

Fated To The Alpha by Jessica Hall

Chapter 180

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Last Night we could have filled a lake with the tears the pack shed. This morning it wasn't about our heartbreak but preparing the boy we all loved to remain calm about the change in situation. Andrei pulled every pack from duty so they could spend it with Jonah knowing not one person was wanting to leave his side. So instead we played, we ate like every other day. Our attempts of trying to make everything remain normal was heartbreaking for us, knowing tomorrow we wake up and that piece of him that has become routine will be gone until we can bring home again.

Clive was due to pick him an hour ago now and was running late. I hoped he never showed up and dropped off the face of the earth so we could keep him. He didn't deserve him, he didn't know him. We only had him a very short time and no amount of time would be long enough in my eyes. But in that short time we already knew him. We knew what his favourite cereal was, his favourite bedtime story. He liked climbing trees and painting rocks, he was more excited about a cardboard box and what he could do with it than any toy the pack tried to give him. He was adventurous and cheeky and knew how to push everyone's buttons, push them to the edge of their sanity and bring them back with one giggle and smile. He loved campfires and his eyes would light up just from having your undivided attention, making me realize that was something he didn't get much of even when he had a family because they were always on the move, something we were all familiar with because we all were rogues turned family turned Pack.

Everyone was on edge and alert waiting to see the man we were being forced to trust him with. How anyone could put a child with a man like him was beyond us. Andrei's lawyers tried everything and even they couldn't make sense of it. Andrei's lawyer even went and knocked on a judge's door in the middle of the night to beg him to reconsider. The judge was apparently unwilling to help, making us think someone was pulling strings because who in their right mind would agree for an abusive piece of shit like Clive to have rights to a 6 year old boy and now we only had one other option to try before Kat petitioned to have the laws changed.

I stand up looking down at Jonah drawing with a stick in the dirt before he would rub the picture out and draw another. He smiles up at me, though it wasn't as big and bright as usual, his eyes conveying a different message. He was scared and didn't want to go yet he smiled anyway because that was Jonah.

"I will be back in a minute" I tell him and he nods, going back to drawing in the dirt. I walk over to Andrei. He had two duffle bags and he drops them next to the log that sat around the campfire, looking over documents in his hands. Stopping beside him he looks over at me with a troubled expression on his face, he was nervous and scared like everyone else was.

"That's everything from the safes, I can get more but we would have to go into the city"

"Alpha" Zane calls out while jogging over with another bag in his hand.

"Here, take it. It's all I could find around the house but there is 10k there" Zane says, dropping his brown paper bag into a duffle bag when I look over to see the entire pack heading toward us.

Everyone emptying out the pockets and their savings, dropping it into the bags, Zane counting and taking note of everything and calculating.

Andrei tried to tell them no but they refused to listen, dropping everything they had and with what Andrei pulled from the safe there was nearly 400k there.

"Also Alpha, I need to speak to you later on" Zane tells him and Andrei nods his head.

"Already?" Andrei asks.

"Yes, I can smell it on her, it won't be much longer" Zane tells him.

"I will handle it when we are done here " Andrei tells him and Zane nods, looking thankful about something as he glances around at the pack nervously.

Casen brings Jonah over on his shoulders while Malik and Zane zip up the bags from his view.

Andrei reaches over to pluck Jonah from Casen and kisses his cheek when a car suddenly pulls up screeching to a stop and throwing dirt and dust everywhere. The speakers in the car blaring, the bass way too high. Andrei instantly pissed off just at his disrespect of the way he turned up flicking dirt and rocks on everyone. One of the rear windows of his car was smashed and the man inside looked out at us with a smirk. Andrei places Jonah on the ground and I pull him behind me.

Derrick walks over to speak to the man.

"Grab the other one" Andrei says to me and I lean down grabbing the duffle. Malik instantly takes Jonah and walks away over to the willow tree with him while I follow Andrei. The man still hadn't got out of the car. Instead he was speaking on the phone to someone.

"Give me 5 minutes first I think they want to talk, just follow the road it leads straight to this shit hole" I hear him say and look over at Andrei who looked on the verge of exploding until his father squeezed his arm. Who was he speaking to and why were they coming here?

The man gets out of the small daihatsu charade, rubbish spilling out the door onto the ground. He wasn't very big for a werewolf, he smelt heavily of

cigarette smoke and body odour. He was wearing a flannelette shirt that was left open, with a tank top underneath, his entire body appeared to be covered in tattoos from the neck down. He also had a pair of black cargo pants on and boots. His greasy hair lay flat against his head.

"Who did you just invite to my pack lands?" Andrei asks and I know he was trying hard to keep his voice controlled even though I could tell he wanted to kill the man.

"Just my assurance," He says. "Assurance of what?" Andrei asks.

"That I leave here alive, I was warned you had grown rather attached to my nephew Jonny"

"Jonah" Andrei growls.

"Yeah that's it, now where is the brat, hand him over" Clive says looking around us but I step in his path blocking the view of Jonah.

He smirks and his eyes look me over. "The rogue Luna I heard about, I heard rumours of you too, heard you lay on your back for anyone, must suck terribly Alpha having a used up whore for a Luna" Clive says and Andrei launches at him. I grip his arm and Derrick steps in front of Andrei blocking him.

"Leave it, it's not worth it" I grit out, looking back at Jonah. The entire pack was glaring at Clive. A few even shifted, unable to contain their anger. Andrei was on the verge of shifting himself but I was curious where this man got information like that from and who was speaking lies of me, yet his dig at me still hurt. Derrick shoves Andrei trying to tell him to keep his wits, the man was trying to bait us but I couldn't understand why he would, I could tell he was a rogue, pissing off an Alpha was not the smartest thing to do. Clive laughs.

"Yes backup Alpha" Clive emphasised the word Alpha almost spitting it at him. Bending down and grabbing the papers. I hand them to Clive who snatches them.

"We will pay, just sign your rights over, there is nearly 400k in those bags you can have it, just sign the papers, do it for Jonah, we will look after him and you can go back to whatever it you do" I tell him.

"400k, is that all he is worth to you?"

"I can get more, but I have to head into the city, just tell me how much and I will have it two days time" Andrei tells him. Clive shakes his head.

"Not interested, I received an offer I couldn't refuse already, now hand him over" Clive says as a sleek black Mercedes pulls up. It's windows

blacked out and I couldn't even see the driver. It parks next to Clive's car but no one gets out.

Andrei looks at the car, Derrick turns his full attention to it.

“What offer, how much? I will get it for you” Andrei continues ignoring the new car’s presence and focusing back on Clive.

“Like I said, I was offered a place in a pack if I took the brat, and all my debts cleared and more than a pissy 400k for the boy”

“Name your price, our pack may be small and live out here but we have money, I will even let you join our pack just to keep him close” Clive laughs and shakes his head.

“No, the man I am now working for has invested a lot to ensure I take Jonah so if you would just go bring him to me, I will be on my way” He says.

“No, just take the money and leave, I am not letting you take him. You couldn’t even remember his name, and I know what sort of person you are. You don’t even want him, or you would have known he was missing for months on end and that your sister was dead” Andrei says venomously. He picks up one of the duffles and chucks it at the man’s feet. Clive chuckles nodding toward the black car and the rear door opens.

