

My Alpha's Betrayal: Burning In The Flames Of His Vengeance by Moonlight Muse Chapter 4

4. My Worth

YILEYNA

Last night's events were fresh on my mind, along with Alpha Andres's and Theon's parting words, I hadn't even been able to thank him for helping fix my arm. Something that I could have done myself, but it's a lot easier when you're not the one snapping your bones back into place. I hadn't shifted yet, so I didn't heal as fast as those who had.

I had woken up with Theon's words playing on my mind and an ache between my legs that begged for only one man's touch. As much as I was sure I could find a man to satiate the hunger, I didn't want just anyone.

I had changed and come out to one of the smaller, less frequently used training fields. No one really came this far out often, and since the pack had in a way shunned me, I felt more comfortable training out here alone.

Rain had fallen heavily all through the night and it was still ongoing. The ground beneath my feet was muddy and my boots were completely covered in it. Squelching with every move I made as I punched the tree repeatedly, venting my frustration.

I was wearing a tank top with a leather jacket and pants; my hair was open, and I was completely drenched despite the overhead branches that partially shielded me from the rain. I didn't mind it, I was simply relieved that there was not a soul in sight. I guess the regulars were all training in the indoor courts and halls.

I punched the tree again, the Alpha's words ringing in my head.

'Talent but no strength.'

The tone of his voice made it obvious I was just a failure...

I punched the tree harder, staring at the blood that streaked the trunk. Despite the bandages I had wrapped around my hands, I had still bruised them. The once white wrap was covered with dirt, water, and blood.

Useless.

A failure...

I was a shame to the De'Lacor name... I was meant to be my father's legacy... Someone who he'd be proud to call his daughter, the future Beta, but without my wolf, I don't think that title was going to be mine.

It had been two months and I knew the rest of the ranked wolves wanted the king to pick a new Beta... No doubt the Gamma and Delta wolves had their eyes on that position. A position that was rightfully the De'Lacor's.

I felt an all-too-familiar stinging in my eyes as I continued to hit the tree. My grunts, whimpers of pain and effort faded into the sound of the downpour. Weather that truly fitted my mood.

I kept going, no longer focusing on anything but the pain in my entire body, I knew I was going to end up in bed for an entire day after this.

I stumbled, my feet skidding in the mud. I fell forward, bracing my hands on the tree as my knees hit the ground.

"Now I think that's the best position for you to be in." A haughty voice from behind came.

Irritation flashed through me as I got to my feet, turning to look at the two young men who stood there. Nikolai and Kyson. Warriors that were of the same rank as Theon, but unlike him, both were trash in my eyes.

It had been Nikolai who had spoken. With his dark hair and blue eyes, one might think he was handsome, but his personality was far from it.

"I don't think anyone was asking you what the best position for me to be in is." I replied, acting unbothered as I began to unwrap the bandage on my right hand. I was shaking from exhaustion and the number of splinters embedded in my hands were far more than I realised.

"Curvaceous, beautiful and wolf less, I think we have ourselves an Omega... and what are they good for, Kyson?" Nikolai remarked, a smirk on his face.

Anger flared inside of me at the insult, I was no Omega!

"Fucking." Kyson added arrogantly, his brown eyes glimmering with lust.

"Exactly." Nikolai replied, his voice laced with amusement.

"Say that again and I'll show you what you will or won't be capable of when I'm done with you." I hissed, clenching my fists.

“Ah... I see you have quite the tongue on you, maybe we could put it to better use.” Kyson stepped forward; his shoulder-length blond hair was pulled back in a pony, displaying the scar that ran across his jaw.

If he carried on as he was, I wouldn't mind adding another one to his face.

I scoffed as I stared at them in disgust. There was no one around for miles and in the exhausted state I was in, I didn't want to be alone with these two...

“How about we do just that? Just looking at her makes me want to bury myself into the little whore.”

“Touch me Nikolai, and I swear by the goddess I will have you castrated.”

“I think you forget you have no rank anymore; don't you know what they are saying in court? Theon might be taking the Beta title... and once he does, you become an Omega by default. But play for the right team and we might just make that experience very pleasurable for you...”

His words shook me, but I refused to admit that. Was it true? Theon may become Beta?

He advanced towards me, making my heart thunder. His eyes were predatory, like the animal he was. Unmarked women were just targets for men like them, and one without a wolf was the perfect plaything...

“I am Yileyna De'Lacor, and until the king himself strips me of my rank, I am still the Beta candidate.” I warned, my voice sounding breathless and shaky even to me.

“And a beautiful name it is for the flower you are. The king can strip your title but allow me to strip you of a little more.” Nikolai remarked, his eyes darkening with hunger as his gaze fell to my front and I realised my shirt was sticking to me, almost completely see-through thanks to the rain. In a flash, he grabbed my arm, spun me around and tugged my jacket off roughly.

I heard Kyson's sadistic chuckle, and felt their eyes on me. Nikolai's hand reached around, grabbing my left breast.

