

## Her Secret 89

### CHAPTER 89 NO.89

“Well? What do you think?” Avery asked, subsequently causing everyone in the room to turn to River. “There’s no saying that Ezekiel and his pack of misfits won’t cause any more trouble for these parts of the forest.” She added.

“They only dared to attack last time because they knew Griffin was sick and our pack did not have a strong leader.” Someone chimed in, River did not bother to look up from the map he was staring at. “Now that we have a strong pack leader, Ezekiel and the Highcaster wolves won’t attack us.”

“How can you be so sure? Are you forgetting that there is someone among us that is providing information to Ezekiel?” Maddison’s voice snapped.

“But there is no proof that there is a traitor among us.” Another said.

“Are you seriously that delusional? How did Ezekiel find out Griffin was sick then, when neither of us even knew until he had to tell us? Do none of you find that weird at all?” Maddison pressed, speaking to the others in the pack that joined their meeting to discuss ways to prevent another surprise attack from the Highcaster group.

“Settle down, there’s no point arguing among each other.” Ray’s calm voice spoke, causing Maddison to click her tongue and stay silent.

River frowned at the map, now that they have started widening the areas where they were patrolling, nothing seemed to be out of the ordinary as of late and yet he still felt as though something was going to go terribly wrong in a blink of an eye. The sudden change of the pack leader, the potential threat of a traitor in their midst...everything was slowly piling up. How much more burden could he place on the pack's shoulders to ensure the safety of the forest and how much more burden could he carry on his own?

“River?” Luis called out, causing River to finally lift his eyes up from the map. He looked around the room where old and young werewolves alike looked up to him as their pack leader but the fact that River was still inexperienced in his role was starting to show. The last thing he wanted now was any form of infighting—he had a feeling that Ezekiel was waiting for such a thing to happen so that he could strike when the Rosecliff pack was in disarray.

“For now we shall stick to the predetermined patrol routes. Pay attention to any changes in the forest and don’t stray apart from your designated teams. We can’t let our guard down now when there are still too many questions left unanswered. That’s all.” Was all he said as he walked towards the door.

For now, he needed some form of guidance—advice even to soothe his panicked heart. He was afraid that his decisions would one day lead to the downfall of his pack and the mere thought alone was enough to make him do whatever it takes to get stronger, better, for the sake of the forest and his pack.

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River rapped his knuckles on the wooden door and waited for a moment. He wondered if it was rude to suddenly show up at Griffin's front door with any prior notice but then again, he was living here together with Griffin and Rene not too long ago.

The door was pulled open as Rene popped their head out, eyes widening at the sight of River.

"Did you lose your house key?" Rene raised an eyebrow.

River let out a small laugh. "Sorry Rene, I didn't bring it with me. I know I should've called first but I was wondering if Griffin was still awake...?"

Rene nodded as they pulled the door wider for River to enter. "He is in his study, don't take too long because I need to bring him to bed and make him take his medication soon." Rene huffed.

"Alright, I'll make it quick." He reassured Rene as he hurried to the study.

He wasn't even sure what he wanted to ask Griffin, all he knew was that he wanted to hear his voice—to reassure him that things were going to be okay. His knuckles tapped against the wooden door softly before he pushed the door open.

"River. What a surprise." Griffin said with his signature toothy grin.

"Sorry for barging in on you so late." He told the older man as he shut the door behind him and went towards the chair in front of Griffin's desk. River had been visiting him occasionally and he can safely say that in the short period of time Griffin was diagnosed with cancer, his body grew weak and pale but now there was a hint of colour in his cheeks and River could not help but believe that he was getting better. His werewolf regeneration abilities were doing its job.

"Don't worry about that. Is there something you need?" he asked him.

"Well...it's about the Highcaster wolves." River said, getting straight to the point. "Some are worried that they will launch an attack at the forest again while others believe that they won't because we have a new pack leader..."

"What do you think?"

"I think we can't afford to overlook their presence. They did it once, they will most likely do it again."

"And? Do you think you are too weak that you cannot deal with them? Or are you underestimating your pack's abilities?" Griffin asked, raising his eyebrow.

“That’s not it at all...it’s just that I would prefer to avoid conflict if possible. Why should I risk the safety of the pack and the forest if I can avoid all of those?”

“I didn’t know you were a pacifist, River.” Griffin teased. “Your thinking has really matured, do you know that?”

River sighed. Now that he had a lot of people relying on him, he had to have a matured mindset. He can’t just go around starting fights. A thought then came to his mind but he pondered if he should even ask Griffin about it. Would Griffin even answer honestly, or sweep it under the rug as he normally did to topics he wanted to avoid.

“You look like you have something to say.” Griffin noted.

“I do...it’s about Lana’s parents.” He forced himself to speak.

“What about them?”

“What happened to them? How did they die?”

“Why the sudden curiosity?”

“I remembered that day when we found out about your cancer, Rene was about to say something about what Ezekiel did...but you stopped Rene before they could finish talking. Is Ezekiel involved in Lana’s parents death?”

Griffin let out a tired sigh. “You were always such an observative boy ever since you were younger.”

“Don’t change the subject, Griffin.”

“Am not!” he cried out, clearly offended. His face then grew grim just by recalling what had happened to Aldric and Claire. “I cannot tell you the full story since I myself am not certain what exactly happened that unfortunate night. All I can say is that Ezekiel found out Aldric’s weakness and did everything in his power to remove that weakness.”

“...When you say weakness, do you mean Claire Danley? Was she Aldric’s weakness?” he pressed.

“I believe so. But then again, there are only three people who know exactly what happened that night, two of them are dead while the third one is actively trying to claim the forest as his own.”

“Why didn’t you let Rene tell us this? Especially to Lana? Doesn’t she have the right to know that Ezekiel was the cause of her parents’ deaths?”

Griffin shook his head. “As I said before, no one truly knows the full story. I did not want to spread any false rumours that would lead to Lana blindly plotting for revenge.”

“...do you really think she is that kind of person?” he asked.

“Well, she is a curious case, don’t you think?”

River unconsciously caught himself smiling. “She truly is. I can never tell what she is thinking.” He complained.

“Well, it takes time. When Rene and I first met, we did not get along at all. Even though there was that spark—that initial feeling of yearning, we just never saw eye to eye on a lot of things.” Griffin reminisced.

“But things worked out in the end, right? You two are mates after all.”

“That’s true, but there were hardships that we had to face. And, I can see it in your face that you truly adore Lana, don’t you?”

River felt his face heat up. “A-Adore...? I mean the attraction is there.” He meekly replied.

Griffin let out a booming laugh. “It will be a tough road ahead for the both of you, since her special circumstances might take a toll on her body in the long run.”

“How so...?”

“She’s a hybrid, one of her kind and we don’t know the things that she will potentially be able to do. Just recently she found out she had more werewolf traits than just her scent. Everything takes time to develop, it would seem but Lana—she doesn’t seem to be the most patient person I have met.” Griffin said with a small laugh. River nodded in agreement. “Do you plan on making her your mate?” he suddenly asked, catching him off guard.

“W-Well...I do but I don’t want to pressure her into anything. She still isn’t aligned with her emotions yet so I don’t mind giving her some time to figure things out.”

“I always imagined you to be the aggressive kind of lover, River. But I’m glad I was wrong.” He laughed, causing River to roll his eyes. “But the way I see it, even you need some time to figure things out.”

“I suppose you’re right.” He said.

“I’m rooting for you, River my boy.” Griffin beamed and River smiled, even though his heart was beating insanely fast just at the mere thought of Lana being his mate.