

The Unwanted Wolf

Chapter 19

“Don’t move. I’ll be there as soon as I can,” Mark said. I heard the familiar click of the phone call ending.

I let out a big sigh. Mark hadn’t yelled at me or gotten mad at me. He had just gotten quiet for a moment. Somehow, that almost felt worse. I leaned back against the door for a moment, not ready to go inside. This is not how I wanted to spend my day. I didn’t want two guys fighting over me. It was scary enough accepting one guy who liked me, and now there were two who wanted me. I didn’t want to deal with this. I just wanted to stop whoever was trying to kill me. It felt easier to process somehow.

The door I was leaning against suddenly opened, and I found myself falling. I hit the ground, and the wind was knocked out of me. I lay there for a moment, catching my breath. I looked up and standing above me was Daniel. He was looking down at me curiously.

“I was not aware you were right there,” Daniel said. He held out his hand to me.

I sat up and took his hand. He easily helped me to my feet. “Oh hi. What are you doing here?”

Daniel shut the back door and then turned to me. “I was told I could find you outside. I found some information that I thought would interest you.”

“Have you found out more about what I’m mixed with?” My heart started racing at the thought.

“Not exactly. Follow me to my office.” Daniel started walking down the hallway. He led me to the second floor of the building and into a small office.

Despite it being small, it was extremely organized. Three of the walls were lined with a bookshelf that was completely filled with books. The last wall held various filing cabinets. There was a desk in front of the filing cabinets. The desk had surprisingly little on it, which was completely opposite from the state of Doctor Zayla’s office.

I sat in the chair in front of the desk, and Daniel went to pull a few files out of the cabinet before sitting down in front of me.

“I started looking into the history of sorcery and some different aspects,” Daniel began. He handed a folder over to me. “I didn’t get

as far as I would have liked with this information. There was no mention of glowing eyes, so I'm not able to confirm if that is in fact a trait of a sorcerer."

"So can we rule that out?" I asked. I opened the folder Daniel had given me, but the notes weren't very legible.

"No," Daniel said firmly. "I did find some information that was interesting. Just like how werewolves have key turning points in their maturity. The first one is at sixteen. Did you notice anything happen at the age of sixteen?"

I swallowed hard at this and then slowly nodded.

"Care to expand on that?" Daniel asked.

I took a deep breath. "I didn't feel any different on my sixteenth birthday, at least not that I noticed. My father took one look at me and kicked me out of the pack. The rest of that day is a bit of a blur." I started chewing on my lip. That was the worst memory I had, and I hated thinking about it.

"Interesting. Do you know why he did that?" Daniel asked.

I shook my head, keeping my eyes down. I had asked myself that question a million times.

"I may have a theory about that," Daniel said. He handed me a second folder. This one also had a bunch of quickly written notes that I could barely make out. "When you said you were originally from Pack Lyna, that piqued my interest. Years ago I heard several rumors about the pack."

This got my attention, and I looked back up from the papers. "You know my family?"

"Not exactly. I have never met them, but they are the largest pack in the nearest city. It's important to be aware of packs nearby. 1

know the former alpha had a relationship with the pack as well." Daniel clasped his hands together and placed them on the desk.

"I never knew that," I said.

"We haven't heard anything from them for almost five years. They cut off all contact with us without much explanation. It sounds similar to what happened to you." Daniel paused to let me say something, but I didn't have anything to say. I was on the edge of my seat never thought any of them were true. I don't like assuming things without evidence."

"What kind of rumors were going around?" After I left my pack; I didn't hear anything from them. I had gone as far away as I could imagine, and I didn't talk about my family to the few werewolves that came into town, so the topic was never broached with them.

“There was a rumor that the alpha’s daughter suddenly died. One said that the alpha never had a daughter. Another one said a sorcerer whisked his daughter away. I even heard a rumor that the pack was attacked by a sorcerer because Pack Lyna had broken a deal with the sorcerer. There are many more rumors that went around. You can see them in the notes you have in front of you. Some are completely ridiculous, but there are a few things that consistently come up in the rumors,” Daniel elaborated. “A sorcerer was involved and something happened to the alpha’s daughter.”

“Something happened to me,” I said.

Daniel nodded. “Since that part turned out to be true, I’m thinking that there is truth in regards to the sorcerer as well.”

“So you are thinking I am part sorcerer then?” I said.

“I can’t come to that conclusion without concrete evidence, but it seems that might be the case. Perhaps your father realized you weren’t a pureblooded werewolf when you were sixteen, and that’s why he kicked you out,” Daniel concluded. “This is purely conjecture, though. There are other possibilities.”

I leaned back in my seat. This was the second time someone had come to a similar conclusion, and it was hard to believe. Out of all of the reasons I thought my father had to kick me out, I had never thought about the possibility of not being my father’s daughter. That made more sense than anything I have ever thought about. I had done nothing wrong. I had always been the perfect daughter, and I couldn’t think of a single thing I had done that would make my father want to kill me, except for the fact that I was not my father’s daughter.

I felt myself tearing up at the thought. I was relieved. I thought there was something wrong with me for years that made me feel unwanted, but it wasn’t anything I had done.

