

Fated To The Alpha by Jessica Hall

Chapter 16 | 3 months Later

Andrei POV

Sage lurches forward as I grip her fist like I expected as she tries to punch me, she turns underneath my arm, her smile not slipping as she tries to get out of my grip. Her eyes sparkling and I saw her intentions a moment too late as her foot connected with the back of my knee making me jerk forward onto one knee. She jumps on my back, her arms locking around my neck in a chokehold, holding my hand still on her wrist as she effectively starts choking me with my own arm. I let her wrist go trying to get her off but her legs wrap around my waist and she crosses her ankles, her arms locked tightly restricting my airways.

Zane laughs as he watches, telling her to hold on. I grip her thighs knowing she is ticklish and she falters. Her laugh is like music to my ears. “That’s cheating” She shrieks her grip loosening as she struggles to not let go.

“No rules in a street fight” I tell her.

“I doubt someone she is fighting is going to try to tickle her,” Zane laughs as she clings to me. Her legs unwrapping from my waist yet she still

doesn't let go instead dropping backwards on her knees and I reach around trying to get to her ribs knowing she is most ticklish there. She shrieks as my fingers dig into her, her arms letting go and I laugh standing back up.

"You definitely cheated Alpha, she would have had you" Vince laughs watching.

"Still do" Sage laughs, making me turn around to see her leg swipe out at the last second whipping my feet out from under me as I hit the ground on my back.

'Ha didn't see that one coming' Donnie laughed in my head as she pounced on me, but she always knew she was at a disadvantage when she was on top, she was too light and easy to toss off as she tried to lock her legs around my arm but I sink my teeth into her thigh.

"No cheating" She shrieks as I yank my arm, lifting her body off the ground before hitting the ground.

"It's not cheating" I tell her, escaping her easily the moment her legs let go of my arm. I moved quickly, pinning her on her stomach as she tried to escape me. Sage was getting stronger, quicker and more confident in training yet she was still easily taken down by Vince, Casen and Zane. She was

more reluctant and hesitant in training with them, she knew I wouldn't get mad if she hurt me, not that they would either. We encouraged her too but she was always more wary though she was fitting into the pack nicely and knew everyone by name now. Sage had even gone running with most of the pack, or occasionally did border patrols with Malik and Zane but only close to the borders, never on the front lines. None of them wanted to risk her and she was hesitant to be that far from home.

Her breathing was hard as I pressed down on her before pulling her arm behind her back while laughing. She growls at me before throwing her head back and I grunt as her head connects with my cheek making me let go before she rolls slightly, her elbow smashing into my ribs before I manage to pin her again. She was running out of steam and she slumped on the ground giving up.

“You done love?” I chuckle.

“I will get you eventually” She taunts.

“I hope so” I tell her, leaning down and kissing her cheek. I lift up letting her roll beneath me.

“Ah if you are going to start making out, I am out” Casen says getting to his feet and tapping Vince's shoulder to follow. They both walk off leaving only

Zane. Zane laughs at their retreating figures before they start racing each other and shoving each other as they go. I laugh at the sight of them, Sage also chuckling softly watching them before looking up at me and I press my lips to hers before biting her bottom lip.

‘Why do you do it’ Donnie whines as I feel my cock twitch to life in my shorts before moving and hopping off her when she tenses also feeling my arousal. I let her up before helping her pull the twigs and grass from her hair with Zane’s help.

Her scent gets to me. I loved training with her but it was punishing as well. Her closeness always affected me yet besides kissing she was still uncomfortable with touch unless we were sparing.

“Go shower Luna, or do you want to head to the strawberry patches first?” Zane asks her.

“Strawberry patches” She says snatching up the water bottle off the grass. Zane stands looping his arm through hers and tugging her toward the patches. He looks over his shoulder at me as I start to follow after them. He smirks, shaking his head at my raging boner.

“Go have a shower Alpha, you can go rub the skin off it” Zane laughs through the link.

“F*ck you” I tell him adjusting myself in my shorts.

“Hard pass, I ain’t that desperate yet” Zane laughs and I roll my eyes at him. He always loved taunting me after training knowing how worked up I got with her pressed against me. It was getting harder and harder to deal with. Donnie wanted to mark and mate her but since Lior it was like trying to rebuild the trust again. She knew she was safe with me but Zane told me he overheard her talking to Casen when he asked her why she still hadn’t let me mark her.

