



Aiden

“For the millionth time, Sienna, he didn’t *say* anything.”



“Well, he pulled you into the hall for a little pow-wow for a reason!”

I sighed. We were back home, in bed, ready to call it an early night, but Sienna just wasn’t dropping it. I’d told her over and over again that the healer hadn’t told me anything. And that was true.

Well, it was mostly true.

He hadn’t told me anything of merit.

Nothing he said to me made me believe he actually knew a damn thing about healing or about the status of our baby’s health. I honestly think he just wanted to talk to an Alpha for a few minutes.

Sienna turned onto her side so her back was to me.

“Come on,” I said, nudging her. But she didn’t budge. So I shifted closer to her, wrapping my arms around her so that we were spooning.
“Okay, you want a verbatim run-down of the conversation?”

“Yes.”

“Fine. He said it was a pleasure to meet me, that I looked like a real Alpha—not like one of those pansy ones. And he said when he felt you, he got a sense that something was off.”

Sienna turned to face me, her eyes wide.
“Something’s... *off*?”



“Sienna, we can’t trust a word this guy is saying. He clearly just wanted to meet me, to impress me with something—”

“And you think him saying that something is off is what he’s trying to impress you with?!”

“I don’t know,” I admitted, scratching my head. “I don’t know what to think. But you’re not hurting anymore, right?”

“No,” she said softly, shaking her head. “But I need to know...”

“I know,” I said, kissing her nose. “We’ll find out what that was. I promise. First thing tomorrow, I’ll track Jocelyn down—”

“No. First thing tomorrow is the goddamn baby shower.”

Fuck.

I forgot about that.



I nodded. “Okay, after the baby shower, I’ll track her down. We’ll get to the bottom of this, Sienna, I promise you that.

But you promise me that you won’t worry about it, okay? Not until we have a reason to worry.”

She closed her eyes gently, and when she opened them a few seconds later, they were filled with trust. Trust for me, for the words I was saying. “Okay,” she whispered, and then she nuzzled herself into me.



And we fell asleep like that, wrapped in each other’s warmth.

Sienna

I was less than excited to be going to the baby shower, let’s leave it at that.

Look, I knew that it should be something I *wanted* to do—celebrating the future birth of our child with our closest family and friends. That was a milestone, something most women would squeal with delight at the thought of.

But here I was, draped in a pastel blue off-the-shoulder sweater, feeling like some emo girl in a depressing movie.

It wasn’t helping that I’d never felt more bloated in my life. Even though the mirror showed the

same body I've always had, I felt like I'd gained forty pounds overnight.

"What's wrong, my love?" Aiden asked as he walked over to where I was standing, but my eyes were still staring into the mirror.

"I don't know what's wrong with me."

"Nothing's wrong with you, Sienna."



"I'm not talking about physically. I'm saying, why am I dreading this so much? It's everyone we love, Aiden. I should be excited about it."

"You've had an exhausting few days. We both have," he said, tilting my chin up so he had better access to my lips. He kissed me. "It won't be so bad, I promise. And after it's over, we'll have the afternoon to ourselves. With no plans at all," he said, smiling mischievously.

I took in his handsome face, his sparkling eyes, and wrapped my hands around his neck.

Then I brought my lips back to his, feeling warmth strike through my body as we kissed tenderly. And with the warmth came a resurgence of energy, reminding me that my body wasn't out of my control.

That I still had power over myself.

I kissed him harder, pressing myself against him with new urgency.

“Sienna, wait,” he said after a few seconds. His voice was coarse, and we were both breathing heavy. “We’re gonna be late.”

“Who cares?”

“Uh, your parents. My parents.”



He grabbed my hand and led me out of the bedroom, sitting me down on the couch in the living room. He went to the shoe rack by the door and picked out my boots then crouched down in front of me and slid my feet into them.

I didn’t know why, but the gesture was sort of... hot.

“You’re really turning down sex right now?” I asked him, my eyes watching his face. I could see regret passing over it. But then he looked up at me.

“I’m not turning down sex. I’m saying, be patient. We have a whole afternoon ahead of us. And good things come to those who wait,” he said as his hands worked their way up my thighs.

I narrowed my eyes at him.



He's being a goddamn tease.

And I won't take it sitting down.

So I rose up, grabbing my purse and walking straight out the door. "In that case, see you in the car."



By the time we got to Jewel, the baby shower was in full swing. All of our family and friends were mingling in the back room, surrounded by the pastel-colored floral arrangements I'd ordered from the florist.

Servers were walking around with platters of mimosas, and the long table was decorated with pastel pink and blue centerpieces. I had to admit the place looked beautiful.

"Sienna! You look beautiful!" Selene exclaimed as she threw her arms around me, bringing me in for a tight hug.

"I don't feel it," I laughed back. "I am so bloated and... I don't know, I just feel gross. Like my body needs to get out of my skin or something."

"Shut up, you look *amazing* in that blue. Seriously, your hair is popping!" I smiled at my sister. I couldn't help it. Her enthusiasm was

contagious.