“Like I said, I have had an offer I couldn’t refuse Alpha. You’re not the only one with friends in high places, so I will be needing that boy now” Clive chuckles before shoving past Andrei toward Malik who had Jonah. Andrei grips the back of his shirt pulling him back, the man stumbling over the duffle bag when Andrei wraps his hands around his throat.

“You’re not taking him,” Andrei growls.

“That is where you are wrong” Comes a deep voice. A man hops out of the car and my breath lodges in my throat when I see the man from the Alpha meeting. Alpha Dominic steps out walking over, a cruel smile on his lips.

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Derrick pats Andrei on the shoulder and Andrei growls but lets Clive go stepping away from him, his canines protruding and I take a step toward Andrei before Derrick yanks me behind him.

“At least one of you is smart” Dominic says nodding to Derrick before looking at me over Derrick’s shoulder, he smirks before his eyes flick to Andrei. There was something off about this man, the vibe he gave off made my skin crawl and it was more than his Alpha aura it was him in general.

"Tell your man to bring the boy over," Dominic tells Andrei.

"No, have you seen his record, he doesn't want him, he just wants what he gains by taking him?" Andrei replies.

"Clive has every right to file for the boy, he is family and a rehabilitated man, now hand the boy over"

"Is this because of the Alpha meeting? I knew something was going on because there is no way a judge would award custody to a piece of shit like Clive Steed. What do you want, Alpha Dominic? I will take this to the courts, you can't award this man custody"

"It's amazing what power and money can buy, just like you trying to buy the boy back. What I want, I'm about to get the moment you hand that boy over. See Clive here owed my Casino a massive debt, but then little Jonah needed a home, so when I found out Clive was his uncle I made him an offer. I would clear his debt and find him a pack to join, in exchange for him taking on the boy. Your sister made an enemy of the wrong man, so when I received an email the other day looking for blood relatives of Jonah and that you were seeking to adopt him, I couldn't help myself. I was planning on signing those documents for you, well until Katya yesterday decided to humiliate me, so I made a few calls. I don't like to waste an opportunity to get revenge and since I can't get to Katya right

now I went after the next best thing, her family"

"You would really give an innocent child over to this man, you are a f*cking father, would you trust your kid in his possession?" Andrei asks him.

"Not my kid, not my problem. I couldn't care less what becomes of the boy, all I care about is showing Kat who has the real power. She may be Queen now but she will never be able to rally the packs behind her, she will never have control and this is just one way I am showing her that"

"You f*cking bastard, he is a boy" Derrick spits at him.

"And what about you Derrick, you are hardly winning father of the year, didn't you toss Andrei here aside. That alone shows me what kind of man you are, you are no one to judge Clive. I have the documentation here " He says, clicking his fingers.

"Fight all you want in the courts for the boy" A man gets out of the car passing him a folder and Dominic hands the folder to Andrei.

"You will never get him back, not unless you tell Katya to rechallenge me and stand down from her title, that folder contains Clives references saying he is a reformed man, the parenting courses he has completed or it says he completed anyway, times and dates can be changed with a little influence, records can become lost. On paper Clive looks like a very respectable man and a good candidate for little Jonah. I have even written my own recommendation on what I

think is in the best interest of boy and that is Clive. You have money Andrei, but you don't have the power I have to change what I have done. Now you want the boy, tell Katya to admit defeat and announce that she is stepping down, then and only then will I have the ruling overturned, until then" He looks over at Malik, his Alpha aura rushing out.

"Bring the boy" Dominic demands and Andrei steps toward Dominic, his hands clenched into fists.

"I wouldn't recommend doing whatever you are thinking of doing Andrei or would you like me to show you what having true power is. I could command your entire pack to kill themselves and they would have no choice but to obey, or I could order you to give me your lovely mate, and you would be forced to watch me take her away from you. Don't tempt me, because I could destroy you in ways you never thought possible. The boy isn't even yours, don't make me take everything from you just to prove a point. Do as I ask and I will have the boy returned back to you, until then he belongs to Clive" Malik was drenched in sweat by the time he walked the short distance toward us. His movements were painful and robotic as he tried to fight the command unsuccessfully.

Jonah reaches for me and I take him from Malik. Malik lets out a breath, Dominic's aura slipping off him. "I don't want to go" Jonah whispers and I clutch him to me.

"I know, it's only for a little while" I tell him, while glaring at Clive. Jonah hugs me tighter and I bite my lip to stop it from trembling and squeeze my eyes shut to stop the tears from spilling. We break and it was going to scare him more than he already was.

I rub his back and after a few minutes Andrei takes him. He looked so small in Andrei's arms but right now we put the entire pack at risk if we disobey. But now we knew who we were up against, we could figure out a way to get him back.

Casen brings his bag over and I hand it to Clive. "There's clothes in there and some toys, also his vitamins the pack doctor recommended he take" I tell him. Clive snatches the bag from my grip and walks over tossing in the window of the car.

"Hurry up, I haven't got all day" Clive tells Andrei who growls at him. Andrei places Jonah on the ground and pulls the phone from his pocket.

"I will ring you everyday, make sure you charge it like I showed you" Andrei tells him. Jonah nods, taking the phone. Andrei also slips a small piece of paper folded up with his number in Jonah's pocket. When Clive grips Jonah's arm and yanks him toward the car. Andrei moves quickly at the man's harsh treatment, punching Clive in the face before his father jerks him off a stunned Clive.

"He has to leave with him, don't make it worse for him" Derrick growls in Andrei's ear.

"Are you just going to let him do that?" Clive spits at Dominic before opening the door and pushing Jonah toward it. Jonah gets in the car and Clive slams the door. I step past Clive to try to calm down Jonah who was crying hysterically and open the door plugging his seatbelt in and wiping his tears.

"Shh, you will be ok, it's not for long, we will get you back" I tell him. He nods and I pass him his bag and he hugs it to his tummy.

"Don't forget to ring us if you need us" I tell him.

"I need you now" He whispers, glancing out the windshield at his Uncle.

"I know, I know buddy but for now we can use the phone ok, we will see Kat and make this all better? But for now I need you to be on your best behaviour, and stop the tears because it's only for a little while" I tell him.

Exactly how do you explain to a child not to provoke the person that has now been given custody of him. Those are words that should never be said to a child, they shouldn't have to fear the person caring for them, we are meant to be their safe place, the first person they run to. Not

the person they hide from and cower from. Yet I knew he wouldn't be getting cuddled and his tears wiped by this man.

"That's enough, get away from him" Clive calls out.

I press my lips together to stop from saying what I truly thought of him, I didn't want to make things worse for Jonah but Andrei gripped Clive's shirt, ripping him to him.

"If you lay one finger on that boy, I will hunt you down and you will meet the man I used to be" Andrei growls at him before letting him go.

"Get your hands off me, what still nothing, what use are you if you are going to let him toss me around like that?" Clive spits at Dominic.

Dominic's aura rushed out at the disrespect he was shown. Clive drops to the ground clutching his head. "Don't forget who you are speaking to mutt, but most of all don't forget I am also a father and I don't like child abusers, so heed his warning Clive. I let you have the boy, I never said hurt him" Dominic spits at him before looking at Andrei.

"Speak with Kat, then you get him back, you and I both know the boy stands no chance at a future with him" Dominic says as Clive gets up and walks over to the car and climbs in.

