I chuckled.

“Nope.” Areli popped the P, meeting my attitude with me smiling. No matter what her history with Brum was, I did not care. It hurt a little but I was not going to let it affect my relationship with her. Brum could go screw himself.

“Don’t test me Zisealer.” The king said with me chuckling again because I was just beginning.

“It’s not polite to walk in a room when you have not been told to walk in my king.” I continued, schooling him. His head shook, Areli just in a fit of giggles. My work was done, the king starring daggers at me and I could have clapped my hands.

“Okay, to move on from the king’s bad manners, I am here to report for duty. What will I be doing? You can just show me and I am ready to tackle anything you throw on me” I said out with much confidence.

“Oohh, I thought that maybe you can chill until after your ceremony.” Areli said out, quickly hiding some papers on her desk. I played it cool as if I had not seen but I knew she was up to no good.

“No, I am ready. I have rested enough and I am ready to pull my weight.” I said out with such confidence even though my legs wanted to shake so bad.

“Oohh, okay. Let me show you to your office. We will get your desk in there but for now you could use Brum’s because I doubt he even stepped foot in the office in two years.”

I was happy to hear the word ‘Office’, not sure what to make of this new information but I guess it was time to dig in.

“Does he usually just disappear like that?” I asked, acting all cool when I wanted to just milk out all the information I could from her.

“Yep, all the time. We actually thought he would change with you here but he seems to just be the same.” Areli said, stopping infront of a door which she opened. I took a deep breath before I walked in. She was right, Brum had not been there at all in a long time. The room was dusty and it meant more cleaning for me.

“Since you are not just a female beta, you are the royal beta, the pack actually is mostly lead by you and Brum. Most of the pack decisions and how it is run is all on you. Conri and I mostly attend to the other packs. We help each other anytime and share the work load where possible. Brum has not been doing any of his duties since the war ended. Conri and I pulled the weight but maybe in trying to help we enabled his behavior. We will stop doing that and just let you guys do your work.” She explained with me mentally sighing.

So basically, I was going to work alone because Brum was useless. I would not show how freaked out I was. I was going to put everything I had in my work. There was no room for failure.

“Before we get much into anything you won’t really work well until you know the pack so I am free, let’s go tour the pack and meet some people.” Areli said, the worst line she had spoken to me so far. The thought of socializing just had me so weak. My energy levels were dwindling but I held on.

We went down, starting at the kitchen where all the women introduced themselves. The information I was getting was helpful so that kept me up and energized, learning how they operated the kitchen and what I would be contributing to their work. We moved to the cleaning crew and it was just the same, so much information and I was scared I would not remember any of it from my pounding head. The names, that was out as soon as they said them. I caught the names of those I would be interacting with more and just hoped to learn the others as I spent more time in the pack.

By the time Areli said we should go out of the castle I thought I would faint. A part of me kept screaming for me to let her know I was not feeling well and ask for us to continue later but I was too stubborn. I pushed through the pain and exhaustion, somehow getting everyone to think I was fine. Areli was just too excited to notice and I let her bubble away, a hop in her step, watching her nearly float in the air in happiness. She truly was magnificent and if I was not so sick, I would have been so jealous.

We met with the head trainers, she introducing me. I would have loved to watch them train but my head just wasn’t there and the sun was not helping.

By the time we went back to the house the sun was just about to dip and I was sure I was green at that point.

“You okay? I never thought giving a tour would be so nice.” Areli asked, coming down from her adrenaline. It was fun for her, I was in hell. She had dragged me through the whole pack, all the way to the hospital and back to town. It was pure torture but somehow, I got through it.

“Yeah, I am just going to rush to my room.” I said out, “See you later, thanks.” I rumbled on, already turning and literally just dashing from her. All I needed was to just get away from her, lock myself in my room and die. My feet were shaking so bad, not sure I could make it to my room but I did and it seemed my body had just been waiting to get there before shutting down. I did not get far, feeling myself swing in the air, pain exploding hard in my head as it hit so hard against the corner of the bed, everything turning black around me.

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# 13.COMMON GROUND

I had not even woken up and my head was already pounding way too much. The screams in the room weren’t helping at all. My eyes fluttered open, the light like the devil’s pitch fork thrown into my eyes.

A groan pulled from me, my body turning around to pull the blankets higher but who was I kidding, the catfight in the room seemed to escalate. Couldn’t they have done it outside or in the woods?

My body turned back around, rubbing my eyes because my curiosity also peaked. The king was so mad I could just see the saliva spit as he screamed with such anger. I was happy I was not at the receiving end of it, my head turning with Brum standing there red with fury.

I had to see this, sitting up to rub my eyes again.

“We did not force you to mate her, you came up with the decision on your own now grow up, take care of your responsibilities or me and you will have a real problem Brum!” It was like watching a younger sibling getting scolded so hard. I bit my lower lip not to laugh, just eating the scene before me up. The king turned. He was so angry I thought steam would blow from his whole body. The door cracked from how hard he hit it on his way out. My eyes were at the door, scared to even look at Brum but how could I resist.

My head turned and his killer eyes were still at the door, heaving with such anger then the second show began. I gasped, the table nearest to Brum just smashed so hard it stood no chance but he did not seem satisfied, his head turning to me.

I did not even want to get involved. I sighed, deciding to get out of there as fast as I could. A fake yawn pulled from me, quickly detangling myself from the sheets to jump off the bed. I felt energized, felt healed and so much better. I had so much work to do and I felt powered to do just that.

My feet quickly pat away only to gasp as my body was pinned to the wall. This was happening way more than I would like. My face was to the wall, giving me déjà vu vibes. I swallowed, my anger rising up but my arousal too.

“Where do you think you are going?” His voice was gruff, dragging his words in a way that drove me crazy. I pushed him, turning as his body moved but he was back and this time he put much force onto it. How crazy was it that I loved his weight on me, nearly suffocating?

“None of your business. Actually, it is. I am going to do the work you can’t because you are incompetent.” I spat the words out straight to his face, staring right in his cold gray eyes. I took one last look, shaking my head as the distaste fell in my mouth.

I put both my hands on his chest then just pushed. All I needed was a tiny tug to slip away. I quickly slid off him, walking away with my head held up only for him to grip my wrist. He tugged and pulled me around, his arm going around my waist only for my palms to sit on his chest, pushing off him.

“Let’s make something clear. You are dead to me. I am not yours to touch or do anything, now get your disgusting hands off me. I can get way better dick than ….” I trailed away, looking up and down at him.

“This.” I spat out, disgusted with my body turning around. The nerve he had to handle me like that. I would not stand for it even in the slightest.

I tugged my arm from his hold to walk away to the bathroom where I shut the door. He could go screw himself. I peed and got into the shower while wondering what had happened. I took my time because it was going to be a long day ahead and I was ready for it. The door opened and a shrill rang from me. It was not that I was naked, it was the lack of respect and any manners from the man. I was so angry I was not even able to speak, just fists clenched hard with me growling. The door to the shower opened. He was really shameless, walking in, the water spraying on his clothed body.

“I mated with you because I wanted to get it over and done with. You mated with me for protection.” He said with my body shaping as I narrowed my eyes at him.

“I do not need your protection, you can barely keep your own shit together.” I spat out, hating that he thought I needed him. I did not need him at all.

“You need Raven’s protection.” He shot back, his face blank.

My mouth opened to close, well, I couldn’t fight with that as much as I wanted to.

“You need to make everyone think we actually like and care about each other.” He said out, getting closer. It was just a stab to my heart but he was right, I absolutely hated him. What we had was nothing but sexual chemistry. He was just too sexy and I was always horny for him. I chewed on my inner cheek, staring at him.

“And what will I get out of this?” I asked, nothing for free in this world. If I had to pretend to be happy with his grumpy self then the price would be steep.

“What do you want?” He asked, his jaw flexing and it made him hotter, the clothes sticking to his skin and lord, what a sexy mountain of a man.

I mentally shook my head, trying to focus.

“You will owe me. Every smile and giggle comes with a steep price and I will collect when the time is right.” I said out, a smirk growing on my face because I would have him by the balls and he knew it. He did not like it at all but did he really have a choice? We both knew he was backed into a corner and how sweet it was.

“Okay.” He said back, my day getting even better.

“Great, now get out, your gorgeous mate has to get ready for work.” I said out, shooing him away but the man was just in it to kill me. He turned to the other shower head, pulling his t-shirt off his body and his shorts were. I was left standing there, staring with wide-eyed. When he pulled his briefs off I was done for. His dick like a beautiful thick magic ward I could take in me any time. I was a lady and ladies do not stare so I continued showering and minding my own business. My legs were clenched together, just moving as fast as I could until I was done. His scent was just unbelievably good. I got out of the shower, doing my morning routine then walked out of there. My body was oiled with body mist sprayed. I put on deodorant, just taking care of my body. Smelling and feeling good was an obsession to me.

A skintight work dress was worn, just sexy but still professional, putting on heels. I felt like my old self, my confidence high with my head held high. The whole mating and Brum situation had really got to me but not anymore. I was concentrating on me and my success in this new life.

I was done, turning around to find Brum lazily waiting for me wearing his shorts, no t-shirt on. I would have to get used to this no t-shirt policy where anyone could see the parts of my mate I never wanted them to see. He was stunning, wishing I could have time to analyze his scars but I put that for another day. My heel clicked, picking up my communication book since I would write to Flavia when I got to the office. I was sure she was dead with worry and I felt so guilty.

My body moved to Brum, him pushing off the wall, looking angry as always. My body slipped into his side and how perfect we fit together. His arm circled around my waist and I felt my whole body tingle as sparks ran up and down so intensely. It was hard to not show all this but I fought to keep a straight face because I would not give him the satisfaction.

We walked as if we were one, head tipped so high. We walked out of our room, and took the steps down.

“I want to demolish all these other free rooms and make the whole floor a house that will have a kitchen, living room, two spare rooms and an office.” I spoke out, not really asking, telling him.

His head turned to mine with me turning mine to his as we hit the last step. His hold on me was so firm and possessive it had me feel so many different things all at once.

“Your highness, her highness.” A voice echoed, my head turning to find a man in a bow. A smile graced my face.

“Good morning good sir.” See me working on my people skills.

“Good morning princess, we hope you are feeling much better?” The man asked with me smiling even wider it would have sent me to the grave two weeks before.

“Yes, I am, thank you. Brum really helped me pull through.” I said out, turning to stare at him with a glee. His frown was even deeper, having me giggle a little.

“Your highness, her highness.” A woman bowed too, greetings passed as I dragged Brum to the kitchen because I was starving.

“What happened to me by the way?” I whisper asked Brum.

“Your body was adjusting to my bite.” He said with me nodding, not really knowing what that meant.

“Do I get a wolf now too?” I asked, the severity of the situation hitting me. I was a hybrid, it was the coolest thing ever.

“We don’t know, Raven did not get a wolf.” He said with me nodding my head. I really hoped I did because having two beasts would be amazing.

“I am going to leave now.” He lowly said with me fake frowning.

“You won’t even grab breakfast with me darling. You know I hate eating alone.” I loved this, I loved it to no end. His face turned as if I just told him I killed his favorite pet. His arm pulled from my waist, turning to walk away.

“Okay, bye my love!” I shot through, hearing the groan from him which had me in a fit of laughter, what a morning.

# 14.GAME TIME

The sun was up high, no one was trying to kill me and I was full to the brink. I swung my shoulders back and forth, finally taking in the good that came with mating Brum. My body swayed with such rhythm as I walked to our offices only to stop as I came face to face with a few ladies from the cleaning team standing just outside.

“Good morning.” I greeted, closing the gap to stand a few feet before them.

“Good morning your highness. Her majesty said you needed help cleaning your office.” The head cleaning lady said as if my day couldn’t get any better. I could just kiss Areli.

“Yes, thank you.” I said out, walking to open the door.

“The beta seemed to have abandoned the office, he prefers the wild now.” I chirped in, us walking into the dusty and webby office. The only difference was the large boxes of files that weren’t there the day before and I just knew who the culprit was.

“I will sort out the files and help anywhere needed.” I said with the women nodding their heads and we got to work.

I sorted the files and when the shelves were cleaned, I moved to stack the files according to their labels. There was so much to be done, happy to be busy. It took half the day to sort through them and I did not even need lunch. When I was done, I ran over to Areli and she came to brief me on how everything worked, how to do records and she was amazing. Her brain was sharp. She had the ability to never forget anything at all which on it’s own was a weapon. She was going to be my library and she did not mind at all.

We established how we would communicate with each other telepathically. She could already read my thoughts so she just created a link for us to use and I was in my happy place. To test it we just communicated in our heads for the next hours. If anyone walked in they would have thought us crazy, giggling out of nowhere from the conversations that were occurring in our heads. I came to the werewolf kingdom for my mate but it seemed I found something better, a friend. She had been so alone there against the two men but I was there now and together we were going to be untouchable.

“Dinner is ready, let’s go clean up.” Areli jumped from the large table.

The office was super clean and smelt so great. I would never thank the cleaning team enough.

“Yes Queen.” I said out with her giving me an eye which had me wink and smirk at her.

We walked out together and made our way to our different floors.

Everything wasn’t as bad as I thought it would be, a smile on my face only for it to drop as I walked in my room.

“You are late.” A voice greeted me with my eyes rolling.

“Some of us have work.” I said back to Brum as he narrowed his eyes. He wore dark jeans with a black t-shirt and a leather jacket. He looked so good it should have been a crime, standing there with such power to him. He could have been a king himself, I could see it, so magnificent yet there just being this dark cloud over him that wanted to swallow him whole. What happened to him in that battlefield?

I walked past him, moving to stash my communication book before getting naked. I walked bare to the bathroom where I took my time showering just to spite him. I brushed my teeth after then walked out to find him pacing back and forth. I could not help but smirk, his eyes running to me only to quickly look away when he realized I was naked as the day I was born.

I wondered why I was so comfortable around him. I had no shame when it came to him and seeing him on his last nerve was my weakness, having me nearly squirm.

My feet slowed down, taking my time to walk past him then I shut the door to the closet. I bit my lip so hard not to laugh. This was too much fun. I oiled my skin, putting on some highlighter to shine under the lights. I slipped on a dress with a bare back, loose on the body and just above knee length. I strapped my heels on, putting on some jewelry. That was what I called casual, turning with the dress moving to enhance every move I made. My perfume was sprayed on, moving to open the door. My smile was radiant, a huff pulling from Brum as he turned around. My head was up high, staring at him to see his reaction which made my night. He was struck, just standing there like a little boy seeing his crush but he recovered fast.

My legs worked it, walking past him and not even giving him the chance to slip his twiggy arm around my waist. This waist was for men to hold and he was just not men enough. Each step taken, my body moved with such grace, eating it up with Brum right behind me. I hit the last step, turning to make my way to the large doors, hearing the cutlery in play. I stood before the doors with him standing right besides me.

His arm ran behind my back, goosebumps erupting all over my body, my lips parted. My head snapped to him, and just then he pushed the doors open with his free arm. As for me, I was enticed, his side profile impressive. I did not even try to look away, playing it to our act. My legs moved, my waist seeming more flexible with his arm around it. I did not fail to notice him tug a bit closer with his grip firm. My eyes rolled to the other side, my head moving back to stare ahead. All the people had risen to their feet and down on their knees. It was breath taking to watch.

The king and queen sat at the head of the table, eyes on us. I could even feel the gleam in my eyes, such a cunning lady and shame on Brum to make me feel any less than that.

My body dipped down and as if we were in sink, Brum bowed just as I curtsied.

“My king. My queen.” I gracefully said my respects, my voice like honey just glazing through.

“Princess. Brum.” The king greeted back, us both rising up, me still in Brum’s arm. We turned around together, him pulling my chair to which I smiled. Words were not needed, my eyes running to him, a wicked smile to thank him as I sat down.

The moment I began sobbing and feeling sorry for myself was when I began losing the game. I was back on track, about to teach a grown man a lesson he would never forget.

# 15. FIST TO FIST

Brum’s hand did not fall away even when we were away from all the eyes. The king was impressed, I could just see even though he said nothing.

I pushed the door to our room open and walked in which was when Brum’s arm fell away from my waist. The food had been so good, and this time I had listened to the conversation which had mostly been about the upcoming party. They all seemed more excited about it than us. A party was great but I could do without it. I had so many projects to take up plus the work that had been piling up from Brum giving himself a two-year vacation, lucky him.

I bent over, pulling off my heels to hold them by hand, walking to the closet where I placed them down. My eyes fell on the pile of clothes huddled on the corner.

“You should hang your clothes!” I shot out with nothing heard in return. My head popped out from the closet door to find him right at the window, about to hop out. I could not even frown, just laughing with how crazy this whole thing was.

“You better not be going to another woman!” I shot out, him jumping over and just like that, he was gone. My head shook, walking back to the closet to sigh. I picked up all his clothes which I had torn down when I arrived. I hung and folded them back because I could not stand a mess. When done I took out my communication book, walking over to the window seat. My eyes looked out into the night, searching for him but sure he was long gone.

I sighed, relaxing in my seat to open my book. I was happy I had waited to write to Flavia because I was in a better head spaced and lying to her wasn’t my thing. My hand moved, getting lost in the pages. I kept writing and writing until I had poured my whole heart out. I did not know why I was so vulnerable with her but she knew my deepest darkest secrets. I guess the writing made it better to communicate and afterwards I always felt so much better. Her responses made my day every time. Through the lonely dark days, she had been my only hope. I smiled, missing her. She was a sister to me, a best friend, all things I had never had in my life and I had not realized how much I had needed it.

The book was snapped closed, knowing the words would appear on her book. I stared out feeling less bargained. I felt a bit free. A smile was on my face, the air kissing my skin and the need to move my body hit me intensely. It would be the perfect way to end my day. I scooted from my seat, running to put my book away then I changed to black leggings along with a sports bra. I pulled my socks and sneakers on before picking up my folded lupa. What would the fun be in walking out like a normal person? I crept over the window, looking down with the jump so high but I lived for danger. My body flew off, the air kissing me so harshly, just the way I loved being caressed. I smirked from my own thoughts, doing a flip in the air to land in a low crunch.

My head tipped up, the adrenaline rush like none other. I already knew I would kick some air ass.

My feet moved, jogging to the training fields which were empty. It was so quiet and peaceful. I ran around the field so fast for the first hour then stretched again to unfold my lupa which I waved around the air a few times. It glazed around my fingers, the thin metal cold. I blew out air then got into a position.

The lupa waved with each stroke I did, hearing it whisper through the air as I tore it apart. I jumped, moving with such deadly force. I kept fighting as if ready to murder someone, my body straining with me taking it to the extremes. Each jump was so high, each kick with such force and each punch with such impact it felt as if I was punching someone. I did not stop, moving faster and faster.

A kick unexpectedly came at my side. My body jumped right into defense. I kicked and punched back, my lupa striking the man so hard he surely felt it straight to the bone. My eyes fixed on him. He was definitely from the pack, one of the head trainers I had seen the other day. He looked darker and haunted more than Brum. He looked like death, seeing the need he had for this and I would give him just what he wanted.

I threw my lupa to the ground, it just fist to fist as we jumped on each other.

He hit as good as he took, the fight so brutal which was my kind of fight. A dark chuckle poured from me, going faster and harder. He might have been a head trainer but he was no match for me. The man never backed down though, he kept coming. He did not care how hurt he got in that fight, seeming as if he had nothing to lose. He fought as if we were in a fight to death and it had me even more excited because nothing was off bounds. We were not holding anything back, sweat and blood coating us.

My body hit the ground hard, rolling and flipping to kick him from under. I jumped to kick up from under his chin. Blood flew from his mouth, spraying on me so beautifully. He fell with me on him, punching straight to his face over and over again. If his face was the same after I would salute him.

His hands fell on my neck, his nails digging into my jugular which he pulled out. I couldn’t breathe, eyes wide with tears pouring out. I stopped punching, my arms hitting hard on his hand and as soon as he let go, I sat on his throat with my hand, pulling hard. He tried hitting my arm over and over but I was like a bull, never letting go until I saw those eyes roll so I let go, jumping off him.

He quickly coughed so hard, my eyes moving to the sky, seeing the edges turning lighter. Fuck, the sun was about to rise and I hadn’t gotten a wink of sleep.

# 16. SEX ALL NIGHT

The influence of Brum on me was not good. Instead of walking through the front door like any sane person, I began climbing the side of the wall to get to our room. It was hard which excited me even more because I would never say no to a challenge.

The windows were far apart from each other, the wall nearly smooth and I leapt over and over with no fear at all. I was bleeding and sweating by the time I got to our room yet the smile on my face was definitely worth it. I jumped through the window to huff out. My head snapped up as I heard the main door close.

Eyes locked with each other, both questioning the other with our eyes. Brum was wearing the same clothes he left with a few hours ago but because he was more balanced than myself on that night, he took the front door instead of climbing up a whole castle. In all his dickness, at least my man was packing heat. I still couldn’t get over how good looking he was.

I snapped out of the trance faster than him, quickly running straight to the bathroom where I closed the door and leaned on it. A laugh pulled from me only to stop as I realized I had ran all for nothing. We had three head showers and a bathtub, there was no need to fight over the bathroom with him. My eyes rolled, pushing from the door to walk to the sinks. My whole body was aching in a deliciously painful way.

My teeth were brushed, the hard work coming as I peeled my clothes from my body and it was hell. I threw the bloody clothes in the bathtub, having not realized how bloody I was. I tiptoed to the shower, blood on the floor. The water sprayed on me, warm and healing as I sighed. I heard the door open, Brum walking in with the bathroom immediately clouded with his scent. I took my time washing my body, him right behind me on the other shower head. We were so near yet so apart, so bare yet so closed off to each other. I turned off my water, walking out to dry my body. I cleaned the bathroom, washed my clothes while making a note to add a small laundry room in our house plan. I liked being self-sufficient and my house would be just that. I did not want anyone else touching my clothes nor my mate’s. My head turned to Brum as he walked out of the shower.

“I am collecting my first payment.” I said out, straightening up. He did not say anything nor acknowledged my words yet I continued.

“You will do your own laundry from now on.” I said out, a smirk on my face. He paused what he was doing. I thought he would turn around and tell me to piss off but he went back to what he was doing.

My head nodded, walking past him to the closet. I oiled my skin, did not even bother with underwear yet I stood frozen right before my clothes. A scarf had been untied from the rack and it sat right on the dresser. I frowned, there being no way for me to have done that.

“Please do refrain from touching my things unless necessary.” I said to him, taking the scarf, running it through my hands to go and tie it back where it was. What would he have wanted with it? And I thought we had came back together or had he taken it down after I sprinted to the bathroom?

I was too tired to think deeper, walking to wear my sexy sleep wear. In each second of my life, I would be caught wearing nothing but the best. My house slippers were slipped on, walking to the bedroom where Brum already was. He had slipped in the bed, me cursing because he had taken the side I liked, near the door. I let it go, walking around the bed to stop and turn back. I rushed back to the closet, looking through my weapon’s drawer. I pulled out my dagger and then rushed back to the room. The sky was way lighter, sure I would catch an hour or two of sleep. My dagger was slipped under my pillow, feeling Brum’s eyes on me. I pulled the blankets back, slipping in to sigh and drift away to sleep.

I had not even scratched the surface of dreamland when a loud knock came over and over again. I tried to hold on but that knock wasn’t going anywhere. I had been in that state where I was just sinking into deep sleep.

“Brum, Zisealer.”

“Fuck!” I cursed, my head tipping up only to see skin. My body was way too hot. All I felt was skin texture, my body just getting high on that second because it had realized what had happened.

Never had I jumped so fast from a bed but my feet were tangled with Brum’s. My body rolled over and hit the cold ground with a thud.

“Guys, are you okay?” The queen’s voice came with me cursing over and over again.

“No!” I shot out, quickly scrambling up to crawl over the bed as the door opened. I rushed to reach Brum’s chest just in time of the king and queen walking in.

I shifted from the uncomfortable position I was in, my whole side on Brum’s body, my head by his face. The sheets were all over the place, my face burning up.

Brum cleared his throat at the incoming couple, his arm around my body, holding me to him.

“Sorry to disturb. A few people have reported seeing a person climbing up the castle, we were just investigating.” King Conri said, his eyes moving around the room. I was already shaking my head.

“We don’t know anything, we were in our room all night long.” I said out quickly.

Brum nodded his head to agree.

“Really, someone also reported seeing Brum walk in just an hour ago.” Conri continued with me shaking my head again, eyes wide, acting as if I knew nothing about it.

“Nope, we were in here, having sex, all night long, just sex, me and Brum.” I said, my words fumbling over. Brum’s hold on me at that point was so firm I thought he would break my side. Areli was red with laughter, me just trying and failing to keep cool.

“Okay then, since you got enough sleep, wake up and let’s meet at breakfast. A few of the alphas will be arriving today and you will be greeting them.” The king said, his arm hooking around Areli’s waist to turn around.

“Yeah, but maybe we will add one round and that will take an hour so don’t wait for us at breakfast.” I spilled out, Brum groaning with me cursing myself. My mouth tasted foul after those words. I had just been trying to buy us time. With the workout I had, I needed more sleep.

The king and Areli paused for a second before they continued moving.

“Oohh, and wipe off those bloodly foot prints from the window.” Conri said just as he closed the door.

I sighed, collapsing down onto Brum’s side.

“Why were you even climbing to our room?” Brum asked with my head picking up to give him my ugly eye.

“Mind your business.” I shot at him, falling back into his side, too fatigue to care.

“We have two hours.” I fumbled out. I was not about to waste my hard earned two hours talking about my wall climbing skills.

My body felt so good against his, feeling sleep rush to me so fast and all I could do was cuddle deeper into him and drown away.

# 17.BREAKING DOWN THE WALLS

The blanket was rudely ripped from my body, getting a rude awakening with the person tugging the sheet from under me two hours later. I groaned angrily, my feet kicking but Brum was on a mission to just get on my last nerves until I burst apart.

“Brum.” I groaned out, turning fast with my hand slipping under my pillow to retrieve my knife which I held up as my eyes opened. I sat on the bed, staring at Brum who was fully dressed. He straightened up, having done what he wanted. He walked away to the closet with me groaning over and over. I fought with the bed covers but even if I murdered them, I still had to wake up. I grumpily hopped off the bed, walking to the bathroom.

“You will do the bed, right?” I asked and I was not really asking. It was a way to tell him to do the bed. I was late, he was already dressed, it made sense for him to do the bed. I did not know how much we slept for but it was all we would get. I did my business, brushed my teeth then took a shower. I rushed out to the bedroom where Brum had done the bed.

When he wasn’t a dick, he was totally lovable.

I oiled my skin, did my routines and made sure I looked my best. I did not know what to wear. I wanted to be classy, sexy, modest and giving out queen vibes yet there was no time to deliberate so I picked a blazer dress going just above the knee. It had paired black buttons. The material had patterns from my culture. I was there to represent, such bold colors all the alphas would see me from miles away. It was loose but still showing off the curve of my body. I paired it with black heel pumps. My legs were definitely one of my best assets.

I looked good, I smelt good and I was ready to meet some alpha and lunas. My body turned, walking out of the closet with Brum standing nearby. He was seriously underdressed. He had to up his game now because he had me in his wing and I was always on point.

We left the room, my body turning to him.

“What should I say to them? What are the rules? I don’t know much about your culture and rules?” I asked, a bit excited to meet the alphas which was weird for me because I hated everyone yet I realized right then that I was changing.

Brum said nothing, our steps echoing through the floors we passed.

“Well. You can’t just not answer. I know we are not friends but me looking like a fool also doesn’t look good on you.” I said out in irritation. Brum turned his head to me, sure I was pissing him off.

“You greet them like you greet your clan leaders back at home.” He said.

“We bow down with both knees and upper body right before their feet.” I said out just to spite him. Brum frowned even deeper.

“You bow down on both knees?” He asked with the scowl on his face so awful.

“Well, no. The only person I bend my knee for is my father and no other.” I said out, not even my brother. My brother would suck my invisible dick before I ever bent a knee for him.

“Just because you are mated to me doesn’t mean you lose your princess title. You are still a princess and only bow to the king and queen.” He said with it my turn to frown.

I scoffed, my head shaking.

“What world do you live in? I lost everything when I left those dragon borders. I am just a nobody starting from scratch.” I said out with me feeling the anger just soar again but I would not deter. I would fight for my position in this court and rise up like a phoenix.

“Just because you are mated to me doesn’t erase who you are. Being a princess has come with so many sacrifices I am sure, it’s your birthright. A mark of mateship doesn’t change that, it doesn’t change who you are.” Brum said with the words having me stop where I was. I had not expected such from him and it meant a lot really. I was taken back by him with us reaching the first floor which was busy.

“You are going to leave me to deal with them alone, aren’t you?” I asked, turning around suddenly with my hands on his shoulders. With the words he had just spoken I would have given him anything which was probably why he spoke them.

Brum did not say anything, we both knew the answer.

My hands moved to fix his collar as we stood in such a position I would call intimate. He was so close, his arms around my waist.

“What are you doing?” He whisper-asked, me smiling at him.

“You don’t even want to grab breakfast?” I questioned him, busy with his collar as he frowned even deeper. He was ready to push me back and walk away. My eyes went to him and he caught on fast.

“Okay, please go get it for me. It’s a small purple flower, I am sure it’s nearby. I need it for my dragon, she is restless today. It will soothe her.” I said out, pushing back to wink at him, smiling in a way I never had before.

Brum did not waste time. He squeezed a little on my waist before letting go to turn and walk to the door. With Brum gone, I was left staring at Conri and Areli as they made their way to me.

“You shouldn’t indulge him.” Conri said as we all turned to stare at the door where Brum had walked out a few seconds ago.

“Ahh, he will be alright. He is not as gone as we all thought.” I said out in a daze, taking a deep breath to snap from it.

“How far is the first alpha, I am ready to meet some people. I need to eat first, my body is stiff.” I said out, turning in my heel to head to the kitchen since breakfast was long done.

“What were you doing at night by the way?” Areli asked as they followed me.

“Sex of course, good toe-curling sex.” I said, the king clearing his throat as Areli choked. Poor them, I giggled, walking into the kitchen to feed the beast in me.