“Thank you, Daniel,” I said, wiping my eyes before the tears could escape.

“You have no idea what this means to me.”

“None of this is fact,” Daniel reminded.

I smiled at this. “I know, but it still explains a lot, and it makes me feel better.”

Daniel nodded. “I am happy that this makes you feel better, but this doesn’t explain why someone is trying to kill you.”

“I know, but it’s a start.” I felt like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders.

“There’s one more thing,” Daniel said. He handed me the last folder that was in his hand.

I took the folder and took a look at the notes. When I couldn't discern them, I looked back at Daniel. "What else could there be?"

"If you are the daughter that disappeared five years ago and you were sixteen at the time, that means you are twenty-one, correct?"

Daniel asked.

I placed the folders back on Daniel's desk. "Tomorrow's my birthday actually. I turn twenty-one. Why does that matter?"

"That makes sense. I read that sorcerers come into their full power on their twenty-first birthday. That could explain why you were able to shift yesterday," Daniel said. "Perhaps your powers are starting to show."

"Shift? You mean that disappearing thing that I did?" I asked. I still didn't fully understand what happened in those few moments.

"Likely based on the text I read about sorcerers. It wasn't very detailed, though, so I can't tell you much. Usually sorcerers and werewolves do not mingle," Daniel said. He stood up and moved over to a bookshelf. He pulled out a small book that was leather bound and tied together with a string. He handed it over to me.

"This is all of the information I have on sorcerers. It's not much, but it might help you," Daniel said.

I grabbed the book and took a look at it. It looked like some sort of diary. "I appreciate your help with this. With all of this." I stood up, holding the diary tight.

"It's my pleasure. I enjoy doing research and solving mysteries. I'm just sorry with how little information I was able to discover."

I moved forward and hugged Daniel tightly. "It's more than anyone has been able to find out for me, so I really appreciate it."

Daniel awkwardly hugged me back, and I got the feeling that he didn't get hugs very often. "You're welcome. I have reached out to a few of my contacts who might know more, so hopefully I can discover more for you."

I released Daniel from the hug. "You are a good guy, Daniel."

"You seem to be good yourself, Adira." Daniel smiled back at me, and it was the best smile I had seen him attempt since I had met him earlier. "Jori is a good guy as well. He is a little rough around the edges, but he is a good alpha."

I pulled my lips tight. "I will take that into consideration."

A door slammed downstairs, drawing my attention away from Daniel. I heard a commotion, and once again my chest felt tight. I knew Mark was

here, and I was afraid of what was about to happen. I was running out of Daniel's office and down the stairs in a heartbeat. When I got to the front of the building, I saw Mark pinning Jori against the wall.

"Stop!"

Chapter 20

"Mark, what are you doing?" I shouted. I was shocked to see Mark acting so aggressively. He had always been so gentle and so caring with all of his actions, but Jori brought out something different in him. I wondered if this was the old Mark that Jori had told me about.

"He's saying you won't leave with me," Mark snarled. "He's acting like you belong to him."

Iran over to Mark and placed my hand on his shoulder. "Please put him down."

"She doesn't want you to hurt me because she might pick me after all." Jori smirked, despite the position Mark held him in.

Mark let out a growl and slammed Jori against the wall again. "Stop trying to make decisions for her."

"I'd say the same thing to you," Jori returned.

I gripped Mark's arm harder, terrified. "Jori! That's not helping. Mark, please put him down."

Scythe moved to Mark and grabbed his other arm. "Alpha, we don't want to cause any issues in another alpha's packhouse. Please listen to Adira."

Mark groaned in frustration. Finally, he released Jori, who fell to the ground. Percy was instantly by Jori's side, helping Jori to his feet.

Mark grabbed my wrist and tried to pull me out the door. "Let's go."

I pulled my arm out of Mark's grip. "No."

Mark stopped and looked at me surprised. "What do you mean?"

"I mean you don't own me, and you can't just drag me around. You need to stop to think about what I want." My voice cracked as I scolded Mark. I was beyond upset with his behavior.

Mark froze, his eyes wide. He swallowed hard. "Do you want Jori?"

I sighed and my shoulders dropped. It killed me seeing Mark look so defeated. "I want to stop thinking about this for just a moment.

Someone is trying to kill me, and I can't handle you two fighting over me right now." Tears threatened to spill out of my eyes.

Jori and Mark both looked at me with sheepish looks. They had forgotten

about the reason I came here in the first place.

"You're right," Mark finally said. "We should make sure you are safe before pressuring you into anything."

"You would be safe in this packhouse," Jori suggested. "There are wolves everywhere, and we always have fighters on patrol."

"I can keep her safe," Mark instantly said.

"I will stay here on one condition," I quickly said before Mark and Jori could get into it again. "Mark, Scythe, and Rie will stay here as well." I turned to Mark. "I know you don't like this, but Jori has a point. If we are going to stay here for a little longer, wouldn't it be safer to be surrounded by other wolves?"

Mark's jaw was tense. He glanced over to Jori. "I will agree to these terms if you do."