"And that's exactly why my daughter is better off as Queen, she would never sacrifice a child for her own gain" Derrick tells him.

"Your daughter is a small girl that entered into the game of politics with men she will never be able to compare to or control. There are other ways to dethrone a Queen, I am offering her the easy way out. Tell her to do what I said, then you get the boy back" Dominic says, turning on his heel and getting in his car. Clive smirks starting the car and reversing out before taking off in a cloud of dirt and dust. Taking our hearts with him as we watched helplessly.

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Katya POV

Andrei called me and told me the news last night. What I wasn't expecting was a call from him at lunch time to say Dominic had interfered and he was behind all of it. How the heck did he manage that within a few hours of the Alpha meeting.

Andrei told me of his demands and I was half tempted to go through with it. From what I heard of this Clive from Andrei it made my blood boil.

Andrei said to look for any dirt I could find on him, and I had already petitioned for the laws to be changed not even an hour later was it rejected saying I needed support from other Alpha's. Sitting at Ezra's desk, I combed through the pack laws looking for anything that could help.

It didn't matter what I found though, I knew Dominic would find a way around it. He was dirty and he didn't like that he was supposed to answer to me now. I never said he had to step down. Either way he would have some role in the packs. He was Alpha of Alpha's, I never wanted his title to begin with, but the moment things got out about Jackson's pack the rumours started and he obviously felt threatened. He can keep his title, none of us want it anyway we were well and truly above Alpha's of Alpha's. We weren't taking anything from him, we were just adding a new title to the mix, one higher than his. If he didn't challenge me in the first place we wouldn't be in this mess.

"Still no word from Seline?" Ezra asks, walking into the office. I hop out of his chair and he sits down before I plonk back down on his lap.

"No, she will come when she isn't busy. I feel she is hiding something from me though"

"Like what?" He asks, resting his chin on my shoulder.

"I don't know, she has become more distant and her answers have been shorter, or more cryptic" I tell him.

“ Since when is that anything new, you know she likes to speak in riddles”

“I know, but it’s different. I don’t know last time I saw her she looked tired” I tell him which was really strange. Seline always had this certain air around her, she was always glowing and looking perfect but lately it was like something was haunting her.

“Who knows, maybe confront her, you are

technically a Goddess now and her prodigy so why not demand answers?” He says and I sigh. He taps the book in front of me.

“Exactly what are you looking for?” I shrug “something that will help I guess, have you actually read this, I don’t think any laws have been updated since the 1800s” I tell him looking at some of the ridiculous laws.

“Nope, I just know the ones that we actually use now”

“Well did you know it is illegal to ride a horse backwards, up a main street?” I chuckle.

“What? That can’t be real?” He says, turning the book and looking at it.

“Yep real and it’s right there” I tell him pointing to it.

“Oh here is another stupid one. It is illegal to possess 50 kgs of potatoes” Ezra laughs.

“Who would want 50kgs of potatoes?” I tell him, shaking my head.

“Probably someone with a taste for homemade Vodka. From the prohibition maybe” Ezra chuckles.

“And here is another, Bars are required to stable, water and feed the horses of their patrons. I think you’re right these laws are severely outdated and some are utterly ridiculous” he shakes his head.

“Yes, I think someone actually needs to go over and amend some of these, like this one for instance. If a man finds their mate and the mate is underage, you have a right to take them, apparently to preserve their maidenhood to ensure purity” I tell Ezra and he scrunches up his face.

“Maybe flick through the newer laws, where did you even find this?” he asks.

“On your bookshelf” I tell him flicking through the dates to find this century, law had been added over the years but none removed”

“When was the last time laws were changed?” I asked him curiously.

"Not while I have been Alpha that is for sure" Ezra tells me. We searched every law. Nothing helpful but I did find something and I was waiting for Ezra to come back to ask him what he thought of it because he went to make more coffee.

When he returns I look up smiling, praying I was right. "Why are you smiling?" He asks, placing the mug down in front of me.

"I wanted to ask a question actually. Pack courts, it says, are decided by a panel of judges all of which are Alpha's, and a law can't be passed unless at least half the states Alpha's agree on the change" I tell him.

"Yes that is correct, I don't see how that helps Andrei though" He says.

"Well not one Alpha would sign the petition or appear in court for me" I tell him.

"Obviously"

"What about the Luna's, they are technically Alpha females, why does it have to be the Alpha of the Pack, there is nothing stating the Luna's can't sign off on it"

"You expect them to go against their mates and Alpha?" Ezra asks.

"No, but the majority of them are mothers. The Alpha's won't help because of Dominic and their loyalties to him, but the woman might. It was clear at the meeting they didn't like being pushed off to the sides, they are just as important as the Alpha, their role within the packs is just as important"

"Kat, I'm sorry but I am telling you not one Luna will go against their mate and Alpha"

"You're wrong, I am not asking them as Luna. I will be asking them as mothers. If I explain the situation surely one would sign. If I could get one to step up beside me, I reckon the rest will follow. They want change, Ezra. They want a say. And this law is ancient and absolutely ridiculous. No child should be forced to go live with someone because they are a blood relative, especially if that person isn't a safe option. Human laws are about the child, yet pack laws are outdated and it is

about the bloodlines, tell me one werewolf that still has Lycan DNA?"

"None, everyone knows that, and I am pretty sure when that law was made it was from when we still had royals and it was more about keeping the royal bloodlines pure, you know cousin fucking" Ezra says before cringing. I shudder, not that I had anything to worry about because I had no cousins and today was a modern century but that just showed how badly some of these laws needed to change because some were barbaric.

"Then why are still going by Lycan laws?" I tell him. Ezra sighs and rubs a hand down his face.

“Exactly how do you plan on speaking to the other Luna’s”

“Well in today’s day and age, we have a thing called social media and we have Electricity to charge the phone sitting on your desk” I tell him and he rolls his eyes.

“So you are going to f*****k every Luna, or ring them”

“ If that’s what it takes” I tell him. He huffs before digging through his filing cabinet.

“What are you looking for?”

“Pack lists, so you can search up the Luna’s names and the packhouse numbers, what are you going to do if the Alpha answers though, you know you can’t command over the phone, it doesn’t work that way”

“Play dumb ask if I can speak to their Luna because I am so hopeless and need to get parenting advice, I have a colicky baby apparently and looking for help” I tell him and he chuckles.

“Here, I will leave you with this while you Luna talk. Sing out if you need me” He says, kissing my forehead and leaving me with Alpha Directory.

I set to work writing the most recent Luna’s names and their contact details. All while trying to figure out what had got into the Moon Goddess, I was beginning to worry and I knew she was keeping something from me. I have been trying to contact her since the Alpha meeting about the strange vision Jonah gave me but still no word from her. I also needed to ask about the twins and Dominic and this darkness that won’t leave completely like it used to.

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Sage POV

We were all lost without Jonah, Andrei had been on the phone to Kat and everybody he could think of that could help. Yet the day was slipping by and I longed to hear his voice. I needed to make sure he was ok and we tried to ring but got no answer. Sitting outside, I tried the phone number again. The phone rang completely out and it was nearly 4:30 PM, he should be getting ready for dinner and a bath. Why wasn’t he answering. I sit on the log next to the fire pit when I see Andrei come out. He looked exhausted and stressed just like the rest of us.