# 18.UNEXPECTED ENCOUNTERS

I was full, smiling and ready to kick ass. I stood right next to Areli, holding a basket in hand. The girl had outdone herself. There was a whole bunch of baskets behind us we would give out to each couple. Each basket had flowers, treats and tiny gifts. I shook my head, deciding there was a lot to learn from the goddess standing tall next to me.

She was all smiles and sun shine. The sun rays just bounced off her. I snapped my head as I heard the first couple make their way through the courtyard. Our border patrol accompanied them to make sure they got to us alright. The couple was delivered right to the doorstep and they immediately bowed. Areli filled me in on their names, their pack and their family. With her by my side I would never go wrong.

“Your majesty.” The man greeted with him bowing before the king. He was six feet tall, a bit shorter than the king. He looked good, middle-aged but werewolf ages were confusing even for myself. They never aged.

“My queen.” He continued, his mate greeting the king. She then moved to Areli who was so happy to see them.

*‘Stop smiling so much, I can’t keep such a huge smile up.’* I linked to Areli through our special link. With her smile that large, I had to smile too and my jaws was ready to dislocate.

At that, Areli giggled.

“Your highness.” Former Alpha Moonseekers bowed before me, my smile going so wide my bones complained.

“Hello, nice to meet you.” I said out, trying to be sweet but I sounded so bad and I hated it. I was definitely uncomfortable but I would bare through it.

“Nice to meet you too your highness. Where is his highness?” The man asked with me nearly rolling my eyes. It was the question we all wanted an answer to. Where was he?

“He went to get some herbs for me, Oula—my dragon has been acting out. Sorry Brum could not be here but he will be back in time for dinner. You must be exhausted. Please, come get some refreshments before we show you to your room which is stunning, thanks to our queen Areli.” I said out, not sure where all these words were coming from but I felt like I was killing it. I turned to Areli, winking at her as she shook her head while politely laughing.

“Aah, she never disappoints.” Former Luna Moonseekers said, me leading them to the dining room where all the refreshments were. The place was amazing, flowers at every corner, the floors so shiny I could see myself striding through. There were definitely new pieces of furniture added as we walked through the foyer to the dining room.

“My son could not come, he has been under the weather these past months so we are filling in for him,” Mr. Moonseekers said out as I smiled.

“I hope he gets better soon, that’s a shame to hear but I am glad I get to meet you as well.” I said out, my brain working over time trying to come up with the best words. Who knew socializing could be this hard. I had never done it back home, I was always cutthroat there.

“We hope so too, maybe we gave him the leadership position too early. He seemed ready for it, he wanted it and now he just looks dead.” The man continued with me nodding my head. Well, I could not put in my two cents there since I did not know the current alpha of their pack. I could only smile and reassure them again that he would be fine. I gave them some refreshments and was on my way.

My smile dropped as I walked out the door only to pick it up seeing that another couple had arrived.

Twenty minutes into it and I was good to get along with the day. I actually had to stand there all day long greeting each alpha couple, imagine. How had I let Brum out of the hook like that? The bastard knew what was coming and he probably split because of it.

“Oohh shit, here comes Logan. I did not think he would pitch.” Areli said, my head snapping to the man who was striding on his own, no patrol accompanying him. He wore shorts and a t-shirt which was odd. Most werewolves only wore shorts after shifting from a long run.

He was tall and so well built I would have drooled if not mated. The man was the definition of handsome. He had that dangerous bad boy look and it was working for him. His hair was falling on his forehead, him running his hand through those wet black locks.

*Logan, Logan, Logan.*

His name was so familiar which was also weird. I bit my lip, trying to think deeper but stopped as he ran up the stairs. Areli had already stepped to meet him halfway. My eyes did not miss anything, watching to see why Areli had stepped out for him.

“Logan, I did not expect to see you here. I am so happy to see you.” Areli greeted but the man seemed not interested in anything she said. If I thought Brum was dead I took it back that second. The man walking past Areli looked like the darkest God, just ready to doom us all. He looked like a demon about to take our souls by force. There was this deep darkness in him and I won’t lie, I liked it. He looked ready to rip us all apart, him dark and very dangerous.

“I am not going to stay.” His deep and dark voice had shivers run up and down my body. His eyes were on me and I knew he wouldn’t be taking a basket. There was no escaping that stare, him gone and never to be recovered back from the dark. The demons had swallowed him whole.

He stopped right infront of me and all I could smell was him.

He smelt of the earth. Just raw. He also smelt of blood so I would not be guessing what he had been doing before making his way to us. I did not know what he was looking for but I was ready to punch if need be. I could definitely take an alpha down.

Logan suddenly swallowed, seeming to be fighting with himself. His jaw clenched so much I thought it would snap apart.

“How is she?” He asked intensely. I frowned so deep, totally lost. I chewed on his words until it hit me. My eyes went wide as it smashed into me like a wrecking ball in full swing.

My mouth opened to close, taking him in again and wow. My cousin definitely had competition.

I swallowed, not knowing how to approach this. It seemed I had no choice because the look I was getting from Logan told me I had to answer or there would be consequences.

“She is great. She is happy.” I said out with the pain just rippling all through his face but it seemed he was a master of controlling himself. His emotions were reined in so fast I might have thought I imagined it.

“Good, he treats her well?” He questioned with me nodding my head. This was more than awkward.

“Yes, he does.” I answered with Logan nodding his head.

“She has any children yet?” He went on. He really wanted to crush his own heart to the fullest.

“Logan.” Areli cautioned softly, her hand on Logan’s arm.

“Yes, three. Two pure Dragons and a boy. She had them all together.” I said out knowing I shouldn’t tell him in details but instead of making him mad, he seemed to find relief in it. He seemed to find closure and a bit of peace.

He nod his head again, nothing said after for a few seconds.

“Good.” He commented with him swallowing. It seemed he wanted to say more but decided against it. He turned around, ready to leave.

“Logan.” Areli tried again but Logan walked off. His back was to us, striding down the steps. He walked a few steps on the grass before ripping apart to his humongous wolf, dashing off into the woods.

# 19. MINE!

I should have been pissed. I should have been moody and fuming but I was not. As torturous as it was standing there all day long, I could not help but be excited. I did not know what I was excited about. The smiles that I had gotten, the compliments and the well wishes, they did something to me. I should have hated it, should have hated how much I was smiling but I was the opposite of that.

All these were unexplored emotions for me. Such happiness, it seemed criminal to have them. I smoothened my hands over my dress. It was a bundle of colors and patterns with spaghetti straps, tight to the skin. I paired it with tall black heel sandals and jewelry. To add a piece of me on the outfit, I put on my beads. With that, I was ready to face the alpha couples sitting at the dinner table at that point. My hands were sweating a bit but I would never say that out loud because I would be accepting that I was nervous. I never got nervous. I thought, shaking my head.

Brum was supposed to be back but he was not. I paced the floors, my hands sweating even more. Dinner had begun downstairs. I could not just go alone, could I? I had promised them all that Brum would be there. I shook my head, turning around to walk to the window and back to the wall over and over. It felt like I would wear out the floors. After a good twenty minutes, I decided I could not wait any longer.

“Fuck you Brum.” I cursed, opening the door to walk out. Even as I walked down I hoped I would meet him halfway but noluck. Imagine being late for your own dinner. It was not really my dinner but the alphas were there for my ceremony. My palms rested on the doors, taking a deep breath before pushing them open.

I snapped my head up, swaying my body from the way I took each step. It was the power walk, drawing all eyes to me. I could never get used to all the people rising up as I walked in. The chairs scraped the floors, all bowing down to one knee, even the alphas.

It was magical, a smirk on my face. I would not lie, I was a sucker for power. My eyes snapped to the ruling couple, the king staring at me with a frown while Areli looked gleeful. She winked at me and I winked back.

*‘You have to teach me that walk!’* She screamed in my head, having me to smirk even harder. She was blowing to my already overbearing ego.

*‘Of course my queen.’* I said back. I reached the edge of the table, lowering down with such grace.

“Your majesty, my king. Your majesty, my queen.” I greeted. I had never felt this way. I felt so witty and excited. I was sure my eyes were sparkling.

“Princess Zisealer, looking stunning as always.”

“Thank you my king, you don’t look bad yourself. My queen, always sizzling.” I said, all smiles.

I rose up, walking past Brum’s empty chair to pull mine back. I took a seat, settling down. I turned to take in all those kneeling.

“You may tell them all to rise princess.” The king advised with me happy for it.

“You may all rise please.” Look at me adding that please. I was trying to be nice.

My appetite was back, just putting all I could on the plate.

The conversation picked up, compliments on my dress, the alphas asking about my kingdom.

My food went fast, eating, talking, and even laughing, can you imagine. But suddenly, this warmth spread through me. The doors opened just as of then.

The people all rising up told me who it was. I was not even mad anymore because I had been having too much fun. All those in the room knelt except for myself, the queen and king.

I swallowed my food, placing my towel down. My chair was pushed back, standing up straight. My smile widened so much on my face it hurt, playing my role. I turned around just as Brum did a slight bow for the other royals.

He was showered and dressed. He looked good in his formal pants and t-shirt with white sneakers. His hair was wet, looking yummy.

His body turned to me, and fuck, I was fucked.

The man was not good for me at all. He walked closer, and I stepped out. We were playing a role, I kept telling myself. I was starting think I would burn from this game.

In Brum’s hands was a punch of purple flowers that looked amazing, a whole bouquet. He seriously did not have to, them wrapped properly. He bought them just to play into the excuse we gave, I thought.

He reached me, doing a slight bow and my folds just creamed that very moment.

“My princess.”

His voice! Fuck him.

I wish I could tell you that the smile on my face was still fake. I wished it was but it was not.

“Your highness,” I said, fighting with everything in me to keep my voice firm when all I wanted was to just bring him to me and let him ravish me.

He gave me the flowers, getting closer to place a kiss on my lips. Why didn’t he just kill me? My body was high on him, wanting to lean in more. I suddenly missed him pounding into me hard. I wanted him to pin me again and just tear me apart.

He stepped back and cleared his throat before turning to his chair. We lowered and sat down.

“You may all seat.” Brum addressed the room with all the people standing.

I placed the flowers down, standing to make a plate for him because I was just this good cute little mate, wasn’t I?

“Thank you.” He said.

“Anything for you my love.” I said only for him to cough from the sip of alcohol he was taking. It had me giggle to myself, serves him right.

I sat down, not really able to eat but I did so.

Eyes could be felt, a bit of awkwardness going around the room. I stared up, finding all heads down.

One alpha tried to pick up the conversation with Brum but it faded away. Brum hauled his food as if he had somewhere to run to. Even I corked my head up in wonder. I pushed my plate forward, done with eating.

“May you all excuse us for the night.” Brum said which came as a slight shock. I was not opposed to him excusing us but I found myself curious on where he was rushing off to.

“My king, my queen.” He bowed after he stood up. My chair was pulled back, me standing up. I took my flowers, smiling and waving to everyone before we made our way up.

Never had we climbed the steps so fast. I could feel the urgency in him. I was sure he was ready to leave but he had just arrived. I held a groan in, going with it.

We reached our floor in record time. Our door was pushed in, the room dark.

Before I even knew it, my body was pushed and pinned to the door.

Brum was before me, his hands on my waist. His head moved to my neck, taking a long whiff. I could not help it, my legs just shaking. All I had been holding burst apart. My whole body tingled, my underwear ruined.

Brum quivered, seeming to have lost control. His teeth grazed my skin, his lips moving up before he took my lips with such need. My fingers dug into him, my leg on his hip. His hand lowered down. His finger pulled my underwear to the side before rubbing on my sex. He slid a finger in, having me moan out loud into his mouth.

“So wet.” He groaned out, pinning me even more. His dick was hard and ready. I needed it there and then. I wanted it raw and hard. I moved my hands down, fighting with his pants, literally, until I heard the clutter of his belt hitting the floor. His briefs were next, nothing to keep me from having him.

We were both high, my dress ripped apart and I did not care

“They could all smell your arousal.” He groaned out as he slammed his large shaft deep inside me. I moaned so hard I was sure the whole pack heard. I trembled in a way that I felt would kill me. My body nearly buckle over as he slammed into me again.

“Fuck Brum.” It was more of a cry, my juices running down my leg.

“Mine,” He roared out, slamming harder until we fell over the floor and continued fucking harder.

He dug and nestled himself deep inside of me. We slid over the floor with each thrust until we both shuttered apart so brutally it was mind blowing.

# 20. STONE COLD

Every time Brum and I had sex it was more than I could ever imagine. But every time he pushed off me, it felt as equally brutal. That sense of cold air kissing my skin. The haunted imprint of where he had touched and kissed me. He immediately went cold while I was still at the peak of the sensations. It never got better. I never could get used to it. It was damaging and heart breaking.

I was scattered on the floor and he was carrying his pants to the bathroom where he shut the door. I was left feeling so disgusted and so ashamed again. Where was the care? Atleast show some respect for the person you are intimate with.

The floor was cold, and I just felt dirty.

My arousal juices were suddenly so sticky on my skin. My hands shook, staring down at them as I stood up. I folded them into fists, pushing myself up as defeated as I felt. There was nothing besides collecting myself and my dignity. I walked across the room to the closet where I dumped my dress after completely ripping it off me. He wasn’t worth it. My dress deserved better, deserved to be ripped by a better man. My body deserved better. I deserved better.

I shook my head in anger, walking to the bathroom just in time for him to walk out. There was no eye contact, nothing. I did not understand how he could shut down like that so quickly. The only thing I could shut was the door, feeling so many different emotions. I decided to take a shower, cleansing myself of him. I wished I could just rid any desire I had for him but I could not. Even as I stood there, I still wanted him. I still wanted more of him and to be honest with myself, I wanted to have a real relationship with him.

The realization had me halted in what I was doing. The dread fell, feeling the stress just pile up. I was sick. I needed help because how could I even fall for Brum? He had done nothing which would make a normally sane person to fall inlove. I should have been resenting him. I should have been telling him to piss off at every turn. Yet, I found myself falling deeper and yearning.

By the time I walked out, he was gone. The window was wide open with air blowing the curtains to a dance. What else would you expect from him?

I pulled on shorts, my sports bra and a t-shirt. It was early to go training so I sat down to write to Flavia. I had to tell her about Logan. I knew she had been worried about him. First, I read her response to my last letter then replied back. I was done in twenty minutes, walking to the closet to pick up my laundry. There were sheets there which had my basket full.

I slid my feet through my slides and walked down to the laundry room.

It seemed every time I got a chance to be happy and free, Brum just rained hell on it. I had been so happy through the day. I had been so excited and there I was doing my laundry, trying to stay cheered up when my foul mood just clung onto me. I wanted something different. I wanted to feel something different and Brum just kept pulling me down.

I ran my hand through my hair with a sigh escaping me.

The clothes were hung and I was done in thirty minutes, going back to the room. There was nothing else for me do. I took my lupa, put on socks and sneakers. I needed to fight and I hoped Warrior Vex would show again.

I climbed up the window seat to the seal where I stepped out of the window. I stared down and a thought struck me. A thought that one day I would just jump and let go. I shook my head, snapping the thought away before I threw myself off the window.

I flipped my body in the air, the feeling indescribable and it was consuming. I ran through the yard until I reached the empty field. I warmed up, running around for the first hour. Vex was still a no show so I did no routines hoping I would not be alone for long. My body twisted and turned, my bones realigning as I curled to whatever position I wanted. I felt the pain explode but I was there for it. I smelt him before I even felt him, not even giving him time to attack.

I threw myself on him. He fell down from the unexpected weight. Head warrior Vex pushed me off and I jumped up, stepping back with my Lupa thrown away.

He got up, eyes focused on me. I crunched down, us moving at the same time to jump at each other. I wanted those bone crushing punches and those skin tearing kicks. We were on each other with none giving out.

Our bodies collapsed on the ground, blow for blow, more brutal than the previous night. I was holding nothing back, blowing off steam the only way I knew how. I could not take out my frustration on Brum but Vex was willing and ready. He took out his own on me which I did not mind at all.

Blood flew and splattered on the ground, face hammered hard. I hammered back, my fists as if hammers forcefully slamming in a nail. It was do or die, no rules.

As much as I would have liked to go on all night long, I knew I had to cut our fight short. The next day would be the main day of my ceremony and I needed to be well rested.

I pinned Vex down just to show who was boss there then I stood up. Him and I never talked, only fought. I straightened up, holding out my hand for him to get up but he ignored it. He looked more defeated than he had when we began. Something was eating him alive and he was barely holding on.

“Keep fighting Vex, don’t give up.” I said out, giving him one last long look. I did not even know if my words helped a bit but I hoped he got better. Seeing him like that scared me. Was I going to end up looking that broken? I felt as if I was going there.

Leaving Vex was hard but I knew he wanted to be alone if we were not fighting. I had just met him a few days ago but his pain was one that just drew me in. It was heart wrecking to watch.

Like a sane person, I used the door that night. The castle was nearly dead asleep, dark and quiet. I made the way to our room with it empty. I did not even know what I expected. I seriously was expecting a lot from Brum and this relationship. I should have been seeing it as it was, a shit show.

I took a shower, walking out to oil my body then pull my sleep wear on. I did not even bother with the lights, walking to the bed. The covers were thrown off, climbing in to collapse down. I had about five hours to catch sleep yet as hard as I tried, I couldn’t sleep.

A groan pulled from me, rolling in the bed to Brum’s side. I would be dead asleep when he got back anyways so I just let myself be. I took a long whiff with my soul soothed. I found the peace I had been searching for. My body craved something more though. It craved his touch once again. I curled myself with sleep coming for me slowly. All that clouded my mind being Brum.

I pushed my head up as I heard movement outside but I quickly lowered my head and closed my eyes. Brum could not catch me awake. Silence spread through with me frowning. What was he waiting for?

I pushed my head up again, looking at the door but all movement on the other side had halted. I frowned then recalled that if it was Brum, I would have felt the warm sensation I always felt when he was near.

Who was it then? And what were they doing in our floor late at night. The person was just standing on the other side of the door. I could hear them breathe. I threw the blanket and slid off. I wore my slides, walking to the door to pull it open. Shockingly, the walls were all I could stare at. My head turned left and right, an echo of a hall.

The frown was deep because I swear there had been someone there yet I would not go calling on them. Or I was just going insane. I could not pick up any scents which led to me thinking I was literally going down the rabbit hole of insanity. I turned around, walking into the room to close the door.

All I could do was listen for the next ten minutes. I barely even took a breath, just listening. In ten minutes, I was too tired to care. I walked back to the bed, my mind suddenly too busy to rest.

# 21. THE LAST STRAW

Brum walked in, the sun over the horizon. It’s thick vibrant rays poured on the land. I was raw with fatigue, my eyes hurting from it. Brum walked in to shower as I sniffed the air. He did not smell of anything at all, not even the woods. Maybe my nose just wasn’t working at all. I took a whiff again, getting nothing then the thought hit me. I could barely even get his own scent which meant he had used something to wipe any scents on him.

Why would he do that?

What was he hiding?

Could there have been someone in the hall and they had also hid their scent? I was sure I wasn’t making it up, someone had been standing at the other end of the door. My thoughts ran to the night I got sick. I had felt someone next to me. But now looking at it, it could have been Brum with his scent masked.

All I had wanted was a good night sleep which had been thrown in the gutter. Every part of me was aching, too numb to even shift from Brum’s side. The bathroom door opened and it was then his scent came to life. Too many things were bothering me, it a maze in my head.

Feet came closer to stop. I silently sighed, scooting over a little. The bed cover was flipped with Brum sliding in.

It was silence for the longest time as I dived deeper into thought. The more I thought, the more perplexed I got.

What if Brum hadn’t taken down my scarf that day? What if someone else had been in the room while we were out? What if Brum hadn’t been in the room the day I was ill? What if it had been someone else?

I turned around so fast, eyes wide.

“I think someone got into our room while we were out.” I quickly said out. Brum lay on his back, head to the painted ceiling, arms under his head.

I was taken back because he looked so tired. Dark circles took settlement under his eyes and they did not do him well.

“I swear someone had been standing on the other side of the door when I got back from training. I went out and there was no one there.” I was sure about it, someone had been there.

“Did you pull my scarf down yesterday when we came back? Were you in the room on my first night here?” The questions just flew out, sitting up in the bed.

Brum suddenly just turned and gave me his back.

“Brum, this is serious.” I called out but I was preaching to a chair here.

I bit my lower lip.

What if my brother was in the pack? What if my bother could walk in and out of the pack?!

“Fuck.”

I slid off the bed so fast, running to the closet. I suddenly caught the two left feet disease. My feet tangled and I went face first to the floor. There was no time to even process it. I rolled and jumped up to continue my way there.

My heart had never drummed so hard. I fumbled through a few drawers, having forgotten where I put it. I pulled the last drawer on the dressed to fish my hand in until I felt the little box at the back. The relief that washed over me was a feeling I could not even describe. I stumbled back, snapping the box open to stare inside. It was one of the most valuable things to me. It carried all of mother’s jewelry and a few of father’s most valued ones. I did not know if Uther knew that father gave it to me. I ran my hand through it all.

“Your brother wouldn’t make it an inch in the pack without being seen.” Brum’s voice came from behind me. I swallowed, nodding my head with the same thought in mind.

My brother was nearly nine feet. You would see him miles away. But I just had this un easy feeling I couldn’t shake off.

“Yeah.” I trailed away, turning my head to stare at Brum lean on the door frame. He looked so exhausted.

“Go sleep. You look terrible.” I said out, trying to smile but I failed. Brum did not have to be told twice. His body turned, him walking off. I turned my head back to stare at the box before me. I really missed my dad. I knew he did not like writing back and forth but it was too much, I needed to hear if he was okay.

I slid off the counter to take my communication book and writing stick. I did not even know what I would say. I was not going to reveal any important information incase others read the letter.

The ache in my heart just amplified with me suddenly missing him so much. I missed having meals with him as we ate like cows. I missed my room, how expressive it was. I missed training with my army as moody as they all were. I missed home.

I sat up when I was done with the letter. The writing pen fell onto the page. I pushed my feet onto the chair I sat on. I wrapped my arms around my legs, my head lying on my knees with me drifting away in thought until the darkness claimed me away in sleep.

The flipping of paper had me stir from sleep, my whole body ringing a fire alarm. I groaned out, having been in such an awkward position. I did not fail to notice the figure right next to me. Brum’s scent overloaded my nostrils, so sweet and delicious.

“You are selling our secrets to the enemy!” Brum shot out and I heard something hit the floor with a thud. I frowned, my mind slow to process what was happening. I tipped my head up to pause.

My communication book was not where it was supposed to be. My writing pen was rolling to the edge of the counter.

I thought I would explode. My legs swung so fast off the chair. My eyes just lay on my communication book scattered on the floor.

“Are you fucking crazy!” I screamed as I rushed to it, finding a few of the pages torn. My whole body was shaking and I was seeing red.

“You are telling those blood suckers our secrets. Are you here to be their spy, huh?”

I could not believe my ears. I was boiling over to the point where I could not even speak.

My hands shoot up and down to groan out loudly before I messed the man before me up.

“What gives you the right to go through my communication book? Read my thoughts and personal things I wrote! What gives you the fucking right Brum!” I screamed at his face, holding on by a tissue strand and soon it would snap.

Brum bent to take the communication book. Seeing this, I rushed to take it and we were soon fighting over it. I was screaming so loud, pulling it from him only for it to rip apart into two. I felt as if my own soul was ripping apart. I staggered back in shock, him walking off with both ends since the one I had been holding hard slipped from my hands.

“I will fuck’n kill you!” I screamed, running out of the closet just in time to see him throw the book out the window.

I did not have time to fight with him as bad as I wanted to. I rushed to the door, flinging it wide to run out as fast as I could. The stairs were taken four at a time, jumping through some flights.

Gasps echoed as I reached the first floor, moving past everyone busy preparing for breakfast. Bare in mind I was wearing my flimsy sleep wear but I did not care. My heart was just at the tip of my tongue, about to weep it out.

I ran to our side wall of the castle, my book, splattered on the ground. A couple of pages had flew off. I ran after each and every one of them then came back to pick up the two halves of it but what was the point. The magic making the book work was gone.

I would never get a response from my father. I was never going to be able to write to him again. I had lost that connection. I shook so hard, fighting the tears. My body staggered back, hitting the wall with defeat falling on me.

It was too painful for me to even express how I felt. My head bent and the first tear dropped which I wiped away. My body turned, cradling the book as if it was a baby. I saw nothing, heard nothing with all buzzing.

The steps came to view, taking them one at a time until I was further away from all the werewolves. Brum’s scent hit me so hard my heart broke all over again. His feet tapped over the steps with him climbing down.

“You will cut all ties you have with the vampires. I despise them and I fuck’n hate you.” He spat out, walking past me.

# 22. FAMILY OR MATE

I did not have the energy to put up a show. I did not have the energy to stride in with such confidence. All I could do was keep my head up to not show defeat. I still could not wrap my head around what happened this morning. I was having difficulty processing it to the fullest.

The moment I entered the dining room, chairs scraped the floors but you could feel the tension even then. It suspended in the air and consumed all in that room.

I could feel my body sway with each step, my waist curving in with my long legs striding yet I was not in control. I was just loose, my mind gone but I would not tell you where it had vacated to. I felt hallow, an empty vessel with an echo inside.

My body bent down.

“My king. My queen.”

I did not know if they replied or not. My body pushed up, turning to pull my own chair and sit down. The next one to me was vacant. The opposite chair to me was also vacant, with the next until the sixth where former alpha Moonseekers sat with his mate.

“You may all sit.” My voice echoed, one I could not recognize myself.

All those bowing pushed up, their chairs pulled back with them all sitting.

I turned my head to the plate infront of me and I had no appetite at all. I picked a bowl and filled fruit in it.

I could feel the eyes and knew they all knew. I had no idea if they had heard Brum’s words and God, I wished not. I stabbed each cut fruit and brought it to my mouth with no interest in it at all. No conversation picked up, the food sliding down like boulders in my throat.

In that tension, the door was opened slightly and feet echoed. As if the room hadn’t already been pregnant with such thick tension, it got worse.

At first, I thought it was Brum and the dread fell but I relaxed when I felt no warmth inside me. Most of those in the room gasped and gawked. I had no interest to find out who it was, just stabbing at my fruits but the reactions were too much I could not resist.

I turned my head, seeing a couple walk hand in hand. They scanned for empty seats until they found them. I saw the shock in all those that had been sitting in that table. I turned back around, Conri and Areli equally shocked themselves. It was as if they had seen a ghost. Their hands connected on the table, the action pushing in a thorn in my heart.

Maybe I had missed something. I turned back and the couple was just normal. They both looked a bit pale but otherwise, normal werewolf couple.

‘Who are they?’ I asked Areli through our link.

It took time for her to snap out of it.

‘They are Rose’s parents. She left with her mate, Alpha Bush, years back. We have not heard anything from them since they left. The parents came back after a few months after the war. They keep to themselves. This is their first time joining us since they came back. They never leave their house.’ Areli said with me frowning.

‘What happened to Rose?’ I asked because it seemed there was a story there at how Areli was picking her words.

‘The previous king abused her since she was young until he died. Conri and Brum also had a thing with her.’ Areli finished with me taking in the words. Why wasn’t I shocked? Brum could have been sleeping with the whole pack and I wouldn’t be shocked.

‘That is awful. Is she okay.?’ I asked, just already seeing it in my head and it was heart breaking.

Everyone thought werewolves were nice and romantic. They thought it was all sunshine and rainbows here but it was all a disguise. It was as evil as all the other kingdoms. Even worse than others.

My hands sweat, the day taking a turn for the worst.

‘I don’t know. She was in bad shape when she left. Her mate was also in bad shape. They have cut all communication with us so we don’t know how they are.’ Areli said sadly with me swallowing.

‘But if everything was alright, the parents wouldn’t have come back.’ I said out in wonder.

‘They are also tight lipped. We tried asking what happened but they completely shut us out.’ Areli spoke out with me nodding my head. I had a bad feeling about this. I had a bad feeling about everything suddenly.

I dropped the fork, my pretense in eating done. I turned around to take one last look only to freeze as I found the woman’s eyes directly on me. I had been caught. I did not know if to smile, wave, turn away or what. The more I stared, the more it got weird. She had an evil eye. It had shivers run down my body. It was as if she knew something I did not.

I did not like this. I did not like it at all. I snapped my head away but surely something was going on there.

Everyone was pretend eating, food just pushed around on plates, eyes moving from head to head.

Conri suddenly cleared his throat and stood up. It was the much needed destruction as all eyes snapped to him.

“I am happy to let you all know that tomorrow will be the day we finally have the initiation ceremony for our female beta. This pack and kingdom has gone for more than two hundred years without a female beta. The moon goddess has seen it fit to put a warrior, the dragon princess Zisealer in our mist. She is impressive in every way. If you ask any of the dragons, they will let you know, or the vampires. She burned down all cities in the vampire kingdom just a few months back to avenge her people. She trained and led an all-female army. Just that on it’s own is inspirational. I would like to officially accept you again Zisealer into our kingdom. We are the one in the Goddess’s favor by gaining you as a part of us.” The king finished with me shocked to say the least.

All the in the room were smiling and as the king took his seat, all the people in the room began clapping hands. After the morning I had, it was hard keeping my emotions in check yet I did. I felt awkward because I felt as if they were cheering at that I had burned down the vampire kingdom when I regretted it deeply. There had been children there. There had been mothers and innocent men. I would never forgive myself for it and I loved the vampires. I was really in an odd situation when it came to the two kingdoms. It felt like I had to make a choice at a certain point and I did not want to.

Flavia and Dante were the closest family I had. If I cut ties with them then I would have no one and Brum would win. I was not going to do that. Whatever happened would happen but Flavia and Dante were not going anywhere when it came to my life.

# 23. CLAIMING DESTINY

Just after dinner the alphas from all the packs began showing up. They were trickling in like flies. Most had been travelling by groups.

I was not in the best moods and I was actually doing well considering the morning I had.