When I asked Casen about it, he said Sage was worried that as soon as I did I would go back to killing Rogues because she wouldn’t be able to leave then. I haven’t killed any, but saying that I also stayed away from the borders to steer clear of temptation. Sage could feel that through the bond and knew how hard it was for me to break old habits. I think it worried her I would revert back to it. We had a few small attacks but my men disabled them quickly, we have also had scouts come looking for food before being scared off. I was better staying away from the borders for now.

Walking back to the packhouse I see Derrick coming out of the front door. “Son” he

acknowledged me and I nodded to him. Things weren't quite as strained between us, and he had

been here nearly three months, which I was surprised about. He never asked to go home but I sent him back every weekend to see Kat only for him to return the next day.

"Are you going to see Kat and the kids this weekend?" I ask him.

"I was thinking about it- "

"Just go, I never expected you to stay here Derrick. I know she is your daughter, you don't need to babysit me" I tell him.

"You're my son, Kat is doing good but she is getting nervous of the Alpha meeting, her coronation of sorts. I wanted to head back to help with the kids" He says and I nod walking to the door.

"Where is Sage?" He asks, looking to the hill.

"Strawberry patch" I tell him and he nods following me inside.

"How are things with her, any closer to marking her?" I sigh, but shake my head.

“No, I don’t know. It is what it is” I shrug heading for the stairs to my bathroom. Derrick follows as I walk into the bathroom. I raise an eyebrow at him as I turn on the shower.

“I was thinking, ” He says.

“Hopefully thinking of stepping out old man because I don’t fancy showering with you” I tell him and he laughs, turning around and leaning on the door frame with his back to me.

“We are both men, you haven’t got anything I haven’t got”

“Yeah, only a few more inches Derrick, ” I tell him.

“Ha that’s what you think” He tosses over his shoulder. I shook my head at him but tugged my shorts off. The grass making me itchy, n*delity wasn’t a big thing obviously but still it was awkward showering knowing my father was right there.

“Well what’s up then ?” I ask him deciding to ignore my father’s presence while I showered.

“I was, well I was wanting to ask” he fumbles for words and I stick my head out the shower to see if he was still there when he falls silent.

“Just spit it out, what is it?” I ask him.

“Well, you can say no and I will understand but I thought.... since I have been here for the last 3 months. I actually like it here ” He sighs and I try to think of what it is he is getting at when he pauses again.

This is the most awkward shower I think to myself.

“Kat said she has no issues with it, but I was wondering if I could stay. Becoming an official member of your pack, Kat said I didn’t need to renounce Ezra and that I could become part of both packs, if you say it is ok. I don’t.... I won’t be offended if you say no, I don’t expect you to make me your beta but, I don’t know.... it is up to you” He says with a sigh.

“You want to be a pack member?” I ask a little shocked not thinking he would want to leave Kat.

“I like it here, I like spending time with you and Sage” He answers. I think over his words, our relationship was already strained but had gotten a little easier and I knew he was trying to fix things between us.

“Like I said Andrei you can say no, I won’t be offended and it will change nothing, I will still stay if you need me or want me to”

“No, Zane asked me the other day if I could take you as Beta along with him, he is more comfortable within his role as my Beta with you here” I tell him rinsing the soap from my hair.

“ So you would be happy with me remaining here ?” He asks.

“Yes, would you be comfortable being my Beta along with Zane”

“You would have two Beta’s ?”

“Yes if that is ok with you, and you could still be part of Kat and Ezra’s pack too” I tell him, shutting the water off. I reach for a towel wrapping it around my waist and he falls quiet for a second making me look over at him. He turns around and I realize why he was so quiet. Tears shining in his eyes and I don’t know how to react to seeing him so emotional.

“I would like that Son, you have no idea how much I would love being a part of your life again” I nod to him and he steps aside letting me pass him to

get some fresh clothes. He goes to say something else when Sage suddenly walks in.

“Oh sorry, was I interrupting something?” She asks about to walk back out.