“Don't touch me!” I hissed, ripping his hand from my body, twisting back towards them and yanking free from his hold only for him to grab my hand and squeeze it painfully. I winced as I felt something break, making me gasp in pain.

I needed to get away from here. Now.

He slammed me against the tree, the jagged edges of the splinters I had created in the trunk cutting into my back. I could feel them embedded into me, making my eyes water in pain.

I raised my hands, using both to try to push him back, but he was a wall of muscle and one that was not going to budge no matter how hard I tried. I was as weak as a pup, and he was a full-fledged werewolf.

My gaze flickered to Kyson, who stood there watching, a smirk on his face. As much as I wanted to plead for him to help me, I knew he was waiting his turn... The very thought made me sick...

"Let go of me, Nikolai." I growled coldly.

He sneered in response and instead stepped right up to me. Reaching down, he forced my legs apart. I shoved him hard, but he didn't budge.

"You will pay for this, Nikolai!" I hissed.

"Will I?"

Probably not... he was the respected son of one of the highest-ranked families... No, he wouldn't pay because I didn't have my father to protect me anymore.

Right now, I was the one who was a no one... even if no one said it... I knew.

He pushed me back roughly, pinning my arms to my side as he forced himself between my legs, and I felt my stomach churn as I felt his hard shaft pressing against me.

Immense rage flared inside of me, like a brewing storm, as I struggled in his hold. Did he really find pleasure in this?

If there was a time to shift, now would be it. I was using all my willpower and strength to fight him, but I had worn myself down. I felt helpless... useless. Even though I tried so hard, and trained so hard, I was still weak.

"Calm down, beautiful, let's put this body to good use." He rasped huskily, making me glare at him in disgust.

Had he always been so... ugly and sick?

"Let me go!" I hissed, trying to kick him, but he had my legs clamped between his, restricting me completely.

He bent down, one hand squeezing my neck as he forcefully pinned my head back against the tree trunk, his eyes falling to my lips, as he licked his hungrily.

A move that could look appealing on one person's face, but was sickening on Nikolai's.

Using all my might, I tried again and pushed him, making him momentarily loosen his grip.

I needed to escape!

Taking the chance, I darted to the side, ready to make a run for it when a hand twisted in my hair and yanked me back.

“Now she wants to do this the fucking hard way.” Nikolai spat.

Something hit the back of my head and I heard Kyson murmur something as I fell to my knees. He tossed whatever he had hit me with to the ground.

“She’s done.” Nikolai’s voice came before I was pushed backwards into the mud.

My vision was slightly hazy as my top was ripped off, leaving me exposed in my bra. Nikolai climbed on top of me, pinning my thighs under his knee as he began to unbuckle his pants.

“The Alpha will not forgive you!” I shouted.

He scoffed.

“He won’t care... you aren’t even Beta’s Williams’s own blood... I think you were right Kyson, she was probably born from an Omega whore.”

His words hit me hard, my heart thumping in fear.

What were they saying... What did he mean?

“I’ll show you exactly what someone like you deserves...” He reached down, ready to unbutton my pants, but I forced myself up.

I’ll ask questions later, I needed to get away from here!

No matter how terrified and helpless I felt, I was not going to let this happen. My body screamed in response, I brought my knee up and kicked Nikolai in the leg, making him fall back onto the muddy ground.

I lurched to my feet and barrelled into Kyson. He staggered and I turned away, I needed to run as far and fast as possible before they succeeded in raping me.

“Grab her!” Nikolai growled at Kyson.

I ran blindly, the mud slowing me down, my feet squelching as they sank into the ground. Both men were gaining on me, but luckily being heavier, they were finding it harder to keep up, sinking deeper into the muddy ground.

“Don’t do something you will regret, you bitch!” Nikolai growled just as I stumbled, falling face-first into the mud.

“I would say the same to you too, Levin.”

My head snapped up as a pair of hands grabbed my elbows, lifting me from the ground. Wet strands of coppery brown hair fell over his forehead, rain water trickling down his perfect features and I found myself staring into a pair of seductive yet dangerous amber eyes.

“Theon...”

5. A Hot Brew

YILEYNA

The rain continued to beat down upon us, washing away most of the mud that had splashed in my face.

He reached up, brushing my dirty hair back from my face, my eyes fluttered shut under his touch, a touch that I welcomed...

A wave of relief washed over me. Theon was many things; mocking, aloof, cold and arrogant, but he was not a monster.

“It seems you can’t stay out of trouble for even a moment.” He murmured quietly before his eyes sharply snapped to the two men who stood a mere few feet away.

“You should leave, don’t interfere where it’s not your business.” Nikolai’s cocky voice came from behind.

The gold flash in Theon’s eyes made my heart skip a beat, even if the rest of his face remained emotionless, the anger I saw in those eyes... for me. My stomach fluttered, before Theon moved me behind him.

“As warriors of the pack, it’s a nice example to set.”

“This has nothing to do with you. Leave. You saw nothing.” Kyson added coldly.

I stared at the back of Theon’s head as I crossed my arms over my breasts, hugging myself.