Brum was nowhere to be seen but we had all expected that. With the rate he was going, he would miss even the birth of his own child I swear.

“My king.” An alpha couple greeted the king.

“My queen.” They continued, moving onto to me. I waited until the whole group had said their greetings then I led them to the dining room where they would get refreshments. The castle was buzzing in a way I had not seen before. It was all tiptoes running around. The kitchen was in full swing, pots bristling. Some ladies were showing the alpha couples to their rooms where they would catch some sleep. At that point I wished I was one of the incoming guests so I could also go sleep in my room. The fatigue of not sleeping for so many nights fell on me and by the looks of things, I would not be sleeping in that night either.

The conversation between me and the ruling couple remained shallow. I was too much in my head to keep a conversation going. I was pretending to not be thinking of Brum when I was actually thinking of him and nothing else.

How could he?

It hurt beyond I could even express. I had just been minding my business and he had attacked me like that. The reading of my private conversations with my family was bad enough but actually destroying the only means of communicating with them was pure evil. I knew he had history with the vampires but that was uncalled for.

Even if I had been selling secrets, what secrets would those be? Flavia and Dante had enough on their hands, a war was far from their minds.

A sigh escaped me, it not sitting well with me that I would not hear from my dad. I surely had to ask and use Conri’s communication book or Areli’s. Hopefully they had a link to my father’s book. But knowing dad, he would not answer in fear that any information would be intercepted.

Brum really went over and above. There was no coming back from it.

I was not even angry anymore when it came to him. I was just numb.

Areli nudged me.

“Here comes Alpha Silver and Blackstone. Their family lines are the eldest and they are the ones that carry this ceremony.” Areli said through our link. I looked up, seeing old men needing retirement.

They were both a bit on the thicker side, skin a bit saggy with eyes sunk in. It was a blessing infact to see a creature from any species who was that old and there weren’t many.

“Alpha Silver. Alpha Blackstone.” The king greeted. Alpha Blackstone greeted back but alpha Silver’s eyes were on me. He stared me up and down, analyzing me up and down.

“Brum couldn’t get anyone better. She looks like a small twig about to snap.” Alpha Silver said out. I corked an eyebrow out, actually amused.

‘He is always like this and he gets worse each time I see him. It’s old age.’ Areli said out, nearly having me laugh. She tried her best to mask her face but alpha Silver’s eyes snapped back to her as if he could read her mind.

“Take me to eat.” Alpha Silver exasperated. “I doubt I will be eating anything tonight.” He continued, already walking on.

My eyes locked with Brina’s before I threw myself in the fires of hell.

“I will accompany you to the dining room where you can get something to eat then go refresh and catch some sleep in your rooms.” I mention, my long legs allowing me to catch up to Alpha Silver in just two strides. That seemed to also piss him off.

“Accompany me?! I have been in this house many years than you have lived child. We should be accompanying you.” Alpha Silver snapped back, the way to the dining room suddenly longer. Yet, I could handle myself.

“I know alpha but I have been taught to never let an elder wonder on their own. It is merely a show of respect alpha.” I politely said with the alpha lowly mumbling to himself until we reached the dining room where he waved me off.

When it came to old and sharp-tongued elders, you killed them with kindness and respect.

My body turned, giving alpha Blackstone who was gawking at me a smile. He nod his head as I left them to torture someone else.

There already was another alpha couple that waited and I was soon also accompanying them and answering the same questions over and over. *Where is Beta Brum*? As if I was his keeper.

“You smell amazing by the way.” Areli said, still not giving up hope in sparking a conversation with me. I turned to her, recalling that I had not even sprayed perfume that day.

“Must be the remains of the perfume I had on yesterday.” I simply said with her shaking her head.

“No, I smelt that one, it was great. I need to get your collection. Today you smell different, amazing. It’s like being in a field of flowers.” She continued as I frowned. I was not going to bite into the forced conversation at all.

“Thank you.” I simply answered, giving her a smile with her beaming back. Not even her bright mood would rub off on me that day. The more the hours trickled away, the angrier and fidgety I got. The sky mirrored my mood as the hours passed, you would think I had an effect on it.

I had not idea when the ceremony would start. What would happen and where it would take place? I just knew the first step took place that night. The sun dipped with any calmness that remained in me. I hated Brum and I hated him more for leaving me there in such an important day. What was so important to him that he would leave in such a day? Why was I even wondering? He said it himself, he hated me and probably wanted to see me make a fool of myself infront of all his people.

I did not need him, he could die wherever he was.

“All the alphas are here, let us meet in my office.” The king said, his arm around the queen’s shoulders as he tugged her to his wing. My head nod on it’s own. I did not miss the king turning to look towards the woods before shaking his head.

What was he thinking? Was his mind in the same thought as mine? That Brum wouldn’t go that far, but he could and he would.

I don’t know why I went to our room first as if I would find Brum there. I just did not want to look as pathetic as I felt. My head was buzzing and good thing I had no hair or I would have pulled it all off in that second.

I straightened up my body and shook my head. I could do this. I would face this as scary as it was. I rolled my shoulders back and stood tall. I wondered if the outfit I had on was okay for what was to come. I had no clue, deciding to go with it.

The door was closed by myself before I made my way to the king’s office. My heart was jabbering in my chest. Needles prickled my skin inside out.

As soon as I reached the office floor, I could hear the chatter in the king’s office. There were so many alphas there. I sucked in a breath, swallowing all the fear. My heel echoed, my walk back.

I grabbed the handle to the office. It was so cold but I pushed it down eitherway. I pushed the door and walked into my destiny.

# 24. CLAWING MY WAY THROUGH

“Where is the Beta?” Former Alpha Moonseekers asked with the whole room in scowls, full of testosterone it was suffocating.

Areli kept showering me with sympathy smiles and they set me off. The mention of Brum did not help my foul mood. I was sure I held the deepest scowl in that office.

“He is running late.” King Conri said, his hand running through his hair in frustration. His words left a bitter taste in my mouth, turning me green.

The silence that followed was heavier than any weight I would carry in the world. Eyes darted from one pair to another, the shock seen in all the alphas there. It was not my best day but I would not bend my head in sadness no matter how much I wanted to.

“Then we should wait.” Alpha Silver said with the dread pushing down to my belly and made it flip.

No one answered but a decision had been silently made. I walked off to seat on Areli’s office desk. Eyes darted around, everyone waiting for another to pick up a conversation.

“Since we are all here, we can talk about the rogue matter.” The king said and since we had nothing better to do, all the alphas turned their attention to Conri.

“We put up a task team to Alpha Logan’s request. He is heading it and he has made great progress. He captured the rogue ‘beta’ who has been facing alpha Logan’s wrath. We believe we are close to getting where their ‘kingdom’ is located. When we do, alpha Logan will be leading the attack team seeing what the rogues did to his pack and family.” The king spoke with all heads in the room bowing.

Were they talking about the same Logan I had met the previous day? He was hunting rogues. There was no surprise he actually caught their beta. Logan was as scary as they come. He was a man that seemed to have nothing to lose and a fight with him was never fair. What I would do to train with him and see how dark he would go. How hard he would hit and if I could easily take him down. There weren’t much worthy men to fight with and something told me Alpha Logan would not go down as easily as many did.

What happened to his pack and family?

I had a lot to learn and everything was just flying over me.

“We are happy to hear such news my king. We can finally end the abomination of a kingdom they claim they have. I think I speak for all that no one better would carry out this mission than Alpha Logan. The boy has hardened since the loss of his family. He is truly a force to be reckoned with.” Alpha Nightshade said with the others agreeing.

The conversation trailed to a point where Conri even whipped out his ledgers as they delved deeper into the kingdom’s finances. The alphas took the opportunity to put in their requests. I was happy they could all talk but that was not the reason they were there. We were rotting in that room because of one person who was so incompetent he couldn’t put his ego aside just for this day. I could not stop myself from imagining the many ways I could end him.

Three hours later, everyone sat back, the silence falling over again. I was tired, sleepy and irritated.

“We can not wait any longer, the ceremony has to start.” King Conri said as he stood up. His eyes darted to Areli who nod her head.

“Princess, please come over.” King Conri mentioned with me seeing that I would not like what was about to happen.

“Her mate needs to be here, who will undress her?” Alpha Silver asked.

“I will.” The king’s voice boomed as I reached him. I couldn’t help but cling to my clothes.

“Blasphemy!” Alpha Silver cried.

“This woman right here is going to be initiated as our female beta starting today.” The king firmly stated in a commanding manner that left all the other’s jaws on the floor and looking pale.

I hated it. Another man doing my mate’s job when it came to me. I hated it so much but I was only going to take the anger and use it as fuel. My hands fell, the king right before me. I could see him, feeling his hands pull the skirt and shirt off. My bra was next and I thought I would explode with how violently my body was shaking. My dragon had had enough. She was burning flames and it took everything in me to rein her in yet her wrath sent my skin burning hot.

I was bare naked in a few seconds. I felt cold fingers as the older alphas began drawing on my skin. I did not care at that point, I just stood there brimming with anger.

“You will go to the woods with these alphas to start the ritual and it will end tomorrow night.” The king said with nothing coming from me but he knew I heard.

“One royal needs to be there. It’s useless without a royal present.” Alpha Silver spoke out again, pissed to say the least.

“Brum will be there.” Conri affirmed but I held no such hope for the man he spoke off.

The door was opened, the alphas trickling out and I knew I had to follow. They led and I followed. Soon, cold air rushed around me, a contrast to what I was feeling. I could have been the causing the lightening that tore through the sky with such vengeance.

“This is a cursed day.” An alpha said. I felt my body move side to side, legs stretching and kissing the ground with my waist doing it’s dance. I had angled my head down, my murderous eyes sharp. Conri had left my good luck beads on. They sang for my waist as it swung side to side. Time became a blur to me. The first drop of rain hit my skin followed by another.

Unnatural darkness crawled from the very ground to the sky while the lightening set it clear for just that second it tore through the heavens. Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice I put that on myself but never, never a third time. Brum would never get another chance.

The alphas stopped, snaping around to survey the area. We were near a pond that looked to be carrying more evil than any of us had ever seen.

I moved around, circling the camp. I sniffed and surveyed the land until I was satisfied. The heavens seemed to open up at that point with the rain holding nothing back. It did not rain but poured yet what difference was it to me.

“Wolf ass!” Alpha Silver cursed, stomping around. “Stop standing there. You need to hunt and get us something to eat.” He continued. I turned to look at the deep dark forest. If it were anyone else they would have been spooked as it was so dark but not me.

I strode right for the large forest which was darker than the other option. My walk turned to a run and soon I was knocking down some trees with my body. Hunting could wait, I had to get the wood before it got soaked. I knew what I was doing and I could do it in my sleep.

It took half an hour, all the wood I would need brought before the alphas. I quickly began building my shelter while they watched, jaws on the floor. I moved at lightening’s speed until I had a place to store all my wood which they could use as benches.

Without a word, I was done. I broke into a run knowing all animals were mostly in hiding from the storm. My hunt was made easier for me. I looked for caves, checking inside, ready to face the wrath of any animal in there. I kept searching until I hit a score. An evil gleam spread on my face with me finding a large cage housing two large Gorlz. They were large mammals and they were violent. It was exactly what I needed, just nearly the size of a normal werewolf.

I went in blazing.

My fist was all I was going to use. I screamed to wake them up because I wanted the fight. Finally, I could fight my anger off. My fist ran into fur with my kick hiting more fur. I slung myself, fighting with such wrath the poor animals did not deserve. As soon as they realized they were under attack, it was a war. Two against one. I liked my odds. I liked living vicariously. It had me appreciate life even more and I needed to appreciate life with everything that was happening. Some would even say I was suicidal.

The animals all jumped at once, long claws digging in me and it was then I realized I had wanted to feel the pain. It burned need in me and I loved it but too bad for the Gorlz because I was riled up. I threw everything I had into both of them and when I was done, the animals dropped down, shaking the whole cave. I rummaged through them for two full hours. Two full hours in there. I had walked in a presentable naked person and walked out a beast.

I dragged one at a time, going back and forth until all two of my sacrificial lamb were by the river. I skinned them with such skill. It took only a few minutes. I cut them into half and cleaned them before I hung and left them to drip away the rest of the blood.

I walked back to get my wood where all the alphas were huddled.

No one said a thing, just unspoken words hung in the air. I could only feel their eyes follow me, seeming as if all of them had decided they would not interfere which was good because I was still at the edge even with that fight. The heavy rain did nothing rein me down.

I heard shuffling and I did not even look up to see.

“Your majesty? You can not be here.” Alpha Silver exclaimed.

“A royal has to be present, I am here.” He shot out in irritation. I worked and I did not even want to listen but I found myself catching the words none the less. Ofcourse Brum had not shown up.

“A king should never be present in these. That was why we allowed Beta Brum to attend even though it was his mate’s ceremony.” The alpha continued.

“I am not here as the king, I am here as Brum’s older cousin.” The king said. Alpha Blackstone threw his hands in the air, at a loss of words.

“We can’t just all do what we like despite tradition. This whole thing will be doomed.” Alpha Blackstone finally snapped.

“If the Beta doesn’t want her as his beta then so be it. We will halt this whole ceremony until he gives us who he wants placed as his beta female.” Alpha Silver exclaimed as I rubbed my hands together, eyes on them. I kept rubbing harder with the flame burning hard in me. My hands fell away from each other as the flame blew out from my hands. All eyes snapped to me and I stared back at them all with no shame at all. They could see the darkness in me as I threw the flame hard onto the wood I had set up. The wood just picked the flame fast with it all combusting into a large fire. I was at the other end of the fire, looking at them through the flames.

There was only one thing that would happen and by the end of the next day I would be the official female beta.

“The ceremony is going to continue.”

I wasn’t asking. I was telling them all.

The bastard was not going to mark me then put another as his female beta. I would be damned.

# 25. YOU WILL NOT HURT ME ANYMORE

“And now we are being held hostage!”

“Don’t be dramatic Silver.” Conri exclaimed.

I was not holding anyone hostage. What I was saying was that the ceremony would go on whether they liked it or not. Whether they were part for it or not. I was too riled up to argue with them. My eyes did the speaking for me. The alphas raised their hands up, backing away and I took that as a yes.

I swerved around, walking away into the forest. The trees danced to the wind, such harsh wind in this huge storm. I gathered the fruits and herbs I needed before walking back to my hanging meat. I grinded the herbs and fruits on the stone. I rolled the oranges on the ground over and over to get as much of the juice squeezed.

The meat was cut into a bunch of pieces which I carried to the fire. I set them near but not directly to the fire. As the large pieces cooked on the rocks I set them on, I divided the fire into two. I set up where I would hang up each animal then went to get the two beasts. I hung them upside down on the nearly extinguished fire. They would cook all night long by the smoke. I turned to the smaller pieces, dusting more of my spice mixture on them as I turned them over and over again.

My back was turned from all the alphas. It was time to build a shelter for the meat so I got onto that since the flame was controlled. When the meat was under the shelter, there was so much smoke but I sat there, turning the smaller pieces over and over where I sat.

No one spoke, the tension high, feeling eyes on me just gawking like creeps.

The cut pieces were done in no time. I cut the oranges open, the juice just spraying onto the meat. With the fire roaring, the meat turned golden with the skin crispy. It smelt good and I knew they were all drooling in their mouths. I got banana leaves, putting the cut pieces there to serve. There were so many they would feast like kings.

I took the first leave to the king, carrying such a big portion. My knees bent as I extended the food to him.

“Thank you.” He said back with me bowing my head.

I did the same for the rest, giving out the food in a bow before walking back to the fire

I had not left any for myself because my belly was full with anger, like heavy stones having sunk there. The hanging meat was turned around before I went into the forests, getting large tree branches with thin stalks but many leaves. I dragged them back to the shelter for an hour, walking back and forth then began making beds for the alphas. I knew they could shift to their wolves but I needed to do something. I made each bed large so that even a wolf could fit. I extended their shelter until all the beds were ready.

With all this work, I should have been at least calmed down with exhaustion but I was not.

I dusted the hanging meat with more of my herb spices then I just sat on a rock nearby in the rain. I let it was over me, my eyes closed, legs crossed. I could not tell you what I was thinking but I just felt numb and it was the worst feeling ever. I felt hurt but not in the painful kind of way. It was hurt that tore through the soul and chirped it a little. Like a vacant heart with an echo.

Feet shuffled next to me, the king’s scent attacking my nostrils and pulling me from my tortured peace.

“Can I sit next to you?”

I did not answer because my answer was no but I knew he would sit either or. He climbed up and settled next to me with the silence heavy between us. The rain water streamed down my face with such vengeance and I was surely getting a yeast infection.

“A thousand years ago, the current king was cursed to suffer and cause damnation upon his people. The curse was carried by the ruling line so as much as all of his children carried the curse, only the crown prince would pass it on to his children. I was born with the curse. My father and his brother, Brum’s father also carried the curse. The pack was enslaved. They worked so hard for just little food. Many starved for years. My father would beat them to submission and he killed whoever he wanted when he wanted. But my mother and us got the worst of it. He tore my mother apart, beat her and chained her every single day until he finally killed her. He beat us to unconsciousness daily. I took most of the beatings for my brothers. I used to rile him up so he would always be punishing me instead of my brothers but it was not enough. At a point I would pass out and when I did, it was open season on my younger brothers. He kept the youngest, Carl, chained in his cell which was well guarded. He knew that even if we ran away, we would never leave Carl behind. To free us, Carl took his own life. I took my brother Reagan and ran with him but we were caught and our father was so mad he hit us so bad Reagan just couldn’t survive. I broke out and when I did, I saw Brum. He was just two years old. It was my first time seeing him. His father was also cursed. He killed Brum’s mother the second she gave birth to Brum and no one saw Brum ever until that day. His father had hung him off a pole after whipping his two-year-old body so hard his skin leeched off. I took Brum and I left. From then it was just me and him. We were on the run, no place to call home until we found the mountain packs years later where they hid us. When Brum was old enough we went back to free our pack. I killed the king and took the crown. Brum killed his father. We thought we would find peace but we did not. I carried the curse but Brum did not. He was my anchor, my strength. I controlled it as best as I could as it ate me inside. I freed our people and turned the pack to what it is now. I know it hurts. I was just as bad to Areli when she got here and I regret it so much but she never gave up on me. Please, don’t give up on him. He wasn’t like this. During the war his heart was ripped out and he should have died but because of Areli, he survived. He was never the same though. Just give him time please.” The king finished with his words all in my head.

I said nothing for the longest time.

My heart broke for them both. I could see it just play in my head and it was shuttering. The pain engulfed me and I was so sorry for them both but I could not stop thinking of one thing.

“He would never do this to her.”

“He wouldn’t.” The king hummed back his words and the confirmation added to the ache.

“He loves her.”

“He does.” Conri confirmed with me nodding my head.

“I could open my arms and heart. I could let him break me over and over again with the hope that one day, just one day he would love me enough to stop hurting me. But I am afraid my heart and soul would be shuttered beyond he could fix.” I swallowed the pain down.

“I would rather find happiness without him. I would rather save the little pieces of my heart left for my children.” I whispered out, meaning each and every word. It tore me apart but I would stand by my words.

I turned my head to stare at Conri. I was shedding the last tears when it came to Brum.

“I am done with Royal beta Brum.”

# 26. PAIN

I tended to the meat all night long as all slept in the camp. My eyes were raw and I myself was raw with determination of my course following that day. The forest came to life until it all settled down as the sun made its strides over the horizon.

The rain had begun and exhausted itself on me. I liked to believe it was cleansing me of how weak I had gotten. By the time the men woke up I had assembled their plates for them. They sat and ate as they chat with themselves. I could feel the eyes take me in but I had my old self back. There was no way they could approach or start a conversation with me. Even Conri decided to let it rest.

They walked away after eating, heading back to the pack, and I was left to dissemble all the shelters I had made. I cleared the beds and left the area as clean as we found it. They came back clean with a new set of clothes while I rotted, feeling like filth in my own skin.

My back was to them, sitting on the rock, legs crossed and staring at the lake. The hand of time stood for me, just blinking the hours away until I heard my name being called. I knew it was show time. The drums could be heard from where I was, the darkness crawling slowly to engulf us all.

I jumped off the rock, walking towards the two oldest alphas who did not look pleased at all but we could not all have everything we wanted, right. My eyes locked with Conri’s, him watching with his jaw flexing.

I turned around, being led to the lake. I was not afraid. I was not afraid of anything. If death found me then so be it.

We walked into the lake, deep to the center with our feet far from touching ground. I felt as if something was moving in the water, circling us but I shut it all out.

Alpha Silver placed his hand on my forehead and before I knew it, they had dived me completely under the water. My eyes closed on instinct. The water ran into my nostrils and ears, feeling it burn. It seemed like forever before I was pushed up again. My body was dunked back immediately as I tried to blow out the water already in my mouth.

They held me down longer this time. My body wanted to fight, kick and try to set myself free but I just lay limp there. Every part of my face burned, and I couldn’t breathe. The time ticked away, hearing them sing or chant above the water. I let the fear in me wash away, wanting to know how it would feel like to come to the very brink of death. It was not as painful as I would have thought. Once I relaxed it was a dull ache with my cells fighting for air in my body. The urge to take in air, to fight drifted away and I was just floating. I did not think there, no pain. Peace.

My body was pulled out. It instinctively jerked to survival mode. I spat the water, coughing and taking in as much air as I could. The throb came back with a vengeance and the aftermath of being at the edge of death wasn’t so nice.

The two men pushed my body forward.

Conri stood at the edge for me, holding his hand out. I placed mine with such grace, my eyes flickering, his locking with mine. I stepped out, standing straight as the water ran down my body. He held a towel, drying my body from head to toe then he stepped back. The two alphas came with a white cloth, tying it at my back, covering my breast. Another cloth was wrapped around my waist and tied at the side. My beads sat on it and it looked good. The men began drawing on my skin with their fingers and paste. Every exposed part of me was marked up to my forehead. They then held out a wooden bowl to me. I just knew it was filled with blood. I brought the bowl to my lips, it fresh and still warm apparently.

I flickered my eyes up, them pairing with gold orbs. I imagined it being my enemy’s blood. I did not waste time gulping it down, every last drop of it. My heart drummed with a vengeance and when I was done, I could not help licking my lips. I extended the empty bowl to Conri. Everyone seemed paled and phased, just staring at me.

I turned my head left and right, waiting for the next task. The alphas snapped from their frozen state.

“It’s time we finish this.” Alpha Silver said, walking ahead with Alpha Blackstone.

Conri was next to me, feet kissing moist ground.

The drums got louder and faster. It reminded me of home. I closed my eyes and let the sound wash over me. The walk took shorter than I thought. The lights, the fire, the smell clogged the air. I took it all in. The people sang and danced. It was a celebration. They finally had a female beta and that was me.

I felt heavy. I felt drugged with my eyes droopy. My waist moved with such skill, my whole body swinging with such royal finesse.

My eyes faltered open and close because my lids were suddenly heavy. The blood ran through my system and poisoned every part of me. I could see the flames, the dancers, the wolves running and howling. I could see the men smashing the drums with such force the drums should have torn apart. I was taking each of it in blinks.

The beat mixed with the poison in my blood and my body began moving. I did my people’s dance. My body seemed loose in a way it had never been. My waist swirled around while I made my way down the set path. The song went louder, the cheers roaring with such fire as they all parted and danced on the sides. My body was just slithering, the spirit of my people taking over and she was a party animal. Never had my body moved so well, the beads rocking on my waist with each move. My smile was one cunning, my eyes drowsy and vividly opened.

I moved my arms all around, my legs uncontrollable. All of me was on fire, the whole present werewolf body cheering so hard I thought they would faint. They screamed so hard their chords would rip.

We reached the end of the path, two large wooden chairs just before us where Queen Areli stood before one, cheering so hard. Conri held out his hand and I straightened up, placing mine on his to take the last strides.

“Kneel.” Conri whispered softly into my ear. I lowered to my knees, him lowering with me, hands still clutching each other. An old woman walked to us holding a large wooden bawl with a knife on the other hand.

“Lay down child.” She said, her voice seeming to echo and multiply.

Conri held my shoulder and gently pushed me forward. My forehead kissed the ground, eyes closed. My hand was held tightly and I soon realized why. A knife cut me from the nape to the very bottom of my waist. It was something I had went through before, not to this magnitude but I knew the pain that was coming.

I felt the woman rub the herbs in the open wound and it was sizzling pain that nearly paralysed me. I bit my lower lip and told myself to relax. The pain washed over me like the rain had. The cut healed with the herbs inside to run to my blood stream. She cut under my feet next and rubbed more herbs in. It was excruciating pain and exactly what I needed. It seemed to splatter the brain apart, just so unbearable.

“You may stand.” The woman announced, tranquil silence all over the pack.

My feet were on fire, burning deep from the bone.

I pushed up, Conri holding me. I had braced myself for the pain of standing on my feet but it was more than I could have imagined. My body stumbled over but Conri was there to hold me up.

“Where is her male beta?” The woman asked in annoyance. She seemed to be a witch, her floral scent just distinctive.

I could feel the tension escalate.

Conri held tighter to me.

“Not present.” He answered.

“Then why waste my time?” The woman asked as I swallowed.

“I will proceed on my own.” I spoke out firmly, the woman unbelievably gasping.

“She will proceed on her own.” Conri enforced with the wind heard whistling with how silent and tense it was.

The woman shrugged but annoyed. She turned and walked away to come back a second later with a large bowl filled with so much blood, werewolf blood. My hand was cut and wrapped with a white cloth before it was dipped in the bowl. The blood soaked onto my wound as it slowly closed. My hand was pulled out and uncoiled after the woman took the bowl away.

Conri turned me around to stare at him. His hands held mine, eyes on each other. His warmth swam into me as uncomfortable our position was. We were too close and it seemed too intimate for me.

“Zisealer Dragonstone, Royal Beta Brum’s mate. Do you accept the role of female beta to the werewolf people as your own, to love, protect and care for?” Conri passionately inquired, the words drifting off with the wind. I stared deep into his golden gaze. Did I have a choice though?

“I do.” I said out, erupting a cheer from all the people watching. The drums picked back up, them singing and rejoicing. I swallowed the lump stuck in my throat. The pain soaked with the poison, creating an explosion.

Conri stepped closer, his head bent to the side of my face. He was so near it had me shiver.

“I will hunt him down myself and I will drag him back home. I promise you that.” The king irely seethed out.

“I will protect you and I will fight for you. You do not have to fight your battles on your own now. You have me and Areli.” He finished, holding a bit tighter before he let go and stormed off with determination.

# 27. THE ART OF SOUL BREAKING

I woke up alone, all splashed on the bed. I had drunk too much Were-ale. It had knocked me out which was the only way I could sleep really. Looking back at the night, I had a great time.

The people had dragged me down and I had danced all night long as if my life depended on it. They gave me drinks and I could never say no to a drink. We jumped around as a group and danced until the sun threw it’s first shade.

I jolted off the bed, running straight to the bathroom where I crumbled to my knees and held tightly to the seat. The ale forced itself out of me so painfully it surely had to be revenge for how hard I had drunk it. I kept dry heaving with nothing else passing because I had not eaten anything in two full days.

My stomach turned, my body twisting to collapse next to the toilet seat. I was way too hot and the tiles were cool. It felt nice just passing out there.

It was hours later when I woke up. I dragged myself to the shower then stumbled out to brush my teeth a million times until my mouth burned with nothing but freshness. I cleaned the bathroom then walked out to make the bed as naked as I was. It was then I finally went to the closet to oil my skin and did my routines which I realized were a lot as I dragged myself around. My belly was still turning, just not wanting anything to slide in my mouth that day.

I finished dressing up and I was just talking a deep breath to find peace when Areli linked me and ruined my already ruined day.

*‘Conri found Brum, come to the office now.’* She spat out with me sensing an emergence which had me groan. I ran my hand through my head to realize I had a bit of hair. It was the highlight of my day. I took a soft brush and gave it a brush. A small smile tugged on my face but I couldn’t dwell on it because I was summoned.

I walked out of the room, wearing leggings and a t-shirt with sneakers because I just did not have the time for a full glam up. I still looked nice though. Me in leggings was a knock out. I ran down the steps to take a turn and made my way to the king’s where I could hear voices just screaming at each other. A sigh escaped me. There goes my happiness down the drain.

My hand fell on the handle, walking in as the door opened. So many scents hit me but my body nearly jerked when Brum’s scent hit me yet it was different this time. He smelt of someone else and a baby. I frowned, my eyes taking in the setting of the room.

Areli and Conri sat behind Conri’s desk. Before them was Brum with a vacant chair next to him. I cursed my luck that day, walking in to pull the chair and sit down.

Brum was drowning in these other scents it left me very bothered. He did not glance at me, not even once. He was red with anger but Conri seemed about to burst apart.

“You called her?” Conti asked, turning to Areli.

“Yes, we can’t hide her mate’s indiscretions.” She shot back at him. “I would like to know.” She added and I knew this wasn’t good.

Indiscretions?

My heart leapt hard and I was trying to ready it for what was to come. I was trying to build an extra layer of protection around it fast but I was not fast enough and it would have never been thick enough.

I shifted in my seat and not even the perfect sitting position would have saved me. The tension in the room was suffocating. Conri turned back to stare at Brum, him swallowing.

“You will stop going there. I will send someone else to talk to her and if she doesn’t want to come back then we leave her there.” Conri seethed through, him nearly shaking in anger.

“Who her?” I asked, since I was called there, I wanted to know.

Conri’s gaze was frozen on Brum. He was harshly breathing with such rash. His eyes shut close, him sitting back with Areli placing her hand on him to calm him down.

“It’s none of your business.” Brum shot out, not even sparing me a look but it seemed like he was throwing swords my way. I could not help but chuckle as I sat back in my seat. I held my hands up in surrender, him out for blood. I crossed my legs, a smug smile on my face. He could have it anyway he wanted.

“Rose. He has been seeing Rose.” Areli jumped in to save the day. I won’t lie, it took a good thirty seconds for it to click who Rose was. The smug smile was wiped from my face so fast as I frowned. Being in Brum’s life as his mate was just a test of one’s sanity. The stab in my chest intensified yet I had to stay strong and act unbothered.

