

Owned by the Alphas | The Offering | C 2

The Offering

“Lorelai, run!”

“What, why?” I demanded.

“They are here! You cannot be late or our family will be cast to the Vampire Territory!” she cried.

I sucked in a breath. I had never seen that happen before.

She pulled a shawl over her shoulders, then grabbed my hand, abandoning our hut and hauling me through the matching homes.

It was bloody freezing, the warmth of the fire and wooden floorboards at home changing to damp grass and soft mud. I hadn’t even put on my twine shoes. Apparently, that was less of an infraction than being late.

Mother and I raced through the huts toward the bonfire as the music leveled and the villagers fell quiet.

The night air was cold and ominous as my mother pushed me into the lineup with the other offerings, all wearing the same provided silk lace dress that I was. They had their twine feet decor on though.

Breathing hard, I eyed the dark carriages on the gravel behind the bonfire. There were two of them, both black with a wolf head on the side.

Mother patted my hair down and readjusted my dress as the others were fluffed by their own guardians.

“Mom.” I smacked her hand away as she tried to stand me straighter. I was already taller than the other girls, I didn’t need to stand out more.

I hadn’t been nervous before, but now I was; something about standing there on display, waiting for *them* to climb from the carriages, had my heart racing.

“Please them, Lorelai. Make them happy,” my mom whispered.

“They have everything they could ever want or need in their fancy mansion; they have access to any girl in the entire Werewolf Territory. How the hell am I meant to please them with a vagina I’ve never used before?” I demanded in a hushed tone, and my mom tried to hide her smirk, failing as she held my face and kissed my forehead.

“I know the books you read, my dear, you know exactly what to do.” She winked back, and I snickered, drawing frowns my way.

I ignored them and hugged my mom.

“I love you,” I whispered against her.

“I love you too.” She breathed, then stepped back. She looked over me, her eyes filled with pride, just as the moon began to cast red shadows over everything.

I sucked in a breath and looked up. The blood moon.

“Holy shit,” I bit, my legs feeling like jelly as the severity of the situation hit me.

It wasn’t just sex. It was three alpha douchebags claiming my body in exchange for my family’s protection. A family I didn’t even get to see because of their stupid laws.

My eyes scanned the crowd, locking on navy eyes and a face almost identical to mine.

My brother.

He was taller than me, with clean stubble covering his jawline. His hair was dark like mine, his body slender like mine, his lips full like mine.

My eyes watered as I felt the twin connection burn through me, still as strong as ever, and I hadn’t realized how scared I had been of not feeling that.

I clutched my arms tightly, the cold air giving me goosebumps as I smiled at him.

“Lucas,” I breathed, and as soon as the name left my lips, a shadow fell over me.

I gasped, shrinking back from the wall of a man that towered over me. He was huge, muscles uncovered, body heat radiating from his form. His green eyes caught mine, and his lips curled back as he shoved his dark hair back from his face.

Nikolai Ferus. The Grassland alpha was staring me down, but it was his tattoos that caught my attention: grasslands turning to forest, then to an ocean on his arm before bursting into inky flames across his chest.

He snarled at me, and my eyes shot back to his. I refused to cower though, refused to step back. I hadn't done anything wrong.

"Are we interrupting something?"

His husky voice did something to my stomach. I looked behind him to my mother, who was standing with my father. He narrowed his eyes at me, then nodded once, and I knew I had to make him proud.

I couldn't let him down after not seeing him for years.

"No."

"Are your knees broken?"

That voice pulled at something inside me again, and I shook my head, seeing the other offerings bowing before the alphas.

The other two were watching, their eyes full of hunger, their bodies just as intense and rippled in abs and muscle as the one in front of me.

"Shit, sorry," I cursed, bending like the others before grimacing at my use of language.

The leanest of the alphas, Braxton Trux, the Water alpha, barked out a laugh before coming over and putting his hand on the shoulder of Nikolai.

He had a similar arm tattoo, but his started with the water. The other one started with the forest.

"Put that one in the front," he said, his long blond hair pulled into a bun, a blue braid falling down his back with a bead holding it in.

I gasped, looking up, my eyes clashing with Nikolai's again. He was my alpha. The Grassland alpha. I could feel it in every part of me, but the look that seared me reached even further than that bond.