"I saw enough to take this back to the Alpha." Theon stepped forward and both men tensed.

I frowned as realisation hit me. They weren't scared of Theon, but the fact that he may be the future Beta... How rank made you everything or nothing...

The two exchanged looks, mind linking before they glared at me coldly. The silent promise that this was not over was clear in their eyes. Both men walked past us, only for Theon to grab Nikolai by the collar and punch him across the jaw.

"What the actual fuck?!" Nikolai hissed, clutching his face as he stumbled back.

"Touch her again, and I will kill you." Theon replied, his voice dangerous and cold.

Both men walked off but Theon turned towards me. I suddenly felt very bare, despite having paraded in front of him only yesterday... Today was different, I suddenly felt dirty and used, the sheer weight of what could have happened crashing down on me. I turned my back on him, not wanting him to see the vulnerable state I was in.

The fear that rattled me, my entire body was beyond the point of exhaustion. I gasped when I felt his fingers brush my upper back. I bit my lip when he tugs a lint of wool from me.

The silence between us was loud, but I had nothing to say today. My heart thudded when I felt the warmth of his jacket being placed around my shoulders, his scent invading my senses, I closed my eyes. Despite the intensity of the comfort it brought me, the sheer reality that I was now a no one... pretty much alone in this world, hit me hard.

My parents were dead... I couldn't uphold the De'Lacor name and I had no one...

You have Charlene and Theon... I tried to tell myself, but did I?

"Let's get out of here." His voice came and I nodded, clutching the jacket around me tightly as he turned away.

To my surprise, he took hold of my wrist, glancing at my bruised hands, a frown creasing his brow as he led me away. I looked at his large hand wrapped around the sleeve of his leather jacket, my heart skipping a beat.

He had saved me...

'Theon may become Beta...'

I glanced up at him sharply, wondering how true that was. Did he know?

I was so lost in thought that I didn't even realise we had come to a stop. He pushed open the door to the small cabin.

"Where are we?" I asked,

"My place."

I raised an eyebrow.

"You live at the castle..."

"I have a room at the castle, but this is mine." He corrected, looking over at me. I realised that I had actually never been here... But how much did I really know about Theon? Not much, he didn't really share, nor did I bother to ask. "Are you planning on letting the rain continue to flood the place?"

I blinked and quickly stepped out of the doorway, about to shut it when he leaned over me, snapping it shut.

My heart skipped a beat as he flipped the light on and I took a good look around me. It was simple and clean, with a small kitchen area and a table with two chairs was standing to one side. On the other side a two-seater sofa was opposite the fireplace, with a coffee table before it and two large bookshelves on either side of the fireplace.

Two doors led off the room, most likely to the bedroom and bathroom.

Theon walked across the room and through one of the doors, I peered inside, seeing the edge of a bed from where I stood. I turned away, glancing up at the ceiling with the wooden beams and the iron filigree light shades, I had to admit the place looked very cosy.

His scent lingered in the air, I wonder how much time he spent here? I looked down at the mud we had stained the ground with, and slowly stepped out of my boots, not wanting to spread the mud and water everywhere. I clutched Theon's jacket around me.

Must I give it back?

"Go shower."

I looked up as Theon stepped out of his room, holding a shirt and some sweatpants. His clothes.

"Thanks," I replied, walking over to him. I took the clothes gingerly, careful not to dirty them.

“Wear the shirt back to front, I’ll check your back over.” He said just when I turned away, making me freeze.

Check my back? He was going to check it?

“I don’t need-”

“It’s that or we go to the royal healer, take your pick.” He cut in coldly.

I frowned. What happened wasn’t something I wanted others to know, it wasn’t going to help my case in any way and the rumours would spread fast.

I entered the bathroom, shutting the door behind me and hung the clean clothes up on the peg behind the door, before I took his jacket off, mud-covered the lining and I felt guilty.

I’ll rinse them off once I had rinsed the mud off myself I decided.

I turned the showerhead on and placed my hand under it, waiting for the water to warm and quickly stripped out of my clothes, carefully placing my panties aside. They weren’t as wet as the rest of my clothes and I needed to wear them. I stepped into the tub and under the water, welcoming the warmth of the hot water, letting it soothe my aching bones.

Once I had soaped myself clean and realised that I smelt a little like Theon thanks to his body wash, I stepped out of the shower and grabbed one of his towels. I dried myself quickly and then walked over to my muddy clothes, dumping them into the tub I had just gotten out of and quickly felt inside of Theon’s jacket pockets. Taking out a few explosive enchantments and two small daggers, I placed them aside and dumped his jacket into the bath too. Scanning the bathroom, I looked in the drawer under the washbasin but didn’t find any washing powder.

I guess he took his clothes to the castle to have washed, Omegas or the human staff would usually do all the chores like this and someone of Theon’s status would have one or two Omegas attending to him personally, that I was sure of.

Remembering what Nikolai said made a pang of jealousy flood inside of me. Theon was a young man, one who would obviously have needs... did he have Omegas for his sexual desires? Or maybe he visited The White Dove.