“I thought she is mated?” I asked in shock.

“She seduced and slept with another at the pack. The alpha, her mate, forgave her but when she gave birth to the other man’s child, they banned her from the pack.” Areli spoke out with my eyes going wide. It was too much to take in while I was still trying to tuck away my pain.

It was by pure luck they hadn’t stoned Rose to death. In my kingdom they don’t play like that.

My head shook, trying to process it all but failing. I wanted to stare at Brum. I wanted to stare at him to make sure this was real. And shake him just to get a reason why. Even if he told me lies, they would make me feel better than I did right there.

“Where is she now?”

I could not even believe what was coming out of my mouth. There were two parts in me. One was crumbling down while the other maintained a straight face, asking questions with a firm voice.

“Brum built her a house on unclaimed land. Every day he goes there and takes care of her and the baby”

I know I was asking these questions but Areli’s explanations just furthered the nail in. I felt so defeated. I had never felt so defeated in my life. I did not know what to do, what to say. I had a question deep in me that I wanted to ask but I realized I couldn’t bear the answer no matter how strong I told myself I was. It was already hard trying to regulate my breathing and act normal. If I asked the question I wanted, all would break loose in me.

“Brum. Rose has gone through a lot but we can not carry our father’s sins. We already have our own. We will help Rose in any way we can but you are too involved. You have a mate now you need to take care of and worry about. You cannot walk away every day and night to Rose, leaving your mate alone and your duties to all our people. How do you think she feels? How would you feel? How would you feel if I did that to Areli? If you cared that much about Rose why didn’t you mate with her?” The king shot out. He was trying to rein in his anger to calmly address Brum but failing.

“Maybe I should have.”

I gasped loudly from the pain that struck me hard.

“Maybe I should have. Now, if you are done with this, I would like to take my leave. As you saw, Rose is sick, someone needs to take care of Hugo.”

“Brum, don’t you dare walk out that door. You are not to see her and that is my final verdict as your king. That girl is playing you. Don’t stupidly fall for it and ruin your life. Br….” Conri did not get to finish the word. The door shut hard, Brum having left the conversation and office.

# 28. REVENGE

No one thought he was bold enough. I did not think he was that bold enough but as this cold and vacant echo got intense in my chest, I knew he was gone.

I could not believe it, all mouths wide agape as Conri still stood staring at the door in shock as if that would will Brum Back. I was in shook too, just sitting there paled with my jaw on the floor. The room got hot and cold.

I kept processing it and each time it shocked me harder. I was seriously at wits with what happened. My mind in the gutter.

Conri groaned out in anger, running his hand through his hair. He turned to Areli who was wide eyed herself. I knew their attention would turn to me from there. I knew they would throw their sorrowful gazes at me and try to comfort me. I didn’t want to be a part of it. I shot up like a flare, turned around and quickly made my way out of the office. Areli called after me but I moved faster, getting into Brum’s office and shut the door. I quickly grabbed a chair and put it under the handle which wiggled a few times before it stopped. I just needed time to think. I just needed time on my own.

I shuffled back and forth before the large office desk, my hand over my head.

I did not know what to do but what could I do?

Brum knew as much as I did that I had no other option than to sit there and take it all. I couldn’t leave, I could only stay and endure. My anger was dimmed down by my hurt. I leaned against the table, biting my lip while deep in thought.

But I couldn’t just take all this nonsense lying down. I could not just weep my heart out and hope everything got better. A wild part of me wanted to follow him and wreck everything in that house. The soft part of me wanted to weep and be sad until he realized how much he hurt me. I shook my head with a frown taking over. I would never do that. The evil part of me wanted revenge to give him a taste of his own medicine. But I was not a deceitful person, it would be me compromising on my values and I was not losing more sleep because of Brum.

I began pacing again and I finally decided to slip into the chair before I collapsed. My head fell on the desk before I picked it up in a sigh.

The fierce warrior in me wanted to weather the storm. I would leave him to do his thing and ruin his own life while I built mine without him. All my life I thought I would be alone and that had not changed. I could make a life of my own, a beautiful life. I had a role to play in this kingdom now and I would do it with no fail. I just had to make myself indisposable so that when push comes shove, I am have a place no matter what. I would be the best and most fierce beta female they had ever seen. Since Brum wanted to play house with some other man’s child I would take his position. Yes, I would be the best beta they had ever seen. I would replace him and make him seem more useless than he actually was at that point. When he came back to his senses he would have lost everything. He was destroying his own relationships with his family, cutting ties and burning bridges. I would take over so that when he finally breaks our bond and mates with his Rose, I would keep the beta position and he would go live his life with his little family. I could even get myself a boy toy.

It sounded good to me, a smirk on my face as I sat back in my seat. The way my brain just circuited and switched had even me worried. I felt so evil it nearly had me laugh. My heads angled. There was too much to be done, and I was ready for it.

I quickly pushed off my chair. I straightened up and rushed to my room. I tore off the leggings from my body to wear suit pants and a white shirt. I was the man now. My heels were slipped on, taking my leave to the kitchen.

Lunch was being cooked. I checked on it, asking what was needed. The woman said they would send me lists of what they needed. I helped a little then moved to the cleaning crew to do the same. From there I went outside to the gardens and landscape team. I could hear the warriors training at the training fields and that was my next stop. My heels clicked, the sun burning down on me until I reached the fields.

It was all muscles on display there. All the men just wore shorts, sweat covering their bodies and it was a sight for sore eyes. They were in groups, learning different routines from the different head trainers. Some were training in their wolves with their head trainer who was also in his wolf form. My eyes caught head warrior Vex who was doing one on one combats. His group was in a circle. Each person would jump to attack Vex when the previous one fell out. Vex was not holding anything back on them. He was tearing them apart. It tempted me to join.

“Beta Zisealer.” I was called, my body turning to head trainer Stern.

“Head Warrior Stern.” I greeted back, walking to him. He was the head of our army under myself and Brum so anything we communicated, we did through him.

“Good seeing you here. Have you come to train with us?”

“Yes, actually but starting from tomorrow. I will train with the warriors and I would also like to teach a group. I have a different style of fighting, I am a different species and very skilled. I think I have a lot to teach.” I said out with Stern nodding. I needed to put myself in high positions everywhere to the point where I am irreplaceable. This ensured my place in this pack no matter what. Was this why Brum hadn’t come my ceremony? He did not want me as his female beta. I was good for a quick fuck when he couldn’t reach his girlfriend and that’s it. He wanted to put Rose as his female beta instead? I mentally shook my head. Over my dead body.

“I agree your highness. We would have asked but we were not sure you would agree. Vex has been raving about your skills and it would be an honor to train all of us.” He said with me just so happy about it I would burst. I doubted Vex would rave, he did not seem like the talking type at all.

“Thank you. I will also learn a lot from you all. I will come from five to four every day.” I spoke out. The three hours before dinner would be to help the ladies at the kitchen or anywhere I am needed then paper work would be done at night till morning where I would train with Vex again then catch an hour or two of sleep.

“That is generous your highness. Thank you so much.” Head Warrior Stern said, others staring our way with grins on their faces. I guess my reputation carried me. I did not know how Brum thought I would take this but I was not going down without a fight. He could keep his dick and I would keep everything else he has and he would not see it coming.

If I had to challenge him for the position then so be it, but first, I would get everyone on my side.

# 29. NO PEACE

Brum was gone for the whole following week. There was no time to ponder on it because I was buzzing like a bee through the castle. I never thought I would enjoy work that much. I was smiling despite the odds bet against me.

I taught two two-hour classes which I enjoyed so much. All the warriors joined in my class and they were such good students. I took other classes by the other trainers myself and I learned so much, including how to fight off a werewolf. I dropped all my opponents down of course. There was no way I wasn’t letting it be known who the best fighter in the kingdom was.

Areli joined often which just became our thing. The king did sometimes which was even more fun because all the warriors did their absolute best to impress the king. I was not above that kind of attention, we all did our absolute best when the crowned couple was present.

After training, I refreshed then head to the cleaning crew to check on them and see if any help is needed. I would then go outside, if they were good there I went back to the kitchen which was usually filled with laughter and pipping pots.

Nights were my worst enemy though. All which was forgotten during the day came back with such force when the lights were dim, the castle quiet. I hated paperwork but I endured it for my course. I worked so hard, reading, writing and making decisions. I communicated with the different alphas now and again. The pile of work was getting slimmer. I was on top of everything, barely getting sleep at all as tired as I was. Even if I tried to sleep I would only toss and turn. Brum’s scent was wiped from the bed which he had rarely used before. It set me off and I would die before I took any of his clothes to hold while sleeping.

My appetite was completely gone. No matter how hard I tried, the smells just left me so queasy. My body was sore all over, tired but no relief. I would soon lose my mind. I sighed, pushing back in the chair with my hand running through my short hair. The amount of weight I had lost since getting to the werewolf kingdom was alarming. I knew I could not keep doing this. I had to eat, feeling so weak. As I thought of food it just had me gag where I was. Maybe if I cooked something from home, something I had been craving. Even thinking of that was a spear to my heart. How was dad? I wished I could write to Flavia. She could get that information from Drakko. But seeing how Brum acted when he found out I was talking with the vampires. I did not want to have such a break out with the crowned couple especially when I was already on thin ice and I doubted they had a connection with my vampire family.

The heels were switched for flats. My feet had been burning on recent days and just thinking of dipping them in icy water had me sigh. My body was sluggish, dragging myself down to the kitchen. The castle was dim from the limited lightning. No one was in sight yet somehow, news always reached the king of who walked in the castle late. I shook my head, walking straight to the kitchen. The scent of dinner still clung to the walls and it had my stomach turn. At first, I bore through the torture of going down to dinner but on day three I bowed out. No one came at me for not attending dinner so I just retired to the office instead of joining them all.

I swung the cabin doors open. My main ingredient was chili peppers, a lot of them. I found a few in the fridge which dimmed down my hope but I was esthetic when I found chili powder in the pantry. The thought of having a meal from home just had me smile. I went through the pantry. The more I found ingredients, the more I jumped around. They did not have mealie powder but they had flour so I would make mealie bread since I did have corn.

I got into it, my hips moving a little to a drum in my head. I sang the song, doing the dance now and again. It brought a memory to me. My mother and I used to cook. She taught me all I knew when it came to cooking. She would teach me traditional songs. We would sing and dance the traditional dances while cooking. My father would walk in with my brother and we would all dance. It was like she was there with me, her smile lighting up the whole castle.

The dough was done, whipping it as I waltzed around the kitchen. The steamer was ready, putting the bowl with the dough in. I closed the lid and stood back, very excited. The hunger seemed to amplify, having me work faster.

I got into my vegetable stew. I put the potatoes and other veggies to fry before adding spices. I put it to a boil then stepped back while magic happened. The number of chilies there would knock a wolf down. The smell took my smile to the heavens. I could not help clap my hands in excitement like a child about to receive candy.

To keep busy, I washed my dishes and got the kitchen to its former glory.

I took out my plate and spoon to plate. I waited five minutes and how gut wrenching it was. I couldn’t make it to the five. In four minutes, I opened the lid and the amazing smell of the mealie bread nearly had me moan. My mouth watered from the luscious smell. I took it out, and sliced it to carry the slices to my plate. It was a large plate, believe me, and I was a big girl with a large dragon so my serving was very generous. The bread piped up as if begging to be eaten. The stew was pulled aside from the burning stove plate. I plated it and closed the pot before rushing to seat down. Only food could make me so happy. I quickly washed my hands and came back to tear the bread with my hands and dip into my stew. It was piping hot but I was going in. I blew a few times but I was too impatient, throwing it in my mouth as hot as it was.

The heat made the chili a million times worse. My eyes shot wide with tears crawling up yet I chewed and swallowed, going in for more.

I moaned with each bite, my fingers licked dry before digging in again.

*‘Ziss, where are you? I need to tell you something.’*

NO! NO! NO!

I couldn’t find peace in this castle. I thought of not replying, cursing under my breath. I had learned, Areli was a bearer of bad news. If it was good news, the king would break it to me.

*‘I am busy with something, you can just tell me through the link.’* I mentioned to cut things short.

‘Brum just sent word.’

I lost my appetite. I pushed the half-eaten plate and sighed. The heavens were against me surely. I did not even want to hear it at all.

*‘Rose is pregnant.’*

It took a second, just one second and I was running straight to the sink where I vomited all I had eaten out.

# 30. THE REJECTED PRINCESS

I was sick. I was sick to my stomach for days. I was buried in bed, tossing and turning with sweat trickling from every pore. Yet my compulsive behavior still had me wake up and wash the sheets each day as sick as I was from how hard I was sweating.

The contractors were supposed to start working on the room and I had no energy to move out so I told them to start working on the other rooms first. Besides the sickness, I was dealing with the constant pounding of hammer to wall.

I did not want to see anyone to the point where there was a chair under the door handle. I blocked Areli out from my head but that did not stop her from pounding on my door and sitting there for hours telling me ridiculous stories each day. She tried, she did try to cheer me up and she was not the problem. I was the problem. I just wanted to be left alone. She did not know I was sick, no one knew and I liked to keep it that way. They all thought I was mopping over Brum. Even that killed me on it’s own.

Rose was pregnant which was why she had been sick all along. Brum was working to bring her back to the pack. *Just gut my heart out*. I silently groaned out even thinking about it.

Curse him!

How could he?

But there was no surprise there.

Now I had to watch them parade in front of me. It had my stomach turn and I had figured out a solution for that. I just rose my head up the side of the toilet bowl and gagged to my heart’s desire. My head felt faint, it slumping on the toilet seat which was dewy with my sweat.

Oula was pissed at me. She didn’t want to be here anymore and so did I. She was very shady these days and suspicious as if she knew something I did not. She tried projecting her feelings to me intensely. She wanted to pack and go so much it had me sicker. I had no energy to deal with her moody feelings.

I could just already see in my head, Brum holding Rose’s hand as they walked around the pack with her big bulgy tummy.

What was I even still doing there?

Why not go to the vampire kingdom? If my brother attacked, Flavia, Dante and I would figure it out ourselves. If I died so be it.

Even if I stayed in the werewolf kingdom, what life would it be?

My children, if I would have any because I doubt Brum was going to be baby making with me anymore. He was having his heir with Rose and to him, I could go die in a rut somewhere.

The tears prickled my eyes with them burning.

*He is a good man*, father had said but look where I was now. What kind of man would do what he did? It was a first for me to hear but the werewolf kingdom was full of surprises.

What would happen to my children now? My firstborn would have to fight for his beta position. It would be my brother and I’s situation all over again. I would have to tell my child he couldn’t be a beta because his father now had an older child with another woman. What kind of madness was even that?

“Why Brum?” I asked for the millionth time, feeling so defeated.

Yet, at the same time, I had to rein my hurt back because maybe I was the other woman. I was the other woman! She had him first and now she was having his child. Just kill me.

I wanted to pack all my bags right then and leave. What if Brum was waiting for me to move out from our room so he could bring his pregnant lover in with their unborn baby?

“Urgh!!!!!” I screamed out loud in such pure anger. For days I had been at this, five to be precise, and still it tore me apart.

He mated me.

He embarrassed me in front of my people.

He used me.

He dragged me before his people and now I was probably the joke of the kingdom.

My stomach turned and I quickly jolted up to gag so painfully over the toilet bowl. The tears poured down, painful pants pulling from me as the pain took root from deep in my belly and spread all over. The sob broke through just as then, gagging and crying out loud with fat tears dropping in the bowl along with the string of saliva.

*THE MIGHTY REJECTED PRINCESS*

*WHY?* I kept asking over and over in my head. I shook and cried so hard my throat closed. *I want to go home! I want to go home!* The words tore through my head over and over. I felt the last of my energy drain. My body slipped from the seat I was clutching. I went down, my head hitting the cold floor with eyes staring at the white ceiling. I thought I was dying from the pain. The darkness edged around my eyes, spreading until the darkness swallowed me whole.

*“Are you going to give up? Are you going to give up Ziss? Look at you splattered on the floor. You are going to let her take him? Your mother must have saved you for something. You can’t even fight for yourself. You are useless. Even if you were given the crown, you would not be deserving. You can’t even save yourself. Pathetic. Your mother died for nothing!”*

*“I will not fight for a man papa!” I screamed out in the field of tall grass we stood in, staring at each other as tears rained down my face.*

*“Because you know you wouldn’t win ….”*

I jolted up from the dream my brain had deduced to torture me even in my unconscious state. I heaved so painfully, hand on my chest, it rising to collapse with such force. My eyes were wide, moving around the large empty bathroom where I was still sprawled. They searched as if searching for someone. I did not know who I expected to be there yet my fragile and tortured heart knew.

I felt disgusted with myself, as if my skin was crawling. I pushed up the bathroom floor to clean it and the toilet. I knew I had to get myself together but I just didn’t know how nor with what strength. I felt as if every ounce of energy had been squeezed out and all I was left with was to clean myself in the shower then pull on some sweats and just crawl in bed. Maybe the next day I would have the strength to face the world. Maybe the next day I would have the strength to get up and continue fighting.

# 31. TRAPPED

It was a trap. It was a trap I couldn’t shake off. I rattled hard into the rabbit hole and got stuck inside. There was no way out. The pull of the blanket under my chin, the fold of my body and the dangerous thoughts were all a trap. I found myself in a loop, in a cycle I could not break.

I could not push out of my bed. No matter how much my inner voice screamed for me to get up I just couldn’t. No matter how much my dragon fired at me to get myself together I just couldn’t. What should have been a night to recover turned to a week of deep-rooted pain that kept me bolted onto the bed.

To keep Areli off my case I would wake up dead at night and slowly make my way to the kitchen where I would rattle some pots then walk back up but in the past two days I did not have the strength to even cover my tracks. I just lay in bed with my eyes closed. My whole body hurt so bad even swallowing turned painful. My stomach could only painfully twist because there was nothing I could vomit out. I did not even know how I was still able to even wake up. My dragon was surely shedding the last of the energy she had in her to keep me up. Food was not even a thought in my mind. I did not know what was in my thoughts but I was just drowning.

I wanted to get out but I couldn’t. I did not know how and I was starting to panic. It dragged me even deeper into the dark hole where I was. I was screaming in my head yet my body just limp on the bed as I blinked the hours away. The silence was maddening at night yet the pounding and voices during the day equally pushed me over the edge. I was losing more pieces of me daily. The once fierce and fiery princess brought to shambles. Everyone had a breaking point, don’t they? I had met mine and I was afraid it would swallow me whole. I was trapped in my own mind, my body and mind having turned to become my enemy.

I told Conri I was done with Brum. Told him I couldn’t let him break me because he would damage me for good. I had not known that Brum would still hurt me even when he was not in my life. I hadn’t known he could still tear me apart even when he wasn’t there with me. He did it while miles away, just nailing me to my coffin. I felt as if there was a large open wound in my chest, I was convinced it was there. Even breathing became deadly, just wanting to lay there and painfully drift away but I couldn’t.

The fire in me couldn’t be extinguished. The core of me kept fighting, fighting for me to not drown in the dark sea I was in. I finally pushed up the bed I had been lying in for days. The blanket was pushed away. I sat there for what seemed like hours, thinking and failing on how I would collect the pieces once again and puzzle myself back together. Even if I did put back all the pieces, I would forever be broken, cracked at all angles that could shutter at any point.

Everything seemed hard. I sat for long minutes trying to move but my body seemed paralyzed. I put my hands on my leg by force and manually pushed it off the bed as my body violently shook. It took so much of me I was left heaving. But I had already started, I could not go back. I forcefully pushed my other leg down and then worked to turn around and stand up. My mouth was dry as dust, my tongue to crack I swear. My legs wobbled with each step I took. Thinking of how broken I was, it left me in tears. I did not know how I got there but I was not staying there. The tears poured harder because even walking taxed me so much I was sweating. I did not even know if would survive the day but I told myself one step at a time. It was exactly that, just taking one step at a time. I got to the bathroom and took so much time showering, brushing my teeth and cleaning after myself. I avoided the mirror at all costs.

I walked back out with my mind having been made up. I kept chanting the words in my head over and over again. I could already see myself having the conversation *‘ Areli I need help.’* I nod my head, trying to move faster so I could get to her. I knew she would help me. I knew just being with her would help me. I oiled my skin. The pain intensified but I pushed past it. I thought of nothing else and kept chanting the words I would say when I saw her. I needed help. I needed to eat. I needed to gain my strength back then I would feel better. I was abusing my body and mind. Areli would know what to do.

It all looked so much better, feeling a tard better already.

None of my clothes fit anymore. They were all too big and it left me shivering so hard. I did not recognize myself. I felt lost and trapped in my own body. I wanted to touch myself but refrained because I could not handle the feel of my bones. I could already see it in my head. I could see myself in my head and the image I had created was unbearable to see.

I slugged down a chair, my head lowering down on the counter. It seemed too much, walking out of the room, everyone seeing me like that. It was too much. It became a battle. I knew I had to leave the room. I kept telling myself to get up and go to the door but I never did. The strength I had gained diminished like sawdust in the air. It failed me even when Areli came knocking on my door to check on me. It failed me as she sank down the door and sat for hours. It failed me as she stood up, giving up for the day. I was screaming inside. I was screaming for her to just knock the door down and get me. I was screaming in my head for her to get in and help me. But it wasn’t her job to help me. It wasn’t her job to save me. Why couldn’t I help myself? Why couldn’t I save myself? What a hypocrite I was, teaching others strength I did not have. At the first sight of problems and I crumble and break apart.

I felt like my head is about to explode, my hands gripping hard on it, tugging, groaning in anger. I was so angry, angry at myself. My body was crunched in that awkward position for so long I thought my bones would tear at my skin. I just wanted to go back to bed. A large part of me wanted to go back to bed but I knew that once I got in I would sink in the trap again. I was not going back there. I sat in the closet naked. Chills covered my skin with the day turning to night. The voices went away, the construction team knocking out for the day and I was left truly alone. I swung my body back and forth at some time over and over. It was a war in my head, fighting to not go back to bed.

To not think at all, I needed to be busy. I needed to do something. My head painfully jolted up. I slipped off the seat and made it to my clothes. I began pulling them on to the floor. I sat down and began folding them as fast as I could which was very slow. I had to clear the room for the contractors to knock it down and rebuild it into the desired design. The night was spent, my side of the closet clean by midday the next day. I couldn’t stop, I had to keep going. It was helping. I was getting better. I shifted to Brum’s side and stopped. My eyes took in the clothes and I closed my eyes to take a deep breath in. His scent hit me hard and I had not been ready for the effect it would have on me. I felt dizzy yet the pain that had been so intense washed away a little. My eyes flickered open. My feet moved on their own and before I knew it, Brum’s t-shirt was pressed to my face. I inhaled deeply and oohh God. It was the most amazing thing that had happened me in weeks. The relief that came. It was magical. I took the whiff again and the pain washed away again.

There was no stopping me as I pulled the t-shirt over my body and it felt so good I stumbled back and lowered to the floor. I found my cure. I had found my cure for my sickness. My stomach stopped clawing itself in, the bile irritation dialing down. I curled my body and I was knocked out by sleep in seconds.

# 32. THE ROYAL LETTER

I was doing better. When I woke up from the deep sleep I felt way better. As much as I hated it, I kept Brum’s t-shirt on. I sniffed it constantly and it kept me sane. I packed all his clothes away and set the cases to the side. I changed the bed sheets then just decided to clean the floors.

I knew I was delaying the invertible yet I stalled as much as I could until I knew I had to face the world again. I showered and brushed my teeth a million times. I oiled my skin and even sprayed some perfume after wearing what was once a tight dress. To hold it in around my waist, I tied my thick layered beads. Walking out of the room seemed like a fire but it was a fire I had to walk through. I can do it, I whispered to myself, pushing my head up.

“I am strong. I can do this.” I chanted out, taking it one step at a time. The chair under that handle had kept many out but it was time to let them in. I put the chair back in it’s place then walked to turn the handle.

The door was pulled open by myself. I don’t know what I thought but after two weeks buried in my room, the air was dustier than I had left it. The men were hard at work. I could already see the kitchen lay out and bathroom. The home I had wanted to create for Brum and our family was coming along fine but it seemed I had been planning it for him and his other family.

I swallowed the bitter thoughts.

All the workers stopped in shock. The silence was one I did not know how to address.

I said a low hi to which by the time they snapped from the shock I was way down the stairs. There was no going back at that point. There was only moving forward. I took a deep breath as I ate away each floor. I could hear the people buzzing around and it hit me then that my senses were not at their best. I had really weakened myself.

I hit the first floor and everything came to a standstill I swear. All around were frozen with jaws on the floor. But they snapped out of it and were soon all in a bow.

“Princess,” They greeted and all I could do was swallow and bow my head respectfully to greet them back. I turned around, walking to the kitchen which was busy. The smell of food hit me even before I got there. My stomach which had found rest after so many weeks rose up even worse than before. I nearly bent and gagged right there. My hand fell on my chest as if that would ease the irritation. I stood for a few minutes with my face sour. I had no option. I was sure a month had passed without any food. My senses were weakened, I was weakened and I needed the food. Something so normal like food turned to such a tedious task for me. I took a step closer to the kitchen as if approaching an opponent. I took another. The smell got more pronounced and I couldn’t help but run to the nearest bathroom where I heaved over the toilet seat because I had nothing to vomit. My stomach was eating itself up. We were back at it again, my strength plummeting down. I could see myself spend the rest of the day there because I had no strength to get up. And besides, to leave I would have to pass by the kitchen again and even thinking of the smell of the food had me jump up and gag again.

I have to get up! I chanted in my head. I had not come so far to get stuck in a toilet where someone could just walk in to take a shit.

“I can do it.” I told myself, building up new pillars to lean on every time I crushed down again. I nod my head, finding strength somewhere in me to get up. I stumbled up, feeling that I was far from okay but I was a warrior and I could bare through it. Slowly I made my way through. I held my breath and covered half my face as I went by the kitchen. My steps hastened so I would pass by quicker. There was no way I could take the steps so I opted for the flying machine. It took me to the office floor where I walked to my office. Conri and Areli were not in their office. I wondered where they were. I was sure they were informed I was out of my room. I would have expected them to come running and engulf me in hugs. Don’t get me wrong, I was happy they were preoccupied.

The workload I had worked hard to lower was back up from all the days I had missed work.

My concentration was nearly zero. My mind was everywhere but nowhere. I wondered what I would make to eat after everyone went to bed. Even the thought of the meal I made last time had my stomach turn itself. I pushed those thoughts for when I had to deal with eating.

I shuffled papers around, read this and that. Reading a single paragraph took hours and at the end of those hours I could not even recall what I read. I tried picking up sounds from downstairs but I got nothing, my sense of hearing so weak.

I lowered my head to the desk, feeling sweat collect on my forehead. I felt absolutely horrible. It was a sickness I did not even know how describe, just tearing me apart, every part of me.

*‘There is a vampire at the south-east border, detained, looking for you. It seems important, run.’* A voice echoed from somewhere. I jumped in my seat, looking around the room to realize it was in my head.

Was it Vex?

*‘Vex?’* I questioned but no answerback. His words then came back to me. The realization hit me like a brick to the face. The chair collapsed down as I jumped out of it. I did not know where I found the strength but I ran for the window. The door was far. I jumped out not even thinking of the consequences on my body. I was sure something might have shuttered but we would see it later. I ran like my life depended on it. My heart drummed so hard. The adrenaline turned to fuel as my feet carried me like wind.

I was happy and scared but mostly happy.

Was it Flavia?

I am sure Vex would have said if it was her, maybe not. I hoped it was Flavia. I shook my head with me so hopeful. I would throw myself in her arms. She would hold me so tight and never let go. I would beg her to stay a bit longer. I felt tears swell in my eyes and pushed them back. I missed her so much and I needed her.

I tore through the trees with newfound strength. My dragon was on the lead, pushing me forward. We had really attached to Flavia. I could feel the determination flow through my body with each pump put in. The darkness was nothing, dodging any obstacles that stood in my way.

I jumped out of the clearing as if jumping into a fight. My knee grazed the ground. I quickly flipped up to walk further on.

There was a large group of werewolves. Most were in their wolves, caging a vampire in. They growled and threatened him with their bared teeth. The vampire’s arm was up high, holding a large envelope from them.

The king and queen stood not far from him seeming to be passionately talking to him and not in a good way. I frowned, walking closer. Their heads snapped to me. I could see the fury on the king’s face, Areli in a deep frown. They seemed to be at odds.

“Ziss!” Shock was all that painted their faces.

Hadn’t they called me? Why were they shocked to see me?

Then it hit me, if they wanted to call me, Areli would have reached out, not Vex. My eyes looked around, Vex was nowhere to be seen there.

“What is happening here?” I questioned, walking closer.

I walked past all the wolves who were not backing down. They were ready to tear the vampire into pieces. They did not back down even as I passed them into the circle where the vampire was stuck. I snapped my head around in anger and growled back at them forcefully

The vampire looked young yet strong. He was filled with such fear but he still stood his ground.

“What is your name?” I asked as I turned to him.

“Abraham.” The boy said. “The king and Queen sent me to get this to you no matter what.” He continued. He looked so tired and worn out. Surely he hadn’t stopped even for water on the way with how exhausted he looked. I wished I could offer him water, food and rest but seeing how they were ready to tear him apart, he was not welcomed in the land of the werewolf people.

I turned my head back to Areli and Conri. I did not expect this from them. He was just a boy. But who was I to judge. I had massacred many of the vampires myself.

I gripped his shoulder, turning him around, and I gently pushed him forward. The wolf near jumped up as if to snap his head off. I kicked the wolf straight in the face hard he collapsed to scramble up more riled up than before.

“Enough!” King Conri finally spoke up, the wolves snarling and growling in disapproval before backing down yet not entirely. They lowly growled, eyes still filled with blood lust.

I led Abraham away. We kept walking and I was very much aware of everyone following us. It pissed me off to the very brink. I stopped walking. It was very clear I was not to be alone with the vampire and that said a lot about how much they trusted me. It brought me memories of Brum ripping apart my communication book.