His jaw was strong, his cheekbones high, and his black hair kept falling over his face, just for him to push it back again. He nodded once, and I pursed my lips.

I didn't want to go in the front.

His eyes let mine go before he roamed over me slowly. I shivered underneath his gaze, my skin prickling as he inspected every part of my body. I felt naked, like he could see through the stupid dress they had chosen.

"Stand," he growled, and everyone got to their feet. He stepped closer, my breasts brushing his torso as he looked down.

"Why were you late?" he asked, his voice a dangerous tone that said he was threatening me even though his words weren't direct.

I scrambled my brain for an answer, opting for the truth-ish.

"I almost wore the wrong underwear. Sir," I said, my eyes meeting his as his lips moved so close to mine, I could taste the whiskey on his breath.

A smirk tugged at his mouth before he leaned back, leaving my body drowning in sensation that I didn't understand. His fingers brushed up my thigh, and my breath hitched.

He lifted my hem, revealing the white lace panties that I was required to wear, his finger tracing the lace trimming as my eyes fluttered closed, my skin on fire where he touched.

My heart raced. I had no idea why I was reacting so strongly, but it made the idea of getting naked with the guy that much more exciting.

"Hmmm. Carriage one," he called before stepping back.

My eyes flung open, and he moved to the next girl. My eyes went back to my family. My father was grinning proudly, his arm wrapped around my mom. She had tears in her eyes as my brother clenched his jaw.

I could feel his anger, and I wanted to go to him. I wanted to hug him. But I had to wait until tomorrow.

I swallowed back the emotion as the second alpha came over. The Forest alpha.

He was the oldest, but his face was the friendliest. His brown hair was shorter than the others and smoothed back. He wore jeans, his muscles and strong body on display as much as the other two.

The V on his hips went down below his waistline, and I bit my lip. The alphas were sexy as hell. I couldn't even deny that.

My body hummed at the idea of being beneath that much power. Derik Achlis leaned in, sniffing my neck as I shivered, his body heat warming my icy skin. He smirked.

"Give Nikolai hell, beautiful," he said in a low voice, brushing my ear with his lips before moving to the next girl.

I glanced over at Nikolai and swallowed as he announced that Portia Caldwell would be joining me in carriage one.

Perfect. Tonight officially made it to worst night ever.

Miss Perfect Portia... Just her name had me tensing. She was the leggy blonde who said all the right things, kissed ass like a pro, and never rubbed people the wrong way—except for me.

She was as bitchy as they came, and I had been on the rear end of the scorn from the villagers most of my life because of her. She proved my point with her next words.

"Oh, thank you. I am so grateful Your Majesty, my alpha, but I must decline. It would be improper to willingly choose to be in the same carriage as a winter born. I wouldn't wish bad luck on the night," she said, as sweetly as molasses.

I rolled my eyes, and all three alphas turned to me. I had to work to keep my spine straight under their gaze.

Most humans avoided procreating in the months that led to a winter born, so there hadn't been many. Not any in my lifetime. I clenched my jaw and steeled myself for the condescension.

"You're winter born?" Nikolai asked.

I nodded once. We had already established that.

Nikolai and Derik looked toward Braxton. His eyes rolled back before swirling with blue and white. He nodded once, and his eyes flicked back to the ice blue they were before.

They looked at me again before looking up at the moon. The blood moon had crested, and Nikolai nodded toward the carriage.

"Carriage one."

The Carriage

"Carriage one," he said to me before looking at Perfect Portia. "Carriage one," he growled, and she nodded quickly, clamping her mouth shut.

"Rest of you to two," Braxton ordered, and they all rushed forward to their carriages as the alphas moved to carriage one.

I didn't move with them though. Instead, I ran to my family. I had two seconds before I was hauled off by three sexy werewolves. I didn't want to wait until tomorrow when I could have a fleeting moment now.

A grin broke on Lucas's face as I ran into him. My arms wrapped around his neck as his closed around my body, lifting me off the ground, holding me tight as tears fell from my eyes.

"Lorelai!" my father growled as my mother gasped.

"You must go!" she begged, but Lucas kept holding me as I held him. Warmth and love filled me as I closed my eyes against him.