A deep frown settled on my face as my thoughts got darker and darker. After wringing out the clothes, I draped them over the edge of the tub and towelled myself dry before slipping my panties on. My body was screaming with exhaustion and the urge to just curl up into a ball and go to sleep threatened to consume me.

I examined the pants before pulling them on, tying them tightly by the drawstring at my waist. Last of all the shirt, I slip it on backwards, flinching slightly as I reached behind and closed one button.

I looked at my bruised hands and sighed, picking out a few splinters before I clutched the towel and stepped out of the bathroom. I looked around, noticing the curtains were drawn, the lights were switched on, the floor was clean from all the mud and water, and both our shoes stood by the front door, clean. The hearth was lit with a blazing fire that warmed the entire room up.

I looked over at Theon who was pouring what smelt like coffee into two mugs. I couldn't resist a small smile from crossing my lips, I don't think I had ever seen Theon do anything so... ordinary? I wasn't sure if it was the right word, but he still looked far too handsome whilst doing something like that.

He glanced at me, raising an eyebrow and I shook my head quickly, turning away, trying not to blush. I went over to the sofa and took a seat staring at the shelves. Most looked like history books, although there were some training ones and others on other subjects.

"Don't be nosy." He remarked, placing the two mugs on the table, and I took a moment to drink up his muscular biceps.

Oh Goddess this man is made to sin... May I be the subject of that sin?

I frowned at the thought, remembering the incident with Nikolai.

"Drink it whilst it's warm." He said, taking a seat on the sofa, and I suddenly became very aware that this was the first time we were in a private place, alone.

I reached for the mug, my arms screaming with agony, when he grabbed hold of my wrist, pulling me back.

"Are you simply stupid, or incredibly reckless?" He raised an eyebrow, giving me a cold gaze. My heart skipped a beat when he took my hand in his, using the other hand to feel my bones, cricking a few as he went. I bit my lip at one point, trying not to pay attention to the tingles that danced up my hand and arm at his touch. He dropped my hand, taking the other and picked out a few pieces of wood that my body hadn't automatically rejected.

"Ouch." I winced when he pulled out a thin piece of splinter that was embedded in my finger.

He glanced up at me, before he let go of my hand.

"You didn't answer that question."

"I didn't realise it was a question." I replied. Reaching over I grabbed the mug, the shirt I was wearing slid off my shoulder, and I placed my free hand on my chest, moving back slowly. I inhaled the milky coffee, relishing the smell before I took a sip.

Theon had made coffee. For me...

Oh, I couldn't wait to tell Charlene, wait can I tell her this? No, if she knew what happened she wouldn't be happy...

I sipped the coffee, enjoying the silence as Theon picked up his own mug and downed it in a few gulps making my eyes widen.

"Wasn't that hot?" I asked in surprise.

He raised an eyebrow.

"Not for me. I can handle the heat; we aren't all babies."

His mocking arrogant tone made me narrow my eyes.

"I am not a baby..."

"No... maybe not... Want to share exactly how stuff went down that path?" He asked, the mood darkening instantly.

I shook my head. I didn't know what to say. How do you tell someone you didn't even do anything wrong or anything to instigate that?

Nikolai's words were spinning in my head, only adding to the exhaustion I was feeling.

'...Aren't even Beta Williams's own blood... Theon might be taking the Beta title...'

"Turn around."

His command pulled me from my thoughts, and I glanced down at the white shirt that was covering me, before staring into his eyes. A glint of something I couldn't make out flickered in them, but his gaze didn't falter, as if challenging me to refuse. I clutched the shirt tightly and slowly turned my back towards him, holding my mug steadily with both hands now.

I bit my lip, trying to ignore my hammering heart that I knew he could hear too. I stared down at my mug as I felt him tug on the shirt slightly as he undid the button. His eyes were burning into me and my stomach fluttered as the shirt fell open, revealing my back to him.

His heart was steady, and I wondered why he had such an effect on me?

I hissed when he pulled the first of the splinters from my back.

“You have a few, and you’ve begun healing, embedding them into your skin.”

“Great.”

“Hold still.”

I rolled my eyes, I was still!

My eyes flew open when his hand went to my waist, gripping it tightly, sending a strong jolt of pleasure through me.

Goddess, don’t let him hear my heartbeat.

He pulled out another splinter, making me flinch as a sharp stab of pain shot up my back.

“That one was deep.”

I nodded, unable to focus with his hand still gripping my waist.

Goddess...

His touch was like a drug, intoxicating and dangerous yet so so... tempting and made me feel all lightheaded.

I felt a trickle of fresh blood drip down my back and Theon’s thumb brush it up, igniting a trail of sparks in his wake.

“Perfect.”

I turned just in time to see him lick the blood off his thumb, making my stomach flip and my core throb with a desire that he alone could ignite. His gaze flickered to mine and those intense amber eyes fell to my lips and then I heard it, the slight change to the beat of his heart...