“Are we the last ones to get here?” I asked, looking around. I saw Mom and Dad in the corner talking to Charlotte and Daniel, a conversation I was not trying to join anytime soon.

Aiden was deep in conversation with Jeremy, and standing by the table were Erica and Mia, knocking back some mimosas.

“Michelle’s not here yet,” Selene informed me. “Josh either.”



I checked my phone. It was already twelve twenty, and the brunch had been called for noon. *Of course, Michelle is going to arrive grossly late.*

She needs all eyes on her, always.

“Well, are you drinking, at least? I’d need to live vicariously through someone’s freedom here.”

Selene laughed. “Jeremy and I are trying to cut back on our alcohol drinking—” I shot her a death glare before she could finish. “But if you’d like me to have a mimosa, I will have a mimosa.”

I nodded. “Have a mimosa.”

As Selene took a few steps backward to grab a mimosa off a server’s platter, I felt my frustration well up inside me. I hadn’t even wanted to have



mimosa off a server's platter, I felt my frustration well up inside me. I hadn't even wanted to have the damn baby shower, and Michelle wasn't even here yet?

I was the one who organized the whole thing, and she wasn't even going to take the liberty of getting her ass here on time?

And she wasn't just a few minutes later. It was now twenty-five minutes late! Who did she think she was, the queen of goddamn England?!



Sienna
Michelle

Sienna
Where are you

Sienna
It's 12:25

Sienna
Everyone's here but you guys

Sienna
Which is weird, cause we're both supposed to be the hosts

Michelle

Josh was driving us down the open road when I



Josh was driving us down the open road when I felt my phone buzz in my pocket. I reached into it, grabbing the phone and reading the screen.

And then my stomach sank.



“SHIT!”

“What? What happened?” Josh asked, whipping his face toward me.

“It’s the baby shower! Right now! Everyone’s there, Josh. Sienna’s gonna be so pissed! Come on, let’s turn around. Let’s turn around! We can still make it—”

“Babe, we’ve been driving for three hours already! We’re too far. We can’t just turn around now.”

“But we can’t just not show up to my own friggen’ baby shower!”

Josh exhaled, bringing his hand into my lap to squeeze my hand.

“You gotta think about the priorities here, Michelle. Yeah, it’s shitty that we’re not showing up. But we’re doing it for a good reason, right? We’re tracking down the guy who’s a huge threat to everyone, including Sienna.”

He glanced at me again, and I saw that his eyes



were filled with determination. He'd shaven last night, so gone was the not-so-chic beard he'd been rocking since I woke from the coma. And, God, the man looked *good*.

I sighed. "Okay. Fine. Maybe you're right..."



"I *am* right, babe. You'll see. When we're all safe and sound five years from now, no one will be thinking back to the baby shower we missed."

"That better be true," I responded, sliding my phone back into my pocket and leaning back against the seat. Maybe I should've responded to her... Fuck, I definitely should've responded to her.

But what was I gonna say?

Hey, Sienna, so sorry but we won't be making it to the baby shower that's been thrown in our honor, xoxo?

I think not.

So I closed my eyes, trying to drain the negative energy from my mind.

We were on a mission.

Josh and I were the only people who were actually doing something to destroy Konstantin. While Sienna and Aiden were *eating eggs and bacon* we



Sienna and Aiden were eating eggs and bacon, we were hunting down the last guy who'd interacted with the vampyre.

That was right. After my little pep talk to Josh, he'd pulled his shit together and done some serious research. He found a newspaper article from a town 240 miles away, about a man who'd been bitten by something.

Something that wasn't a werewolf.



And the picture that came with the article showed the exact same bite that had been on my neck. The one that came from Konstantin.

Which was why we were on the road trip. We were gonna hunt the other victim down and make him give us all he had.

Josh was right. This *was* more important than eating waffles and receiving compliments about how my skin was glowing. We could get waffles and compliments any day. But today we were on a mission. And that was that.

Josh pulled off the street we were on and into a parking lot. I squinted at the massive brick building in front of us. It looked ancient like it had been there for way longer than any of us had.

The white lettering above the front doors read:
MARPETTON ASYLUM.



“Babe,” I managed to get out. “Is that like... a mental asylum?”

He turned to me, and I saw the discomfort in his eyes. “The paper said it was called Marpetton Center. I assumed it was like a Healing Center or something...”

I swallowed. “Well, let’s get this over with.”



“Wait a second,” he said, pushing me back against my seat. “You’re staying in here. I’m not having you come inside a mental institution. Mich, what if the guy’s crazy?”

“Of course, he’s crazy! He’s in an asylum!” I cried. “But I’m coming. We drove all the way here, and we’re a team, remember?”

“But you’re *pregnant*—”

“Yeah, and the next time you use that against me, I’m going to shove my boot’s heel right into your mouth. So stop whining like a bitch and let’s go into the goddamn asylum.”

I didn’t wait for his response. I just climbed out of the car.

Next Chapter

