

11. In The Shadows

1725 Words

Savannah steadied her feet in a defensive stance, ready for battle. Athena has never let her down, but now, she seemed tenser than ever, which could only mean that their opponent was extremely dangerous.

The glowing red eye didn't move, and neither did she, baring her canines as a warning to the intruder. Her paws let out their claws, digging into the ground underneath her. If the creature attacked her, she would be ready to behead it. She wasn't in the mood for jokes.

However, when it took a step toward her, leaving the thick, suffocating darkness of the woods it had used to hide itself in, a chill snaked down Savannah's spine.

Massive, with a erce-looking scowl, a white bear was slowly moving in her direction, not taking his eyes off her. He looked like a majestic ancient warrior god, and Savvy would have been in awe if she didn't know any better.

Unfortunately, bears were bad news.

She growled. It was the last warning that she was ready to give. Although she knew the chances of him backing off were slim. The werebears that she knew were as*holes.

Thanks to their impressive size, they were the only other species capable of competing with lycans. Because there was no way that foxes would go into this if they didn't have such strong allies. The upcoming war was on them.

What worried her the most was the knowledge she had knowing no bear should be present this far north as they weren't on friendly terms with the Northern Kingdom. Another reason she was agitated was the fact that the bear had one eye. This sight triggered unpleasant memories from the past, although the only person she knew with a similar injury was a fox. Moreover, he was long dead, and she had seen his body with her own eyes.

The bear took another step toward her, and she let Athena take control. The wolf chose not to waste any time, rst charging at the white beast. One sharp, nimble move and she managed to slice her claws through his side hoping that it would be enough to make him give up on whatever idea he had in his head. However, when she turned back to face him, she was looking at a tall man with a smirk on his lips.

She froze, not knowing what it meant. Shifters were vulnerable in their human forms. So, what did he want to tell her by shifting after she attacked him?

The most reasonable explanation she could think of was he wanted to demonstrate to her that he was harmless, despite that she didn't want to make assumptions. Looking at him, she quickly realised that even as a human, he was dangerous. Not to her though. She was a royal Lycan, after all. He would be a threat to someone with a much less impressive lineage. The man was unbelievably tall and built like a mountain, with sharply carved muscles that testified to his extensive training and old scars that ... were proving he had been through a lot. It was extremely hard to scar a shifter.

Almost impossible.

Almost ... One had to go at lengths to achieve that.

The stranger had silver hair that covered half his face and reached his shoulders. Savannah realised that he was trying to disguise the missing eye.

Other than that, he seemed condent and not embarrassed by his nakedness at all.

"Are you just going to watch, not that I mind, or can we talk?" His lips curved into a smirk. "I see you are not from here."

Savvy snorted. What if he was one of Brigit's people? The best course of action would be to run back to the castle and pretend that this encounter never happened, but natural curiosity was her curse.

"Shift! little wolf," he ordered suddenly, adding his Alpha tone to it, which only annoyed her all the more.

She didn't take Alpha orders even from her own brother, the Lycan King of The Western Kingdom. She wasn't about to take them from some werebear.

Savannah rolled her eyes. The slight motion did not escape him. One sharp jump, and he was beside her. Neither she nor Athena expected this, so they were both utterly shocked when he abruptly pinned them to the ground.

"How on Earth?" Savvy struggled under him. She was a Lycan, and he was in his human form. Bear or no bear, he had to be weaker than her now.

Yet there she was, nailed to the ground.

He had a handsome face. Too handsome for his own good, nonetheless there was a long deep scar crossing the area of his left eye, and Savannah swallowed, realising that it was missing.

The man noticed her interested gaze, and he wasn't thrilled about it.

"Shift!" He roared at her, shaking her wildly, and this time she did as she was told, shocked that his Alpha command worked.

The man on top of her enjoyed the frustrated look on her face, and she quickly gathered herself sensing this was clearly now a life and death situation.

"What are you waiting for?" She arched her brow, and now he was the one confused out of the two.

That confusion, however, quickly changed to a smug smile.

"Impatient?" He chuckled.

"You said you wanted to talk," Savvy snapped deantly, lifting her chin. "So, get off me and talk."

It was a long shot, still, surprisingly it worked. The werebear stared at her for a few seconds and then slowly stood up, eyes greedily devouring every inch of her.

He offered her a hand, but she declined it, moving her hair to the front of her body to afford herself some coverage.

"You are not from here." He repeated the words from earlier thoughtfully.

"Neither are you!" The woman shrugged her shoulders, searching for a nearby bush to hide behind. However, the observant bear stepped closer to her, making it impossible to escape.

She took a step back, but he closed the distance between them in a blink of an eye, backing her into a huge ancient tree. The man lowered his head to the column of her neck and took a deep breath, placing his hands at her sides.

"You are one of Kai's new toys," he stated with a grunt, and this made her anger boil in her veins.

"That's enough!" She gave him a warning, letting Athena closer to the surface so that their eyes glowed blue light, manifesting their royal power. It was just a glimpse of her strength, but usually, it had the desired effect.

Not this time, though.

He seems amused, but that was about it.

"I am no one's toy!" Savannah snarled through gritted teeth, and that earned her a chuckle. "Especially not his!"

This whole experience annoyed her. She pressed her hands into his chest to push him away, meeting resistance that proved to her once again that she wasn't wrong about his strength. This would explain why he wasn't afraid to wander here alone.

"Feisty!" He approved of her action with a soft snarl, but then a loud resounding growl emerged from the forest, and the grin on the bear's face widened. "I'll see you another time, Princess," he teased, winking at her and making her gasp.

Did he know who she was? Had he known from the beginning? Or did he just gure it out?

Whatever the answer was, one thing was for sure. It didn't mean anything good to her.

The stranger disappeared in the darkness that welcomed him as if he belonged there, and in just a few seconds, a huge black wolf jumped out of the bushes in front of her.

Their eyes locked, and she knew at once that it was Kai.

He shifted right before her, and she bit the inside of her lip not to make any sounds at the sight of another perfect and naked male body.

She managed to jump behind the bushes this time. Another growl followed her.

"Savannah Stormhold!" He seemed so angry that it caused chills down her spine. "What the hell is the meaning of this?"

She sighed in exasperation, trying to gure out what to say. For some reason, it was harder for her to think now that he was here. When the outline of his perfect body was drawn by the moonlight ...

"Meaning of what?" She squeaked, feeling her cheeks turning red and thanking the Moon Goddess for the cover of night.

"You left the castle grounds alone and without permission." Kai seemed angry as he practically spat each word. "And even standing here, I can smell that you reek of another male!"

Her lips parted in shock.

He did not just say that.

He did not just simply say what she thought he implied.

He didn't.

Otherwise, she would just have to kill him on the spot because this audacity of his had no boundaries.

"Excuse me?" Savvy hissed, almost tempted to walk out to him and let him see her, yet deciding against it at the last moment. Nakedness never bothered her before, nevertheless, her nakedness did bother her in his presence for some odd reason.

"You are not excused!" The Lycan King retorted. "I should eliminate you just for being here!"

"Well, what are you waiting for?" She heard herself shouting at him. "It's not like that wasn't your plan to begin with?"

He didn't answer her as they stood in stillness where they were, listening to each other's heavy breaths of frustration for a few minutes.

Hearing his footsteps approach and thinking things were about to get ugly between them, she was surprised when a piece of wrapped fabric ew in her direction.

"What the ..." She began, unfolding the parcel, and to her great surprise, it was an oversized grey sweatshirt.

"Put it on," Kai groaned, pulling on a pair of grey sweatpants. "We need to talk."