6. Two Questions

YILEYNA

I quickly turned away, my cheeks burning as I gulped the rest of the coffee down. I felt him move away, so I quickly placed my mug down and stood up, trying not to groan at the ache in my muscles. I slid my arms out of the shirt, holding it firmly as I twisted it around, sliding my arms back in and buttoned it up. I turned back towards him, his arms now spread over the top of the couch as he glared into the fire, his brows creased in concentration.

“Thanks for saving me.” I remarked gratefully, tugging at the sleeves of the shirt and

stared down at the ground. I surely must look a sight in these oversize pants and shirt. Now, what do I do?

I sat down on the small couch and pulled my knees up against my chest, feeling exhausted. "You may not have been at their level, but you shouldn't push yourself to that extent where you cannot even defend yourself, especially somewhere secluded." "Hmm, I didn't think that would happen, I just thought to train... I'm lacking in far more than shifting." I whispered, very aware of his hand near my head on the back of the couch.

"Are you? Or are you allowing others to dictate that?" He asked, tilting his head as he looked at me, his hair almost glowing a gorgeous copper in the light of the fire from the hearth.

"It's true though, isn't it? I'm not strong enough. I'm nearly eighteen, but I haven't shifted..." I glanced into the flickering flames, frowning. "There's already talk that I may be stripped of my rank."

I looked up into his gorgeous eyes waiting for a reaction, anything to tell me what his opinion on that was. He looked away and into the flames for a second before his gaze snapped back to mine.

"Who told you?" He asked, making my stomach sink.

So, he knew. He knew the Alpha wanted to make him Beta, I didn't know why that hurt as much as it did. What was I expecting? For him to care? For him to come and tell me?

"Does it matter?" I replied looking down at my knees, unable to hide the bitterness from my voice. "The Alpha only mentioned it a week or so ago. Nothing is finalised, there's still time." Each word was like a punch in the gut. The tears that I had been suppressing seemed to be on the verge of breaking their dam.

Still time...

"If he gives you the title, you will take it, because he is your king." I said, forcing a smile. His face remained emotionless as he looked at me. "No one refuses the Alpha."

Yeah...

I needed to get out of here... I shouldn't be here, we weren't friends... just two people who were always by the princess' side.

"I'm going to head out, thank you." I whispered, sounding weaker than I was meant to. "Yileyna..."

I stood up, staggering slightly, my legs felt like lead and my entire body was aching from the workout.

"I'm going to head back." I walked to the door, my eyes on my shoes.

Just like that, the De'Lacor name would vanish.

"You can't even walk straight."

I could smell him behind me. Goddess, he moved so silently.

"I can manage." I replied coldly. "I need no one."

I just about pulled one shoe on when he grabbed my elbow, yanking me back roughly. I gasped almost stumbling, but before I could fall, he slammed me up against the wall.

"What are you doing?" I hissed venomously. "Proving my point. You are not leaving this place until you are up to it." "You can't keep me here!" "Nikolai and Kyson are out there, are you sure you want to go back in this weather all alone?" "I never knew you cared." I shot back. For a moment he stared into my eyes, before he let go of me, letting me fall to the ground. "I don't. Get out." He replied coldly.

I'll do exactly that.

I pulled on my shoes with weak hands, realising if I stepped out into the rain, my shirt would become entirely see-through... I looked around before walking back over to the couch and picking up the blanket that was draped over the armchair.

"I'll return this."

"No one's allowing you to borrow it." And with that, he yanked it from my hold, his gaze dipping to my breasts which were moving far too much without my bra. "If you want to leave, it's going to be like that."

He turned away, throwing the blanket onto the sofa. I was leaving, one way or another. I yanked the door open without another word and hurried out into the rain, my arms crossed over my chest as I became instantly drenched. I didn't glance back and when the door shut, it didn't bother me. The future Beta... Beta Theon. Nice. I knew I was being bitter, but it did hurt. I dragged my feet towards the castle, I needed to speak to the Alpha... Nikolai said I wasn't my father's blood. What did he mean by that? I was relieved that I didn't really meet anyone on the way home and when I snuck into the castle, I was glad that there weren't many people around, save the guards on duty. My body was ready to collapse by the time I reached my quarters. I cursed realising my key was in the pocket of my pants. Pants I had left at Theon's, along with my bra... Oh goddess, now what!

I looked down the hall, tempted to go to Charlene, but now wasn't the time to disturb her, I'm sure she was having dinner with her family. I'd ask the head Omega...

Or I'd just wait here... I felt far too tired to go in search of anyone and so I slid down the wall and curled up in a ball, wrapping my arms around my shivering cold body tightly.

I'll just rest a little...

I felt someone move me, but my eyes refused to open, in the hazy state of my mind I had a feeling that the scent was somehow familiar as strong arms lifted me from the ground. The sound of a key scraping in a lock could be heard.

Open your eyes, Yileyna... I couldn't, I felt like dead weight as my head lolled backwards, whoever was holding me didn't really seem to care. The familiar scent of Mom's cocoa butter candles seeped into my nose.