“How long have you been detained?” I asked.

Abraham swallowed.

“A few hours, they wanted me to hand over the envelop but I was told to only give it to you even if it means my death.” I nod my head, knowing Flavia had said those words. My girl was cutthroat.

I held out my hand, the boy placing the envelop in it.

Would Corni and Areli have called me if Vex hadn’t tipped me off? What would they have done if the boy had continued refusing? Would I have ever gotten my envelop? I swallowed the hard pill down my throat. It reminded me of home, how vicious and cutthroat the environment was. This was a royal court and no one was to be trusted.

I opened the envelope and peaked in. I nearly sighed in relief when I saw a new communication book. I was not going to pull it out incase the werewolf couple took it from me. There was also a writing stick. There was what seemed like a colorful card. I pulled it out and chuckled. The emotions I was feeling were new territory for me, always fighting back tears.

It was a very messy painting and it had me chuckle because it was so cute and I would treasure it forever.

**We love you and miss you aunty.** **We are very sorry**. **You will always have us, always**. Under the writing were multiple hand prints. One from baby Kia, Kayda and Kyde then one from Flavia and Dante. I giggled as I saw that one of the corners looked bitten off and I just knew it was either Kayda or Kyde. Kayda would never, she was too much of a cutie, it was definitely Kyde.

I read through the words again and that’s when the dread fell on me. What happened? Why were they sorry? I looked back in the envelop and saw another small envelop. My heart was hammering in me at that point.

I pulled it out and I couldn’t help as the rest of the envelope and my card went flying in the air. Abraham quickly picked it up.

It was a red royal envelop with the royal vampire crest.

It shook in my hand and I was not sure I was ready to look in to it. I felt my breath shorten in me. My feet shuffled around as I stared at it. I sat down on the ground only to stand up. I felt the tears burn and began blowing air out to hold my emotions in. My fingers broke the seal with the cover flipped back. The thick and rich cream folded paper stared back at me. This was an official royal letter. It would only bring overly good news or overly heart-breaking news.

I pulled the paper out after some few seconds and I unfolded it. The paper was blank. I quickly brought my thumb to my mouth, biting into it until I tasted the blood. I brought the thumb down to the paper, a drop of my blood kissing the paper.

Words suddenly appeared. The vampire royal couple left nothing to chance.

*Dear Princess Zisealer of the Dragon people, first daughter of king Zahhak.*

*We write this letter in great sadness to inform you that….*

I lowered the paper down, fanning my face. I felt as if I was going insane. I couldn’t read the rest of it. My arms came around my waist. I couldn’t read. The tears streamed and arms soon wrapped around me. I cried in to Abraham’s chest so hard only to pull back. I needed to read, I needed to see for myself, shaking my head.

*We write this letter in great sadness to inform you that your father, king Zahhak has passed away. He was found in his bed late evening having left us. We pass our most sincere condolences to you dear cousin.*

*Your brother made an appearance that very morning and has put your father to rest in the mountain of Buja. The invite has been sent for his coronation. We will attend to keep face but we await any thoughts you have on how to proceed with this sensitive matter. Be strong little Cousin.*

*Drakko sends his love and deepest condolences.*

*With much love.*

*Your family.*

*The royal family.*

# 33. WHAT NOW?!

I had stood right before Abraham in utter shock. It had taken me collapsing down, hands fanning me and clutching my body to finally take a breath in. Even then, I lost all knowledge on how to take another breath in.

The sky had span all around me, faces before my own spinning just as fast themselves. I had blinked and blinked yet when the cloud finally cleared, I wished it hadn’t.

So many weapons this body had borne. So much hurt this body and heart had taken yet none would compare. It felt like death and when you are revived you wake up with a large part of you gone.

I could hear them talking. I could see Conri read through my letter. I could feel and hear Areli’s compassion, trying and failing to console me. Abraham tried but those in werewolf form were back and everyone was too busy to rile them away from him.

The tears glistened in my eyes but never fell.

*Papa.*

Did he suffer? Was he scared? I always thought that if the day came, I would be by his side holding his hand and singing to him with my voice guiding him to mama. Were they together? Lord, I hoped they were together. I prayed he was happy. I prayed he was done suffering and together they could flourish in their love. I knew I should have clung to those thoughts and felt happy for him but it was gut wrecking. I had never felt such pain in my life.

I shut down for I don’t know how long. It seemed like eternity and when I finally snapped out of it, I knew I would never be the same again. I stood and tore past Areli. I snatched Abraham by the arm, the werewolves jumping over us but they did not want to test me on this day. I snatched my personal letter from Conri’s grip, too much at the edge to say anything but my eyes sure put him in his place.

I did not even know where I was taking Abraham.

“Your highness, I…I don’t think I should be…..” He trailed away with me realizing I had walked into the pack with him. My body turned, still holding him by the arm as we trudged back past the group we left behind.

Abraham and I kept walking. We just kept walking. This was it. This was me leaving. I could walk away and never look back. I could cut all ties right there and let Abraham lead us home. I would walk into that castle and bury myself into my family’s arms. Flavia would hug me in bed. Dante would stare, watching over us. Kia would be lying on the side, peacefully asleep with my fingers brushing on his soft skin. Kaida would be clinging to Flavia and Kyde would be flying over Dante. My eyes closed and it felt like peace over the storm that was roaring in me. I would lay there and everything would be fine.

Then what?

After a year, after another year, what?

Would I be content with that life? Dante, Flavia and the kids would have their little family. Would I be content with the cold long and lonely nights? Would I be content with the empty feeling deep down inside that could only be filled by only one person? I had been content before with loneliness but why did it seem like a death sentence suddenly.

*Just one more time.*

*Just one last chance.*

*Just*……I did not even know what I was saying myself because even as I thought such things I knew they were utter nonsense. I just did not want to be alone. No one wanted to be alone. I thought I was above that, needing the feeling to be someone’s someone. To know no matter what you had that one person who loved you. The feeling of being held through the cold long nights. Someone to share your life with. The explosion of love and happiness as you make love. To be able to start a family and watch as your baby grows inside your womb. But Brum was having that with someone else. He might have mated with me but not even the mate bond could make him care, respect and love me.

My steps faltered with me coming to a stop right before the river Abraham was drinking from. He straightened up, eyes dashing left and right with the fear all over his face. It must have been scary for him being there and I was slowing him down. My eyes stared at the distance.

“Go home Abraham.” The words escaped my lips with me in a deep trance. I don’t know what he said or did but the forest was getting darker around me and I was alone. My body lowered down, my feet slipping into the cold water. I just sat there defeated. The darkness crawled and danced around me the more I sat there. It seemed like each blink took an hour away.

The heat of another body reached my skin. I had not heard or seen them sit next to me. Nothing was said, just silence. I tipped over with my side falling onto him, head on his broad shoulder. My eyes closed, silent tears falling on Vex’s t-shirt.

*Papa.* I kept whispering in my head with each whisper tearing me apart into shreds. Vex pulled me closer, holding me tighter. I trembled in his embrace and melted into him, weeping my heart out. I clung onto him like a baby clings to it’s mother, shaking so hard even he was shaking.

All of me wilted away. I felt all my energy drain in a very dangerous way and all I could do was cry.

“Vex….what am I supposed to do now…?” I hiccupped, fighting the darkness that wanted to claim me.

He held me tighter.

“Hold on. Atleast you have someone to hold on for. Concentrate on your child. They will love you as much as you love them.” He said back firmly. I was just at the brink of passing out, his words not making sense. My body tensed up, wanting to look up at him with a questioning eye but I was spiraling out so fast.

“You didn’t know.” It was more of a statement than a question. The horror settled on me hard. My tears came back with me heaving. My body shook while it was losing the fight.

“Vex…” It was more of a breath.

“I haven’t eaten in over a month.”

*Ooohh God, my child.*

*I had been killing my child.*

# 34. JUST FOR TONIGHT

Vex scooped me up in his arms and I could not resist holding onto his shoulder and waist to keep myself from falling. My head was buried in the crook of his arm. I felt the air kiss us as he ran back to the pack which had suddenly turned to my prison. I suddenly couldn’t breathe in there. It was suddenly so suffocating yet I couldn’t leave. Not until Brum and I talked about the baby. I was sure they had already told him because it seemed everyone knew before me.

I shook my head and hit myself mentally because how had I not seen it. It had just been staring right at my face. I was so worried, worried for my child and worried of the future he or she would have in this life I was living. My brother was also back. Who knew what he would do. But more importantly, was my child alright? His heart was beating way slower than my ears could pick up, especially with my weakened senses. How big was he or she? How far along was he? Flavia came to mind and I nearly cried out.

I hoped I would not carry the baby for eighteen months because there was no way I could survive that. I could already see myself with a large bulging tummy for two full years. It was death but the more I delved into such thoughts a certain warmth spread in me.

I was going to be a mother. I was going to bring a precious child into the world. I still couldn’t believe it yet I was already in love. My heart swelled and I could not wait to hold my baby in my arms.

I would never tell Flavia but I had always been jealous of her. She was strong, a great warrior, smart and such a beautiful person. She had an amazing mate that adored even the air she breathes and amazing children that were as handsome as her and her mate. She had her perfect little family and they lived for each other. I secretly wanted that, a person who would die for you and for you to love them just as much.

Now I would have my own child. It wouldn’t be the perfect picture but I would also have my own little family. Those cute little feet and hands. Those large eyes just staring at me as if I was his or her whole universe. *My child. My heart. My soul*. Everything would be okay and I was sure my parents were just smiling at both of us from wherever they were. I would be fine. I just had to try and fix my little family. I did not know where to start but for my child’s sake, I would.

The voices graced my ears, pulling me from my warm and wonderful thoughts. The dread of knowing we were in the pack and about to enter the castle poured on me like cold rain. I wanted to walk in on my own but I did not have the energy for it so I just buried my face into Vex in shame and hoped it would all be over soon. Vex tightened his hold, him too bracing himself for what was to come.

My eyes closed shut as I felt the air change and in no time I felt something soft fall on me. It kept coming over and over. I sniffed the one near my face and realized it was a flower petal. I frowned, thinking that maybe it was a tradition for those who have lost their loved ones but the excitement and giggles told me otherwise. It seemed no one cared I just lost my father. They were just happy I carried their next beta. I paused in my thoughts, correcting myself. The reminder of Brum’s betrayal painted my joy away. I was in a maze of emotions; grief, sadness, excitement and appreciation for the gift of life that had just been bestowed on me. I took the child as a blessing. I did not want to believe that it was a coincidence finding out about my dad’s passing the same day I found out about my unborn child. It was truly a blessing from God, my father and ancestors. My blessed child.

My hand went over my belly or I tried to but I couldn’t in the position I was in.

Vex quickly ran up the stairs and thankfully, the construction team was done for the day and only silence left behind. Vex carefully navigated the nearly chaotic space. I really had to move to another room. I just hoped the remodeling was done early so I could do the nursery in time and give birth to my child in my quarters.

I would cuddle her to sleep. I would not mind even if he or she was a loud and constant crier. I would not get mad. I would not get frustrated. I would hold my child and coo her until her pain or discomfort went away. I would take care of him in every way I could and more. I would love him or her so much he would never feel abandoned even if Brum did not want to be a part of our lives. I wanted those long sleepless nights with my baby. I wanted to be peed on and scratched at.

How wonderful could God be? I wanted to cry out in such happiness. My tears were held back, a smile slowly gracing my face.

My body was being lowered down. I had not even noticed we had entered the room.

I let go of Vex, sitting up and quickly wiped away the tear that had escaped.

“I will go get you some food. Go clean up.” Vex said.

I was seeing a new side of him and I did not even know what to say to that. Since I met him he was shut down and drowning in pain. I knew it had to do with loss and definitely a mate. But he was not mated so maybe he was rejected. I wanted to hug him and be the rock he had been for me. I did not even want to imagine the pain he was in.

“I tried. The smell of cooked food just sends me vomiting my heart out.” I spoke out, my voice low and frail.

Vex nod his head, seeming deep in thought.

“Let me go hunt then. What meat do dragons prefer?” He questioned, shocking me to the core. I had not thought of that. My mouth was wide agape but I quickly snapped out of it.

“Venison. Tossed in fire to burn the outer layer yet not cooked. If you can squeeze a bit of lemon, that would be great. And add a bit of chili.” I quickly said out, already seeing it in my head and oohh wow, all that hunger just came back. I licked my lips, my eyes out and cute as I plead with Vex. It was a lot of work, I knew, but that raw meat was suddenly all I wanted with such desperate need. I felt as if I would kill for a large thick piece of burnt yet very bloody venison.

Vex nod his head, turning around to pause and turn back to me.

“Do you need help?” He questioned, his eyes running up and down my body, leaving me with shame.

“Hey! I don’t smell. I showered earlier.” I gasped out. “No, thank you. I will sort myself out.” I said with him turning back to walk to the door.

“Vex.” I called out as my heart drummed with such gratitude.

He turned, his hand holding the opened door.

“Thank you.” I said, meaning it straight from the heart.

He nod his head and turned back to leave the room.

I sighed in the quiet room, deciding to get up. I slowly made my way to the bathroom where I brushed my teeth then slipped into the shower. My hands moved all over my body but mostly my belly.

I had lost so much weight I probably looked like a skeleton. My stomach was so flat and curved in. I would not show for the longest time. Dragon pregnancies were tedious. Add foreign genes in the mix and it turned to hell. Dragon mothers carry for twelve to fourteen months. Flavia carried for eighteen months straight because there had been a vampire mix in there. I surely was going to be around there too and as happy as I was to be pregnant, I was not looking forward to the coming months. I just wished we could skip to me holding my baby.

What would my baby look like? Dante who was part dragon and vampire looked more like his father. Our dark skin skipped him and his hair was barely curly. The vampire genes were stronger but since werewolves had tan skin, I hoped our child would be more of my shade. I did not mind either and I was so excited. I just knew that whatever he looked like, he or she would be gorgeous in my eyes. *My little prince or princess. My little warrior*. I could see myself throwing to catch his giggling self in the air.

Nothing healed my soul like knowing I had a small hybrid baby growing in me. It gave me so much strength to push on.

I showered, always finding reason to touch my belly now and again. I walked out of the room, it quiet, too quiet it had a shiver run down my spine. Something was not sitting right in me but after assessing the room for a few minutes I decided to go get dressed. I oiled my skin and pulled on sleeping shorts with a t-shirt. I wore my slippers and walked to bed. It was in that moment I realized I slept a lot. But it was to be expected because I was not fueling my body while I had another person growing in me. My body was probably really strained in trying to keep the both of us up.

“I will take care of us from now on baby. I am so sorry I put us through this.” I whispered, hand on my belly. I hoped the raw meat would work. I would go out to hunt everyday if needed. I would do anything for my baby.

I turned to stare at the window, not wanting to go where my mind wanted to go.

Had Uther properly honored our father? What was he doing to our people? Uther was unpredictable. You could never know what he was planning or thinking. He had his own way of seeing things. He always played the victim. Everything had to be about him and if you did not see things his way, he eliminated you. I swallowed hard with my mother’s face coming into memory. All the blood, blood that had poured from her, eyes staring right at me.

I shut my eyes fast, chasing the image away with my own body quivering. I could hear the screams, my screams, Uther’s screams. The blood, so much blood.

“Zisealer!”

I jumped up and scrambled away, eyes wide, heart about to be puked out.

“You did not hear me?” Vex questioned, seeming irritated.

I shook my head only to frown. I had not heard him come in nor scented him. I tried sniffing him even then and got nothing. My senses were diminishing even faster.

I shook my head, trying to calm down.

He wore a frown but none the less grabbed a table which he put at the side of the bed before putting down the large basin filled with meat. It was churred outside but I could see the blood glaze out meaning it was raw. I knew this was it. I knew this was what was needed.

“Thank you Vex.” I said, him walking away to slouch in a tub chair at the corner.

I turned my eyes to the meat and did not waste time. I tore the leg with such force and brought it all to my mouth. I tore into it with my teeth. It was a war but one I would win. I kept going over and over. I decided to sit on the floor with how intense the situation was. The hunger felt like it would kill me and I was a beast. My whole face was bloody as I dug in, the floor a mess. I kept going, not even breathing, just biting. I felt like a starved animal.

A sound poured from me, an animalistic sound. The need for the meat became unbearable. Something was wrong with me. My gums became sore. I thought I felt my teeth extend at some point and to my shock, I began tearing the meat with less difficulty and very quickly. I devoured it all, my back to Vex. I picked up the thigh next and devoured it, followed by the other leg. It was no secret that I devoured food but this, this was new even for me.

I left the bones clean. My eyes seemed sharper. Something was different about me. I blinked and my eyes seemed to go back to normal. I was heaving from the feast I had just gone through. All of me was bloody but the basin clean because I had even leaked it. I did not recall doing it but it seemed I did. I shook my head, my belly stretched out as if to pop.

The last minutes came to me and my whole face burned. I had turned to a cave man. The place was all dirty. I stood up and cleaned up before deciding to take another shower because I smelt of raw meat and I was covered in blood. I began with brushing my teeth a thousand times before showering. By the time I was done, Vex had removed the basin and cleaned up any stains that had been left.

The air seemed suddenly dense, the tension hanging there with silence so loud. I dressed up in clean clothes, my washing basket full. I took a deep breath, walking out of the closet with my eyes immediately searching for Vex who sat in the tub chair, head hanging over the arm. I pulled the covers on the bed back, not believing the day I had. I did not even want to think of it. I slid in between the covers and awkwardly lowered myself down. Words came and went, some stuck on my tongue.

A whole hour passed, a whole fucking hour of intense tension. Vex stood up, walking to the door. I couldn’t help but shoot up from the bed.

“Wait,” I did not want to say the words that had been on my tongue for the past hour but I was desperate.

“Stay, please.” I awkwardly said out. Vex stopped, his back to me.

My heart drummed with such vengeance. I couldn’t be alone. Not on that day.

My breathing turned rugged because the worst part of my request was still to come. I had this feeling that was killing me inside out and, in that night,, it was unbearable. I did not know how to put out my request and I cursed my luck for putting me in such a position.

“I need your help.” The words came out as a whisper, ashamed of myself yet I could not stop. Vex was so pale but I knew that if there was anyone that would understand, it would be him.

I pushed the covers off, and slowly slipped out of bed. Each step I took seemed to power my heart to pump harder. I walked into the closet and I thought that when I came out Vex would be gone but he was still there. It felt all wrong but I couldn’t stop myself. Just one night. Just one night, I told myself.

I halted right next to Vex. His eyes were closed and seconds turned to a few minutes before his eyes flickered open. He turned around, looking down at the t-shirt I was holding in hand.

‘Just for tonight.’ I wanted to say but I could not even bring myself to say the words.

Vex took the t-shirt in hand. He pulled the one he was wearing off his body.

“It’s not going to work. I need more.” He said with my stomach dropping because I really needed this.

He walked past me and to the bathroom.

I stood staring at the door only to hold back a gasp when I heard the shower running. I could not stand suddenly and I found myself pacing but I did not have energy so that did not last long. I sat down and stood up again.

The bathroom door opened and out walked Vex with a towel around his waist. The scent hit me and I nearly crumbled. He had used Brum’s shower products. It was the only scent I could suddenly pick up. My heart hammered so hard I could not stand anymore. I crawled back into bed, excitedly waiting as wrong as this was. I turned to my side, staring to the wall. In my heard I imagined it was Brum in the closet after taking a shower. My whole body warmed up, parts of me that had died coming back to life.

Vex walked out of the closet and closed the door. The lights were turned off. The covers were pulled back and the bed dipped. I closed my eyes shut and all I could see in my head was Brum. Vex wrapped his large and muscled arm around my waist. He tugged me to him in one move and it nearly had me purr. My body was nestled into his large chest with Brum’s scent just embracing me and my body melted so fast.

I wanted to thank Vex but pushed that thought away fast because I was trying to convince my head it was Brum holding me and it was working.Warmth spread through me from the inside out. My heart was fooled. The wound in my chest became bearable and I could finally just breathe. My stomach settled and such sad peace came over me. I felt safe for the first time in a long time. I felt protected and my hands held onto Vex’s arms which hugged me tightly to his tense and fully clothed body. I really appreciated what he was doing for me and I would forever remember his kindness.

Vex’s body jerked, pulling me from the slumber I had fell in. His body tensed harder only for him to roll just in time for the lights to come flickering on. I groaned out, my hand coming over my face. The light was blinding and I was pissed because I was in such good sleep. Vex fell with a thud on the floor, the bed cover following after him, leaving me bare. I would have laughed if not for my whole body burning up.

My heart jumped up, the scent hitting like a hurricane. It was the real scent, from it’s owner. At that point I did not care if the light blinded me. My hand fell down with my eyes wide, taking in the man at the door, my mate. I wanted to run to him, I wanted to hug him. My legs had even pulled from the bed then I remembered all the things that had happened between him and I. I remembered the words he spoke, that he hated me. I recalled his actions towards me and it was like he was doing it again. It was like he was ripping my heart out all over again.

Areli’s words came back to me.

*Rosa’s pregnant*. It was like I was hearing them for the first time again.

“I swear it’s not what it looks like Beta Brum.” Vex who I had even forgot was there spoke up, standing up with arms in the air. His voice snapped me from the daze I was in. I blinked the glaze of tears that had covered my eyes and when I turned back to stare at Brum I felt so weak. My legs shook even as I sat. His eyes were to my stomach but mine were to the toddler sleeping in his arms.

The betrayal.

The pain hit so hard I felt my jaw clench. I shook my head to try and waver the pain away but God of fire, I hated this man. My hands clenched into fists, wanting to rip him apart right there. How dare he bring another woman’s child to me, to our home? Did he have no shame? Just rubbing it into my face. He probably wanted to tell me to pack up so he could move his family in. I was done. I was done.

Brum took a step back. His eyes snapped from my belly to my face then he turned around and walked away.

# 35. THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STORY

Brum’s P.O.V

“Rose.” I called, my hand moving to touch her shoulder but she shook it off and lay there.

“Come on, just try.” I said, coaxing her but she did not even reply.

“Rose.” I tried again yet she did not respond. She had lost so much weight because she could not keep anything down. I sat back and cursed in my head. I ran my hand through my hair and put the bowl of her favorite soup down. I had thought of everything to try and make her eat but nothing worked. She hadn’t eaten anything of substance in over a month.

I turned my head to stare at the crib where Hugo lay. I blinked the foreign emotions away. As much as I had attached to the child, I didn’t know how I got myself in this situation. I had been trying to help Rose and her parents but at the end, Rose’s parents just left her to me and she was….she was wilting. And because of that, Hugo was also not doing well. Since the pregnancy, Rose was overly sick. She could not eat anything at all which led to her not being able to produce milk for Hugo. Hugo who was just a month from two years old could not stand solid food which left both mother and son starving.

My head span with me trying to see a way out but I couldn’t. None of this made sense to me at all.

I sighed, slipping from the bed to run my hands through my hair again. I hadn’t been home in a month and I fuck’n wanted to go home. I wanted to go home and see……the rest of the thought fell away.

Fuck.

I paced back and forth, groaning out. I stopped and turned to stare at Rose once again. My heart broke for her, really it did, but my patience and hospitality had begun running out. I couldn’t function. I just couldn’t function anymore. I wanted to go to my mate but I found myself trapped in that house with Rose.

The second Conri had said the dragon and vampire name in the same line in that office meeting, I knew I had to mate with Zisealer. I mated with her for one thing and one thing only—revenge. If I could not tear the vampires apart, I would settle for the next best person. And that person was Ziss. My plan had been so perfect, mate with her then tear her from her family, shred her from the inside until she knew the pain of having your heart ripped out from your chest. I wanted her to suffer but I had been a fool. I had not thought it through. When it came to the vampires, my brain seized to function. I had not thought of the mate bond Ziss and I would have. The bond had crawled it’s ugly head into me and my revenge plan went down the drain.

I tried, I really tried to hurt her but I was not sure I could do more.

Even as I paced there, all I thought of was her and it was getting hard to face each day apart from her.

How was she holding up? I was sure the mate bond was tearing her apart from us being apart. It made me so desperate to get to her but how could I leave Rose? Rose was so sick and, Hugo, I had to take care of Hugo. Rose wanted no one else near her. Apparently, when I was gone a month ago, men broke into the house and assaulted her which led to her current pregnancy. I just did not believe her story and I felt so bad for it.

Who would even venture to this part of the forest? Nonetheless, why hadn’t she told me about it when I came back? I questioned her story but then recalled what she went through and what the late king put her through. She had probably been scared to tell me of the assault, I thought. It was all my fault, I had left her and once again someone had hurt her in the cruelest way, again. She blamed me for leaving her and I blamed myself too. There was no saving her at that point. I had tried talking with alpha Bush, Rose’s mate, begging for him to take her back but he wanted nothing to do with her. He called her the devil. That was a little too harsh. I then tried talking to Hugo’s father, asking him to take Hugo but even he wanted nothing to do with Rose nor Hugo.

Rose had used her alpha command on Hugo’s father and had sex with him. His mate had felt the pain from him cheating and went searching for her mate only to find him and Rose having sex. It was cruel, it truly was. Hugo’s father had not wanted to but because of the alpha command, he had done everything Rose told him to do which was fuck her. It was messed up beyond I could even understand but Rose swore she had not known she had been using her alpha command. I shook my head again. I had seen Hugo’s father and he was not okay. He hated himself for cheating on his mate. The whole thing broke him and nearly killed both him and his mate but they stuck together and tried to move past it. So, I understood why he never wanted to see Rose and Hugo ever in his life.

Rose’s parents on the other hand had informed me of this and brought me to help Rose then they left and now Rose was my problem. I couldn’t take care of her for the rest of my life. I had a mate to get back to whom I was hating a little less with each passing day. She was gorgeous, a fuck’n goddess. She was strong and sexy.

I hissed because even just one thought of Ziss left me so hard my dick would explode. I missed being inside her. I never knew sex could feel so good until I buried myself inside her. The way she melted into me killed me. The way she moaned and tried to take control but at the end she knew who was in charge, me, her mate. Her fuck’n mate.

My wolf growled in approval. My wolf and I had both attached to Hugo and Rose, we tried to help them but now, we wanted our mate. Our mate was so fucking beautiful. I shook my head even thinking of it, not believing we had got such a strong and powerful woman as our mate. I recalled when I first saw her. My first thought was how much fun I would have breaking her. But now, all I wanted was to build her up and watch her dominate the world.

A soft cry pulled me from my thoughts. I was not sure who it was between Rose and Hugo. I checked on Hugo who was sleeping then I went over to Rose. Her body was shaking as she wept in her sleep. Her nightmares were the worst. Seeing her claw at herself was the worst. I felt so guilty suddenly for wanting to leave her to her own accords. Rose went through a lot. I pulled her to my arms and hugged her tightly until she stopped shaking. She deserved better. Thinking of what she went through had me hold her tighter.

‘Brum!’ Conri suddenly shot through in our mind link. I sighed and prepared for more of his bickering. He had gone silent in the past two weeks and I thought he had finally given up on trying to get me back home but I guess not.

‘You need to get back here now.’ Conri said firmly yet this time it was different.

My body froze, getting this dread suddenly.

‘What happened?’ I asked, holding my breath.

‘Zisealer’s father passed away. She just found out. She is not doing well Brum. She is really not doing well.’ He said with me cursing in my head.

I had to go. I had to go to her.

Zisealer loved her father. I knew that and I knew losing him shuttered her.

I quickly pulled away from Rose but she held on with all of her will.

“I have to go Rose. I will be back in a few hours.” I said which made her hold me even tighter. She wept her heart out and I hoped she would pass out but nope, she just kept holding on. When she did finally pass out, as soon as I moved, she stirred awake.

I was fucked, wasn’t I?

Hugo came to my rescue. He woke up bawling but still, Rose didn’t let go. The reason I had wanted Hugo’s father to take the boy was because Rose couldn’t care less about the child. She was not bothered. If I left them together, she would let him cry himself to sleep, hungry and burning from his own urine. If it was up to her, she would leave the child outside. She hated everything about him, from his looks to his scent. Sometimes it was hard to understand the things Rose did but I guess we would never because we never went through what she did.

I finally tore myself from her by force and went to Hugo. I changed his diaper and fed him some milk I had bought. He tried gulping it down but he couldn’t take much of it. He had lost so much weight himself and the once-happy baby was always sad now. It was a haunting thing to see. Rose had not wanted to go back to the royal pack because she said it had too many bad memories for her but at this point I saw no other option. For the child’s sake, I had to move them back to the pack.

I quickly bathed Hugo. There was no other option, I had to take him with me. I pulled clothes on him and made sure he was warm enough. I wrapped him with a blanket only to stop. If I did not take Hugo to the pack now, he would die. In the pack other mothers would share their milk with him. I began packing all his things into a large bag. I would come back for Rose later.

Rose was dead out. She looked more like a ghost than a person. The pregnancy was eating her alive and it scared me. What kind of creature was she carrying inside her? I walked out and decided to lock the door and gate, turning to run into the forest.

The sun was about to dip. It was a long way and I had to move fast because travelling with a child was risky, especially at night. I ate the distance in a speed that shocked even me. I really wanted to get home.

I reached the pack border and ran past the patrol. It was past midnight. I scanned through the windows until I found ours and the lights were out. All that was in my mind was to get to Ziss. I hated it but it was true, I missed her. I wanted to make things right with her. I rushed up. I couldn’t even take the elevator. I took the steps fast. I really missed this place which was weird because after I got killed and woke up from the dead, I had hated the castle. I could never stay in it. Seeing Conri and Raven together also did not help but surprisingly I did not feel my heart clench anymore when I saw them together. The only lips I wanted to kiss were Ziss’s dark lips. The only body I wanted to hold was her curvy, thick and gorgeous body. I wanted her, only her.

The door was thrown open only for me to freeze.

Someone else was in the room and, wait……. Firstly, Ziss’s heart was beating very slow than normal. Secondly, who was in the room with her and why did they smell partly like me? Thirdly, what was that other sound? Like a very slow heart. I frowned because I had heard that sound, that exact sound. I was coming from it. It was the sound that had been coming from Rose’s stomach. Was I imagining things?

