

Chapter 4 Asteria

Amarah

Again, I wake up in the middle of the night and quickly make my way out of the Pack house to hand over control to Minerva, giving her the chance to deal with the pain she's feeling. She doesn't waste any time, crossing our border without being spotted by one of our Warriors.

It doesn't take long for her to find a Rogue and shred him to pieces. She keeps running along our borders, and some of the Rogues flee the moment they see Minerva approaching. Those Rogues are left alone as they pose no threat to our Pack.

About an hour before sunrise, we run along our eastern border from south to north. Suddenly, Minerva stops dead in her tracks, sniffing the air as she scans her surroundings. "Blood, not a Rogue," she tells me, and slowly makes her way toward a cluster of trees and boulders.

The scent of blood grows stronger the closer we get, and Minerva slows down even further, scanning her surroundings. Suddenly, her ears perk up as we hear soft whimpers coming from within the cluster of trees and boulders.

Minerva steps cautiously into the trees to reveal a female covered in blood, with her arms wrapped around a Pup. I ask Minerva to give me back control, and the female's eyes widen as I stand before her. She clearly wasn't expecting a female to show up.

"Please, don't send us back. Please, don't tell anyone we are here," she whispers, her voice laced with despair. I crouch down in front of her, taking in the cuts and bruises on her body. Minerva roars in my head at the sight of her injuries.

"I won't send you back, but I need to warn our Pack doctor. I need to know that your Wolf will be able to heal this on her own, and I need to inform my Pack so our Warriors can keep an eye on you," I tell her gently. It takes a few minutes before she responds.

"My Wolf says she can heal this on her own as long as we don't have to start running again. I don't know if I want anyone else to know that I'm here. Can you give me a few days to think about it?" she asks, and I decide to give her some time to calm down and rest.

I tell her I'll be back in a few minutes. I shift into Minerva before bolting from the cluster toward our eastern border. I quietly make my way into the Pack house to gather some supplies and food for the female and her Pup.

Once I've handed her everything I brought with me, I tell her my name and find out her name is Asteria, and her Pup's name is Inti. "I'll be back tomorrow night. Get some sleep and eat something," I say before leaving the cluster once again.

It has been four days since the rejection and three days since Asteria showed up. Inti has come out of his shell, hugging Minerva the moment we enter the cluster, and we both enjoy those moments. Asteria finally told me what had happened to them, and I had to let Minerva out to deal with her anger.

After we talked for a while longer, she finally agreed with me on telling our Pack. It will give us the chance to keep an eye on them and maybe we will be able to find out if it's safe for her to return home. Not that Asteria is as optimistic about that as I am.

I crash on my bed to get a few hours of sleep before informing Dad about what Minerva and I have been doing at night and about our guests hiding in the cluster. It doesn't take me long to drift off to sleep, and for the first time since my rejection, I sleep without dreaming.

As I slowly open my eyes, I realize I slept straight through. Even though it still hurts thinking about Damien, I know that Minerva and I will survive. I walk into the bathroom to take a shower, and after that, I get dressed, ready to face the world again.

Everyone acts as if I haven't been avoiding them for days as I walk into the dining room. After I sit down, I tell Dad that I need to talk to him with all of our leadership Wolves. Alastor sits beside me, placing his hand on my knee, giving me the calm I need as I see some females staring and whispering about me.

I stand in front of the window, looking at some Pups playing on the lawn to the left of our Pack house, and I wish I could see Inti running with them. "Dad, I know everyone is aware of what happened. I don't want to talk about it, but I have to tell you how Minerva has been dealing with it," I say.

Turning around, I see that everyone is waiting for me to start talking. "The Rogues that were found near our borders were Minerva's doing. It was the only way for her to deal with everything without hurting the ones we love." Mom wraps me in her arms, while Dad tells me he already suspected as much.

"Are you going to be okay?" Alastor asks as he hugs me, and I tell him that it will take time, but that I am already feeling better. "Dad, there's something else we need to talk about. Did the Elders or the Council send a message about Little Crescent Pack?" I ask him, and he nods.