Home?

The man's footsteps creaked on the wooden floor.

I managed to crack them open ever so slightly, but I felt like I was somewhere far away. I wasn't sure... I was in my house, I could see that from the angle my head was tilted, it was all I saw before my eyes fluttered close once again.

Get up...

But I was far too gone for that, I felt myself being placed on a bed, my bed. Feeling fingers brushing my hair back ever so slowly it almost reminded me of Mom's soothing touch... but it was different. I couldn't explain it...

Comforting but...

And then I heard the door shut before darkness welcomed me back into its folds...

"Seriously, Yileyna, who trains out in the cold like that? We are werewolves, not immortals." Charlene scolded as she motioned with her eyes for me to eat the bowl of soup. "You know I hate soup."

"You don't hate it, you dislike it, but it's good for you. Now, eat." She cajoled firmly. I was sitting in bed, it was the following afternoon and I had slept most of the day until

Charlene had shown up an hour ago, banging on my door which was locked, and I had found the key on the floor.

Theon.

It had to be; he must have found the key in my pants... What was he doing looking in them in the first place?

Anyway, Charlene had shown up demanding entrance and had made me take a hot bath, which I won't lie made me feel much better. But the bowl of soup from the head chef wasn't appetising, the truth is, the only soup I ate was Mom's...

I promised her, I'd only eat her soup or none... and somehow, I just couldn't stomach the bowl before me.

"I'm not hungry Charl... please." I pleaded.

She looked down at me with concern in her green eyes.

"What is it, Leyna?" She whispered, sitting down on my bed and taking my hands in hers.

I shook my head, refusing to let my emotions get the better of me. "I only eat Mom's soup." I managed to reply, trying to remain strong. "Oh, darling." She wrapped her arms around me tightly and I rested my head on her slender shoulder, fighting back my tears. "I'll have something else brought right away." "I'm not really hungry." I refused, moving back.

I was wearing a large, oversized shirt that used to belong to Dad. I loved stealing his clothes because they were so comfortable and now that he was gone it was all I really had of him.

Memories... this entire place held memories...

Would I have to move out? "Is the Alpha working today?" I asked casually. "Dad is, as always." She responded.

Maybe once Charlene leaves, I'll go visit him. I needed to ask what Nikolai meant about me not being Dad's daughter...

A light knock on the door to my quarters reached my ears and Charlene jumped up, her ginger hair bouncing around her. "I'll grab it."

I nodded and dropped back onto my pillow once more, looking around my room.

The walls were painted an off white, and the floor was solid wood. My furniture was all wood including my bed. There were paintings on the wall. Some with just quotes, others made by me or Dad, and a few that I had brought from our journeys out of Westerwell; one from when we went on a journey out of our Kingdom of Astalion.

Dad...

Two pairs of footsteps approached, I quickly pulled my shirt down over my thighs just as Theon and Charlene appeared at the door. Charlene was holding a brown bag that clearly contained food.

"You brought food? I never knew the princess's guard was also a delivery boy." I remarked, trying to calm the nerves that erupted inside of me as I sat up. The memory of what had happened at his place yesterday was fresh in my mind.

Our eyes met and I swallowed, seeing his gaze flicker to my bare thighs before he looked back into my eyes and I quirked a brow.

"Seems you're healed." He remarked, turning away and crossing his arms as he leaned against the door frame, as Charlene brought the bag over.

I rolled my eyes almost scoffing, my legs didn't have bruises... I wasn't ready to tell Charlene what happened, but I did want to ask Theon if he was the one who brought me inside.

"Alright eat the sandwich up and there's apple pie."

She unwrapped the items and I took the sandwich, lost in my own thoughts. I needed to talk to the king immediately. Once Charlene had finished fussing over me, I tried not to meet Theon's burning gaze as he stood there before I was finally left alone. Luckily the queen had called Charlene to meet someone or other and both had left but not before Theon's burning emotionless gaze met mine. Once again, I couldn't make out what was going on in that mind of his.

Quickly getting dressed, I left my quarters feeling tired and exhausted. The aftereffect of the rain and training still left its mark and my muscles groaned with every step I took. I saw a pair of guards walk past and I called out to them. "Excuse me! Do you know where the Alpha is?" I asked.

One of them raised an eyebrow whilst the other one's eyes softened slightly.

"Of course, dear, he's out in the courtyard, he was training but he is done for now." He replied.

The perks of the mind link. That was another one I heard from the people. 'If she had her wolf, she could have prewarned us about the attack.' "Thank you." I replied politely before turning and hurrying down the hall. I hoped the Alpha would be willing to talk because I needed answers.

I reached the courtyard to see him sitting on the steps peeling the skin of an apple, on the stone steps next to him was a bowl of fruit. I glanced around but he appeared to be alone.

"May I speak to you, Alpha?" I asked.