I turned the lights on, Vex falling hard from the bed. I frowned even deeper, staring at him wearing my clothes.

My heart sank so hard I thought I was falling myself. It hit me hard and I stumbled back.

*Ziss.*

I fucked up. I fucked up so bad. My wide eyes quickly went to her and it was a punch to my gut.

She had her hand up to shield her eyes, seeing the confusion in her.

She hadn’t figured it was me. Why? My eyes ran through her body and I nearly died. I nearly dropped Hugo from my arms. A person who had never seen Ziss before would never know because Ziss naturally had a thick body but I knew. She had lost so much weight. Her neck was so skinny, her collar bones protruding with her face sunken. I felt so weak, weak to my stomach.

She still hadn’t noticed it was me at the door because her senses were weak. It happened with Rose. To conserve energy, the body starts channeling the energy left solely to sustain the body thus temporary losing the abilities the body doesn’t deem necessary.

She had not been eating, because of…the baby. Ziss was pregnant!

My eyes widened even more. I couldn’t help but stare at her tummy as she turned around. Of course, I couldn’t see it since she wore a t-shirt. I left her, I left them when they needed me. My child. I wanted to cry, I wanted to scream, I wanted to jump but found myself frozen. My eyes tore up to her face and I saw how much I hurt her. She looked frail, eyes puffy and I had done that. I would never forgive myself.

I knew what I had to do. Hugo began stirring in my arms and I knew a loud cry was coming after. My eyes took in Ziss one last time and saw her heart literally break again. Shit. I was such a fuck up. I was going to leave Hugo with one of the new mothers in the pack where I was sure he would be taken care of. His grandparents would then take care of him. I would then take three of our warriors, lead them to Rose’s house and leave them there to guard and take care of her.

I had my own family to take care of now. Fuck, I did not even know where I would begin to make things right with Ziss but I would die trying. She deserved so much better and I would work hard to be the man she deserved, the father our child deserved.

# 36. A DEADLY NIGHT

Ziss’s P.O.V

“Vex, take down that case.” I shot out.

“What are you doing Ziss?” Vex asked, still shaken from Brum finding us in bed together.

“I am going home.” I said, pulling my gold case and hell it was heavy.

“Calm down Ziss, he is probably pissed because he thought we were doing something.” Vex tried to reason but I was not hearing it.

“Vex, the owners of this room want to use it, please hurry.” I shot out, straightening up only to huff.

Brum now knew I was pregnant. He left, he could care less. I was leaving. I was going home to Flavia and Dante.

“The audacity to bring that, that skank’s child here.” I poured out, pointing at air only to bend again and try pulling the case.

“What is a skank? Rose has gone through a lot, she is not a skank, whatever that is.”

“Shut up Vex, just shut up and agree to everything I am saying. Whose side are you on?” I warned him with him shrugging while leaning on the counter. “How will you carry all these cases? Even if I take you to the vampire kingdom, I can’t carry any of these, not even one.” He continued and he had a point.

“Shit. Okay, I can leave them. You can keep them in your house for me until I am strong enough to get them. I just need my father’s box and my gold, I can carry that by hand. Keep them safe Vex, please, these are worth so much. My whole life is in them.” I said, huffing out. I turned around, the anger fueling me. My hands lay on my waist, looking at the room I had once seen a future in.

No one could blame me. I tried, I really did and now I was done.

“It’s late. Let us sleep and when we wake up, you can say your proper goodbyes and I will take you home.” Vex tried to reason.

“No. I don’t want to tell Areli and Conri. They will try to change my mind. Brum is my mate Vex, we have a mate bond and it’s fighting to keep us together. I am weak when it comes to him and I need to leave for my sake and for my child. I have to do this while I still have the strength to.” I finished, only to wince at seeing how Vex flinched when I said the ‘mate’ word.

I swallowed.

“I am sorry Vex.” I whispered. He swallowed hard and nod his head. He looked so much better though. I had never seen him that relaxed. I guess seeing my chaos made him forget a little about his own and I was happy I could do that for him. I just wished I wasn’t tearing apart the way I was inside. It felt like pure hell, knowing that even as I carry his baby, Brum still didn’t care. I lost my father and he didn’t care. He just left. He left us. He walked away. He hated me that much he would walk away from his child.

“Maybe you are right. We should sleep a few hours but we are leaving before everyone wakes up.” I said. It was dangerous traveling at night. I did not want to risk with my baby’s life, especially since I was so weak. I just hoped my brother was busy hovering over father’s throne than planning any attacks on me. That should keep him busy for a while before he decided to come for my life. That thought just scared me because it was not just my life anymore, it was my baby’s life too. If my brother attacked while I was still pregnant, I did not even want to think of it.

All that had happened through the day left me exhausted and we had a long journey ahead of us in the morning. Vex and I went back to bed. I dragged him there and lay on his chest while thinking about it all. After an hour of thinking, I knew I couldn’t leave the werewolf kingdom. I knew Brum would kill me with heartbreak but I couldn’t leave. My baby and I were the safest in the werewolf kingdom. We needed Areli’s protection. I couldn’t fight for myself while pregnant. My baby was too precious for me to risk it. I had to take the pain of seeing Brum and Rose. I had to take the pain and the humiliation for my baby. My baby was all that mattered at that point. My feelings did not matter to me anymore, just my little baby. I knew Flavia and Dante would fight with all they had to protect me but they just didn’t have the numbers and I did not want endanger them because they also had their family to think of.

I don’t know when I fell asleep but I stirred awake with my eyes wide. Vex quickly pulled from me. He stood, running around the bedroom as if it had caught fire. It had my heart hammer. I rubbed my eyes, looking around and it was still dark but I just knew the sun was about to rise.

“What is wrong?” I groggily asked, still filled with fatigue.

Vex just jumped around, changing into his shorts right before me. He seemed out of it. His head then snapped to me, seeing them filled with such determination.

“Rose is dead.” He said and I thought he was joking, I seriously thought he was until Aline’s link came through.

*‘Ziss, are you awake? Brum found Rose dead. Someone broke in and killed her, they tore the baby from her womb. Conri and I are going to help track the killer. The pack is in your hands.’* She said with me nodding my head only to recall she couldn’t see me. I was just in shock. I swallowed. I could already see it in my head and my hand quickly went to my own belly.

*‘Okay. Uhm, is Brum okay?’* My heart was breaking for him. I shook my head, just so horrified.

*‘He is set on finding the killer. He blames himself. He is not doing well.’* Areli answered. I wanted to reach out to him but I did not think it would make things better. I folded my arms around my body, so much dread coursing through me.

“I have to go Ziss, I am needed to track the killer. Don’t leave until I get back, don’t leave.” Vex called out, already running to the door. All I could do was nod.

“Be safe!” I shot out just before the door was shut close.

Who would do something like this?

Brum. I could not even imagine the pain he was in. If it was my baby, I would have been going crazy. I did not even want to think about it. There was no way I could go back to sleep. I was too shocked. My thoughts ran to Rose. The pain shot through as I was just thinking about her. Had she screamed? Had she felt so much pain? She had probably been crying and begging her heart out? It had me silently cry. She had suffered so much, she did not deserve this. I might have hated her a little, just a little, but no one deserved this.

A wolf howl tore through the air. It was such a pained howl. A few others followed. I rushed to the window, looking out to the forest but I couldn’t see anything. I couldn’t see past the yard which had me curse. I wondered how long it would take for me to gain back my strength so I could have all my senses working as before. I rubbed my hands against each other, so worried about Brum.

With no hope of sleep, I made the bed. I had to try and be strong for everyone. Since Areli and Conri weren’t around, I had to assure the pack and show strength. I moved to the bathroom where I took a shower, peed in the shower which was disgusting but I just couldn’t t hold it. I washed the shower then took another shower before walking out to brush my teeth. I walked into the bedroom only to stop. Every time I was alone I always felt something strange. It was starting to creep me out. My eyes looked over the room and it was clean of any intruders. I turned and walked into the closet. I pulled the towel from my body and oiled my skin. I wore my underwear and bra before brushing my short hair. My head snapped, thinking I heard something but after a minute of silence, I went back to brushing my hair. The attack on Rose left me on edge.

I applied some lipstick, bent over the counter, trying to get it right.

A large rough hand suddenly wrapped around half my face. I felt as the lipstick smudged all over. A body pressed me harder on to the counter. It took too long for me to react. My eyes were wide, pushing with all of me for the person to move but they were too large. My heart, I thought I would die as tears filed my eyes and streamed. I stared straight to the mirror and saw a ghost.

“Hello sister.”

# 37. KILLER ON THE LOOSE

Brum’s P.O.V

*Rose is dead,*

*Rose is dead,*

*Rose is dead.*

I could hear myself breathing out loud, my fingers raging through my hair and nearly ripping each strand from it’s root. I was pacing back and forth, the sound echoing in my head along with the distant voices but mostly all I could hear were my thoughts.

How was it possible? I had left her….she had just been laying there.

A distant call resonated in my brain but like everything else, it fell into the echo and drifted away.

She had just been lying there, on the bed. I blinked and the image of her covered by the blankets came back to me but as I blinked again the horror I was in confronted me. There was blood everywhere. The walls were like art for wicked witches. The flooring was drowning in blood. Rose had tried fighting back. Her claw marks were all over the floor with so much blood splatter as if the person had been clawing or cutting into her as they dragged her forward.

My mind had depicted an image of it’s own, Rose clawing on the floor as they hurt her. I could even hear her screams, screams my mind had made up but they would haunt me for the rest of my life.

A shaky breath escaped me, stopping in my tracks with more horror settling on me.

She had been a weak and pregnant woman, who would do this and for what course? Alpha Bush came to mind and I quickly shook the image off. He couldn’t have killed his own mate, not this brutally too. Hugo’s father came into mind next and I couldn’t see him doing it.

Who could it be? Who would have hated Rose that much?

I tried to wreck my brain, trying to think of something but my brain only worked to conjure more scenarios on how painfully Rose had died.

The only person left would be the unborn baby’s father. I tried to recall the conversation I had with her when I found out she was pregnant but she had been mostly crying. How could someone do this to their own unborn baby? I shook my head again and just then a hand gripped me firmly. I nearly chopped it off, my growl and death stare saying it all as Soden stepped back with fear crawling from his every pore.

“What!?” I snapped, him gulping down saliva that had been in his mouth which just made me angrier.

“The king and queen are near, they teleported here with the tracking team.” Soden reported. My eyes snapped from him to around the small cottage I had built with my own two hands for Rose and a few day’s old Hugo. I could remember the utter horror on her face at realizing she had lost everything. I had thought her mate kicking her out would have killed her but no one could bare pain like Rose. She had grown immune to pain and at times I thought she craved it.

I wanted to cry, to jump and rip everything apart.

Why would anyone do that to Rose? Yes, she hurt a lot of people but that was because she had been so hurt herself and she never thought she deserved anything. She self-sabotaged, she pushed everyone away and she wanted everyone to see her as she saw herself, as disgusting and evil. But she was not. My heart was breaking just thinking of it. She did not deserve everything that happened to her.

Literally, no one knew Rose, not even her parents and certainly not me but there had been just one moment where I think I saw the real her. I had bought her pink shoes to which she just stood frozen and literally said she had a pair like them when she was nine. The smile on her face had been priceless, she had looked like a young kid with large eyes and such gratitude. Rose had different armors for different people and different situations. Everything with had been staged, rehearsed, a lie and fake. Fake smiles, fake tears, but she had been hurting so much and no one could have saved her from the river she had been drowning in.

Maybe this is better, maybe she is in a better place now, I thought and immediately mentally kicked myself for even thinking in such a way. It was all my fault, I left her and they had killed her. Her killer was out there and even if it was the last thing I did, I would find him and I would kill him so painfully even the Goddess would weep.

Rose’s body lay on the table, wrapped with white sheets. I groaned out, suddenly sure the father of the baby did this to her. They had taken the dead fetus and the baby would have given us a clue, maybe we would have caught a slight scent of the father on the baby or something.

Stern suddenly walked in, him stopping with his eyes taking in the horror then it hit me. The father had to be a werewolf. We were on werewolf territory; no other species would walk in our territory without permission. The dread settled harder on my gut. It could have been anyone it that room.

“Where the fuck is Vex!?” I screamed out loud, sure to murder someone. Everyone shook their heads, none seeming to know where he was. I groaned out angrily. “Find him and make sure he is here soon or he will lose his head!” I snapped, turning around only to recall exactly where Vex was.

‘Rose is dead. Get the fuck out of my bed and come to do your job! Get here in two hours or you will see what real pain is!’ I sent him a mindlink, fuming to say the least.

“Brum!” Raven called, she would always be Raven to me, nothing would change that.

I span around, her eyes wide, filled with tears.

“Goddess.” She gasped, paled and horrified. Imagine what I felt walking in to find Rose’s body with her intestines dug out.

Conri brought her to his chest and it still shocked me how seeing them together did not bother me since mating with Ziss. Truth be told, Conri did not deserve her and I did not deserve Ziss.

*Ziss*. Her name slipped into my mind like a gush of wind and I quickly shook it off as guilt overtook me. If I had not gone to Ziss, Rose would be alive and Hugo would still have a mother. I did this, I was the reason Rose was dead.

“Brum.” Raven whispered out, walking to me but I did not want to hug her. I did not want to comfort her. I wanted blood. I wanted the killer so I could gut him like he gutted Rose. I stepped away from Raven’s path, evading her open arms.

“Can’t you do something? Can’t you use your abilities, freeze and reverse time to see the killer, anything?” I asked, already knowing the answer and I was already annoyed even before she spat it out.

“You know I can’t Brum. You know to stay in this world I had to promise to not use my abilities. Going back in time could easily change the future. I can’t interfere.” She said as she always says when her help is needed. What was the point of…..I stopped my trail of thoughts right there before I went to a place I did not want to or said something I would never be able to take back.

I loved Raven, I did. She was special in a way I could never explain but in that moment I was spiraling out and I knew I would end up saying something I would regret so I walked out of the cabin, not even knowing where to start searching. There was no scent at all, nothing, not even Rose’s scent, they had wiped it clean but nothing would stop me from finding the killer.

I tore into my wolf, the tracking team which had neared me doing the same. I threw my wolf head back and howled in a promise to revenge Rose.

# 38. HEAVEN WEEPS

Ziss’s P.O.V

*‘ Hello sister,’*

*‘ Hello sister,’*

*‘Hello Sister.’*

Pure dread coursed through my body. A part of me wanted to believe it was a dream. The image of my brother staring back at me in the mirror had me sweat even where I was. I could feel myself roll back and forth. I could hear my whimpers, heaving hard. I was trying to pull out of the hole I had seemed to have fallen into but I could not. Everything was blurry, like drowning in the sea but never dying, just enduring the pain with no relief.

I fought, God, I fought but I could not escape. In my head I was screaming and roaring. I was screaming for someone to help me but it was like screaming in a four-walled prison cell, just your voice bouncing back to you. I could feel my body shake. I tried thinking back to the closet, trying to recall what my brother did to me but I could not recall no matter how hard I tried. I tried to break free from the mental bounds that held me but it just wore me down. My inner cries only gave me the strength to fight on. I was not going to give up. My baby. My baby. I pushed harder against the barriers holding me to the point where I was aware of all that was happening around me.

I felt the cold ground I was on. I heard the whispers but nothing made sense and soon my eyes flickered open. My eyelids were so heavy, closing every second only for me to force them back open.

Concrete walls stared back at me, my mind working overtime to put the image up for recognition.

The sound of drums assaulted my ears.

How long had I been out? I was sweating profusely.

I heard the juggling of keys, not sure if to close my eyes or stare to see what was happening with my vivid vision yet I was scared that if I closed my eyes then I would not be able to open them again.

The thick smell of smoke assaulted my nostrils, not knowing what was happening but my heart couldn’t go any faster.

Hands gripped me and pushed me up. A flash of black skin passed my drowsy eyes and I knew I was back in my kingdom. My brother had caught me. My brother had taken me with him. The dread! The horror of that realization! No one had saved me. No one had stopped them. How was that even possible? My heart was beating too hard I couldn’t even breathe, nonetheless think. My barely open eyes ran from left to right. My feet grazed the floor as they dragged me out, each guard holding each arm up, my head lulling back and forth.

I searched for strength, needing strength to fight them off because I knew that wherever they were taking me, I would not be able to escape. I called to my dragon but she was silent. They had done something to me. My body wasn’t responding even as I screamed at it and I couldn’t get rid of the fog I was drowning in. Everything was double vision before me, blurring in and out of sight. My head felt as if it would explode and I couldn’t stop sweating. My body slipped from the warriors with how sweaty I was and I felt as I crumbled onto the floor, collecting dust. They quickly grabbed me and continued rushing me away.

A second to me felt like long minutes, everything in slow motion. I tried to say something, my words only left on my tongue.

The drums got louder, the smoke more suffocating. All I suddenly saw was orange, flames roaring like in the pits of hell. My people seemed like monster’s than people, and I was not sure what was real and what my mind was making up. I saw large beasts, just staring at me. I saw my people dancing to songs I had never heard.

One second they were dragging me and the next, I was lying on a table, being tied to it. I did not know what was happening, my world spinning and it was hard keeping reality in check. My mouth opened to close with the scream and cry stuck at the tip of my tongue. My body violently shook, feeling like I was losing my mind.

‘I am dreaming, I am dreaming.’ I kept saying in my head. There was no way I was not dreaming.

My head turned to the side, seeing my people, bodies painted, dancing around to the drums as the fire around me roared. It seemed they made a shape I could not depict. My head turned to the other side, seeing my brother standing on the other side of the flames. He looked like the devil behind the roaring flames, them glistening against his dark chocolate skin.

I was surely dreaming because next to him were Rose’s parents.

As soon as Rose’s name came to mind, I knew there was a piece of important information I just could not remember. I watched as my brother talked and smiled with them but his smile was sinister and cruel.

My arms and legs began moving. I felt the ropes cut at me as I tried to free myself but I did not care. I kept tugging my limbs because something bad was about to happen. I just knew it, I just knew it. My body got into fight mood, tugging and the next time my head turned back to the side, my brother was standing behind Rose’s mother. His eyes were on me as if he had been waiting for me to look his way before he slit Rose’s mother’s throat.

I tugged harder, knowing I had to free myself because I was next. Rose’s father had no time to react, his throat slit so fast with his eyes wide, staring at my brother as if asking how could he? What were they even doing there?

The flames roared higher as if the blood fueled them then I heard the screams. My eyes fearfully looked around only to gasp as three women stood at different points of the flames. They were all women I had trained, my warriors. Their eyes roared with anger, men behind them, quickly slitting their throats.

The tears poured, knowing my brain should have already realized what was happening but too much was happening and I was functioning very slowly. The ropes tore deeper into me as I tried to free myself. They would have chopped my feet and hands off, I wouldn’t have cared as long as I escaped. I had to get myself and my baby out.

Chants hit the air, ancient chants from our western tribes.

No! I screamed in my head. No! I did not want to believe it.

My brother walked into the circle of flames, his eyes on me. It was like the devil walking toward me. He had blood plastered on him, blood of his victims.

These tribal sacrifices were banned generations ago, he couldn’t bring them back. I shook, my body twisting and turning as I tried to free myself. I did not care if I snapped myself apart but as long as I freed even just one hand.

The need to break free became deadly, my teeth bared and clenched together as I heaved, tugging with no mercy.

My brother stepped up to the platform I had been tied to. He looked down at me and I could not recognize him at all. What provoked this? Why such hate? Why such cruelty?

“Dear sister.” His voice seemed amplified in my ears and I realized they had given me the mushroom drink to drug me and it was doing it’s job because more times than once I was seeing double visions of Uther.

There was not even time to plead with him. There was no time to beg, he would never let me go. The hatred I saw in his eyes was too deep.

“Our people have trailed from our path and way of life but I will fix this. I will make everything right and we will start with you sister. You should be happy because what a great gift it is to be sacrificed to the Gods. It will save you from all your sins sister. They should have killed you at birth. You upset the Gods and I will correct that. Don’t you see, I am saving your soul sister?” He said as a warrior brought a large knife to him.

My body shook even harder, not believing what was happening. I did not know if to scream or cry. My brother had gone crazy. He was insane! He had finally lost it.

I kept my eye on him, seeing him take the knife into hand.

“First, we will remove any trace of your cursed blood.” He said, slightly angling his head then he walked even closer.

The meaning of his words hit me hard and I had never screamed so loud. The fear that took over me, I could never describe it. The knife was held up and as it sunk into my skin, a roar so powerful tore through me.

I felt as my hands shifted to claws. I swung them and my ties were cut. My arm swung, slicing my brother’s chest with my extended claws. My teeth had lengthened, biting hard into his side. Blood filled my mouth and poured onto me. I swiped my other arm, never having had such hatred for a person. I dug my claws into my brother as deep as I could, going for the kill. He screamed and thrashed so hard like the little bit he was.

I kept tearing into him, blood everywhere.

Hands were suddenly all over me, pulling my arms from my brother.

Warriors tried to restrain my arms and I fought them. I fought with everything I had, screaming and roaring but they were over five warriors at each side, pulling my arms so hard and holding them down. And the worst part was that the warriors were all men I knew, men I had trained with, men I had fought with, my peers. Their eyes were in horror yet they held me down even in that horror. Every part of me was breaking but I held onto the fight and kept tugging. I tried but soon I realized I was not going to free myself.

My brother straightened up, his face pale and the panic seen as he realized he could have died. The anger took over and I was sure he would do his worst.

“Uther please,” I begged.

“Uther please!” I screamed. “Uther!”

The tears poured, shaking and twisting with more warriors running. They pushed me down by my chest, waist and some on my legs.

“Uther! Please!” I felt as if my inner core was tearing away.

I kept thinking something would happen, someone would come for me. Someone would rescue me. It could not be. My baby! The tears fell hard, trying to push up but the hands held me firmly.

“Brum!” I screamed out the other name in my head, my last hope, surely my love would save me.

I saw the knife flash right before my eyes and this time it came with such anger.

I felt as it cut through my skin and sunk in yet I still couldn’t believe this was happening.

“Please!” I screamed so loud my chords snapped.

“No please!” The pain was nothing than what I was feeling inside.

“Not my baby, Uther please!”

I felt as the knife ran down my stomach to the very edge of my abdomen.

I felt as if my mind snapped out of sanity, feeling the hot blood on my skin, so much blood. The pain shooting from my stomach should have left me passed out. I suddenly felt so cold. A shiver ran through me and I stopped screaming. I swallowed, it a second of numbness but it only lasted for a second before my sob came back to me.

Everything was spinning all around and I was drowning in sorrow that wanted to take me away.

My brother held up my unborn child, blood streaming down his arms from cutting my child from my womb. He held him up like a trophy as every part of me died inside. He threw my fetus to the ground as if it was trash. All fight drained from me, even as I felt my brother cut upper to my chest.

“She can’t come back to life without her organs. I will take them all out and feed them to my dogs”

I stared at my unalive fetus, scattered on the ground with dirt and I did not want to live. I wanted it all to end, feeling as they tore me apart. I heard and saw the darkness call me and what would I stay back for? I let it grip me and let it take me away as I wept the last tears for my baby until death gripped me.

# 39. RESCUE TEAM

Flavia’s P.O.V

The sixth day of the week was my favorite day. The sixth day of the week was family day. No work, nothing but spending time as a people and as a family. The sixth day was also what I called ‘Kicking Dante’s ass’ day.

The field was set, all players in place and it was game time. Kaida and Kyde flew on the sides of the field, ready for the game to start. My little nightmare, Kia lay on a blanket at a safer distance from the field with a few of the ladies watching over him. I was sure he was all grins. Kia just loved female attention.

All the teams were ready and I could not help but lick my lips as my eyes fell on Dante. He looked extra delicious and it took everything in me to not push him to the ground and ride that face. He wore his shorts and a baggy, sleeveless vest which looked like Kaida and Kyde tore it apart with their sharp teeth. A smirk was on my face of course because I was about to make the man eat dirt. I loved my soulmate but when it came to winning, I always went for the kill, even with him.

“Are all teams ready?!” The referee called, the ball in his hand.

I did not want to talk, I wanted to play and make Dante eat shit.

“I will fuck you up so bad you will sulk like a bitch all week.” I spat out, my mouth filthy and mind perverted as always.

“I love when you talk dirty to me.” Dante said back, smirking himself as if he thought he could win this game.

We were playing Throw ball. Twelve players on each of the two teams. I had my own team and Dante had his own. We would not leave that field until I won and dragged his ass down. To score, a team has to move the ball from the starting point to their scoring pole. The other team has to prevent the team with the ball from scoring and try to steal the ball then rush try scoring on their own goal post. If the ball flew past the field boundaries, Kaida and Kyde would run to get it and we would start again from the starting point.

I was obsessed with the game.

The rules were clear, no hurting members of the other team but who were they kidding, I was meant to break rules. And what kind of pussy would ever hold me up to the rules. I was the queen after all.

“Your majesties, are you ready?” The referee questioned but he was wasting time, I was born ready.

My eyes were on Dante, ready to tear him apart.

The referee sighed and positioned himself. My eyes snapped from Dante to the ball as the referee threw it up in the air for us to grab. I was vicious, jumping to kick Dante in the gut, stepping on his face but he knew me too well. He gripped my leg and tried to throw me off but I kicked him with my free leg while pushing with the one he was holding. Hey, I would kiss it better later.

The ball was diving back down and I stretched to grab it first.

“Fucker!” I screamed out in a giggle as I threw the ball to my team mate and the game began.

“Nasty little rascal.” Dante groaned out with me giggling hard as I shoved and freed my leg from him.

He took off racing to the ball which my team mates were taking to the goal post but Dante’s team wasn’t having it. It was just flashes in the air as they all ran to attack the guy carrying the ball. I ran so fast, knocking everyone in my way. It was not a game for crybabies.

The spectators roared so hard, giving us all fuel.

I was suddenly tackled down hard, twisting to find Ryian, one of the guards, having jutted me. I gave him my death stare which had him only laugh out and try to detain me. They knew that if they detained me then they could probably get away with snatching the ball from my team but I wasn’t having it.

Ryian got a punch straight to the nose, me laughing out loud as I flipped us around and jumped out to run only for an angry growl to pour from me as I realized Dante had got the ball and they were quickly moving it to score.

“You better not score that goal my love or I swear you will be sleeping in the barn all year long.”

Threats also help, sometimes.

All those around laughed out loud.

“I will take my chances.” Dante shot back, he knew I loved him too much.

I groaned out, my body moving so fast I was literally floating through the air as I tore through the distance to get to him but I was too late as he threw the ball over their goal post, scoring their first goal.

My chest was heaving up and down. I hated losing. My whole body was shaking and fuck I was going to fuck Dante up real good. We all ran back to positions, Dante and I back at the center. He held the ball with a smug smile on his face.

“Don’t look so awful baby. If you can’t take the heat, then leave.” He said, that handsome and sexy asshole. My heart did flips while I swore to mess him up.

The whistle was blown, Dante running left then right, trying to evade me but I kept up with him. He was not passing me with that ball. Seeing no way out, he jumped and threw the ball only for me to jump and catch it, kicking him in the chest while at it.

Dante groaned, his arms wrapping on my waist, tackling me down. We both hit the ground hard but not before I threw the ball to my team mate. Dante fell on me, his hot and sweaty body all over me. At that point I forgot about the ball and found myself drowning in need.

“You are so sexy when you are angry.” He breathed out, giving me those bedroom eyes which he knew when my downfall. My pussy just flooded without shame. Those damn eyes of his drifted to my lips, him giving his own a lick and I was ready for us to take it to the bedroom right there and then so I could lick him from head to toe until he came from just that.

“Your majesty!” A loud call came from somewhere, my senses clouded with lust and it took a few seconds for me to realize the panicked call.

“Your majesty!” The shout came again, hearing the man wheeze his way to us until he stood right next to our fully aroused bodies.

“A bird just dropped this letter.” The man said, him seeming shocked himself.

“A bird? Does that stand for something I should know?” I asked as Dante pulled us both up. The match was paused, all eyes on us and the letter which the man handed to Dante.

“No, your majesty. A large eagle just flew over the border and dropped the envelop.” The man explained with me baffled. Well, we learn new things every day I guess.

Dante flipped the letter envelop over then brought it to sniff. I already knew where it was from and an uneasy feeling ate at me.

Zisealer had been quiet for so long. Abraham had said she had not looked well and I had wanted to go straight to that stupid werewolf kingdom and give them a piece of my mind but Dante had put a stop to my tantrum. My nerves seemed to eat each other up as I stared at Dante. He broke the werewolf royal seal, flipping the cover over to show crème paper.

My hands were sweating, eyes wide. A part of me wanted to delay to read the letter yet again, I wanted to just rip it open and see what happened.

*Ziss. My girl.*

Dante pulled the letter out with the paper clean. He bit into his thumb and dropped his blood on the edge of the paper. Words began appearing, my heart hammering so hard it was all I heard for those split seconds.

I scooted closer, eyes already running through the paper yet I could not see with how a mess I was.

“We are writing this letter to make sure that Royal Beta Zisealer arrived in the vampire kingdom safely and if she is doing well. We would appreciate your response. The werewolf royal family.” Dante read with me frowning. Was this a sick joke?

Dante turned to stare at me, us just frowning at each other for a second. I shook my head, suddenly feeling my energy drain out of my body. I did not even know what to say. I opened my mouth to close it, perplexed and frustrated.

“They would have waited a few days to write this so that the letter got after Zisealer.” Dante said with me nodding.

“It would take Zisealer two days to get here at most.” I said, getting in my head. “Unless she isn’t flying but then, she wouldn’t travel alone if she wouldn’t be flying.” I continued.

“Maybe she is still on her way.” Dante said, “Let us not jump to the worst scenarios.” He added with me scowling at him. I always jumped to the worst possible case, always ready to attack.

“I don’t know, I feel uneasy about this. You know I have been worried sick about her. She has been quiet even after we gave her the new communication book. Something isn’t right here Dante and if we don’t action now, we could regret it. Abraham said Ziss was thin and looked ill. Ziss and food are things you can’t separate, only a terrible situation would have her not eat.” I said, the more I spoke, the more the realization.