“No, Sage of course not. I will leave you both to it, I will be back on Sunday Andrei” My father says before walking over and embracing Sage in what is usually an awkward side hug but I was a little shocked when she actually hugged him back this time.

“Are you ok Derrick?” She asks him.

“I am fine, never better” He smiles at her. He rubs her arm and she smiles at him.

“Are you going to see Kat?” She asks.

“Yes, I will be back Sunday though” He tells her and she holds up a finger for him to wait before darting into the closet and nearly knocking me backwards as she rummages through the closet. I watch her wondering what she is doing before she grabs one of the bags from when she went shopping with Zane the other day.

She pulls out a blue and a pink teddy. “Can you give these to Kat for me?” She asks him, handing

them to Derrick. I step closer to find both teddy's had each of the twins names on the bears paws.

"When did you get those?" I ask not remembering her bringing those home.

"The other day I forgot to show you, Zane took me to this big craft and fabric shop, there is more craft stuff in the bags in the basement" She says and I nod, kissing her temple.

"Aren't you coming to the Alpha meeting?" Derrick asks her but I hadn't told her of it yet,

not knowing if she would be comfortable with being around that many Alpha's. Sage looks over at me.

"What Alpha meeting?" She asks. I scrub a hand down my face and my father looks at me apologetically.

"It's next week, I didn't want you to feel forced to go if you didn't want to" I tell her and she thinks for a second.

"Will there be heaps of people there?" She asks and I hear her heart rate spike for a second. She was fine with our pack, used to the small human

towns but going to Alpha meet was a little more intimidating.

“ ‘Kat, Mateo, Ezra will be there, Zane and Derrick too’ I tell her.

“And the kids ?” She asks.

“Of course, Kat is still funny with people babysitting, ” Derrick tells her.

“Ok, that should be fine, so I can go ?” She asks, looking at me.

“If you want, then you can give them to the kids yourself” I tell her and she beams at me.

“Okay, well I guess you don’t have to give them to Kat for me” She says and Derrick smiles cupping her cheek softly with his hand.

“I will see you on Sunday. ” He tells her, walking off and she nods before turning to wrap the bears back in the tissue paper and place them back in the gift bag.

“So you went to a baby store with Zane ?” I ask her but she shakes her head.

“No, to the craft place and Zane spelt the kids names for me so I could stitch the names in for them after I made the bears” She says and I reach in the bag grabbing one out.

“You put the names on?” I ask her, looking at the bear’s paws. Eziah etched into the teddy bear’s foot.

“Yeah and I made the bear, I put lavender in them, smell it” She says and I sniff the bear smelling the faint scent of dried out lavender. “Hmm” is all I could reply not knowing what else to say.

“My mother showed me how to sew when I was younger, took a couple of tries and I am a little rusty, and I ruined one bear the first go before I made those two” she says with a shrug but I couldn’t find a stitch out place looking at it.

“So you used a sewing machine?” I ask but she shakes her head.

“No, by hand I don’t know how to use a sewing machine” She chuckles. I hand the bear to her and she wraps it back up, putting it with the other.

I wrap my arms around her waist and tugging her against me.

“We have the entire house to ourselves tonight”

“We do,” She says, turning in my arms, she looked a little worried and I knew she liked it when my father was in the spare room down the hall and always found excuses to not do anything, my father being the main one. He was the biggest cock blocker I have ever met and he didn't even know it. Sage using the excuse your father is down the hall. Yet I knew it was more to do with the rogues which angered me, because Donnie was patient and so was I but her fear of intimacy was starting to bother me. Not that I would tell her that, she could feel it. I knew she could but she never acknowledged it. It has been 4 months since I found her and nothing beside kissing and hugging and my goddamn hand.

I sigh, kissing her head and letting her go feeling her tense at the realization of being completely alone with me once again. She puts the bag in the closet before walking back out, her brows pinched together like she was debating some internal battle.

What I would give to mark her just so I could feel what she is feeling. She was sometimes hard to read but I could smell the faint scent of her fear but she was quick to mask it.

“Maybe we could try...” She stops herself her cheeks heating with embarrassment like they always did when she or I mentioned anything to do with s*x.

