

The 5-time Rejected Gamma & the Lycan King by Stina's Pen Chapter 4

Chapter 4

They continued their meal. Then, Cummings came around the table with the two who followed him. Xandar was speaking to Alpha Juan but when he noticed Lucianne's eyes wandered to the side, he turned to see the minister standing before them sheepishly. "Forgive our intrusion, your Highness. May we sit with you? Perhaps we'll take this opportunity to make amends for my poor behavior earlier."

The King smirked. "That's not for me to decide, I'm afraid." He looked at Alpha Juan and said, "Alpha Juan, the discretion is yours and your Luna's. I have no qualms even if the minister's presence is refused."

Alpha Juan's gaze turned gentle when he asked his Luna, "What do you think, baby?"

Xandar envied how sweet the couple before him was. He could only hope that he'll be allowed to call Lucianne his 'baby' soon. He hadn't even begun calling her 'Lucy' yet. He didn't mind taking it slow, so long as she was comfortable.

They were clearly mind-linking until Luna Hale smiled meekly and said, "Perhaps we should take this opportunity to make amends."

"Thank you, Luna Hale." Cummings said, and dropped into the seat next to Alpha Juan.

"Lucianne?" A deep voice came from behind her.

Lucianne turned around, and when she saw who it was, she stood without a smile and greeted the Lycan, "Sebastian Cummings, it's a pleasure to see you again."

Sebastian looked uneasy as he trembled over his words, "Uhh... it's good to see you, too. H—How have you been? You look beautiful, by the way."

Xandar was practically shooting daggers with his eyes at the man who was talking to his mate with such yearning. He only managed to control himself because he saw how uninterested Lucianne was.

She responded in a flat tone, "I've been doing well, thank you. If you can excuse me, I would like to finish my meal now."

Before she could turn back around to sit and resume eating, Sebastian exclaimed, "No! Lucianne, wait!" He was about to reach for her arm but her agility enabled her to step back before he caught hold of it.

Xandar leaped out of his seat, and growled as he stood in front of Lucianne, shielding her from Sebastian. The word 'mine' was at the tip of Xandar's tongue but he didn't want to take that choice from Lucianne. He remembered the previous night when she was reluctant to consider being with him for the rest of her life. He didn't want her to feel like she was coerced to give in to the mate bond.

"Your Highness, I—" Sebastian looked startled. He peeped at the indifferent Lucianne before bowing to the King and said, "I apologize."

He then moved to sit in between his sister, Sasha, and his father. Sasha was sitting right next to Xandar. She wore a backless bright red dress showing a lot of cleavage. In Lucianne's head, she was rolling her eyes. 'What some females would do to get the attention of the opposite sex', she thought.

"So, Lucianne, what have you been up to since last year?" Sebastian asked as he poked into the food on his plate, breaking the awkward silence at the table.

Xandar tensed up but next to him, Lucianne shrugged as she avoided Sebastian's soft gaze and responded, "The usual. Training. Fighting. Teaching."

Sasha started speaking animatedly, "Oh, it must be awful to have to learn all of that! It takes away so much energy and time!"

Lucianne blinked at Sasha's comment, and cocked her head to one side as she said, "I can't think of a better way to spend my time and energy but I do acknowledge that everyone has a different set of priorities." Xandar smiled at his mate's diplomatic response.

“Oh yeah. I know about that. Being the daughter of the Defense Minister, I can’t really escape the importance of combat. But given the choice, I’d rather settle down with a mate and have his babies, not having to worry about safety and all of those things.”

Lucianne smiled flatly in her way. “Not having to worry about safety is a viable priority, I suppose.” Alpha Juan covered his mouth to hide his smile. He and his mate had known Lucianne for so long that they could recognise her sarcasm from a mile away.

In fact, Sasha was the only one at the table who seemed oblivious about it as she continued, “I know, right? And I must say, you are so brave to sit next to our King! I mean, most wolves I know would shun away from Lycans, and for what? I don’t know. But here you are, next to the strongest Lycan. Don’t you feel small?”

Before Lucianne could speak, Xandar asked coldly, “Why should she feel that way?”

Her eyes brightened when she met Xandar's cold ones as she chuckled lightly before explaining, "Well, your Highness. Not to brag but we are a superior species so..."

"Superiority in size and strength is no match for a superiority in character." Xandar said.

"Oh, such wise words from our King." She laughed coquettishly. Lucianne sipped her water as she wondered whether she could escape this unwanted exchange. In the end, she only hoped that her Alpha and Luna would not leave her alone with the Lycans.

Luna Hale seemed to have read her mind as she mind-linked, *'Don't worry, Lucy. We'll be here as long as you need us.'*

'Thank you, Luna.'

Sasha then leaned in a way to show her cleavage as she asked "So, what have you been up to, your Highness?"

"Work." He replied flatly as he looked at the wall ahead and sipped his drink.

"Oh, you work so hard for us. It almost makes me feel bad as one of your subjects. What do you do for rest?"

"Sleep." He said equally uninterestedly, and Lucianne almost snorted at his emotionless response.

"Hmm..." Sasha then whispered, "Want some company for tonight?"

Lucianne bit her lip and intertwined her fingers as she hid her hands on her lap, under the table to cope with the familiar feelings of rejection before Xandar said, "No, I don't. And even if I do, it won't be with you." Despite his firm tone, Lucianne still felt uncomfortable. Xandar noticed this, and it made his animal whimper to see their mate sad.

With pain in his eyes, he leaned towards her, and was about to say something when Sebastian asked Lucianne, "Would you like to take a stroll in the park later, Lucianne? The Irrelises are in full bloom this time of year. It's a beautiful scene."

"No, thank you, Mr Cummings. I've seen them."