"Still no answer?" He asks and I shake my feeling sick at not being able to see him or speak to him.

"We can try again later, if he's headed to the city he could still be on the road" Andrei says, running his fingers through his shoulder length hair. He sits on the log beside me grabbing my hand and bringing it to his lips.

"Come on, we should head inside and have shower, you have been in that dress since the day of Alpha meeting" He says and I look down at the wrinkled dress, completely forgetting I had been in it for two days now I only got out of Kat's clothes and slipped this on but never showered. I sniff myself but I smell fine besides the scent of tears and the lingering smell of Jonah. I look at Andrei and he was out of his clothes, when did he remember to shower? With everything on my mind, showering was the last thing I thought about.

Andrei tugs me to my feet just as Zane calls out to him. "Alpha, Nora"

"Argh f*ck I forgot, "

"Sorry, I didn't want to bother you with everything going on but she is getting worse, I think she will go into heat tonight"

"Yep, I will do it now. Casen come here" Andrei calls out and waves him over. Casen jogs over to us and Malik too.

"What is up Alpha?" Casen asks before looking at Zane. He tosses his head back and groans.

"Already, f*ck" He whines and Malik scrubs a hand down his face.

"I will come too, let's head out now" Malik says and Andrei nods to them before nodding to Zane.

"Sorry guys" Zane tells them.

"It's fine, just not used to having girls here for so long, I forgot about the heats, when no one here obviously has them" Casen says before looking at me.

"I'm sorry I didn't mean"

"It's fine Casen, I am not offended. Not your fault I am useless in that department" I tell him with a slight twinge of guilt. I was useless, I couldn't even provide an heir for Andrei, couldn't give us a family. And now the only hope we had of having a child was just taken away. I watch them go, heading for the forest.

"Night lock berries?" I ask Andrei and he nods his head.

"Dad!" Andrei called out and I liked that he was now calling Derrick dad. I could also see that Derrick got a kick out of hearing it, see the way his eyes light

up every time his son said it. Derrick rushes over to us from where he was sitting on a chair under the willow reading some mail.

"Do you remember how to make the night lock jam?" He asks.

"Bit rusty, Nora gone into heat already?" he asks and Zane nods.

"Probably be in full blown heat tonight sometime, I can smell her scent changing" Zane says.

"Okay, let's get this fire started and I need a spoon and pot" Derrick says.

"Call out if you need me to make it, I just want to take Sage to shower and then try Jonah again, Malik and Casen have gone to collect the berries" Andrei tells him. Derrick nods and heads after Zane to help collect kindling to get the firepit going.

"I forgot about her heat" I tell Andrei as he leads me inside and up the stairs.

"Yes, slipped my mind too, the boys will be extra grumpy tonight, not sure if you have seen rogues on nightlock"

"Yeah once, one of the camps we spotted had a female in omega in heat when I was kid. They also used nightlock to suppress the unmated wolves but they made it into a soup not a jam"

"Yeah we always made Jams or paste from it, more concentrated that way and not so watery" Andrei says and it made sense but when rogue, there aren't many options in the camps. You couldn't lock the woman down like those in packs and warn people away when there was nowhere to

go. You also didn't have shutters or descenders for the woman to keep the unmated at bay, so good old poison was used to knock out their wolves. I have heard it makes them incredibly itchy and uncomfortable in their own skin.

We head into the shower but just before I strip off and hop in. The phone rings and Andrei grabs it.

"It's Jonah" He says and my heart starts pounding in my chest. He quickly answers, putting the phone on loudspeaker.

"Jonah?" Andrei says.

"I didn't hear the phone" Jonah says and relief floods me. Andrei sits on the end of the bed, pulling me on his lap.

"But you're ok, are you ok Jonah, where are you?" Andrei asks.

"Yes I am ok but I want to come home, when can I come home. I want to be with you and Sage"

"Who are you on the phone to?" I suddenly hear Clive's voice snapping at Jonah and Andrei growls.

"Leave the boy alone" Dominic's voice snaps back at Clive in the background.

"Dominic is still with you?" I ask Jonah.

"Yes, he put us in this room" Jonah says.

"Hand the phone over for a second Jonah, you can speak to your father in a minute" Dominic says.

Andrei's heart skips a beat at his words. I hear the phone being fiddled with before Dominic's voice comes through clearer.

"The boy is fine, I am not a complete monster. They are at my hotel in the Safari Casino room 410 and I will make sure he has been fed before I leave, this neanderthal would probably feed him beer and chips for dinner otherwise" Dominic says with disgust lacing his tone which shocks me, he clearly didn't like Clive yet took Jonah from us.

"Have you spoken to Katya for me?" Dominic asks.

"Yes she is aware of what's going on?" Andrei tells him.

"Good she has a week, I know these things take time and she will have to convince her mates but any longer and we will have issues. I can only tolerate this fool for so long" Dominic says, making me wonder what he meant by that.

"You are staying with Jonah?" Andrei asks, confused.

"No, I just brought them here until I found a pack that would accept this idiot and the boy. I will be leaving soon, tell Katya to hurry and make a

choice. I will put Jonah back on for you"

"Jonah you can talk to your parents, after dinner have a shower, but I need to leave now" Dominic tells him and I am shocked at the way he speaks softly to Jonah.

"Yes sir" Jonah says before I hear the phone passing hands again.

"Are you okay Jonah?" I ask.

"Yes, Dominic said you are my parents. Does that mean I can go home and have two dads like Mr. Andrei?" Jonah asks.

"If you would like to have two dads but you don't have to call him that if you don't want to" I tell him.

"Can I have two mums too?" he asks and I refuse to get excited at his words, I didn't want to pressure him but my heart soared at that word.

"Whatever you are comfortable with Jonah, you can call us what you like, we just want you home with us" Andrei tells him.

"I would like that, I miss the pack and Malik and Casen too, do they miss me?" Jonah asks.

"Yes everyone misses you and can't wait for you to come home" Andrie tells them and I hear arguing in the background between Dominic and Clive.

"I don't think that man likes my uncle Clive very much," Jonah whispers.

"It will be ok buddy, we will get you out of there soon" Andrei tells him.

"Please hurry, I don't want to be here with him by myself. I want to come home" Jonah sobs.

"Ah shut it boy" Clive bellows and Jonah whimpers.

"Knock it off, he is a child" Dominic snarls in the background. Andrei's jaw clenches and I actually feel sick knowing Dominic was about to leave Jonah with him. I would have preferred Jonah in that monster's hands than Clives, at least he was nice to Jonah. Despite what he has done, at least he has parental instincts and knew how to raise a child.

"Come on buddy stop crying, breathe Jonah. It won't be long we are doing everything we can"

"I want to come home," Jonah cries, his voice breaking along with my heart at hearing him so upset.

"I know, I know, soon very soon" I hear a knock on the door in the background and Jonah falls quiet before I hear Dominic's voice again.

"Jonah dinner, come eat. Say goodbye then have a shower when you finish eating. Clive I want you to stay out of my casino and the bars, you are to

watch the boy not leave him on his own" Dominic says and we hear Clive mutter but couldn't hear what he said as he was too far away from the phone.

"I have to go," Jonah says sadly.