He hands me the message, and the more I read, the angrier Minerva becomes.

"Amarah, what's going on?" he asks, as everyone can feel the anger radiating from my body. I take a few deep breaths, trying to calm Minerva down.

"The contents of this message are a bunch of lies," I respond. "Khonsu's Brother didn't die in a Rogue attack. Khonsu killed him and tried to forcefully mark Luna Asteria. He also tried to kill her Pup, Inti, but he failed at that as Luna Asteria protected him.

Khonsu always wanted what his Brother had, even as little Pups. When his Brother found his fated Mate, Khonsu tried to seduce Asteria, but she told her Mate about what Khonsu had tried to do, and he removed Khonsu from the Pack-house to protect his Mate.

Luna Asteria managed to escape her Pack's territory with Inti. She kept running until she was too exhausted to continue and took shelter in the cluster of trees and boulders near our eastern border. She is fully healed now, and she and Inti are doing much better than the night I met them," I say as I look at my Father.

We discuss the options we have, and Dad decides that I'm right. With Asteria hiding in no-man's land, we won't be lying if we say that she is not in our Pack's territory. Instead of having a meeting in front of the Pack house, Dad links the entire Pack at once and explains the situation.

Everyone is ordered to keep her presence a secret, and with the Alpha command in place, I know Asteria and Inti are safe.

I follow Dad out of his office, and I'm surprised to see that an Omega is putting clothes, toys, and other items into a bag.

"Alpha, some of our Pack members have brought supplies for Luna Asteria and Inti. Where would you like me to put them?" she asks, and I smile as Dad tells her to put them in his office. He informs me that he will accompany me tonight.

Our Head Warrior approaches me and Dad to tell us that every Warrior has volunteered to visit them at night and to bring them whatever they need. Happiness and pride fill my heart as I realize that our Pack considers them as one of our own.

That night, I visit Asteria with my Dad, and when we tell her what's going on in our Pack, she rewards us with a smile. Inti is happy with his toys and clothes; Asteria is happy with the support she's been given, and she tells me that for the first time since her Mate was killed, she feels calm again.

We have all fallen into a routine that works for all of us. Asteria and Inti have their day and night rhythms reversed—they sleep during the day and are awake at night. Pack members take turns teaching Inti everything he would normally learn in school and helping Asteria with whatever they can.

Khonsu is still searching for her and still sticks to his story, even though most Packs have found inconsistencies with it. The Elders are not eager to give him any information, and so far, no one has shown up on our doorstep to ask about Asteria and Inti.

We received a message from Council member Boaz, stating that Khonsu was still searching for Asteria and that they had questioned him about the events of that night. He had refused to come in, using his search for Asteria as an excuse, but the Council is not giving him much time to dodge them.

Two weeks after Damien rejected me, he informed the Elders that he had found his Mate, and that had set off a new string of sleepless nights for me, while Minerva had once again taken to hunting down Rogues and shredding them to pieces.

Dad had a video conference with the Elders and a Council member the day he found out what happened. When Damien reported finding his Mate, they called Dad to ask what I wanted to do. Dad told them to leave it as it was—that his Pack would feel the consequences one day.

Realizing I needed something to take my mind off Damien, Dad told me he was stepping down, and that gave me enough to keep me busy.

I had been trained by Dad for years, and I knew I could handle the job, but I was nervous nonetheless.

Today is the day I will take over from my Father, and we both know that some of our allied Alphas will not agree with him. They may or may not break their alliance with us, but truth be told, I don't care, and neither does my Father.

Alastor has been over the moon, to say the least. I don't understand why, as I am becoming Alpha and not him.

Alastor once told me and Dad that he was glad Dad didn't believe a male could take the position of Alpha. When we asked him why, he smiled and said, "I don't have the patience to deal with crap."

Dad and I had laughed our asses off because it's true that Alastor lacks patience in some areas.

Alpha Drew and Luna Jess are the first to arrive. After just one look at me, they both know that I will be taking over instead of Alastor.