“You said we should wait last time when Abraham came back but we need to go now and find out what the hell is happening.” I said out, very determined.

Dante was the smart one in this relationship but I couldn’t listen to reason at that point, not when it came to my Ziss. I was ready to snap all of those twiggy werewolves if I had to. My mind had jumped into the worst-case scenario and I was ready to bury some people. No one was going to hurt my Ziss.

I pushed off the ground, marching through the field.

“Kaida, Kyde, carry your brother. We are going to kill some werewolf ass!” I shot out, marching into the house, knowing the twin dragons had baby Kia hanging by his baby blanket with Dante behind them.

“Who are we going to leave the babies with?” Dante questioned.

“I am not leaving my babies.” I shot out. I had been proven time after time never to trust vampires. We loved them, we took care of them, they were our people but we had learned the hard way that they turned on their own fast and without any mercy at all. They were vicious and selfish snakes.

“We can’t take our children to a fight.” Dante exclaimed.

“Well, they need to learn how to fight at some point.”

Dante’s laughed poured out and it was the most beautiful thing ever, calming my anger down by an inch, just an inch.

“You know they are two years old right?” He said with me turning to glare at him.

“But they already know how to terrorize a whole village.” I said back, both Dante and I laughing.

We reached the babies room where Kaida and Kyde lowered down their triplet brother who was all teeth out and cooing like the terrorist he was. No one had ever terrorized me like Kia. He slept three hours a day and the rest were of him making sure we all suffered.

By the time I put him in the water for his bath, he was at it again, screaming his lungs out. Kaida and Kyde were helping Dante pack, flying back and forth to get this and that. I bathed them too after and when all that was done, Dante and I went to get ready.

“Should we take a team? It could either save our lives or provoke a fight with the werewolves. You know how much they hate us, seeing a whole bunch of us will definitely get them riled up like little bitches.” I said out, oiling my skin with our three children sitting on the bed, watching us with such cute eyes as we got ready.

Out of nowhere, my ass was slapped and groped hard as Dante walked past me. What the hell?! He knew how bad that turned me on.

“I hate you so much.” I groaned out, my eyes eating him up as he wore his t-shirt, looking so good I could just eat him up.

*‘Not the time girl.’* I reasoned in my head, swallowing over and over to cool my lower regions down.

Dante took out clothes for me, helping me get into my leggings and t-shirt. As I fixed my sleeves, he pulled my black boots on me, tying them for me. My heart skipped a thousand beats and I nearly died for the millionth time in that day. How could I even function when he did such things? He kissed my knees before getting up.

The vampire king who was my gorgeous soul mate pulled out our cloaks. He walked over to drape mine on me. He made sure it sat well, folding the sleeves for me before he took me in then came closer to kiss my forehead. It never got old, the feeling I got every time he took such good care of me.

“We don’t need a team to come with us my love. I have you, my firecracker. I fought two wars with you and won. All I need is you.” He kissed my forehead again and I found my center. He calmed me down and brought me back to peace.

“But Gary and Marshall are coming with us to watch the kids or hold them in case of a fight.” He added with me nodding my head and grinning.

“Have I told you how much I love you. Your brain, your body, everything.” I said out, staring into his eyes and drowned in such love.

“No,” Dante said back as I giggled.

“Well, and I probably will never.” I said smugly, turning to walk away only for him to hook his arm around my waist, spinning me back to him.

“Say it.” He groaned out and I loved it when he used his big daddy voice.

“I love you; your brain, your body and your soul.” I whispered out, him kissing me deeply before pulling back.

Urgh, he made me so dizzy.

“Let’s go my queen.” He said with me nodding my head.

He took the bags and pulled Kia into his arms, wrapping his blanket around him. I walked to tie his cloak for him, hiding our little rascal. Kaida and Kyde seemed over the moon, flying above each of my shoulders.

We were literally glazing over the air as we made our way down, Gary and Marshall meeting us at the door. I locked the house, never trust vampires, not even with my house.

We were ready.

“Let’s go get our girl and kick some werewolf ass.”

# 40. A BLOODY VISIT

It’s so easy to get wrapped up in your world and forget the world that exists beyond your comfort. My eyes stared in awe as we glazed through the forest. The kids were more than happy, their eyes mirroring mine as they took in the whole other world beyond our kingdom. Nighttime fell and the real magic happened. Insects Dante called ‘fireflies’ light up all around us, glazing up as if welcoming us to their land. Kyde and I gasped out in pure admiration. Kyde had literally cried his way out of his father’s cloak the second we stepped out of our territory. I swear the child had magic in him. He never cried even once after that. He was cooing and giggling as he took everything in with his large round eyes. The dragon twins were awestruck themselves, flying over us with glazed eyes.

I wished we could turn our trip to an adventure. I wished we could linger longer and find cool spots, camp out, but we could not. The more we approached the werewolf kingdom, the sure I was that something had happened to Ziss. Call it best friend/ sister/ girl crush intuition but my girl needed me and I was not going to fail her.

Seeing my worry, Dante sped up, Gary and Marshall left behind because they were way slower than us, like travelling with snails. The trip did not turn as horrid as I thought it would. Kia had been too occupied to torture us with his screams. He never slept a wink even through the night, he was on his best mood.

The air began to change and my wolf yipped and wiggled his stupid tail. He was home, the land of the werewolves. I hated it. I hated every part of it and I knew such anger towards them came from my insecurities. I felt as if I was not good for them, feeling that they rejected me. I knew I was the problem but that did not make me stop not liking them, especially Areli. She was just….urgh, she looked perfect, as if she had everything all together and I felt like the fraud queen, the crazy queen. It was deep, not wanting to dwell on my darkest thoughts.

We ran another hour, Dante’s ears peaked up with his face back to his old self. I had not seen him like that in a long time and it was sexy. His face was dark and deadly, looking calm but ready to kill any that threatened us. The last time we were in that kingdom I kissed my true mate and it did not go well. I wondered what I would have done if Dante had left me and ended things with me.

I shook my head, it not the take for fake scenarios.

My eyes scanned around, the trees greener, air cleaner.

We moved a little more then skidded to a halt just in time for the large werewolves to show their awful teeth at us. They really did not like guests. They stayed a safe distance away, snapping their teeth at us. Did they know that threatening a royal, none the less a king, had a death penalty? I was not above rolling heads for people snapping their teeth at me. I realized how my wicked and evil self got darker over the years. I swallowed, shaking the thoughts away. I was just riled up because of Ziss.

I was sure the werewolves were waiting on orders from their royals on what to do with us.

It took four minutes and they all turned away only to emerge back out wearing shorts. It was a happy day for me. Staring at a half-naked vampire and a half-naked werewolf had two opposing effects. One was gag worthy with the other drool worthy. All I saw were abs, gorgeous sexy abs. Just because I was mated did not make me dead even though, they held nothing to my mate but sometimes it was good to ogle at something different.

“Follow us.” The leader of that small group of werewolves said, grumpy as if we killed his pup. I stared at Dante in amusement but Dante was no fun in the werewolf kingdom, he had his king face on. I swallowed my smile and together we walked in the circle that the werewolves put us in, caging us as they led us deep in their land. The walk through the forest was long but I seriously did not mind. I was mapping their land in my head, you never know when you will need an escape plan or an attack plan.

I guess Kia had ate up the tension in the air because as much as his eyes were still wide in adore, he was too quiet while the dragon twins sat on my shoulders quietly. The tension was so thick you could cut it, the hate pouring from all the werewolves around us.

We finally stepped out of the forest and I nearly sighed because the low growls had been chirping at my sanity and how bad it would be to start a war because of a growl, a low growl nonetheless.

It seemed nearly all the werewolves had scurried into their houses because the yard was dead quiet. A few stood behind the king and queen. I mean, there was no way we could scream ‘we come in peace’ more than us walking in carrying our children in our arms.

My eyes fell on Areli of course and as always, she was a sexy beautiful demon of a goddess. I loved the black on her, such pure and evil beauty. I was so inlove and I hated it. Don’t get me twisted, I loved her look not her. We walked graciously, my hand having found it’s way to Dante, our fingers lacing. My head was high, doing the walk Ziss taught me and even thinking of it made me emotional. Where was she? My eyes searched all around as if I would see her gorgeous self parade her way to us with her death stare.

The werewolf king and queen walked closer, the circle of handsome men breaking around us with us finally getting a bit more air.

“I will do the talking love.” Dante linked me.

“ I will just be smiling like an idiot, do your thing my love.” I chirped in with me mentally smiling while holding my bitch face or so I thought. Dante was the intelligent one with a sweet tongue while I was the rascal. He handled the talks and papers, I was the fist, just call me when it’s killing people time.

“What are you doing in my kingdom?” The werewolf king asked and promises I had not made were unkept.

“Where the fuck is Ziss?” I questioned, not there to play pissy with them. All I cared about was my Ziss and we were not leaving without her.

“Baby.” Dante huffed in our mindlink.

“Sorry boo, it just came out. I will not say another word.” I linked him back, squeezing his hand.

The werewolf king was more than pissed at that point. His deadly eyes were on me and I swear he was killing me a million deaths right there.

“She is not here, we thought she was in your kingdom.” The almighty queen spoke, me just scowling mentally.

“She is not. We have not heard from her in weeks. How long did she leave and please tell me you did not let her leave on her own?” I couldn’t help my tongue; my tamper was already very hard to control. I guess Dante gave up at that point, feeling his eyes on me but his little firecracker was fired up at that point and there was no way to put out the fire.

The two werewolf royals stared at each other, then back at me.

“Two weeks. She left without telling anyone. Vex told her to wait for him but when he came back two days later, she was gone.” Areli said with me having a hard time to keep standing. The words were ringing in my head. I held on tightly to Dante’s hand, feeling my skin turn red. There was much heat as my dragon side got triggered. I closed my eyes and opened them, taking a deep breath so I could talk. I opened my mouth to shut it, my free hand going to my hair.

By that time Kaida and Kyde were off my shoulders because they knew, they knew what happened when I burned up in such a way.

“Two weeks?” My voice was dangerously low. “How long did it all take you to realize your beta was…..gone?” I asked, all I could say at that moment.

“One of our pack members was brutally murdered, we have all been searching….”

Areli did not get to finish that sentence. I literally held up my hand to shush her up. The gasps were lost on me, seeing the warriors around us inching dangerously close.

“So, my cousin is not here? She has not been for two full weeks.” My heart was beating way too fast, my brain short circuiting and I already had very low brain capacity so I was on dangerous territory.

“You can not come into our kingdom and…!” King Conri stepping towards me in anger was his worst mistake.

I took his challenge, jumping and smashing my fists into him.

Dante was too slow for me, pulling me back with one hand from King Conri who was ready to rip me into pieces. Areli held Conri back with both of us deadly staring at each other.

“Put a leash on your…” He did not get to finish that sentence either. I had a thing for fixing assholes.

Conri was ready this time as he slipped from Areli’s grip, meeting me with his fists. If only he knew that he was riling me up. His fists were nothing but fuel to fire. He might have been immortal but I was a hybrid, three beasts in me, and I would clean the floor with him. He was no match for us. I went full vampire speed, hitting him over and over. The werewolf warriors jumped in and Dante at that point let me have it I guess. I whopped the warriors while I had their king on a tight leash.

A scent hit me once and for a second, I had hope but it was exactly the person I wanted. The king was suddenly not my target as I turned with my lycan claws coming out to play. I swiped them at the beta, ready to wash my body with his blood. No one would stand between me and that son of a bitch.

I roared with me pushing him to the ground, ready to bury my claws into him but I knew deep down that Ziss wouldn’t want me to hurt him to that extent. I pulled back my claws and went full force with my fists. My skin was harder, and bones firmer which made each punch nearly fatal.

Werewolves jumped on me and I threw them off then jumped back on their beta.

“Enough!” The goddess spoke and I felt her power run through me. It was telling me to submit. Letting me know a higher being had just spoken. I had never submitted through the horror of my life, I was not going to start with a self-entitled good for nothing goddess. There was only one person I yielded to.

“Flavia, enough my love.” Dante softly called, his voice washing over me and leaving me quivering. I groaned out, jumping off the beta who was bloodied. He could count his lucky stars Dante had been there or else. Their Goddess would have had to kill me to take me off him.

My emotions were high and I still had a hard time regulating them. I walked into Dante’s stretched arm, needing his touch to get myself stable again. My head turned to Ziss’s mate as my heart broke. How could he do this to her?

“Ziss has been missing for two full weeks! Two full weeks! You know…..” My heart was breaking, throat clogging “….You know she is in danger! You know her brother is hunting her like a dog! You know he just took the crown! Why! Why would you take so long to confirm she arrived, especially if you know she left alone?! Why! She is your fuck’n mate. Doesn’t that mean anything to you? Don’t you care, even a bit?! You sit in this stupid castle of yours while that fucker has my cousin. I swear to my dead vampire God, I swear to my fucking dead people that I will burn this whole kingdom down if anything happened to her…”

Dante held his arm tighter around me, us completely surrounded. The sob was just about to consume me and I would not allow it. Areli suddenly spoke but she could go fuck her Godly self.

“Breathe my love, breathe.” Dante kept saying in my head. “We will find her.”

“They are all in it. It’s not possible Dante. How can her own mate not know she is missing? They did something to her. They gave her away.” I rushed the words out in our mindlink.

“Let’s get out of here. She is not here which leaves one place.” He said.

I blinked the tears away. My body straightened up and all I wanted was blood, blood of those that dared hurt my family. We would deal with the werewolves later.

Dante tightened his hold on my waist. Kaida and Kyde had settled on my shoulders again. My body was lifted off the ground and Dante ran so fast out of there we surely left just a blur. The werewolves chased after us but it took minutes for us to cross out of their border and the next time we would walk in, we would surely be bringing war. Firstly, we would pay the dragons a visit and dead bodies was the only thing I was leaving behind.

# 41. MOUNT ZION

We passed Gary and Marshal halfway home. They immediately turned and read between the lines, running after us to which we left them again.

No one talked, there was no sight seeing anymore or adventuring with the children. My mind was set on the dragon kingdom and I knew Dante was already making plans on how we would sneak in. I was already planning each and every strike I would make on that vile person called Uther. I could already see myself nailing him to a rock before skinning him alive but I would keep him alive because I knew Ziss would want to deal with him herself. I did not even want to think of what they had done to her already. The only comfort came from knowing she was now immortal so they couldn’t kill her, right?

I shook my head, the pain squeezing my heart and leaving my chest aching. I wished I could teleport there. The way seemed to get longer and we did not waste time when we got back home. I unlocked the doors, running to the kid’s room to give Kia a bath. His screams bounced off me because my mind was already on the long way to the dragon kingdom. Kia rarely cried. He just screamed, not because he was hurting or uncomfortable. As I said, he took joy from other’s pain and that was the exact reason he screamed his lungs out most of the time. Such an evil little cute thing.

I dressed him then bathed Kaida and Kyde. When I stepped out of the room with the babies, Lorex, Adam and Selby stood outside with Dante briefing them. I did not know if they were going with us or staying. They were the only ones we even attempted to trust. They had been on our side since the great fall of the vampires. They were the three trackers that had alerted us when Dante’s uncle came to attack us after the villages were burned down. Everything they had done showed that they could be trusted but Dante and I had been burned too often by people we considered family and we did not trust easily. I stopped to listen as he briefed them.

“… One of you will be with them at all times. I don’t care if you have to shit in your pants but never leave my children ‘s side. Assign men you trust, ten at least to always guard them. They should not leave this house unless it’s on fire.” Dante finished, firm in his words. My heart squeezed. This would be the first time I would leave my children and I was not sure I could survive it. I loved my babies more than anything.

“Any rising matters should be contained until we are back. If we are not back in eight weeks, Selby you will hold my position until my son comes of age. Lorex and Adam will be your seconds.” Dante said, just knocking my breath off. I had not thought of the possibility of us walking away and never coming back. We did not have immortality like the werewolf royals.

Fear gripped me, suddenly realizing I had a lot to lose if things went wrong. It was a fight I was going in with so much to lose. I was not sure I could do it. What parents were we, leaving our children knowing there was a possibility we could leave them orphaned? I swallowed my thoughts, holding on tighter to Kia who lay his head on my chest. Kaida rubbed her cheek against mine, with my head leaning on her. The thought of dying and leaving my children was unbearable to me and that just meant there was no room for failure.

The three men nod their heads and quickly got into a bow. I walked away as Dante turned, following behind me.

“Drakko sent word a few days ago, we hadn’t checked his communication book in weeks. Ziss is gone.” Dante said, stopping me in my tracks. My heart hammered hard in my chest. My eyes went wide, my head spinning.

“What do you mean Ziss is gone, Dante?” I questioned, my voice louder than I had intended but Dante couldn’t just say such words.

Dante shook his head, swallowing hard.

“Dante, Ziss can’t die. She is immortal and I don’t appreciate you trying to scare me like that.” I said, pinching him before I turned to continue making my way to the shower. His words just made me want to move faster.

“Uther has been killing a lot of those opposing him and sacrificing them. Drakko stated that he is next. He knows they are watching his books and if he sent this then it must have been critical for him to get word to us. We need to get in there. We need to move faster. Ziss may be immortal but my brother isn’t.” Dante added, walking past me in a rush.

We had never taken a shower nor dressed up that fast. My hands were shaking. If only we had checked Drakko’s communication book before we took that useless trip to the werewolf kingdom. What if it was too late? What if they had killed Drakko already? The thought nearly drove me insane. Drakko was the only relative Dante was left with. They loved each other so much. Dante looked up to Drakko. He was all simping around Drakko. If he lost him I knew a part of Dante would die too.

No one said a word. I could see it in his eyes, the fear. His hands were quivering as he pulled up my leggings for me. They shook as he put my socks on me and slipped my boots to zip them for me. He pulled my hair into a pony tail then slid a hat on my head. I wanted to hold him, to comfort him but I knew that all he needed was for us to be fast and rescue his brother from the clutches of Uther who was a dead man walking. I thought of Lizz, Drakko’s mate. I thought about their children and nearly cried just thinking of it.

As hard as it was, we quickly said our goodbyes, kissing our children with Lorex, Adam and Selby holding them. Kia began crying out for me as we walked away. He began clawing at Lorex, wanting me to come back to him but I couldn’t. All I wanted to do was hold his screaming self and let him torture me some more but I couldn’t and even that killed me.

Dante was no longer there in mind and spirit. His hand was holding mine tightly and as soon as we stepped out of the house, he picked me up and began running. He ran so fast we could barely even breathe. He ran so fast even I was shocked. He was running to save his family. He was running to save his one and only brother. I held on tightly, nothing I could do to calm him down.

The night was one of the most brutal, thinking of why Drakko would say Ziss is dead. What had they done to Ziss? I knew it was bad and it just broke me knowing she went through hell after all that she went through while growing up. She did not deserve this and I wished I had fought harder to go see her when Abraham came back. I don’t know how I could have prevented all this from happening but maybe I would have suspected something and took Ziss back with me. I shook my head, not knowing anything at that point.

We reached Mount Zion in record time. It was fifty thousand feet, rugged yet Dante ran up it as if it was flat land. I kept thinking we would fall but he kept going even when the harsh winds began drifting through. We were not on dragon territory yet but we would be able to see in especially with our sharp vision.

It took horrid hours to reach the top and when we did, Dante lowered me down. His eyes already scanned through the land. We lay down on our stomachs, looking at the royal village. It was just past morning, people doing their chores yet something was very very wrong. I had a bad feeling about this. We would walk in blind and anything could happen but it is a chance we would take.

“Should we start at his village?” I asked.

“No. They will have seen what he sent to us by now and they will have apprehended him. He is in the royal village, if he is still alive anyway.” Dante said back coldly, turning around.

“He is alive Dante. He is. Don’t give up hope.” I took a deep breath, hoping he was. “Do you think they will suspect that we are coming?” I questioned.

“I don’t know. We have been labelled as weak. Maybe Uther will think we will cower out just like him.” Dante spat out, seeing the hunger he had to completely annihilate Uther.

Dante moved around the mountain, taking one last look before he took my hand again, getting ready to make a move and that’s when two things happened.

My eyes went wide as I saw something like a zombie walk through the dragon royal village. It was pure white, staggering around, a white sheet around it’s thin body.

“Dante,” I called.

“Do they have mummies now?” I asked with wide eyes.

Dante hissed and my eyes turned, hearing what had him hiss. My eyes went wide, those shit heads about to get us killed.

Dante ran down the side of the mountain so fast as the werewolf royals stepped out of the portal they had just opened. How fancy. Wind was collecting around their portal and it made so much noise which could bring the dragons out. The werewolves trickled out one by one, ready for war.

I could feel Dante’s anger evaporate from his skin and I knew it was about to go down. We reached the werewolves in record time, Dante skidding to a stop, boiling in anger. I quickly jumped out of his arms, marching the rest of the way as the werewolf queen turned to us. They wore their crowns, ready to declare war.

“Whatever this is, stop it now.” Dante said out, shocked he could still speak so calm because I was sure he was fuming within. But that’s just Dante, he never let his emotions get the best of him. He was always level headed.

“Hello to you too.” Areli said, smiling at us as if we were friends.

“Let’s go baby, leave them. Let them see how fast a single dragon can melt this army of theirs to ash.” I said, pulling at Dante.

I actually was laughing evilly inside because they would see why the dragons were one of the most powerful beings in the world. In their people form they were average but once they turned to their dragons, the whole mountain could melt down.

‘They will act as a destruction. As the dragons burn them down, we will be sneaking in and looking for Ziss and Drakko.’ I said to Dante through our mind link.

“This is making too much noise, it will draw the dragons out and they will burn your people.” Dante tried to explain again because he was too good for his own good. I was ready to leave them there to bear the consequences. Why did we even care, they had a goddess on their side. She would probably freeze time and kill all the dragons in one instant like she had in the battlefield against the vampires.

‘Dante, let’s go. They can handle their own, they have Areli.’ I reminded him, pulling at his arm. He sighed, deciding I was right. We turned around, hand in hand, hoping our God was with us in this fight. My head turned one last time, staring back at the werewolves in envy because no matter what, they would walk out still alive and us, well, we would see.

My eyes locked with dark ones staring back at me. My breath hitched and I came to an absolute halt. My world just seemed to freeze. I had not known if I would ever see him again. I had not known how I would react to it. I did keep an eye out on him over the years. The werewolves thought they were the only ones with spies. They thought they were so smart. I knew Logan lived with my sister in his pack. I knew he still hadn’t mated with her. I did not how I felt about that and I did not have any right to feel anything at all. I just hoped he was happy which he was not at all. He was spiraling and I added just a tiny bit to that.

Our eyes were locked and he looked just as good. I had thought the pull between us would have been cut but I guess it was impossible to rid of the ties the moon goddess had bestowed on us. I did not regret my decision on picking Dante but I sometimes wondered if the moon goddess would punish me for breaking one of the most sacred bonds to the werewolf beings.

I suddenly felt Dante’s eyes on me. I blinked, seeing Logan make his way to us. He looked more ripped than the last time I saw him. I didn’t know what I would say to him but I just couldn’t walk away. He ate the distance. Dante let go of my hand and stepped away. I completely turned to stare at Logan. I did not know what Dante was thinking and I was too scared to read his thoughts but I knew he was not angry.

“Logan.” I breathed out as Logan stopped right in front of me. My body was pulled into his arms. He hugged me so tightly I just melted. The hug took long and when we pulled back, he stayed close, looking into my eyes. He looked even more haunted than the last time I saw him but the more he stared at me, a certain weight chirped off him. I held on tightly to him as he stared into my eyes. We said nothing after, no words coming to me.

“Be safe.” I suddenly said and he just stared. Before I knew it, he was hugging me again, taking a whiff of my hair. He then pulled back, placing a kiss on my forehead then let go. It seemed to pain him to let go and it hurt me seeing that pain in his arms. I wanted him to find love and someone who would help him heal but I knew my sister was not it. That selfish two-timing rascal was no good for Logan and he knew it. I smiled sadly at him with him turning to walk away. I took a few seconds, just standing there, stuck.

Dante ran his arm around my waist, pulling me close.

“You okay?” He asked with me turning to him, a slight smile on my face.

“Yes. Thank you.” I said back to him. He knew what I meant. I had needed that closure and I hoped it also helped Logan in some way.

I would forever be grateful for Dante. He always put me first no matter what and he was supportive and loving. I leaned in more to him.

“I love you.” I said, Dante smiling, lowering to place a kiss on my forehead only to stop then he turned to kiss my cheek.

“Let’s let that sink in there.” He said, referring to Logan’s kiss. I giggled because he was just being cute. We turned around and made our way to the dragon royal village.

It was not even five minutes later when we heard the soft crumbling of rocks not far from us. My body turned, ready to whoop some more werewolf ass.

I did not know how I felt seeing the beta who had mated with my cousin. A part of me hated him but seeing him so lost and messed up had me feel sorry for the guy just a little.

“Know that if we come into trouble we will throw you as bait and as they kill you, Dante and I will run. We will come back and drag your dead body when we have found Ziss.” I put it out there so there wouldn’t be any confusion later on.

No answer came, just constant rock crumbling from the beta’s heavy weight. He made so much noise when walking it was disturbing.

“And I hope you are not here to spy for your king or queen so you could keep us from finding our family because if you are, we will kill you and wait for you to wake up only to kill you again until you wish you could really die.” And I was not joking at all. I would not hesitate to rip his heart out over and over again. I would make it my life mission. Sometimes I would let him escape then catch him only to rip his heart out again.

“They will act as a destruction as we search for her.” Beta Brum finally spoke out with me nodding my head. I would have loved to see the dragons toast the werewolves but next time I guess.

We tracked down, all of us deep in our heads. I knew there was a lot they were hiding because the math was not mathing. But, I also realized that Brum had nothing to do with her disappearance unless he was a very good actor. He looked like he would splatter apart any moment. The man was barely holding it all together. I felt so bad for him.

“I know you hate us but the moment you mated with Ziss, you became family too. We will find her because our girl is so strong. I know she has been fighting and when we do find her, she will need us all. She will need us to just love her so much and be there for her. We can go back to fighting when she has grieved all that has and will happen here. Are you willing to do that?” I asked, slowing so Brum could catch up and we could stare into his grey eyes.

He swallowed, thinking through the words and his hate was too much. I saw it swirl in his eyes, not willing to let it go. I nod my head. Well, that was a good try. Dante and I turned back and continued walking, Brum not far behind.

# 42. REVENGE AND RETRIBUTION

Ziss’s P.O.V

I thought I knew pain. The pain of being unwanted, a constant burden with snide remarks said at your every passing. The pain of watching your uncle stab your mother to death in her attempt to save you while your younger brother watches. The pain of losing your home, your anchor and nearly losing yourself. The pain of being rejected by a person who was supposed to love you. Losing the only person who was by your side from the start. Losing your child. I thought I knew pain but I was wrong.

I felt each inch of my heart grow. I felt each inch of my liver grow. I was dead yet alive, feeling everything. I felt my body sew itself together in such an unholy and twisted way. My heart began pumping as soon as the vessels connected only for it to rupture because my body was larger than what my heart could support. The pain of dying over and over again, each time the heart rips apart. It felt as if my whole being was my exploding. My soul broke to it’s last crumbles tired and shuttered. I wished to drift away. I wished to die and for it all to stop. It seemed even in death there was hell.

Each hour passed, begging for release, begging to be let go with no saving grace coming to my rescue. My mind and body drifted into numbness at some point, numbness that was so dark and so painful. This was the cost of immortality, ripping apart in every way and bearing through agony to pair myself back together even until I wished and prayed for the Gods to grant me release. It should have been good. It should have been a wonderful miracle but how I wished I had never mated with Brum because then I would have died and found peace in the afterlife.

The screams were only mental. They echoed through every chamber of my body, leaving it trembling. Time was lost on me but at a point I felt so cold, such cold that seemed to freeze my bones. My heart kept fighting, kept pulling itself together with each rapture until it was strong enough to sustain my body and that was when all the other organs grew. I don’t know how I was conscious of what was happening but I was. I knew that the experience would leave me indestructible to all worldly pains. It was life altering and made everything else look not so much.

My body stitched itself together and I gained back all sensation, all of my emotions and feelings. It all came back to me, all that had been done to me and never had I experienced so much anger. No matter the consequences, all that filled my mind was revenge. I wanted it raw and bloody. I wanted it like I had never wanted anything before. It fueled me to bear through the pain, to lay still where I was as I recovered.

Rain poured, seeing rocks all around me. From that I knew my body had been stoned and left buried under the stones they had threw on me. My anger had no bounds and I did not even care if it burned down worlds. I did not care who would get hurt and how hard they would get hurt because it was my time to explode and be damned to the bystanders.

My eyes fluttered open with such force. Everything was blurry as I lay there. I blinked over and over, the large stones heavy on my body yet none would keep me down. The rocks flew off from me pushing my body up. A white cloth had been wrapped around my body for modesty before they stoned my dead body, casting me out as scum not worthy of even a proper burial. They had not buried me in the mountain of Buja as tradition states. It had been my brother’s final cussing at me and my position in the family.

It took long minutes and it was hell even standing up, none the less walking. It felt as if I was relearning how to function again, like a baby taking their first steps. I swallowed the angry tears and groaned out in anger because I would not fail. I would not give up. I put one foot in front of the other and kept moving. I kept walking, staggering left and right with only one destination in mind. That was to reap hell onto that evil spawn I had called my brother. Since he was young, we all had daunted on him. At five he began following my uncle around, the same uncle who had advocated for my death when I was born. The same uncle who had been set on killing me even after my mother and father stated that they would not carry the tradition of killing me even though I was a girl. My brother became more and more distant, disappearing for some time. When I was twelve, my brother nine, I had been running down a corridor, running to help my mother in the gardens. I had been pulled me straight into one of the caves. My uncle had pushed my body down, my brother watching, and had stabbed me right in the chest. I had never screamed so loud. My uncle had been too strong for me, I could not escape. My mother came running and in fear of the consequences of being caught, they had pinned her down and stabbed her over and over while I bleed, my brother watching.