Once upon a time, as a child, I used to address him as uncle, but as I got older I started calling him Alpha and that stuck. More so now that Dad was gone, that connection was also no more. "Sure, what is it Yileyna?" The Alpha turned, his hair framing his face only added to his dangerous look and I lowered my head before stepping down into the grass and turning to face him. The knife in his hand was large, and I watched as he made slices out of the apple. "Speak up."

I blinked and nodded.

"I had two questions, Alpha Andres. Yesterday an Epsilon ranked warrior told me that I... That I'm not my father's blood." I asked, the words hurt even as I spoke them, it still hurt so much.

His face didn't change as he ate a slice of apple, munching into it before putting two more in his mouth.

"Rumours. People want to spread those rumours because you're not living up to your status."

He replied. A wave of relief flooded through me despite the insult that was thrown in there. I was my father's daughter. Of course I was!

But his following words felt like a few punches in the gut.

"But the truth is, all rumours start somewhere... I never saw your mother pregnant so who knows exactly where you're from? Was your mother unable to carry? Did your father have you by a whore? It doesn't matter, he was always adamant you were his as

was your mother. Whether I believe it or not they stuck by it... but the truth is, you hold no power to show that you are part of the De'Lacor family.”

7. A Word Of Warning

YILEYNA

His words stung. Was he saying that although Mom and Dad said I was theirs, there had been rumours... Meaning there was something there... I looked into the Alpha's hard emotionless eyes, feeling very alone. Sure, he was our Alpha, his job was to take care of his pack, his city... and as King, his responsibilities were far more than that but if even for a second I thought I'd get any compassion from him, I was wrong.

“I understand, Alpha, and that brings me to my second question; is it true that another will take my place as future Beta?”

He leaned back on one hand, eating his sliced apple as he looked up at the sky.

“I need a Beta now, soon. I can't wait for a wolf less pup to shift to take that position. I'm afraid, yes, I will be choosing another.” His eyes fell on me once more and I did my best to remain emotionless despite the pain in my chest. I bowed my head trying to force a polite smile. “I understand Alpha, will I be given at least some time to prove-”

“To prove what? You didn't shift when Will was killed in the proximity you were in. I don't think anything will trigger your shift.”

That stung. Guilt enveloped me and I knew it was my fault they died...

“I understand. Will I need to move from the castle?”

From my home? My parents' home?

It hurt, so much more than I could express. He sighed heavily, picking up a pear and slicing it.

“Come sit down.”

I tried to remain passive as I sat down on the steps a few feet from him, sitting one step lower than he was. He didn't speak as he sliced the pear and peeled the skin of another apple. “I know that place holds sentimental value for you, but they are the Beta quarters. When he takes the position, you are welcome to move to another room in the castle. You won't be asked to leave the castle.” He pushed the fruit plate closer to me, but I had no appetite. I picked up a slice of apple out of respect and took a bite.

“Thank you for your explanation, Alpha.” I bowed my head and stood up.

I needed to stop feeling sorry for myself, I needed to prove I was good enough, not for the Beta position but for my father, I couldn't let him down. “It's nothing personal, Yileyna.” “Of course, thank you once again.” I turned, leaving the warmth of the courtyard, the sudden coolness of the halls felt far more chilling than they were.

Nothing personal, just the pack laws and rules. In this big world, I was just one more in the throngs of thousands...

The blanket of darkness had fallen over the city of Westerwell and from where I sat on the roof of the Goddess' Citadel, it was the tallest building in the city. I stared down at the bustling streets, lit with lanterns, vendors were still running busy and late-night stalls were as full, as they were throughout the day. The Moon Goddess Festival was coming up soon too. I guess everyone was busy shopping for it. I hadn't thought over what I'd wear, after all usually Mom had my clothes sorted.

Although the majority of the city was part of our pack, there were others who resided here; humans, mages, and fae. Being the middle city, the capital, we were the home to

many, but along with that status and privilege, the risk was always heightened. I ran my fingers through my hair as a sharp wind blew and I turned my attention towards the outer wall. The wall that had been destroyed two months ago had been resurrected and I knew it had been reinforced.

There was still no news on what those rogues had wanted and how they retained that much sanity to think straight and plan something like that. Unless, of course, it's as rumoured – that there is a bigger force at play... I sighed, turning away. The way the streets were thriving below, one wouldn't think we had lost so many... Charlene told me earlier that her training began tomorrow and how I had to be there. It was good for her to train harder; anything could happen... The night of the attack, she had managed to sneak away from that place I had left her, I knew it was so I didn't get in trouble. If anyone knew that she had been there... that I had almost risked her life...

"I'm surprised you're not down by The White Dove." A deep seductive voice, that I recognised, came from behind me.

My heart skipped a beat, I hadn't even heard him approach. My cheeks flushed at what he just said, and I raised an eyebrow. "How do you know I go down to the White Dove?" I retorted not even turning to look at him. What was he even doing here... After what happened at his place last night, I didn't think being alone with him was ideal. "Isn't it where you go often? Clearly getting a free show is the most excitement you will ever have in your life."