“You want to try?” I ask her wanting to know exactly what is she wanted to try so I could mentally prepare myself for the torture, we tried last time but the moment my hands went below her panties she tensed and freaked out on me so I have not tried to touch her since, not sexually anyway. She didn’t say anything, chewing her lip instead as she looked away from me. “I’m sorry” I hear her whisper the words barely audible.

“It’s fine, Sage it will happen when it happens” I tell her and she nods her eyes turning glassy. She had told me a few times she doesn’t blame me if I left her, not that I could nor did I want to. But she wasn’t definitely teaching me patience because I was a patient man but she was taking me to new levels of patience for sure.

“Come on, how about we have a movie night instead” I tell her, walking over to her and chucking my arm over her shoulder.

“You can pick” I tell her, kissing the side of her face as I pulled her from the room.

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Sage POV

“We are going to be caught, I just don’t understand why you haven’t told him, he has been good Luna” Casen tells me as we both carry our baskets toward the border near the waterfall.

“He doesn’t need to know, what if it triggers him, and he kills them. It is working isn’t it, none have stepped over since we started doing this, besides even Derrick agrees, Andrei still isn’t in the right headspace to tell him yet” I tell him looking down at the basket of vegetables and bread. Casen contained fruit and bottled water.

“If he catches you this close to the border he will have all our heads Sage, you know he doesn’t want you this close to the front lines, it is dangerous” Casen tells me. He was right but I knew Andrei wouldn’t see it the way we did. Every afternoon Casen or Zane took me to pick strawberries when in reality we had been dropping baskets of food to the borders. Since we started doing that, no one has tried to cross except those that meant harm. Malik and Zane had been good at holding them back with Derrick’s help.

Derrick caught me the first time I suggested this, none of them agreed with me at first so I went alone. Little did I know nothing gets past Derrick's watchful eyes when he was in Beta mode.

Derrick told me about his time as a rogue, Andrei told me bits and pieces but I knew it was hard for him talking about it, talking about his mother's hardships and the things he had witnessed while he was rogue. It haunted him, being rogues haunts all of us like a cloud threatening to rain down on us. When it did rain down on me trying to drown me in despair, it didn't just rain it was like a monsoon, plunging me beneath the dark depths of the water drowning me so badly I could almost feel it killing me and washing away everything I had achieved, washing me bare and raw as I relived the trauma that for so long was my life.

Derrick agreed to keep my secret but only if I had someone with me, so he spoke to Casen and Zane and in turn everyone in the pack knew where I went except Andrei. They hated keeping it from their Alpha but we all knew the monster he could become when faced with rogues.

We stop beside the border at the edge of the river and Casen crosses the river, holding both baskets

above his head as he makes it to the other side. He places them down before picking up the empty baskets and crossing back over. We didn't think it would work but every afternoon we found the baskets empty before we replaced them with the fresh produce we grew in the fields along the mountain edge.

Casen and I quickly race back towards the back of the packhouse before following the treeline and keeping in its shadows as we made our way back to the strawberry patches near the training grounds. We both dropped to the ground out of breath looking around to see if Andrei was lurking about.

We had a few close calls but one thing I learnt about Casen was he was good at explaining his way out of anything. Though he copped a roasting when we were nearly caught last time by Andrei, Casen told him he heard a deer and we went chasing after it when he found us too close to the border.

Casen was ordered to do 200 push ups and run 50 laps of the oval. I felt terrible, but Casen just sent me a wink and accepted his punishment like it was nothing, though Malik had to carry him off the training ground by the time he was done. My

punishment was being forced to watch him which was horrible.

Andrei said he knew the consequences of taking me out that far, but the guilt I felt knowing he was only out there because of me made me nauseous as I watched him take his punishment, knowing it should have been mine. I wanted to tell Andrei but Malik shook his head at me telling me to keep quiet.

We start picking strawberries and placing them in the baskets.

“We may need to find something else soon, these patches are getting bare. Andrei will know we aren’t here picking strawberries soon” Casen says and I nod, trying to think of a new excuse to slip away with Casen or the others.

“How are things with you and the Alpha anyway, are you going to let him mark you soon?” Casen asks and my face heats at his words.