He seemed defeated but persisted to speak to Lucianne, "Would you like to sit with us during the ceremony later this morning?"

"No, thank you. I'll be sitting with Alpha Juan and Luna Hale."

"We can make room for a few more. Our seats are nearer to the front so you would all have a better view of the stage." Sebastian offered with a small smile.

Xandar then said, "You need not worry about their view. I have invited Lucianne and her pack leaders to sit with me at the front row. They were about to respond to my invitation before your father showed up at our table." Of course, this was a lie.

Disregarding the three Cummings' stunned looks, Xandar's eyes softened with tenderness when he turned to Lucianne and asked with a charming smile, "What do you say, Lucianne? Would you join me at the ceremony?"

She managed a small smile and nodded slightly as she uttered, "Sure, Xandar."

"What did you just call his Highness?!" Sasha hissed in anger.

Xandar glared at her and said, "It's my name. Do we have a problem, Ms Cummings?"

“Since when were we allowed to address royals by their name so casually? Especially a King! As one of your closer associates, your Highness, it is my duty to advise you...”

“You are in no position to advise me.” Xandar’s cold voice cut Sasha off before she finished speaking.

Ignoring Sasha, Xandar turned to Alpha Juan and said, “I hope you and Luna Hale can join us?”

“It would be our honour, your Highness.” Alpha Juan accepted graciously.

Minister Alfred Cummings then started looking at Lucianne with interest. “Young lady, I don’t believe we’ve met.”

Lucianne responded without missing a beat, “We have met, minister. We met three years ago at the defense meeting in New York when we revised the laws to mediate with the hunters. Two years ago, I asked you about the rumours

circulating among packs about rogue Lycans, to which you responded by asking me to worry about my own species instead. And last year, I was introduced to you again by Sebastian Cummings at this event. When I asked which packs were the most vulnerable to rogue attacks at that time, you asked me to go around the hall on my own to find out which of them may need our help.”

Alfred Cummings glanced uneasily at Xandar, whose face was getting darker with each of Lucianne’s statements. He cleared his throat before he said, “Perhaps you have mistaken me for someone else, miss. I don’t think...”

“My Gamma is not mistaken, minister. I was in attendance as well.” Alpha Juan confirmed Lucianne’s account of the events with confidence.

Alfred Cummings opened his mouth but he could argue further, his son spoke meekly from his side, “Dad, you have met her. She’s not mistaken.”

Alfred’s displeasure was evident with his son’s express statement. His son could’ve just mind-linked him but he chose to embarrass his father before the King and some pesky wolves instead. Alfred forced a smile and addressed Lucianne, “Well then, I must apologize for not remembering you. Old age does not serve the memory, I’m afraid.”

Xandar's eyebrows were furrowed with disgust as he spoke, "How could you give such an answer to our people?"

Seemingly unperturbed, Alfred said, "Your Highness, in my defense, I meet many people daily so..."

"That wasn't what I meant." Xandar spat, "Excuse my language but why the he*ll did you ask our subjects to worry about their own species? Do you think they would be safe if Lycans went rogue? Do you think they were just asking to bad-mouth Lycans, and not because they are concerned for their packs' safety? And the thing about asking them to find out which packs needed help by themselves!" He shook his head, "Honestly, Cummings. Why would we need you?"

The King sighed in frustration as he ran his fingers through his hair. His animal wanted to be released to tear the old man into pieces. His bright purple eyes were turning onyx. He was on the verge of losing his cool. Then, a small hand reached for his clenched fist that was on his lap under the table. It sent a trail of sparks into his body, and when his onyx eyes met Lucianne's comforting black orbs, she mouthed 'calm down'. She started stroking his fist with her thumb to soothe his animal and him.

His animal purred under her touch, and he let his fist loosen and unfold. Their mate bond calmed his simmering anger. Holding onto Lucianne's hand gently, he

pondered in silence for a moment before his low voice rang around the table, "Cummings, I'm giving you one more chance in the name of my late father, who trusted you to the bone when he was alive. Take your job seriously or you can forget about holding this position any longer than you already have."

"I will do my best to make amends and serve our people, your Highness." Alfred said as he restrained himself from glaring at the members of the Blue Crescent Pack.

Lucianne retracted her hand and stood. Xandar's eyes shot up at her retreating figure, feeling the loss of skin contact with his mate. His animal was already whimpering inside his head. Before he could say anything, she looked at him and said, "The ceremony starts in fifteen minutes. I need to use the restroom first. Hope you don't mind that I excuse myself now?"

Luna Hale exclaimed, "Oh gosh! I didn't realise the time! I need to use it as well!" Alpha Juan stood from his seat after checking his watch.

Xandar followed suit, and gazed dreamily at Lucianne as he said softly, "I'll wait for you in the front row. Don't take too long."

“Okay.” She returned his smile, and turned to the Cummings family as she said, “It has been...interesting to speak to three of you. Please allow us to excuse ourselves.” She left with her pack leaders before any of the Cummings could speak.

Xandar wouldn't have minded if she had left without a word to the three of them. In fact, he would have been quite happy if she had ignored them after the incompetence Alfred Cummings showed. But her sarcasm when she used the word 'interesting' made his lips curl upward. 'Thank you, Moon Goddess', he thought.

He didn't spare any of the Cummings a glance as he walked out from the other way, and entered the auditorium at the end of the hall. He greeted his ministers on the way to his seat, and the King sat right in the middle of the front row. As he waited for Lucianne to return, he reminisced the pleasure he felt when her hand touched his. He didn't expect her to make a move. But he was close to instability at that moment and if she hadn't calmed him down, he may have shifted in the middle of the dining hall.

When Lucianne exited the restroom, she came face-to-face with Sebastian Cummings.