"I'll see you tomorrow. It was nice to meet you," I whispered, and he squeezed me tighter.

Silence fell, until a feral growl broke it from behind me. My eyes flung open and Lucas put me down. I let go of him and turned to Nikolai's stormy face.

“Sorry,” I tried, but he said nothing, looking between Lucas and me.

He stepped toward Lucas, but I stepped in front of him. The gasps of the villagers filled the silence. My mother gripped my wrist as my spine tingled in warning.

“You belong to the wolves tonight.” His chest rumbled before me and anger exploded in my chest.

I was wearing the stupid dress, the uncomfortable underwear, I was freezing, on display, and completely degraded for their sick virgin fantasies and he got mad because I wanted to meet my brother? Fuck him and the wolves.

“Are we going?” I demanded, pointing to the carriages, where the other two alphas watched on, wary eyes between me and Nikolai.

“Learn your place, human,” Nikolai warned, but I didn’t step out of his way, so he couldn’t get near Lucas.

“Can you stop? I haven’t met my brother because of this offering stuff, but I’m still here doing it, so can we get on with it already? It’s freezing,” I bit, sick of holding my tongue for the alpha when he was doing his best to prove what an asshole he was.

His glare turned to me, and I held his gaze. He spun on his heel and I followed, a lingering gaze over my shoulder before I climbed into the carriage with the alphas and Perfect Portia.

Enclosed inside with the alphas, warmth filled me. They were just so big; there was no way not to brush up against them.

I sat between Braxton and Derik, their biceps hard and smooth all at the same time against my arms.

Braxton sucked in a breath and looked at me, then at where his arms touched mine. “Shit, you’re cold,” he said, pulling me under his arm, rubbing my stinging skin.

I laughed. “It’s almost winter and you chose a tiny silk dress to stare at us in. Was I meant to be warm?” I asked, then bit my tongue.

I had to get ahold of my attitude. The alphas may be hot as hell, but they were savages that could break me in seconds if they got too angry at me.

With the look Nikolai was giving me, that seemed more and more of a possibility.

“What’s your name, spitfire?” Braxton chuckled. It was a deep, throaty sound that seemed so natural I almost believed he didn’t have ulterior motives.

“Lori.”

“Your full name,” Nikolai demanded, and I fought the urge to roll my eyes at his anger.

“Lorelai Katerina Rosalynn Valarian.” I said my long annoying name that I never used. “Happy?” I spat, and his anger rolled off him in waves of heat.

His eyes went to Braxton’s hold on me, and he growled. “Mine, Braxton,” he snarled, and Braxton let me go, the heat going with him.

Without thinking about consequences, like usual, I stood and sank into the seat next to Nikolai, forcing myself into the tiny space next to him and sighing as his heat fell over me.

I leaned against him as his eyes widened, looking down at me like he couldn’t believe I had just touched him without permission.

I laughed at his expression, trying to ignore how good it felt to be pressed up against him, his thigh against mine.

“I’m freezing and you said I’m yours, so either help me warm up or let him do it,” I said in explanation.

Braxton laughed a loud barking laugh as Derik smirked.

“She’s got you there,” Derik said with a shrug as Nikolai huffed.

Before I could tell him to stop growling, he pulled me onto his lap. I squealed as he did before his arms went around me, enclosing me in body heat. I couldn’t help the sigh that fell from my lips at the feeling that rushed through me.

I leaned against him, soaking in the heat as Derik held his hand out to Portia.

“Come sit over here, love,” he said, and Portia took his hand, settling in between them. She was tiny between them, or maybe they were just huge.

“I’m Portia Caldwell,” she stammered, and Derik grinned.

“We don’t need your name tonight, sweetheart,” Braxton said against her jawline as he ran his lips along it, breathing in her scent.

I raised a brow as Derik nuzzled into her neck. Portia sat still as a board, her eyes wide, her cheeks flushed.

“Mmmm, is that vanilla?” Braxton sighed. Portia nodded stiffly. He grinned. “My favorite, how’d you know?”

He groaned, tugging her hair between his fingers, bringing it to his nose and inhaling.

“You’re such a creep,” Derik teased, his lips pressing along Portia’s jaw.