“Come on Sage don’t you think he has waited long enough? He has barely left the pack in months and when he does he only leaves with his father so he isn’t tempted to go on a killing spree”

“But that’s my point, Casen. He still has those urges, he still wants to kill them. I can feel it every time rogues are mentioned” Casen nods before he sighs.

“Can’t say I blame him though, what the rogues helped Jackson’s pack do was disgusting, especially to Luna Angie” Casen says. Everyone spoke so fondly of her and sometimes I wished I could have met her, she sounded like someone I could have been friends with.

“What about you, how do you feel about them?” I ask Casen.

“Most of us were rogues, Sage. We all know the desperation. Jackson was dangling a new life for them, promising them safety within his pack. I get it, I do. But to kill children, our elders, is unforgivable. I used to be angry, then sad but now.” He pauses, grabbing a giant strawberry and holding it up like it was a lump of gold.

He bites into it, it was huge, nearly the size of his palm. “How did we miss you?” He says to it, strawberry juice running down his chin and I chuckle before he passes the other half to me. I scrunch my face up and he rolls his eyes.

“That one is sweet, not like the rest of these sour ones we have been eating” He says and I bite the other half of it, popping it into my mouth. “

See?” I nod while chewing, it was extra juicy and sweet just like he said.

“Anyway I know my mother wouldn’t want meddling on the bad stuff, she was a bit of hippy my mum. Loved crystals and meditation and nature, she used to tie dye our clothes. We hated it.” He says with a laugh.

“Now I would give anything to wear those ugly ass shirts if it meant she was still with us, shit I would wear them everyday and eat her horrid cooking, no one burns food like my mother used to” He says.

“She sounds like she loved you a lot” I tell him and he nods.

“Yeah I miss her, but what hurts the most is everything she will miss out on, she won’t get to meet my mate when I find her, our kids if I have any” He says with a shrug.

“Yeah” I tell him knowing exactly how bad that hurts, but at the same time I was glad she was gone because she didn’t have to witness the vile things the rogues did to me, like I had to watch them do to her. She was no longer suffering at their hands.

“What was your mum like?” Casen asks.

“Strong, they never broke her, no matter what they did, she fought until the end. She fought for me until her last dying breath. When they took us, they killed my dad first. I have never heard someone scream the way she did when they killed him. I just stood there, I was frozen, but mum.

Once the screaming stopped she changed. She knew what was to become of us the moment they chained us. They used to try to break her to get to me, but no matter how much she suffered she would always get up offering herself so they wouldn't touch me, no matter how broken she looked the determination to save me kept making her get back up until it killed her” I tell him.

“She sounds like my mother, when we found her body, she was torn to pieces, but half the blood on her we realized was not hers. I think that's what got to the Alpha the most, he blames himself for all the women being defenceless. He was planning on changing it but it was too late, they were gone before we got back here. Luna Angie was always fighting him and the elders for women's rights and she won, she just didn't know it” He tells me and I nod thinking of the strong

Luna she would have been standing up for her people,
standing up to Andrei.

“ When we got back Alpha Ezra pulled her down off the
flagpole, they strung her up naked and she was beaten to death,
I will never forget the screams that left everyone as we
discovered them gone, that haunts me most, the screams of our
strongest warrior breaking, and Andrei felt it all, all our pain,
their deaths, I think when they died that day a piece of him died
with them.”

I couldn't imagine feeling the lives of every pack member as
they died, feeling their tears break, feeling your pack's
emotions while trying to deal with your own grief.

Hearing footsteps and leaves crunching as someone got closer
we both sat up looking to the hill before seeing Andrei walking
toward us.

“This is where you are, you pair have a serious strawberry
addiction” He says stopping next to me, Casen and I are both
covered in dirt and moss.

“Alpha” Casen nods to him standing up with his basket, we had
hardly any strawberries the patches bare.

“Malik was looking for you earlier, best go see him” Andrei tells him and Casen nods before ducking down and hugging me. Andrei watches him but says nothing before he darts off in search of Malik.

“You and Casen seem rather close,” I nod. I was pretty close with most of them here now, I was comfortable with them. Andrei growls before huffing and I raise an eyebrow at him.

“What?”