My uncle thought I would die on my own from the chest wound. He scooped my brother up and together with their crew, they ran. I had held my mother’s hand and felt it grow cold against mine. My father hunted them down with nothing held back. He caught my uncle and executed him. My brother was forgiven but after a month, he left and we never saw him for two years. Over the years he would come back and apologize only to try an attempt on my life then run off when it failed. We all held hope for him but he was lost.

The night passed as I climbed down, winds harsh. I dragged my right leg, falling a few times to stumble up. Nothing could be seen by me. My eyes were to the destination. I could already see my brother. I could already feel his blood on my hands. I would bathe in it. I was going to let it spray on me and let it cleanse all the pain I had in me.

Morning came, time wasted on me because to me it felt like I had blinked and the night had turned to morning. I walked through the land I had called home for so many years. I saw the people walk around, heads turning to me with many gasping. They ran away, screams echoing all through the royal village. Pots that had been carried cluttered and splattered on the ground. My people ran from me, screaming in fear of me as if I was a monster. Or maybe I was. I certainly did not feel normal. I felt beastly. I felt unholy and washed with dark matter. I felt disgusted with myself. I felt as if I died and woke up a ghost. Nothing was right. Everything was wrong.

Warriors ran out, carrying weapons to put me down. They circled around me as I continued walking until I stopped when my brother ran out of the large caves of Magu. He wore my father’s royal attire and my father’s crown on his head. His eyes were wide, seeing the fear as he took me up and down in utter shock.

“B…rot..her.” My voice was hoarse, my throat as if to collapse. It was not ready to be put to work but I continued none the less, bearing through the pain.

“You w…wante…d to bring back the old rules. I, Zisealer, First and eldest child of King Zahhak challenge you Uther, to a fight to death. That crown is mine and I will wear it while bathed in your blood.” I spat out. My brother slowly inching closer.

His eyes went wider, searching all around with his mouth opening to close.

The people all turned to stare at him then me. The challenge was thrown out and since he wanted to uphold old traditions, he had to accept no matter what.

He stepped into the circle the warriors had created, staring up and down at me as if disgusted with what he saw.

“You can barely even stand.” He snickered, turning around to leave but was locked in by the warriors who locked their weapons together to prevent him from leaving. They knew the rules as much as I did. There was no way out for the coward.

“Let me through.” He snickered out but the warriors did not budge.

“As your king I comm….”

Uther did not get to finish the sentence. I had been panting like a wild beast about to attack. I jumped onto him, smashed my fists into him. I had never felt so powerful. I had never felt so powered. I was fighting for myself. I was fighting for my baby who he had cut out of me. I was fighting for my mother and how he broke my father’s heart.

I kept going, kept hitting him over and over. Uther fought back but it was as if I was immune to his hits because I never even felt them.

I roared up in anger, my righthand shifting midair with the other holding Brum by the collar. I slashed into his chest with such anger. My gray furred hand was left red as he screamed like a bitch. I threw his body away, not wanting to end it so quickly. I did not want to make it so easy for him. Not when he tore my family apart. Not when he took my baby away from me.

I threw my head back and screamed with such pain that left me shaking. My body turned, my eyes pinning my brother who was crawling backwards with his wounds healing. I ran for him. He stood up, turning around to run away only for the warriors to push him back. Uther stumbled right into my claws that waited for him. I made sure to not hit any vital organs. As heavy as he was, I pushed him up with my claws, my arms shaking from his weight. Blood gushed down my arm with such force. He thrashed and I knew I could not carry him anymore so I threw him onto the ground where he coughed and wheezed nothing but blood. He was on all fours, scrambling up. I walked behind him only to pause.

A scent me hit me then another and another.

My heart seemed to restart again. I turned around, my eyes searching the crowd but all I could see were my people watching the fight with pale skins and wide eyes but I knew my family was near. It took a few seconds to recall that I was in a fight. I would not let anything distract me from my fight but I had. As I turned around, soil was poured onto my face. My eyes immediately closed but it was too late. They burned as the grains of sand abused them with no mercy. As of then, my bother took the time to hit me over and over. I felt a swash of something, knowing he had taken a weapon. I tried listening to where he was coming from and I was just able to dive in time for him to not cut my head off. My shoulder got the cut, feeling the warm blood trickle over.

The pain was only fuel to my fire. I groaned out, opening my eyes through the pain as tears washed away the sand yet still I could barely see. My hands waved, catching my brother’s hand. I turned to break his arm, my feet kicking him where the sun never reached. He slashed at me again, each strike from him meant to kill me instantly but not today. He was not taking anything else from me.

I pushed him away only to stumble away as he came back heavy on me. I dodged his attacks yet my body was getting weaker with each dive.

“I am your king and I command you to restrain this abomination!” The command I had tried to squash was thrown out and none of my people could resist.

Hands fell on my body just as fast, holding me down but I would not go down without what I wanted and I wanted my brother’s guts on the ground. I pushed as many of them away, kicking and snapping their heads. At that point anyone who held me was viewed as an enemy. There was no holding back. I roared as if hell itself was roaring, killing any that held me but they kept trickling, kept coming on me as my brother waited with his machete to cut my head off like the coward he was.

There was no way I was leaving him with my people. There was no way I was letting him lead our people. He was the devil walking and there was no way I was letting him corrupt our people and destroy what my ancestors and father built before him.

“Get your hands off my cousin your bitch ass psycho idiots!” A scream tore through the air, Flavia flying like the spitfire she is. She tore through all the warriors that dared near me. More warriors joined and she rained terror on them all, knocking them out.

I knocked out all those holding me, my eyes on my brother as I walked to him. Our eyes were locked, any that jumped between us dealt with while I still held my brother’s stare who wanted to run but still stood unsure of himself.

We both knew it was all ending on that day. He had tried to end it his way and it had not worked. It was my time to end it my way.

His eyes looked around, calculating his next move, seeing how he could cheat and scheme his way out of this but there was no way.

Warmth spread all over my body and I wanted to cry for all I had lost but I channeled all the pain to the man who caused it all. Uther’s machete was in the air, ready to hack me but before he could swing it, Brum gripped his arm, pulling the machete away only for him to push my brother to me. I jogged to meet my brother’s stumbling body. I gripped his arms and turned them with such force. His arms snapped out of their socket. The sound was sickening as my brother screamed. I stepped onto his foot hard until a bone shuttered.

“You fuck’n bitch!” He screamed out and I wasn’t done. His body hit hard with a thud. I pulled and broke his other leg leaving him thrashing.

He heaved out, saliva stringing from his mouth. I staggered left and right then lowered down, falling on my knees while I stared at my brother’s tears fall with him immobilized. That did not stop him from dragging his broken limbs to run away from me. I knee-walked to him, wrapping my arm around his neck and pulled him to me.

The emotions all came flooding to me with such a force I could not explain. I did not know why we reached this point. I did not know how this all got to this point. Once upon a time my brother had been my world, playing together, sharing our food then he just vanished before my eyes. I loved him and I still loved him as I held his shaking body to mine. It killed him as much as it killed him for me to be the one that took his life when all I had ever wanted being to love and protect him. The one I was supposed to protect from danger, I was taking his life.

I squeezed with him thrashing. I cut his air supply yet my arm loosened, not able to do it.

A song played in my mind, a song our mother used to sing to us when we were young. It took me a long minute to realize I was singing it.

Chaos was all around us. Anyone that was a dragon fought to pull me away from my brother because of the command my brother had uttered. Brum, Dante and Flavia were just knocking them down with no mercy.

My body rocked back and forth, feeling my brother’s tears fall on my skin as he wept. I tightened the arm little by little, wanting it to be as painless as possible, if that was possible.

“I don’t know why I did it sis….” Uther uttered out in between his cries.

“I did not know what happened to me….I….I” He fell apart, his mucus on my skin. It was getting hard for him to speak, his upper body thrashing up but I held him down with all in me as my own tears streamed down.

“I killed father.” He confessed, something I had suspected but hearing it from his mouth made it worse.

“I made it fast and painless, I promise.” He was confessing all his sins to me. New hatred grew for him because I did not know who he was.

“I killed Rose. She couldn’t bare my child. She was not a dragon. She couldn’t dilute my bloodline. You are not a pure dragon anymore Ziss. Do not dilute our bloodline. Do not dilute our bloodline with your children Ziss” He fumbled and rambled over. The shock nearly knocked me down. I squeezed harder, feeling his fight dying down little by little. He fell silent, mumbling now and again until utter silence fell from him. His heart had stopped yet I could not let go and I could not stop crying nor singing. I had once promised to protect him with everything in me and this was when our story ended.

The chaos all stopped around us.

The king was dead, the command broken with all the dragons left standing.

One by one they stared, looking lost, not knowing if to weep or celebrate. The skies rumbled with the promise to weep tears. Had the sky wept tears when I died? Had it poured in anger for my injustice as the sky opened up then and let the rain pour.

Many werewolves suddenly trickled all around, paws hitting the wet ground being led by Areli and Conri.

In my arms was my brother. I could not let go even as he lay cold on me. I threw my head back and stared at the sky wondering why. Why such heartbreak? Why such pain? And as always, the heavens came with no answer.

I wept until I stopped. I closed my eyes, taking all the pain in and I let it wash over me. When I opened my eyes again, the rain had let out. It was like the start of something new, everything else washed away.

I freed my arm from around my brother’s neck then picked up the crown with my shaking hands. I moved from my brother, standing straight. I raised my arms, both hands holding the crown and I crowned myself the first dragon queen to rule the dragon people. Any that may impose would not live to see another day.

“All hail her majesty the Queen.” A voice, none other than Drakko’s shot through. He lowered to one knee. He was wrapped in a white cloth with drawings all over his skin. He had been about to get sacrificed. On his side was his mate and children all seeming to have gone through the worst.

“All hail her majesty the Queen!” All my people roared up, knees hitting the ground, them bending their heads.

I stared at them all, my people. I turned my head, watching each of them as they called my name in praise, accepting me as their queen.

Brum’s scent tickled my nostrils suddenly and I could not help but turn and stare at him make his way to me. I felt so many emotions seeing him. I did not know what I was supposed to feel after everything. He stood right in front of me, his eyes, his body telling it all. His eyes took me in and I saw his heart literary break.

He lowered down, bending a knee in front of me.

“Zisealer. Queen Zisealer. I have wronged you. I have hurt and neglected you. I have been blinded by anger that I should have never directed to you at all. You have done nothing but try with me and I hurt and left you. I am so so sorry my love. I am sorry I failed you and…..” He trailed away, his eyes moving to my stomach which had once held our precious baby. A shiver ran down my whole body as the grief hit me once again.

“…And our child.” He took a deep breath, looking down at his shaking hands with him blinking his tears and emotions away.

I held my hand out to him. He stared up at it, seeming not to believe the hand was really there. He stared up at me then back at the hand before he took it and slowly stood up.

I said nothing, turning around and together we made our way to the royal caves of Mogu where our story began. We walked in silence, hearing his heart drum too loud and fast for his good. As soon as we were out of sight my body stumbled into his. Brum was fast to turn and catch my swaying body. He scooped me into his arms, realizing how much I was shaking. All I could do at that point was wrap my arms around his neck, my eyes fluttering closed as I passed out hoping it was finally all over.

# 43. I HATE YOU

Ziss’s P.O.V

A loud piercing cry pulled me from the cloud I had been drowning in. It was persistent, leading me out of the abyss I swam in. It pulled me out to the light until all my senses sparked and I became aware. I felt the warmth that sifted into my skin from a nearing body. I felt the strong arms caging me in a way that should have been suffocating but it brought so much comfort. I was aware of the intoxicating scent that healed with each breath I took. And the most traumatizing, I knew Kia had touched ground on the land.

Five hearts could be counted in the room. Silence consumed the room besides the soft thudding of hearts, the constant breathing and of course, Kia cry wherever he was.

Where am I? I thought, wrecking my brain of my memories and I wished I had not. Everything came crushing back. The pain, the ache, and the heavy grief with the horror of everything that had happened. I found myself clenching my arms tightly against the body hugging mine firmly.

“She is awake.” A voice I had to place circled around my head until a face came to mind then all the memories going with that face. The pain intensified, my head throbbing in a way I couldn’t even explain. I realized that the person who had spoken was holding me tightly on my bed. I realized that most of our bare skin was touching. I wanted to pull back but the grief and the pain kept me cemented where I was.

*I had lost our baby.* The truth settled and wrecked me apart.

I heard chairs scrape, movement picked up with feet getting closer but I wanted no company. I just wanted to bury myself deep the blankets and grieve my child. The scene kept playing, him being ripped away from me. It knocked my breath every time.

I couldn’t speak but I found myself shrieking with each step those nearing took.

“I think you should all leave us for now,” Brum spoke again, the steps halting then a chuckle followed.

“Leave her. You must be insane if you think we will leave her with you. For all you know you all sold her off. We are not going anywhere. I think you should all leave. We all know you are not the dotting mate you pretend to be.” Flavia shot back, her words packed with such power it left the room cold to the bone and even I shivered. Tempers were high, tension one you could cut. The room was fueled and just one spark it would blow up.

“What happens in the werewolf kingdom is none of your business. Zisealer is mated to Brum, she is our Beta, we say what happens to her and her care. If we say you need to leave, you need to leave.” I heard Conri growl. I shut my eyes hard, wishing they could all go. My head pound with a vengeance and they were making it worse.

“Beta?” The dark chuckle that poured from Flavia scared me.

“Beta!? Are you fucking kidding me? Ziss is a queen. She is not bound by your stupid hierocracy roles. She is not yours to detect over. She is her own person. She is a fucking Queen for crying out loud! And you are in her kingdom where my mate, right here, has blood ties to so you are in our fucking land, talking about our Queen who her blood runs through my mate’s veins! So cleanse that mouth, turn the fuck around and walk away before I drag you to the cells myself fucking idiot king!” Flavia was about to explode.

“Tsk tsk tsk. Watch your hand werewolf king, do not move it any closer to my mate. The fact that I haven’t said anything is because I would appreciate peace between our kingdoms but if you even touch her I will tear you apart right here and throw your body to my babies to eat.” Dante warned so lowly and calmly but no one was fooled, he was barely clinging onto his patience.

The word was stuck in my tongue, forcing to push it out and it took everything in me. My whole body was burning but I fought through.

“Lea—ve.” It was barely audible but I knew they heard it.

“Maybe you should go attend to your child since he has been crying for some time.” I nearly sighed as Areli politely said. If I had the strength I would have dragged them out myself.

“What did you just say?”

“Flavia!” Dante shouted, the commotion that was happening, I was happy I couldn’t see. I knew Flavia was about to jump on someone.

“Let’s go my love.” Dante whispered.

“You are lucky my mate is here, Goddess or not, I would have put some color on that face.”

The door opened.

“Watch your mouth when you speak to my mate.” Conri seemed about to explode himself.

“Fuck you!” Flavia shot, the door hitting hard I thought it would crack. I knew Dante and Flavia were gone. Conri was left heaving in anger.

“It’s okay my love, it’s not worth it.” Areli cooed back.

“We can crush them in a day, burn their fucking kingdom to the ground.” Conri seemed ready for war.

“Calm my love. Come, let’s go.” Areli said, the door opening and closing. Peace finally fell over even though I was afraid of what would happen outside the room.

I buried my head deeper into Brum’s chest, letting his scent heal me from inside out. It was one of the things I had been robbed of in our short relationship. I felt so protected, so secure and I just let him hold me as tightly as he could. His lips brushed over my skin now and again as if I was the most precious being to him. My heart ached but I was used to it at that point. At that point, it was used to the heartache and it was a norm.

I sniffled and let the tears fall. I was grieving my unborn child. He or she had been with me for so long but I had only known them for such a short period of time. How hadn’t I even thought of it? It had been staring at me dead in the face. If I found out sooner that I was with child, I could have done something, maybe I could have tried eating more and it wouldn’t have been so easy to be taken by my brother. Maybe if…maybe if….I did not know at that point. I thought of the situation over and over again with each conclusion coming back to me being taken. Could I have done something to have saved my baby, I had no answer.

Brum pushed his head on mine, his own body slightly quivering. I let him shake with me as we both drowned. I felt his lips tremble, both turning cold in each other’s embrace.

“I am so sorry Ziss. I am so…” His voice broke away as I absorbed his words.

I did not even want to think of what he should be sorry for.

If he had been there would we be where we were? I did not want to answer that for his own sake and the little relationship left between us.

“I failed you and our child.”

“You did.” I did not realize I had said that out loud until a shiver ran through him yet I could not take the words back even if I wanted to.

I did not care much on how he had failed me but our child….

“You failed our child.” While he was taking care of another man’s child, we were suffering. If he had been there all along I wouldn’t have been so sick. The lack of his presence had torn me apart on it’s own because of the distance then the pregnancy. There was no way I could have been strong, could have been well.

“I am sorry.” He cried out, his tear falling on me but I was not convinced.

Did he even care, about us, about our child? He had walked away as soon as he found out I was pregnant, running to his girlfriend. And now he had none, not me, not her and not our child. My throat clogged with more tears pouring down.

I felt so empty inside. My heart was so empty, my stomach so empty. My baby was gone, any life in me barely there. Somehow I wanted it that way. Somehow I wanted to die silently inside. I wanted to be as vacant. I needed to pay. I needed to suffer in some way for everything that had happened which was why I pulled back from Brum. But he held me tighter, not wanting to let go.

“Let go Brum.” My voice was void of any emotion, numb.

“Ziss.”

“Let me go.” I firmly stated, waiting for his arms to loosen, ready to fight my way through if need be.

He loosened his arms.

“Never.” yet spat as he loosened his them. I pushed out, shuffling over the bed, the same bed my father had died in, the same bed my brother had killed him and slept on after, the same bed my parents had slept on, where we were conceived.

I sat, taking in the room before I turned to stare at Brum seated, staring at me with his face sunken. I saw the grief, saw the grave he had buried himself in. The Brum I had met a few months back was not the Brum I stared at. He had looked dead then but at this point he was a ghost.

“Go home Brum.” I lowly said, feeling sorry for him in a way but that was insane because the same fate that waited for him waited for me too.

“No.” He stubbornly affirmed, shifting towards me. I moved off the bed, my legs shaking but I soon found my strength to stand on them.

Brum slid off the bed to the ground.

“No Ziss. You are my mate. Wherever you are I will be. I have torn you apart with no reason at all. I have put on you stupid crimes I could not let go. I hated the vampires so I wanted to punish you for their actions. I was stupid, I was horrible to you but I am not letting you go. Throw me in the cells, hit me, tie me, starve me I don’t care but I am not leaving you Ziss because I love you. I love you with everything in me. I loved you the first morning you told me to piss off in your father’s office. You brought a spark that had died back into my life. Yet because I was so filled with hate I tainted you. I hurt you. I broke you. I shuttered you my love and I am so so sorry. Please Ziss, please my queen, please forgive me. I will spend the next centuries begging, crawling before your feet if I have to but leaving you is something I will not do.”

“Then you shall crawl and grovel and die wherever the fuck you will die because I am saying it now, you and I are done. I fuck’n hate you Brum. You took everything away from me and I hate you for it! Go back to your dead girlfriend and leave me the fuck alone!”

“She was never my anything Ziss. I was just helping. Ziss I love you. I have loved you. There is no other woman for me and I am not leaving you. Not in this lifetime so I will crawl, I will grovel and I will die if need be but you my love, I am not leaving.”

“So be it.”

“So be it. My queen.”

# 44. ALWAYS AND FOREVER

Brum was following me around like a lost puppy and I hated it. He was there when I got out of the shower. The bed done, his head hanging low in defeat. He was there when the ladies brought in an outfit for me. He was there as I stood, fully dressed, ready to address my people. He went to pull on his t-shirt and shorts, walking after me with messy hair which was also just an irk for me but in my head he was not there so I ignored it.

I walked out of my royal courters, staring at blank walls. I was suppressing my emotions which came from it being was the first time I walked through the royal caves without my father in my life. I was truly alone and the caves and mountain seemed larger than they had ever been. Not even Kia’s screams could vanquish the cold and emptiness of the caves, caves I would reside in nearly alone.

They looked darker and haunted. The life and beauty drained out.

My head tugged up, steps quickening as I stared at Drakko make his way to me. His head bent as soon as he saw me, him going down on his knee.

“Your majesty.” He greeted and I halted in my steps, Brum halting behind me.

“Cousin. We have plenty to discuss.” I said.

“We do your majesty but first, we are grateful for your recovery.” He said with me nodding my head and swallowing. I was not recovered but the important thing was my strength and my brain. I needed it as sharp as it could be.

“Thank you Drakko. Please do gather our people. We will be making an address. But first, please do let our cousins know I would like to see them in the grand cual immediately.”

Drakko bowed and sang praise before he stood and turned on his feet.

“Brum, please let Conri and Areli know that we are having a meeting in the grand office.” I spoke without even turning while we made our way down. He did not reply but I knew he had got the message. There were little to no people in the caves and those near, I could hear them hide as we approached. We took a corner and stepped into the grand kitchen which was vacant. Never again would I leave myself weak in the way I had been back at the werewolf kingdom. It taught me to appreciate food and the strength it brought. As upset as my stomach was I forced myself to eat a few fruits while I sat on the kitchen stool by the counter, thinking over all the things we needed to discuss.

Things would change and I was not sure if for the better or for the worst.

My fingers ran through my palms, suddenly hearing screams. The room darkened and all I saw was fire. My wounds ached and I swear I could feel the knife cutting through me again.

“Ziss.” I could hear the distant calling.

“Ziss.”

A hand settled on me and I jumped off the stool, eyes wide. I swear I could even smell the smoke. I blinked the tears back, seeing gray.

My chest rose and fell.

“You don’t have to do this today.” Brum said, his hand rubbing on my back. My eyes closed, stumbling onto him as I took deep breaths. My body trembled, burning. I had to do it. I knew many already were unsettled with me being the first queen to sit on the throne of the dragons. I had to show strength. Who even knows how long I had been unconscious for. I had to be strong. I had to keep my head up. I had to act indestructible.

I had to be perfect. Everything of mine had to be perfect.

My eyes flickered open, staring into Brum’s gray eyes. My heart sank down with me swallowing.

“I am okay.” I spoke out, pushing from him. He let go but still watched with concern written all over his face. I never thought I would ever see the day Brum would be worried over me. I smoothened my hands over my suit before turning.

I walked up to the grand Cual where both couples already sat. The smell of my babies hit me hard and my gut twisted. My eyes ran to Kia who was in Flavia’s arms, thankfully not crying. Areli stared at him with a pinning glare while Conri stared at Flavia with dangerously deadly eyes. Dante was staring at Flavia too, she seemed to catch all eyes but I could see his eyes dart towards the other couple now and again.

Kyde and Kaida were flying all over the office, happy and free. Staring at them forced me to stare at my father’s office. It was exactly as I had last seen it yet my brother’s scent had infused out all of dad’s and I hated it.

I cleared my throat, walking in.

The twins saw me first and they came flying down my way so fast they nearly knocked me down. They were really growing. Their eyes were wide with excitement and I missed them too. My arms circled around my little dragons, hugging them as tight as I could. Holding them, it did something to me. It made me want to cry and it healed at the same time.

“I missed you too.” I said, them brushing their dragon heads against me.

Kia’s cry told me he had seen us and wanted some action too. I walked over to Flavia, her eyes taking me in as teary as they were. She rarely cried and seeing her tears nearly scattered me to the ground.

“Come here Kia.”

This was not how I wanted it to be. I was supposed to walk in like a queen and get the discussion going but there I was about to cry my heart out as the twins flew to my shoulders, Kia being placed in my arms. His skin was so soft and he smelt like babies. How long would it have been and I would have been holding my own baby? I could not help but lay my head on Kia as he cooed in happiness. It nearly killed me. It was too soon, it was too soon yet I could not let go anymore. I held on so tightly, eyes closed. Losing a baby, it tore your soul to shreds.

Flavia threw her arms around me with the baby squashed between us. She cried and just pulled my own tears out.

“I am so sorry Ziss.” She wept and when Dante’s arms came and closed around us, it was the final blow. My whole body shook so hard.

Damn them for making me cry again. I was a queen now, queens don’t cry. I wept everything in me. Flavia’s constant coos and pleas with Dante’s head kisses just murdered me into pieces. I am sure for anyone watching it seemed comical, Flavia was such an ugly crier then me and Kia had joined in because Kia could not pass out on a good cry. The twins were wailing.

I cried and then I just fell silent.

Dante loosened his arms and pulled back. Flavia stepped back too and wiped a few of my tears.

I rubbed them away too and chuckled as Kia stretched his chubby hand, also rubbing my tears away. The twins joined in, literally licking the tears away. There goes my perfectly dewy look.

“Okay guys, let’s leave Auntie’s face.” Flavia called, calling the twins to her and they flew over to her shoulders.

“I don’t trust them, imagine them burning your face. They have been coughing smoke since they came over.” She said with me chuckling because I could already see it.

I wiped the rest of the tears and sniffled.

“Thank you. Everything will be okay.” I assured them with her smiling and taking my hand to squeeze it.

“It will my love. You are the strongest and most fierce person I know. Life can try but at the end you will prevail. All shall be well and if not, we will kick ass until it is.” She enforced firmly.

I smiled or tried to then squeezed her hand back before I slightly shook my body to try and rid myself of the emotions but that was easier said than done.

“Uhm, okay, can we all seat.” I mentioned, moving to sit. I was not willing to let go of Kia anytime soon and he seemed comfortable in my arms. He wore the cutest jersey with a denim dungaree underneath. He was a fashion icon, my type of people.

I pulled my father’s chair, pushing away the emotions which revived from seating on it.

“I asked you all here so we can iron over some pressing matters. Firstly, I would like to explain that I was taken from the werewolf kingdom by my brother who had help from Rose’s parents.” I said, letting it settle as Brum’s eyes widened along with Conri and Areli.

“I don’t know how that came about but when I was about to be….sacrificed they seemed friendly then my brother slit their throats.” I held on tighter to Kia as the images came back to life. Kia stared at me, his hands on my face, scratching and pulling whatever he could pull.

Everyone in the room was too shocked to speak, the three royals anyway.

“And my brother was the father of Rose’s baby. He confessed to killing her right before he gutted me the same way. I don’t know what was the plan there with her and the parents. At this point, I don’t really care.” I spat out, eyes dead on Brum who swallowed his shook away then bowed his head in shame. I nearly shook my head in disappointment but I held myself.

“I will be stepping down as the female beta of the werewolf people.” I turned, staring at Conri and Areli. They nodded their heads, I guess that was to be expected.

“And as the ruling queen of the dragon people, my mate will be by my side, a king who will be there to support, and do other roles a queen would perform to her king.” I continued, eyes turning to Brum, waiting for an objection but none came. A failed mateship would not be on my favor, everything of mine had to be perfect from that point onward.

Brum nod his head, no objections there.

“And yes Brum, I will need an heir.” I added, Flavia chuckling. She was having way too much fun, hand over her mouth to stop herself from bursting out in laughter. Seeing her laugh had me loosen a bit, blowing out some air as I relaxed.

“I guess Brum is also resigning? Not that he was doing anything anyway?” Conri asked, not so happy.

“Being a beta is my birthright. I will like not retire from the position but I will spend most of my time here.” Brum answered. His words came back to me. He once told me that because I mated with him did not mean I had to relinquish my title and who I was before him.

“And I will retain the position of being your female beta when we are in the werewolf kingdom.” I said out, staring at him with him staring back at me. The stare went on for a few milliseconds than intended before I pulled my eyes from him.

“We would appreciate that.” Conri answered with the matter settled. Heads were nod then silence fell over.

There was nothing else to be said, awkwardness falling over.

“Okay, I guess meeting is adjourned. Before we all leave, I just want to thank everyone for coming to rescue me. I am thankful to have you all to lean on. I appreciate you all so much.” I said with my eyes moving from the vampires to the werewolves. Flavia did not seem to agree with me but she said nothing after Dante squeezed her hand. I did not know what happened when I was missing but either or, they had all come and I was grateful.

“Always your majesty.” Dante finally said, always formal. I smiled at him.

“Always,” Areli added and I smiled at her too, Flavia throwing daggers and before another war broke out, we stepped out of the room, heading to different directions.

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Being a ruler of a nation was more than what it seemed like. Dealing with the people, all the paperwork and just carrying everyone on your shoulder. It was my first day in the job and I already felt defeated but through it all I had to act as if I had everything under control. As much as I hated help, I had to accept it from Drakko, Dante and even Brum.

I was at the wits end and my stubbornness would not get me anywhere. I had to lean on my pillars now and again and luckily for me, I had such strong anchors.

The werewolf royals had left. Dante and Flavia would leave at the end of the week which I was grateful for since they were such help. But I was exhausted.

The door to our courters closed and all I wanted was to collapse yet I kept walking, head high.

I never thought wearing the crown and the role would be so suffocating. I never thought it would be so heavy and draining. There were so many decisions to be made, decisions that could cost and affect thousands of people’s lives. I was still to deal with all the other kingdoms who would come and try to get what they could, try to shake us apart. It was still to get messy.

Hands fell on my shoulders and I jumped, realizing I had just stopped in the middle of the room for no reason. My eyes closed, taking in a breath when in fact, I was taking in Brum’s scent.

“You have all the hours of the day to think of all that is to come. In this room you can just let your shoulders down, let it all drift away and be free.” Brum whispered from behind me. He walked around, standing right before me.

“No one can do this job better than you. You are strong, smart, a warrior and you have such a good heart. You genuinely care about your people and would do anything for them. Just trust your instincts and never forget to take time for yourself too.” He continued, pulling off my suit jacket for me.

I swallowed, staring at him.

Despite everything, I was happy he was there. I held his hand just as it moved to unbutton my shirt. I gripped and held it tightly. He leaned closer and my eyes immediately closed as his lips moved to kiss my forehead where.

“I will always be here, to love, to hold, to assist, to guide, to care and to treasure you.” He whispered, the words sinking down to my broken heart as little by little Brum and I picked up the pieces to build a life for ourselves and our children.

“I love you my princess, my queen.”

“Always?”

“ Always my queen.”