I couldn't resist turning and giving him a scathing glare. "Oh please, I could get a man if I wanted one." I declared. Yesterday's events returned to the forefront of my mind, and I felt my stomach churn with distaste. He cocked his eyebrow.

"I highly doubt that." The mockery in his tone was grating on my nerves and I raised an eyebrow in return.

"And you knowing I go down to The White Dove must mean you're a regular there?" A strong flare of jealousy reared within me, but I fuelled my irritation into the glare I was directing at him.

He didn't reply, stepping forward and dropping to the ground, even a simple move like that from him made my heart jolt. He leaned back against the bar behind him, looking at me, a single strand of his hair fell across his forehead and a piece of straw was in his mouth.

Take me right now... 1 "I don't need to go to a whore house to get a woman." His reply came, bringing me out of my daze and making me pout at what I had been thinking. I glanced over at him, true, he didn't need to go to an Omega... I'm sure any woman would happily want him, but then I'm sure he'd love the omega females too... curvy, dainty, yet stronger than humans so that they won't break... Men and women alike loved Omegas...

I frowned as I glared ahead.

"And what did you come here for?"

"I come here often. It's a coincidence that you're here." His cold reply came. Guilty... I found this place when Charlene and I were spying on Theon, although he slipped away later on, I had searched the area until I got to the top of this citadel. "Or maybe not." He added, tilting his head as he looked at me. His sexy eyes making my heart skip a beat. Again. Goddess, I hated him. "It has a nice view." He didn't respond and we fell silent. The passing breeze, the damp ground and the glittering lights of my home city

somehow felt.. distant... like I was an outsider looking in. "Did you go through my pants to find my house key?" I asked suddenly. He raised an eyebrow. "The key was on the floor in the bathroom so I thought I'd drop it off, since you could barely walk. Pretty stupid for someone who was almost raped to fall asleep in an empty hallway." Raped. I shuddered at the thought.

"The guards make their rounds..." He gave me a pointed look and I trailed off. It was guards who had tried to rape me. "I didn't think." "You're not a child anymore, and although you shouldn't trust anything I say or do, trust me when I say that many men have their eyes on you." My heart thundered as our eyes met, grey against amber. They say that our eyes are the doorway to our souls, yet just like him his eyes held mystery. One that even I could not break through...

"You're contradicting your own words." I remarked, standing up and trying not to wince at the pain in my body.

"I warned you, the rest is up to you."

I tried not to focus on the way his voice sounded. Goddess what was my problem.

"Because my father's gone, so now I'm open game? Wow, how nice, I think you forget that I'm not even worthy of being Beta. There's nothing beneficial for trying to claim me."

I remarked, staring out at the city before I turned away to leave.

I gasped when he grabbed my arm, spinning me around roughly and slamming me against rail he had been leaning against only moments earlier.

"This is not a joke. Grow up, Yileyna, and stop acting like a child." He growled, making my heart thud, his hand wrapping around my throat as he flicked the piece of straw that was in his mouth to the ground.

"Excuse me?"

"This has nothing to do with you being a De'Lacor. It's your physique that's the talk of the fucking town. Keep acting the way you are, and you will get into more trouble than you'll be able to handle."

My heart was thundering with nerves, yet at the same time... the tingles of pleasure that coursed through me at his proximity and the way his hand was wrapped around my throat, sent a sharp jolt of desire to my core.

His chest was almost grazing mine, but it was the anger in those eyes that cleared my mind.

"I'm not acting like anything."

"Reckless and stupid"

A flash of hurt rippled through me, and I frowned.

Was I stupid?

"You don't know anything about me, Theon, so just leave me be." I shot back coldly, trying to yank his hand from my throat, but he only tightened his hold.

"Then use that feisty attitude of yours to get free, since you're strong enough to handle yourself." His husky reply came, the challenging glint in his eyes only making me glare at him. I clenched my jaw, ready to bring my leg up and hit him where the sun didn't shine, but it was as if he knew what I was thinking, he forced my legs apart, placing his knee between my thighs, trapping my left leg between both of his.

My chest heaved as I struggled to pull free, trying not to focus on how his body felt against mine.

"Theon, just because you saved me once does not mean you have the right to call me stupid or reckless." I hissed.

He needed to let me go before my arousal perfumed the air and he found out how turned on I was getting "I'm stating facts, next time, I might just stand by and watch.

Seems like you don't really care what happens anyway."

"Why the hell are you getting so worked up?!" I shouted in anger. He let go of me roughly and I fell to my knees, his jaw clenched as he looked down at me.

"Pathetic." He walked away, leaving me alone on the roof. I stared at the ground in front of me. Stupid, pathetic, reckless, useless. The list sure was growing. I massaged my throat, knowing his hold would leave a bruise. I had to remember I wasn't the daughter of a beta anymore, I was just Yileyna, and I needed to grow up. Maybe he was right... maybe I was immature...

I stood up and climbed down, deciding I needed to return home. Maybe it was time I began to look for another place to stay. I wouldn't take pity and remain at the castle. I'll leave before I was told to.

Theon was right, I needed to grow up.