“Nothing, just a little bit jealous with how much time you spend with everyone but me lately” He says, bending down and gripping my arms. He

pulls me to my feet, wiping off the dirt covering my knees and bum.

“No need to be jealous. Only one person I want and that is you” I tell him. Casen was like the little brother I never had, that was the same with the rest of them, it was brotherly and being the only woman here made them a little overprotective and always happy to follow me around, natural instincts kicking in to protect the omega and I have learned too get used to their lingering and watchful eyes, knowing it is just worry for me and not anything creepy.

“I know, but I feel like you are always off doing something with everyone else, while I only get to train with you and get you of a night” He says.

“That’s not my fault, you never leave your office” He growls tugging me to his side and draping his arm over my shoulder. He leans down pecking my lips before licking his. “You taste like strawberry and soil” He chuckles before dipping his face in my neck. I shiver at his closeness pressing closer to him and stealing some of his warmth.

“Zane got more marshmallows today so after dinner everyone is going out to play darts and roast marshmallows over the bonfire”

“Hmm, sounds good to me ” I tell him excited for tonight.

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Andrei POV

I sat in my office bored as I looked over the business portfolio’s. I really needed to get into the City and check on things. Some of our pack businesses had taken a major hit recently, there was no explanation for it that I could find, yet the

numbers were dropping. Sitting back I toss the file down on my desk when Zane walks in.

“What’s up, have you seen Sage?” I ask him, wondering what she was getting up to today, she was always so busy now making me suspicious of her activities and a lot of the time, I struggled to find her. Or when I did she was always in the fields helping our men with harvesting and gardening. Or sewing, she spent a lot of time sewing now. Not that it bothered me but it did make me wonder if she was trying to provide the entire pack with quilts with the amount she had made so far.

“Think she is off with Vince and Casen in the fields” Zane says, not meeting my eye and I lean forward bracing my arms on my desk watching him.

“That didn’t sound like a very sure answer, Zane” He sighs running a hand through his hair.

“She was there last I checked, I have been busy dealing with the Southern border”

“Another attempt?” I ask him and he shrugs, I knew they weren’t telling me how bad the rogue situation was getting on that border. Yet I trusted they would tell me if I needed to intervene.

“ So why are you here ?” I ask, turning back to the many documents causing my headaches.

“I was checking the business reports earlier” I held them up, also trying to figure out where the money was going and why we were slipping under into them on a few of them.

“You think it is odd too ?”

“Yep, any idea on what’s going on ?” I ask him.

“I was talking with Derrick before he left, I think we need to change accountants”

“That is also what I am thinking too, the reports from the managers don’t match the accountants”

“Want me to handle it ?” Zane asks. “You want to deal with it ?” I ask him.

“I can take Malik, or wait for your father to return and take him, he is better with this stuff than me” Zane admits and he was right, having my father here was a blessing and a torment, though now he has been gone a few days I have noticed his absence and how much he was helping out.

“Yeah wait for Derrick to come back and let him handle it with you” Zane sighs, taking a seat and I

realize it is nearly 4PM. The day slipped by quickly.

Everyday seemed to blur past me thesedays, I felt like I was on autopilot most of the time.

Getting up I grab my coffee mug and head to thekitchen and dump it in the sink. Zane follows me upstairs to the surveillance room.

“ I can check them, why don’t you go shower andthen find Sage” He offers. I don’t know what is going on with him the last few days since my father left, but he has been up my ass constantlylike a bad wedgie.

“It’s fine Zane, you go find Sage and tell her to come home for me” I tell him and he looks at thesurveillance cameras nervously and I cock my head to the side observing him, he seemed worriedabout something.

“Definitely, why doesn’t he want us checking the cameras ?” Donnie says, also thinking he had beenacting odd the last couple of days.

I walk in, kicking the cameras on not noticing anything suspicious at first and I could feel Zane lingering behind me and I look over my shoulder athim to realize he was mindlinking someone.

Turning back to game cameras, I spot movement. I watch the figures freeze and turn around noticing Sage somewhere she shouldn't be. Vince and Casen with her. They look back toward the packhouse and Zane takes in a sharp breath behind me.

My blood instantly starts boiling in my veins, there was no reason for Sage to be out that far and why so close to where she was captured by me. She knew that was out of bounds. I had already stripped shreds of both boys last time I caught her out of bounds.

