

The Silent Alpha by StephanieLight Chapter 18

Natalia***

The bright light peeking through the window stings my swollen eyes and I let out a soft groan. I do not want to wake up, not after the lousy night of nightmares I had.

In need of some comfort, I stretch out my hand in search of Kota.

My eyes bulge open, however, when I find the bed empty, his side of the bed cold.

“Kota?” I whisper, looking around the room frantically, feeling my heart sink to the pit of my stomach.

“Kota!” I scream, tears springing to my eyes as last night’s nightmares flash through my mind.

Zane’s head pops up from my side of the room and I look over to see Kota snuggled up beside him, his stuffed wolf in his arms.

Zane looks equally bewildered to find the pup curled up on his side, his body growing tense with my silence.

How did he get down there? I wonder as I scramble out of bed to pick him up. It’s doesn’t matter, I scold myself.

I’m just glad he’s okay. I gently pick up the sleepy pup, holding him close to my chest as several tears spill onto my cheeks.

Kota mumbles a hello to me, his sleepy voice soothing my heart. I squeeze him tightly, a slight sob escaping my throat.

“He won’t take you,” I hiccup to myself as I comb my fingers I ignore Zane’s pained look, not caring that I probably looked like a lunatic to him.

“Estas bien Mami ? (Are you okay, mommy ?)” Kota asks when I finally loosen up my grip. He pulls back from my arms and pokes at my eyes and cheeks, staring at me with cute furrowed brows.

“You don’t look so good.” I feign hurt at his words and hold back my laughter.

“Am I ugly ?” I ask.

He shakes his head definitively.

“Bonita, Bonita,” he sings.

“I have the prettiest mommy in the whole world!”

He shouts, my ears ringing from the sudden sound of his loud voice. I shower his chubby cheeks with kisses, feeling relieved to not be alone in this wolf’s den.

“Where did you go ?” I ask.

“Why did you go sleep on the floor with Zane ?”

Kota fidgets with his stuffed wolf before whispering close to my ear.

“I had a nightmare,” he says, hugging his wolf tightly.

“A big bad wolf came to take me away.”

My heart nearly stops as the blood drains from my face. I want to scream but my words never spill out of my mouth.

All through the night, I dreamt of Christian finding us and taking Kota from me, disposing of me as he did all those years ago training to take over the Alpha title, turning my sweet little boy into a hardened Alpha.

Kota's large eyes widen and he smiles at Zane who blushes under his gaze.

"But then Zane saved me, mommy. He didn't let the bad wolf take me!"

He climbs out of my lap and runs into Zane's arms.

"And then – And then Zane's wolf carried me home!" Zane's face freezes, his body tensing at the mention of his wolf.

"Aoh aoh aaaaaah!" Kota suddenly howls like a wolf.

"Zane is a wolf, mommy. Did you know that?"

He howls happily again.

"Can I be a wolf, mommy? Can I be a wolf like Zane?" Several questions pop into my head.

How did he know Zane is a wolf and how could he possibly know a wolf was after us? I lick my dry lips, unsure how to respond to his question.

I always knew the day would come when he would earn his wolf but his first shift was so many years away; I thought I would have more time to come up with an explanation as to why he'd feel another presence within him or hear a little voice in his head...

Zane's eyes seem to bore into my soul as I stare at my hopeful pup still in his arms.

While I despised wolves, my son was the exception. I would teach him to be a good wolf loyal to his family and should he ever find his mate, he would never hurt her.

“O-of course you can,” I finally manage to say.

“You can be Kota how is again, crawling on all fours and barking at me.

You will be a beautiful wolf ,I want to tell him but I swallow my words and smile at him as he rolls around the covers with his tongue hanging out of his mouth.

“Come on, Kota,” I say, ignoring Zane's questioning eyes as I climb out of bed.

“We have to get dressed.”

The sweet aroma of crepes fills the house as Kota and I make our way into the kitchen, both of us practically drooling.

We had skipped dinner last night and gone straight to bed after our shower.

We find Agnes hard at work pouring crepe batter onto a hot pan, swirling it around in circles to make a perfect crepe.

Despite laboring over the food, Agnes looks as beautiful as ever in a pretty blouse and matching skirt.

She kindly signs a good morning to Kota and I frowns at me when I try to steal a crepe, slapping my hand to not touch her food.

My pouts are useless against her and I instead help her pack the cut-up fruits and fillings to take to the main pack house.

When we are all ready to go, Zane and Agnes carry the food while I lead Kota up to the mansion, squeezing his hand tightly as my wandering eyes scan the area uneasily.

He can't find us here, I remind myself as we enter the mansion. We're safe.

An omega meets us at the door and leads us to a large dining Alpha. Oliver sits at the head of the table, his Queen to his left.

Sitting beside Aurora is Evan along with a girl we had yet to meet.

To Oliver's right is another couple whom we also did not meet yesterday.

The rest of the table is empty.

Part of Gamma Evan's job seems to be annoying his Alpha who scowls violently at him as he recounts a story.

"Anyways, Oliver ran through the entire school butt-naked looking for his clothes," Evan wheezes, Aurora on the verge of tears beside him.

"He was so mad—" His voice comes to a halt when he finally notices us, Aurora rising to her feet to greet us.

"Please make yourselves at home," she instructs, gesturing to the empty seats.

She points to the girl beside Evan.

"This is Mia, Evan's mate and my cousin." She then gestures to the couple to Oliver's right.

“And this is Beta Carter and his wife Rosalie, Oliver’s little sister.”

Rosalie jumps to her feet and rushes over to us with a kind smile on her lips. Her eyes widen in shock when she sees the food in Agnes and Zane’s hands.

“Are those crepes?” She squeals.