"Ok, we will try to ring you later but you can call at any time, we will answer" I tell him.

"Okay bye" Jonah says before the phone hangs up.

"I feel sick" I tell Andrei and he nods before hugging me closer.

"We will get him back," Andrei tells me.

"Go shower, I will be in soon" Andrei says, tapping my leg. I climb off his lap and Andrei fiddles with the phone while I walk into the bathroom. I turn on the shower adjusting the taps and pulling my hair out of the bun I put in this morning and massaging my aching scalp from the strain of my heavy hair.

Reaching behind me, I start pulling the zip down trying to figure out how the heck I managed to sleep in it, it wasn't exactly comfy and was rather tight. Hands suddenly replace mine tugging the zip down and I pull my arms out before Andrei turns me around and helps me tug the dress down and over my hips.

I yawned, my eyes felt like sandpaper from barely sleeping and my eyes were puffy from crying when I felt Andrei's hand move up my thighs.

"What happened to your thighs?" He says and I pull away from him. He never mentions my scars but hearing his words makes me step away from him embarrassed. I told him already but he never asked before exactly what they did and that wasn't something I wanted to relive. When I step away he grips my hips tugging me back to him.

"Andrei?" I question, my cheeks flaming and I suck in a breath. I hated that he was staring at them, scrutinizing me. I rarely looked down at my mutilated body but his intense gaze was making me squirm uncomfortably and want to cover up. I knew it looked gross but I didn't expect him to point it out. I try to wrap a towel around myself.

"What are you doing?" He says gripping the towel and yanking it.

"Stop Andrei, please I know it's gross but stop touching them" I tell him fighting back tears.

"What? Are you talking about, you are beautiful" He says, kissing my thigh and looking up at me.

"Look" He says and I shake my head.

"No, Sage look. They look like" he shakes his head. "It looks like handprints, they are on both sides," He says.

"What?" I ask, looking down and sucking in a breath, trying to force myself to look at my destroyed skin.

"Here " He points to my thighs, pressing a finger to each one. I sigh before looking down. My skin burnt and the skin rippled scarred when I saw

what he was talking about. Two spots no longer scarred and mutilated. Shocked, I bent down more and accidentally headbutted Andrei. "Ow" I hiss and he chuckles rubbing the spot on my head I smacked.

He stands before gripping my hips and placing me on the sink basin and I look at my thighs, bile rises in my throat but I finally get a good look at what he is talking about. From my angle it does look like two small hand prints on my upper thighs.

"That is so strange, I swear I never noticed that before" He whispers, his brows furrowing.

"Yeah that wasn't there before it was as mutilated as the rest of me" I tell him rubbing the smooth spot. Andrei growls, the sound menacing.

"Don't speak like that about yourself, I won't put up with it" He snaps and I roll my eyes. It's not like it isn't true, anyone seeing them would turn away at the sight.

Andrei grips my face and growls. "Don't, is this because of what Clive said? I won't tolerate you thinking like that. I will drag you out there and strip you in front of the entire pack, just to prove to you there is nothing wrong with any part of you. I can tell you right now, not one man here would cringe away from the sight of you" he snarls, his lip pulling over his upper lip as his canines protrude. I was horrified at his words and the thought of being stripped in front of his pack. I go to say something but his grip on my face tightens.

"I mean it, one word Sage. You are mine and I love every inch of you, don't speak like that just because you don't see yourself the way we all do, now we need to figure out how you have tiny handprints on you" He says, kissing my lips before looking down and letting go of my face.

"Maybe you're having a reaction to something, I can call Mathias to come check you over, but they look like" He pauses counting the little lines that resemble tiny fingers.

"Too small to be handprints unless they are baby handprints" We both pause and I touch the unblemished skin. It felt soft under my fingertips, the skin around the marks is rougher and raised slightly. I think of where I have been before realization smacks me in the face. Just as Andrei reaches the same conclusion.

"You were holding Eziah yesterday," He says, looking down at my legs.

"Yes, he was sitting in my lap slapping my legs," I tell him.

"He healed a peices of you" Andrei gasps.

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Chapter 184

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Katya POV

I was about to give up, I was hung up on 5 times already as soon as I mentioned who I was. They didn't even give me a chance to explain what I was ringing for and the disrespect was really starting to get to me. 5 Alpha's answered and I hadn't even had a chance to speak to a Luna yet.

Dialling the next number relief flooded me when a woman answered. Just as Ezra and Mateo walked in. They both sat on the couch across from the desk.
"Hello?"

"Hello, yes hii.. I was wondering if I could speak to Luna Terra"

"You are speaking to her, may I ask who is calling"

"Queen Katya and I swear if you hang up on me, I will come over there and shove that phone up your bony ass" I blurted out expecting her to hang up on me. She laughs softly.

"That won't be necessary, but if you insist please be gentle on me" She laughs and I let out a breath.

"Sorry every person I have called has hung up the moment I said who I was" I tell her.

"Let me guess all of those people were Alpha's" She asks.

"That would be correct" I tell her and she sighs.

"Yes, you made quite a show at the Alpha meeting and upset a few people but that can't be helped. So what may I do for you?" She asks.

"I am trying to see if I can get some help with changing a few laws but I need Luna's sign off on it"

"How many do you need to sign and are you sure we can sign off on it?"

"All of you and law says Alpha's, Luna's are also Alpha's I tell her" I tell her knowing that a lot of the Alpha's were still unmated and I needed every single Luna to sign off on it for it to be accepted and looked at.

"Is this about that boy, I saw an email about him, he is your brother's child or he was looking to adopt?" Terra asks.

"Yes but I have gone over a few laws and there is a couple that definitely need changing" I tell her.

"It is probably best if you stop ringing around, the Alpha's don't like change but I am glad to see a woman in the top seat for once. Don't be discouraged, I may be able to help though. Can you get to Marrick ville tomorrow at all. I know it is a few hours away but twice a year we have the annual Luna get together, you are new and may not know of it yet. But it is at 11AM tomorrow. If you can get there we will all be in one place and best of all, no Alpha's, they don't like attending Luna functions, even though we are forced to all of theirs" She tells me.

"Yes that shouldn't be problem"

"Great, I will message you all the details, but I must be going before my Mate realises who I am on the phone to, the last thing we need is to have the two days a year we get of peace cancelled, I will text the information to Alpha Ezra. I am pretty sure I have his contact details here" She tells me.

"That would be great, thank you Terra," I tell her.

"Your welcome Katya, just know you have me in your corner, not everyone is afraid of change and about time things got rattled around here. I look forward to speaking with you more tomorrow, but I must go. I will see you tomorrow" She says.

"Thanks again," I tell her before hanging up and running my fingers through my hair.

"She didn't seem completely opposed to you shoving a phone up her ass" Mateo chuckles, shaking his head.

"I know I shouldn't have said it, but every bloody Alpha kept hanging up" I tell him.

"You can say what you want Kat, you are their Queen. But be prepared to argue tomorrow, some of those Luna's can be quite catty"

"That's fine, I will just have to sharpen the claws then" I tell him.

"Some of the Alpha's may show up tomorrow, usually a few wait outside for their mates" Ezra warns and I huff but not much I can do.

"I can handle it," I tell him.