Barging past Zane he tries to grab my arm. "Let me explain, they mean no harm Alpha" he says in a rush.

"Now why would you need to explain unless you were aware of this?" I growl at him before shoving him off. I rush out of the packhouse walking around the back of it and running through the trees in their direction. They had to pass me to get back to the fields and Donnie urged me faster, forcing partial control. A growl tears out of me when I hear them running from me, I quickly catch their scents before spotting them. I pick up my pace tackling Vince in his wolf form. He whimpers and we both slam into a tree making Sage and

Casen stop in their tracks. A menacing growl escapes me as I get up.

“Someone care to explain what the f*ck you three are doing this far out?” They all looked at me yet I noticed the baskets they were carrying were now gone. I looked at Sage who looked at Casen petrified. Casen steps forward to say something and I step toward him when Sage yanks him back, stepping in front of him.

“We weren’t doing anything wrong” She says and I feel my anger building, she knows she shouldn’t be out this far. Vince shifts beside me and I look down at his naked form and he ducks his head and I reach down to grab him.

“It’s not their fault, Andrei. Let them go” Sage speaks, making me look at her but they knew where she was allowed to be and it wasn’t here.

“I am going to give you 5 seconds to answer my question or-” I was cut off by movement behind me and I turned to see Zane and Malik behind me. I growl forcing my Alpha aura out and making the drop to the ground. Turning back around I find everyone on their hands and knees fighting the urge to submit. Walking over to Sage, I grip her arm, yanking her to her feet. Casen goes to

protest but I glare at him and he bares his neck to me.

I start stomping through the forest dragging her with me, Donnie growling and pacing in my head wanting to punish them for risking her life by taking her so close to the borders.

“Speak Sage before I f*cking explode” I tell her as she stumbles trying to keep up with me. I keep a tight grip on her so she doesn’t fall but I was much too angry to stop. I didn’t trust myself not to hurt one of them.

“I was taking food to the rogues” She blurts out and I freeze looking down at her.

“You were what?” I scream at her and she flinches at my anger and I force myself to take a deep breath, trying to calm myself before I do something I couldn’t come back from like hurt her. I grit my teeth and I could feel my entire body trembling with rage.

“They just need help, I wanted to help them” She says and I keep walking through the forest toward the packhouse, I was aware of them trailing at a distance behind us, knew they were waiting for me to lose it. I had no doubt they would attack me for

her but I wouldn't hurt her no matter how much she angers me.

“Andrei please, let-”

“Don't Sage” I warn her as the packhouse comes into view. I push her ahead letting her walk on her own and she stops making me run into her.

“Keep walking, don't f*cking tempt me right now, sage” I wanted to lock her in my basement where I knew she would be safe, where she couldn't run off and if she defies me she might just find herself down there. She lets out a breath but continues to walk.

She stops at the door pressing her hand to the panel. The door unlocks and I shove her inside before slamming the door and removing her palmprint so she can't get out. She bangs on the door as I lock her in.

“Andrei, no. Please don't lock me in. Let me explain” I ignore her walking away and back to the treeline. Zane was standing there waiting for me with his hands out like he was trying to cage a wild animal.

“Where are they?” I ask him.

“I sent them home, but Andrei you don’t need todo this. She only wanted to help them”

“Show me, ” I tell him. Zane shakes his head.“No”

“Excuse me ? You will f*cking show me where shegoes. Now I know why I can never find her, how long Zane. How long has she been sneaking around behind my back, and how many of you knew ?” I

ask him. I felt betrayed, they were lying to me,my own f*cking mate has been lying to me.

“The last 2 months, they haven’t been coming insearch of food since she started doing it Andrei”

“She f*cking kept it from me” I scream at him.

“Because she knew you would be like this, we allkept it from you” He tells me.

“How many knew, f*cking tell me Zane”

“Everyone but you,” He says, shocking me. I takea step back.

“Everyone as in the entire f*cking pack knew and not one of you said anything, I am your f*cking Alpha” I scream at him, taking a step toward him my fists clenching by my sides with the urge to punch him.

“And she is our Luna,” Zane says.