She was barely breathing. Her hands clenched in her lap, and I had to look away. She was terrified, they had to sense that in her scent, and they kept going. They didn’t care.

Fucking alphas.

I went to climb from Nikolai’s lap, but he held me there.

“You made a big deal about this, now sit there until we get to the city,” he snapped, his fingers digging into my thighs.

I yanked his hand from me. “No.” I moved into the seat next to him.

He snarled and hauled me back, crushing me against him. “Mine.”

“Fuck you,” I snapped back, sick of the possessive growls and anger that contradicted his “mine” bullshit.

Braxton and Derik both growled at that as Nikolai roared. He grabbed my throat, pushing me down on the seat, leaning over me, his huge body suffocating mine as I tried to breathe through his grip.

I clenched my jaw, my hand holding his as the fury in his eyes swirled, but there was something else. The lust, the desire, the heat that melted my resolve.

I sucked in a breath and swallowed hard as the nature of his wolf teetered on the brink of his control. I wasn't taunting him, I was taunting his wolf—and that was dangerous. More dangerous than I had thought about in the moment.

I sagged back against the seat as he pressed me into it.

“Stop. Challenging. Me,” he bit, his lips brushing against mine.

I sighed against the touch. The intensity of him leaked into me, desire clawing under my skin.

I wanted him. I had no idea why being snarled at, why him holding my throat turned me on, but maybe I was fucked up from being winter born.

I looked into his eyes, heat passing between us, everything else melting away as I tested the waters. I ground my hips against him.

He was rock hard against my thigh, and I bit my lip at the rush of adrenaline that throbbed through me, settling in my core.

“Make me,” I whispered past his grip, and he groaned. I lifted my thigh, rocking my hips against him as I leaned into his hold. His breath came through as shaky rasps against my skin as my fingers danced up his impressive biceps.

“Kai.”

A warning voice broke through, and he glanced over at Derik. His body shook, and he looked down at me, closed off from the desire this time. I fought the urge to sulk as he let go of my throat and the promising storm of pleasure.

“Don't tempt me, human,” he said, before climbing off me and moving away. He didn't even fight me when I sat on the other end of the bench seat.

I looked out the window, my hands shaking as I stared up at the blood moon. It would be there for twelve hours. I shivered and leaned my head against the window, my eyes closing.

I had no idea why I felt the way I felt, but if I could bait the alpha into holding me like that again, I couldn't help but be tempted.

I chewed my lip as a thrill rushed through me at the idea of it. Was I broken? Maybe. I was winter born, after all. I wanted the alpha to break me—well, I wanted him to try—and I wanted to be consumed by that fire in his eyes.

I glanced over my shoulder as Nikolai was glaring at Derik, who was scowling back. It took me a second to realize they were communicating.

“Can you talk to each other in your minds?” I asked, and Braxton paused his caressing of Portia as the other two turned their eyes to glare at me. That seemed to be their go-to though, so I brushed it off.

“Stop playing with fire, little girl. You've had your fun, but fall in line before we get to the city or we will have to show you that your kind of defiance won't be tolerated,” Derik warned, and I knew he meant it.

“We are werewolves, not equals. Your little game just then could've gone horribly wrong, and you don't understand how badly yet—but maybe you will before the night is finished,” Derik continued, and I shuddered at his words.

I didn't bother responding; instead, I looked back out the window, watching the Grasslands turn into the Water area.

The city was in the middle of Werewolf Territory, surrounded by the Water area like a moat, stretching into the Grasslands and extending into the Forest area.

Beyond that was Vampire Territory, and I had never been brave enough to find out what that meant.

I had never seen the city either though. Villagers weren't allowed. The alphas didn't come to the villages unless it was for offerings.

The wolves swarmed the city, the howls reaching into the carriage as we arrived.

I shivered as it reached inside me. A huge wall surrounded the city, and the giant black gates opened for us. I stared out at the lake that was surrounded by trees and rocks.

A cold pit dropped in my stomach as I stared through the darkness, the red of the moon stretching across the black lake. I frowned at the feeling as it sank further, cold and hard.

I narrowed my eyes through the darkness and swore my eyes found a shadow.

One that stared back.

No data found.