"I know, I just want to prepare you, I will come with you tomorrow in case any issue arises" Ezra tells me and I nod, I also had to see if Sage wanted to go too, we could pick her up on the way.

Grabbing the phone, I start dialling Andrei's number when the door opens. Marge sticks her head inside the office.

"We are out of nappies, I don't suppose someone can run into town to the shop?" She asks and Mateo hops off the couch. "I will go, do we need anything else?"

"Some more milk" Marge tells him and he nods, following her out and shutting the door behind him.

"Who are you ringing?" Ezra asks while getting off the couch and coming over to me.

"I was going to ring Sage to see if she wants to come tomorrow" Ezra hums in agreement and I was about to hit call when he hung the phone up.

"Call her in a minute I want to speak to you first" He says and I swivel in my seat to face him.

"What's up?"

"You haven't shifted in two days, you need to shift tonight"

"It's only a Crescent Moon tonight" I tell him and he shrugs.

"Still better than nothing, you promised you would shift every night and it has been two days" Ezra says. I sigh.

"Why do you hate it so much?" Ezra asks, "you always try to avoid shifting"

"It makes me miss Kora" I tell him, I loved shifting but I also hated it. I missed having her and no matter how long I have gone without her now, it still felt weird being in that form and not having her voice in my head.

"Will you please shift tonight?"

"Only if Maddox and Ares come for a run with me" I tell him and his lips tug at the corners.

"I am sure that can be arranged, Mateo will love to be able to go. I will ask Marge if she minds watching the kids for us" He says before leaning down and pecking my lips.

"Ring Sage, tell her we will pick her up at 7 AM" He says, passing the phone back to me. I watch him walk out and was about to dial Andrei's number when my skin ripples and goosebumps rise on my arms. I hang the phone back up.

"About time, where have you been?" I ask Seline as she appears in the room. She looked tired again and she moves over to the couch and to sit down.

"I am fine, how have you been?" She asks and I get out of my seat and move to her side before sitting down next to her.

"You look tired," I tell her.

"It is difficult for me to portal here at the moment" She tells me running a hand through her golden locks when I notice the blue veins streaking across her arm and hand.

"Seline?" I ask, grabbing her hand and turning it over. It looks like spider webs crossing her skin.

"I am fine Katya, now tell me what is going on with you. Why do you need to speak to me so urgently?" She asks but I shake my head.

"No, you are hiding something and I need to know what is going on" Seline sighs and I see her aura falter. It flickers like an electrical current went through it.

"Don't tell me it is nothing Seline. I am done with the riddles and the lies. Tell me what is going on with you now" I demand and she raises an eyebrow at my tone. I watch as she chews her lip nervously, something I have never seen her do before.

"I am dying Katya" She tells me and my heart jolts at those words.

"What, how? I don't understand, you are a Goddess, how can you die?" I ask.

"I wasn't always a Goddess Katya, there are consequences for everything and I accept mine" She says, reaching forward and cupping my cheek, her hands were chilly and I place my hand over hers, leaning into her touch.

"How, when did you find out?" I ask her trying to make sense of what she was telling me.

"I knew what I was doing, I knew the price I would pay. But I officially realized when I could no longer see your future, that of your mates and your children. I have been losing some of my gifts slowly but it has started already. You may have noticed yours becoming stronger" She says. I don't know what to say but Seline continues and goes on to explain after a brief pause.

"I need you to know this was my choice Katya, I knew what I was doing the moment I decided to bring you back. When I brought you back, I gave you a piece of myself just like Celeste gave to me"

"Who is Celeste?" I ask her.

"The first Moon Goddess, she was my creator, the creator of Lycan's. She gave her life for me and made me who I am"

"I am not sure what you are telling me Seline, layman's terms please " I tell her rubbing a hand down my face, I really needed to get a good night's sleep, my brain felt like mush. She inhales before letting out a breath.

"Celeste created Lycan's, I was one of them. Just like you I was a Queen of Alpha's, the last Queen of Alpha's. I gave my life for my kingdom and also like you I was blessed with the gift of life. I exchanged my life for my kingdoms, I died for them and Celeste saw this and was in awe of what I did so she granted me my life back, giving me a piece of her soul. Only a Goddess can create another Goddess or a God, so when I died she brought me back. My powers grew and strengthened while hers got weaker. Eventually Celeste told me what she did, told me that when my time came I would take her place, that when I died, I would become the next Moon Goddess. She said that she trusted me to make the right decisions and guide her Lycan's and choose their mates. She tempted Fate to bring me back and I did the same with you"

"So I am going to die?" I tell her, horrified. What about my mates, my kids?

"No, not now, hopefully not for a long time but when you do, you will take my place and the fates will be yours to guide, yours to alter. You are a living deity and when you die you will become the Moon Goddess your people pray to"

"I admit over the centuries I became lonely, the repetitiveness and the loneliness of being the Moon Goddess became tiring. Then you were born and I watched you grow, I watched you fight for what was right, watched you get everything I dreamed for you and more, and you gave it away for everyone else, just like I did for my people. I saw the Goddess you could be. The Goddess I knew you would become so I made you one, but you are also a Gemini wolf and I wasn't expecting it would take a toll on me the way it did" She says flicking her hair over her shoulder.

"Celeste stayed a Goddess until my death, but the piece I gave to you to bring you back was bigger than I expected because with it I brought your children back too. I tempted fate and I thought I would be the same, but I am deteriorating faster than expected. I knew it would happen, I just thought I had more time but don't worry Katya I still have time left, so what is it you need help with?" She asks.

I was shocked by her words and also horrified. I didn't want to be a Moon Goddess, but saying that I didn't want to be Queen either. If this is what

Seline gave me I would make her proud, I owed her that much at least.

"First of all my children, they have been acting strange" I tell her.

"Yes, I have been watching, unfortunately with my dwindling power I can't see their fates or even choose their future mates anymore. I can control the fates of everyone else but not my own and since I gave you a piece of myself that now

extends to you and your children. I can't help with any future knowledge with them only what I saw when I brought you back, but I have been

observing and I have enough knowledge now I can give you some insight"

"Like what, because honestly I am at a loss, especially with Marabella" I tell her.

"Yes, when I brought you back I thought both children would be Gemini wolves, instead it split the Gemini between them, one light, one dark.

Marabella will have to learn to control it but I do fear her mate will be darker than her when older, power like hers will seek out darkness, you would have noticed with Dominic, how his power couldn't touch yours because you are also tainted with dark magic, instead it feed your power, it's also why when the madness that comes with being a Gemini affects you, you seek out your children, their power acts like a beacon calling to your power. I also noticed Marabella and Eziah have been mindlinking each other showing me how strong they will be" She tells me with a laugh.

"So she was mindlinking?"

"Yes, they are twins, they communicate even if it is only pictures for now. I doubt any distance

would ever be able to stop their mindlinking, their souls are entwined linking them together" She explains and it did make sense the Gemini split between them but they were twins and sharing a power.

"Though I fear with Marabella the darkness will taint her like Dominic if she doesn't have a buffer to help keep her grounded"

"What do you mean?" I ask.