“Not yet she isn’t, now f*cking take me to them” “We don’t see them, we drop the baskets and

that’s it, the next day they are empty” Zane says.

“I won’t ask again, f*cking tell me” I warn him. He scrubs a hand down his face.

“You hurt them, she won’t forgive you this time, the f*cking waterfall but I won’t be helping you hunt down rogues, I am done with this shit Andrei” He says before stomping off toward the packhouse.

“Where are you going?”

“To check on my Luna” He snaps at me and I growl at him. I turn heading into the forest.

I found the spot yet the baskets were gone and I am pretty sure they never got a chance to drop them here. I squat by a tree out of view of the

river. I could feel them mindlinking me and I shove Zane and Malik out. Clay also tries but gives up but after a couple of hours I mindlink Zane.

“How is Sage?” I ask Zane.

“How do you think she is, just come home to your mate and let it go Andrei” Zane says but I ignore him blocking him back out.

The light turned to darkness and I remained in my spot waiting to spot the rogues that they have been hiding from me. I waited hours, the night turning colder as it went on. Glancing down at my watch I press the button and it lights up telling me it was 7:30 PM. I was about to give up and turn back around when I heard movement on the other side of the river before a teenage boy stepped out with four others, a girl who looked around Sage's age, and two others around 6 and 10 years old. I watch as they walk along the river.

“There children Andrei” Donnie whispers in my head. I watched them look around for a bit before returning around in disappointment and my stomach sank.

“We were like them once” Donnie says and I growl at his words not wanting the reminder and they all freeze looking around for the threat. The

older girl shifts and so does the teenage boy, both of them taking protective stances in front of the two children that weren't old enough to shift. I step out of the shadows and the girl and boy step forward growling, backing toward the mountain base beside the waterfall.

The two children dart off toward the cave behind it when the younger one, a boy, is shoved under the water by the force. The she-wolf howled and the teenage wolf rushed over before freezing when my eyes darted to the boy that was trapped to see the waterfall spit him out. He starts coughing washing down stream and before I realise what I am doing I had stepped into the water and gripped his arm pulling him above the water. I wasn't sure if I grabbed him or Donnie forced control.

I felt like a bystander in my own body as I pulled him to my side of the river. The she-wolf with matted brown fur growls jumping into the water and the boy shifts back reaching his arms into the waterfall and I knew the pressure must be killing his arms. I watch as he helps the girl out of the cave, his eyes not leaving mine. The she-wolf shakes herself out of the water with her teeth bared, her eyes on the boy I had a hold of. I look down at the petrified child.

“Come with me” I tell no one in particular before turning around, pulling the child with me into the trees.

The she-wolf lunges at me, her teeth tearing into my leg and I growl before kicking my leg out on instinct, her body goes hurdling into a nearby tree.

“Don’t test me girl, now tell them to follow so you can come back to my Luna, the one who has been leaving the baskets” I tell her. She gets to her feet looking at the boy in my grip. I let him go and he instantly runs to the she-wolf who steps in front of him protectively.

“Come, don’t. I don’t care but food and shelter is that way” I tell them pointing toward the direction of my pack house. I start walking heading back home.

“What are you doing?” Donnie asks me.

“ I have no idea” I tell him as I trudge back home before hearing them following after a few minutes. Walking home, I walk a slightly different route and come across the baskets stuffed behind a tree. I stop bending down and picking one up.

The footsteps behind me stop and I rummage through it to see what’s inside. I find a quilt on the

bottom folded neatly and recognise it as something Sage was working on last week with Malik. I swallow and look over my shoulder to find the boy that fell in the river staring at me, his clothes drenched. The she-wolf behind him and the other two a little further back.

I hold up an apple to the boy, he hesitantly reaches his hand out before snatching it and darting back to the she-wolf. I look past her to the girl before tossing one to her and she catches it with both hands.

“Grab the other basket” I tell her before getting up and walking again. I walk for a few minutes before hearing the she-wolf growl loudly making me stop to stare back at her when a hand grabs mine. I looked down at the boy blinking at him in shock before staring at my hand he was holding. His brown eyes peered back up at me before he looked ahead, biting back into the apple I gave him. I close my hand around his small one and continue walking back home.

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