Jori's eyes narrowed. "I think I can handle your presence for a few days, but Adira will have her own room. I'm not going to let go of her without a fight."

"I won't either," Mark returned. "Shouldn't it be Adira's decision where she sleeps?"

Jor smirked. "You better be careful with what you say."

"I think it's best to be in my own room for now. I'm not even going to think about making a decision between the two of you until my life is safe, and I want you both to respect that," I said.

"Speaking of keeping you safe," Daniel said, walking down the stairs and joining us all. "I'm a little worried there might be another attack on your life tomorrow."

"Why tomorrow?" Mark asked.

"It's Adira's twenty-first birthday," Daniel said flatly. "If she is in fact part sorcerer, supposedly she will come into her full powers on birthday, there are suddenly multiple attempts on her life. I don't believe in coincidences."

"You didn't mention this before," I said, looking up at Daniel.

"I thought about it after our conversation," Daniel said.

"Wait, tomorrow is your birthday?" Scythe asked. "I didn't know that. We need to make sure you celebrate."

I hadn't mentioned my birthday to any of them deliberately. Celebrating my birthday usually brought back bad memories, so I stopped celebrating it a while ago. "I don't really feel like celebrating."

"You should celebrate," Scythe insisted. "I know a lot is going on, Adira, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't get to celebrate yourself."

"It's settled then," Jori said. "We will have a party for Adira here tomorrow."

"Oh goodie!" Scythe clapped his hands in excitement.

"If Daniel thinks someone will attack Adira tomorrow, don't you think it would be better to put off celebrating?" Mark said. He turned to me. "It's not that I don't want to celebrate you, Adira. I think you deserve the best. I just don't want to put you in any unnecessary risk."

"I agree with you," I said. "I don't think we should celebrate."

Jori waved his hand. "Nonsense. We will have a party tomorrow. As long as it's in the pack house, you'll be safe."

I bit my tongue, feeling that it would be pointless to argue against them.

"There's so much to plan for," Scythe said, his mood practically glowing. I smiled at him. It was good seeing him as his more chirpy self. "Rie, can you handle getting Adira a dress?"

"Sure, we can go shopping," Rie said.

"Make sure to bring an escort with you," Mark said. "I don't want you guys going alone."

"I have an escort you can bring with you," Jori offered.

I waved my hands. "No, no, I don't need a new outfit. Really guys, we don't have to do anything fancy."

"We should probably go shopping tonight," Rie said. "It would probably be safer than going tomorrow if Daniel's theory is correct."

"Excellent. I can work on decorations," Scythe offered. "We will need to figure out food as well."

"Percy will help you with that stuff," Jori said.

Scythe paused and looked at Percy. Percy was looking at Jori with wide eyes, avoiding Scythe's gaze. I could feel Scythe's pain as he looked at his distant mate. His eyes were wanting and lonely, and all he wanted was to be near his mate and hold him tightly. I wondered if Jori knew they were estranged mates or if Percy had kept it a secret from everyone, just like Scythe.

"Is that really necessary?" Percy asked.

"I'm not going to have their pack plan this party on their own. I want you to be involved." Jori's alpha voice came out, and there was no arguing with that.

"Let's go," Percy muttered, clearly unhappy. He walked away with Scythe following behind them. I hoped those two would be okay together.

"We should get going soon," Rie suggested. "It's already dark, and we don't want to be out too late."

"I will have someone meet you outside," Jori said. "Bring her back safe."

"That has always been the plan," Rie sassed. She gave a dirty look to Jori. Then she turned to me. "Are you ready?"

"Can I have a moment before we go?" I asked.

I found myself looking back at Mark, and there was a deep pain in them. This wasn't easy for me, but it made me realize that this couldn't be easy on him either. He was looking back at me, and even though we were only a few feet apart, it felt like miles. It was wild to imagine that just twenty-four hours prior I was resting peacefully in his arms. There was a longing inside of me for his touch and his warmth. The safety he made me feel.

Mark's aggressive behavior earlier was shocking and seemed so unlike what I knew about him. Jori's explanation on top of that showed me there was a side of Mark I didn't know. I wasn't sure if it was that feeling of uncertainty or the pull towards Jori that stopped me from approaching Mark in that moment.

"I will see you later, Adira. Let me know when you are back safely," Jori said. "I will go make sure all of your rooms are prepared." Jori left the room with Daniel following behind him.

Rie got the hint as well and said, "I'll be waiting outside for you." When she was gone, it was just Mark and myself left in the room.

"Mark, I'm so sorry for all of this. I didn't want to hurt you. I wish I could give you the answer you want to hear from me, but it wouldn't be fair to myself if I did." I felt so torn and confused by everything, but I didn't want to hurt him ever.

"No, I'm sorry. I lost sight of what's important: your safety and your happiness. I just can't stand the thought of him taking you from me, too." Mark's voice was soft and defeated. "But I need to stop thinking about what I want."

I looked back at him. "You deserve happiness too."

"You should join the others. They are waiting for you." Mark forced a smile and walked away, leaving me feeling empty and alone.