"Both of your children are like you. Neither have a wolf but I am willing to force fate one last time for both of them. I wasn't expecting their powers to split, I simply thought they would contain both but when I realised they didn't. I looked into ways to help them. I can help them but it may speed the process of my death up"

"Then you can't, I won't let you"

"I am already dying Kat, Marabella's fate I can't tamper with without huge consequences, but I can add to her future. I can't change it but I can add to it, maybe then she will find happiness in the end"

"What do you mean?" I ask now worried for my daughter.

"When Marabella was born I got glimpses and her future was dark, darker than I expected. She will suffer Kat and I want to help. Skeletons

in the closet Kat, hers is not one I can't die with on my conscience, so you will let me do this for the twins"

"What did you see?" I ask her.

"I saw her kill herself, I refuse for that to be her future, unfortunately with my dwindling power I can only do so much. Like Celeste created the Lycan's, I created werewolves to stop the eradication completely, by allowing human mates and that is how werewolves exist now. It also made you all more humane, Lycan's were savage beasts. Unfortunately my power is too weak to create new wolves, so I have had to recycle some old souls but luckily you also had some volunteers"

"Some volunteers?" I ask.

"Yes, give me your hands Kat, I will take you to meet them" Seline says and I place mine in hers.

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The room dissolves and ripples before I find myself in Seline's realm. Her castle was in front of us and I was standing in the fields of flowers that surround her castle.

"I couldn't create new wolves for them but like I said I had some volunteers that agreed to go back, they will have no recollection of their past lives. Instead taking on new ones and being reborn" Seline says before whistling loudly. The sound echoes and weaves of the trees before I see wolves rushing toward me. All in different colours and sizes. 1000s of wolves surrounding us.

"So this is where the wolves go, they come here to live with you?"

"Yes, some choose to go back but those that don't remain here with me" She tells me.

"And how will you give a wolf to Eziah and Marabella?"

"By connecting their souls as one, most wolves shift at 13 for the first time, because I am forcing their souls to connect; they will bloom later and like you shift at 18. Most wolves are picked in utero, it changes things that I am doing this after

the child is born but it is the best I could do since I can't change their futures maybe their wolves can"

"So how do you pick?" I ask her. I feel all their auras, see the different colours of them and it was almost like I could sense their personalities by seeing the color.

Suddenly the wolves part and I see a Black wolf come toward me, he was bigger than Maddox, and had a huge scar across his eye, he sits on his hind legs staring at me.

"This Malachi, he was Micha's wolf. Marabella's mate's wolf he offered to be Eziah's" Seline says and I look at her.

"Micha's?"

"Yes, his heart is true and he loves fiercely just as much as Maddox and Ares, he is a good match for Eziah " Seline tells me and I pat him, he brushes himself all over me, wrapping his body around my legs before sitting beside Seline.

"And for Marabella, I think you will approve" Seline says and I turn to see the wolves part again.

"Hello Kat, " Kora says, stepping forward. I chew my lip to stop it from trembling at the sight of her.

Gosh how I missed her.

"I thought you wanted to be free of the curses of my family?" I ask her, dropping to my knees in front of her. She presses her head to mine.

"I did, but now there's a new curse and I won't let it take your little girl from you, you gave me my freedom, I will make sure Marabella gets hers, I won't let this curse take her from us" Kora tells me.

"New curse?" I ask Seline.

"When I saw that glimpse of her future, her mate is a curse himself. He is her undoing and what causes her to kill herself"

"But how can Kora save her if she won't remember when she goes back"

"By giving her a friend, by taking the loneliness from her"

"But if it is her mate, I will make her reject him" I tell them. Seline shakes her head.

"That is not for you to choose Kat, she is destined to be his and he hers, they will either be each other's destruction or each other's redemption. When I brought you back I didn't realise their fates were set to collide and I wasn't given a choice, darkness seeks out darkness and it tied them together without my influence at all and it killed her, but with Kora with her maybe we can alter destiny and they can save each other" Seline explains.

"So I have to let you go again, " I tell Kora.

"You will always be the one that set me free Kat, now let me return the favour and set her free too" Kora says.

"I love you Kora"

"And I love you Katya, now get back to your mates where you belong" Kora tells me just as my surroundings ripple and I am back in the office.

"So that's where you have been?" Ezra asks, looking between Seline and I.

"Yes Ezra, we had business to attend to, now I know you had one more question, but after that I must go Kat so I can put things in motion" Seline tells me.

"You need to leave already?"

"Yes I am afraid so time is running out and I must get to work before I lose my power completely" She explains.

"Ah what is going on?" Ezra asks, standing up and leaning over the desk to look at us.

"I will explain later" I tell him before turning back to Seline.

"Dominic, is blessed. I just wanted to understand what I am up against" I ask her.

"Dominic is not blessed, nor did I curse him. Remember when I said I created werewolves and they were a mix of human and Lycan. I did that to stop the extinction of Lycan's completely, there are no Lycan's left anymore, only werewolves. One of Dominics ancestors was fated to at the time I thought was an ordinary human, turns out the woman was a dark witch, his bloodline comes

from Salem and the darkness that taints him, has been passed down through the generations since. I never blessed him, his own bloodline cursed him, no woman has survived the Octavian bloodline,

each one dies when a child is born. The power in their bloodline killed every mate of an Octavian. That is their curse to be forever alone and to have no one to survive them"

"Wait, Alpha Dominic's Luna is dead?" I ask looking between Seline and Ezra.

"Yes, she died during childbirth, she was no match for the darkness that taints her son" Seline tells me.

"So how do I defeat him?" I ask Seline.

"That I can not tell you, I have been trying to break his family curse for centuries, like I told you before I am missing heaps, things are slipping past me and I can't answer everything anymore, only you can find a way Kat but for now, I have to go and sort out those other issues which I suggest you keep those to yourself" She says looking at Ezra.

"We don't need to tempt fate more than we already have, and I also have to ensure these second chance mates. After seeing how well Andrei has reacted to a second chance I have decided to grant everyone a second chance, well those whose futures I can still change and see that is" She tells me and I nod.

"But what of Andrei then?" I ask.

"His future is in Sage's hands, but I think she may surprise you, she has come a long way and he has proven to her she is safe with him, he has proven he is willing to change for her and for himself"

"I must go now Kat, Ezra take care of our Queen" She says before she suddenly vanishes.

"Well that was interesting, care to tell me what the hell is going on?"

"I told you I had a vision, but I may have left a few things out" I admit.

"You have 3 seconds to spill or I will put you over this desk and force it out of you"

"That sounds rather tempting, over the desk I mean"

"Katya! " He is definitely mad. I hate when he uses my whole name and he only does it when I am in some serious trouble.

"You promised no more secrets, that you would confide in us"

"And I did, I just didn't tell you every detail" I tell him.

"Come here please" I roll my eyes before walking over to him and standing between his legs.

"You hiding things and trying to take on the world by yourself makes things harder on you, no matter what you see, no matter how bad it is, you need to tell us. Don't carry it on your own, not when you have us to share the burden with"

"But some of the things I see Ezra scare me, I know there are things I can't change"

"So what is so bad about this one?"

"Mateo dies, and I wasn't there to bring him back, I couldn't bring any of them back"

"What is it with him and near death experiences" "It wasn't near death, he actually dies Ezra"

"We won't let that happen, you said so yourself, that he died because you weren't there, simple."

Where ever Mateo goes, you go with him" "And Sage?" I ask.

"Sage too?" I nod.