“Saviez-vous que nous sommes français ? {Did you know we’re French ?}. We love crepes!”

“Agnes is mute and deaf,” I explain when Agnes stares blankly at Rosalie.

“So, she won’t understand you.”

“H-how do you say ‘thank you’?” She asks.

I show her the sign and Rosalie mimics me, Agnes’s eyes brightening from the gratitude.

Rosalie and Aurora help distribute the crepes around while several omegas bring in dishes of eggs and potatoes for everyone to enjoy.

“You can sit right next to me,” Rosalie smiles when everyone’s plates are all full, patting the chair beside her.

“Is he your pup?” She asks, pointing at Kota who climbs onto my lap.

“He is beautiful and my goddess, his eyes are gorgeous!” She squeals, waving over to Kota who gives her a cheeky grin.

Zane and Agnes make themselves comfortable on the opposite side of the table and dig into their food, Zane translating for Agnes as more praise comes her way.

I prepare a small crepe for Kota and he readily licks the Nutella off, smothering his cheeks in the chocolate spread.

The wolves try to make small talk, asking me questions about how I met Gwen or what I do for a living but the last thing I want to do is talk about my life to a bunch of strangers.

Regardless, I am as polite as possible, providing as few details as I can to give them a hint that I was not comfortable with disclosing information about my life.

My patience starts to wane, however, when they ask about Zane.

“So how long have you two been together?” Rosalie asks, wiggling her eyebrows at me.

“You make a cute couple.” I steal a quick glance at Zane who looks petrified by her question anger get the best of me.

“Oh, I just assumed...with the way he looks at you...” her voice trails off when she sees the uncomfortable look on Zane’s face.

“No, he’s just a wolf I met and can’t seem to get rid of,” I mutter, an awkward silence enveloping us as I eat the last of my crepe.

I feel Zane’s eyes on me as I set my silverware down and begrudgingly look up to tell him to quit it.

When our eyes meet, his brown eyes flicker to a bright gold color, his wolf seeming to fight for control.

Zane shuts his eyes tightly, looking away to hide his other half but I had already seen the wolf within...and he was angry with me.

My last memories of Jack replay in my head.

Christian and Jack, my wolf mate who claimed would never hurt me, the one who told me he loved me every day...hit me...rejected me...humiliated me...and betrayed me.

Zane and his wolf would be no different.

They would hurt me too.

Suddenly very aware that I am in a pack full of wolves and the only human for miles, I begin gathering my dishes to leave when Aurora's voice stops me in my tracks.

"I'd like to take a walk with you," she says through a small smile.

"If that's okay with you."

I'm about to politely decline when she rises to her feet, her voice I look down at my pup clinging to my leg, his large eyes twinkling with mischief.

Aurora whistles and the pitter patter of paws announces the entrance of the rambunctious pit bull named Rio.

"Mommy, look! Doggie!" Kota squeals excitedly, jumping in place as the dog comes over to sniff him.

Rio coats Kota in a thick layer of slobber as he licks his face, Kota screaming with joy.

"There's a daycare just down the road..." Aurora explains.

"I'm sure Kota would enjoy some time with other pups." I don't like the idea of leaving Kota alone in such a strange place with wolves no less.

“Or Kota could stay here with Zane and Agnes.He will be perfectly safe here, I give you my word,” Aurora offers.

More empty promises...I mutter to myself.

“Promises are sacred to me,” Aurora says, a slight frown on her lips.

“They are not empty and I don’t make them lightly.” I stare at her in shock, wondering how in the world she knew I was thinking of promises.

“I understand your concerns, Natalia.I do,” Aurora adds with calm demeanor.

“But you don’t know me.Don’t be so quick to dismiss my words.I deserve to be treated with the same respect I have bestowed upon you, don’t you think ?”

“How did you know my name ?” I snap, knowing Gwen would one.

“I’ll tell you if you go on this walk with me, just the two of us,” she says, her mate and gamma looking uneasily at her.

“I’m not going to be in any danger,” she chuckles at their response.

“I’m just going ona walk.Besides, I can handle myself for a couple hours.”

“I can handle myself” Evan mocks her, Aurora bursting into laughter at his high-pitched voice.

“Please, I know kindergarteners tougher than you.”

Before he can say anything else, Evan suddenly levitates several feet off the ground until his head almost touching the ceiling.

“Aurora, put me down.” Evan screams, swinging his arms and legs around.

“Come on, you know I don’t like heights!”

“Say you’re sorry,” Aurora smirks.

“Fine, you little gremlin from hell. I’m sorry! Put me down!” he snaps, Aurora finally having mercy and putting him on the floor.

Evan curls his fingers in a choking motion, grumbling under his breath how much he wants to just strangle her before he storms out of the room, his mate wheezing in laughter as she races after him.

I pull Kota close to me on instinct, completely speechless at having seen what I just witnessed, and amazed no one else was shocked by her display of power.

“I gotta go, babe,” Oliver says as he leans over and kisses her on the cheek.

“I got a meeting in thirty minutes. Let’s go Carter,” he calls to his Beta who also bids goodbye to his mate and races after him as they leave.

Rosalie turns to me and smiles.

“Don’t worry.”

Kota can stay here with Zane, Agnes and I.

This is the safest place in the River Moon.

Kota wiggles eagerly in my arms, wanting to play with the oversized puppy sniffing and licking him.

“Kota is safe, Natalia,” Aurora reassures, her face softening.

“He won’t find him here.”

I know exactly who she is referring to but it frightens me no less that she knows about Christian.

Gwen would never disclose that information.

NEVER.

“Follow me,”

The Queen says, turning on her heel and leaving me no choice but to follow her out of the safety of the pack house.