"I will always choose the mate bond, I know that now. But I can't save everyone but I also can't let her die"

"We will figure it out, maybe there is a way to stop it from happening"

"Yeah well unless we can find a good side to Dominic I don't see that happening" I tell Ezra. He pulls me into his lap.

"We will figure it out," He says, pressing his lips to my head.

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Sage POV

I was sitting out the front of the packhouse waiting for Kat and Ezra to pick me up. Kat rang me last night about some Luna meeting to get enough people to sign a petition to have the laws changed. Now we were going to go to this meeting and try to convince these Luna's to go against their mates. I was nervous, Jonah's future was riding on getting the signatures we needed. Even I knew Kat couldn't step down and even if she did it was going to put a target on hers and her children's backs because no matter if she stood down, she would always be stronger than them.

"Here they are," Andrei says, tapping my leg. I hop off his lap and stand up as I see their car pull in. I was expecting Ezra so I was a little shocked to see Mateo and no sign of the kids.

"The babies?" I ask.

"With Ezra," Mateo says as I climb in the back.

"You sure you don't want me to come with you?" Andrei asks.

"I will be fine" I tell him and he turns to look at Mateo.

"I will be with her and Kat, she is safe with us Andrei" Mateo says before Andrei could say anything. Andrei nods his head before leaning in and kissing me. I shut the door before turning and seeing him walk into the packhouse.

"What is my brother doing today?" Kat asks.

"Initiating Nora's siblings into the pack, she went into heat last night and is now an official pack member, also I wanted to ask you something?" I tell her and she looks between the front seats at me.

"Yeah what's up?" She asks.

"Did you know Eziah could heal already?"

"Yeah he healed me when I was pregnant with him, but hasn't done it since why?" She asks.

"He may have healed some of my scars" I tell her.

"What? Really let me see" She says and I look at the mirror.

"I can't show you, they are under my skirt" I tell her.

"Mateo won't peek, will you?" She says, slapping his chest.

"You can show her, I have mates Sage and I am not a creep, If I wanted to look under someone's skirt I would ask Kat to take hers off, you are safe here if you want to show her" Mateo says.

"See, he won't look" Kat says and I nod before pulling my skirt up my thighs to show her the tiny handprints.

"If he could heal you, I wonder if I can heal old injuries too," Kat says.

"And can we not do that in the car, I am driving Kat, and you healing someone even if they are old injuries could affect me or Ezra" Mateo says.

"I will try when we get back," Kat says.

"How does it affect you?" I ask curiously as Kat sits back.

"When she heals, she takes the persons injury and pain, Kat can't heal, but because we are her mates and tied to her, when she heals someone it hurts her, when Kat gets hurt it hurts us, pulls on the bond and we take it from her so she can heal"

"And that happens every time?" I ask.

"No, not every time. I have found I can block it but I heal the human way when I do that"

"You better not bloody block us from healing you, Kat" Mateo growls at her.

"What about bringing back the dead, how did you save all those people and it not kill your mates"

"She rejected us, Gemini Wolves can reject their mates after they have marked them. So she sacrificed herself and Seline brought her back"

"So if she brought someone back from the dead now, would it kill one of you?" I ask him.

"We aren't sure but also not a risk we are willing to take obviously"

"I think so, but there's a loophole too though. If I healed Mateo or Ezra and brought them back from the dead, I feel like it wouldn't kill the other or me because of how our souls are linked now, but we would experience their death. The other loophole is for me to give life. I have to take it, I haven't tested that theory yet, I also don't plan to. Because for that to work, I have to be the one to actually kill someone to bring another back" Kat explains.

"So Seline told you this?" I ask her.

"About bringing Ezra and Mateo back, no. It's just a feeling I get. It's hard to explain, sometimes my intuition tells me things, sometimes those things

are wrong too though. As for the killing someone to bring someone back yes Seline told me that, it is part of the Gemini wolf and part of my original curse"

"That is so confusing, but pretty cool too" I tell her. It took 3 and half hours to get to Marrickville. It was a small country looking town,

we drove past multiple farms on the way here and farmgate stalls. The town was that small it

had a town hall which we were meeting with the other Luna's at. A grocer, pharmacy and post office. That was the entire main street. Small was an understatement. Pulling up at the Town hall multiple cars sat out front on the grass beside the building.

"Is this werewolf town?" I ask, because this many people would certainly draw attention in a town as small as this.

"Yes, it is part of Terra's Pack, the lady I was telling you about, it's part of her territory" Kat tells me and I let out a breath. Mateo parks the car, a few people loitered in the parking lot and they were all Alphas.

"Shit, I wasn't expecting this many to wait around for their Luna's" Kat mutters.

"Is that going to be an issue?" I ask concerned.

"Only if they make it one, I knew some waited but didn't think this many did" Kat tells me.

"I will handle it," Mateo tells her and she nods before taking a deep breath.

"Let's get this over with," She says, tossing the door open. I climb out after her. Everyone's attention is on us when one of the Alpha's walks over. A growl escaping him as he stalked toward Kat.

"You think you can turn our mates against us?" He snaps, stalking toward Kat. Mateo was quick to jump out the car, spotting the Alpha heading towards us. He slams the car door, the Alpha's attention snapping to Mateo who he clearly didn't

see as he backs up a few steps while Kat just raises a n eyebrow at the Alpha, clearly not caring for his outburst.

"Issue?" Mateo asks.

"No, Beta King" The man answers quickly.

"Are you sure, it looked like you were yelling at your Queen? Have you lost your confidence in front of one of your king's?" Mateo asks.

"No, I wasn't- "

"Wasn't what? Yelling at my mate, yelling at your superior? Know your place Alpha, If you are stuck with figuring out where that is, I will tell you" Mateo says, he steps close enough to the Alpha their chests were touching.

"It's at her feet, because you are and always will be beneath her. Now apologise or I will show you exactly how far beneath her you are when I bury you" Mateo tells him. The Alpha looks over Mateo's shoulder at Kat.

"Sorry my Queen I meant no offense" The Alpha says, dipping his head.

"Is that it?" Mateo asks, turning his face to look at the Alpha who was beginning to sweat, his fear filling the air around us.

"I said sorry" The Alpha murmurs to him, his face paling and a few of the other Alphas were watching this man's embarrassment, while the others were pretending not to see.

"I just didn't feel it was heartfelt, sincere," Mateo tells him, clamping his hand on the man's shoulder and turning him to Kat. He shoves the Alpha to his knees in front of her. 1

"Ah now that is much better right where you belong on your knees begging her to spare you."

The man's face turns red and he glances around at the other Alphas watching his humiliation.

"This is the part where you beg" Mateo whispers before shoving him forward so he was on his hands and knees. His entire body was shaking as Mateo stood so close, his aura suffocating the man and he started to beg.

"Forgive me your highness, I am sorry I didn't mean to disrespect you," The Alpha says and I press my lips in a line to stop from laughing. Jerk deserved it and it was about time some of these Alpha's realised the world wasn't theirs.

"What do you think, Kat. Did he sound apologetic that time?" Mateo asks when a woman rushes out. Her hands went to her mouth as she looked on in horror and by the look on her face I could tell she was this Alpha's mate.

"He's yours?" Mateo asks her and the man looks over his shoulder at his mate. She quickly nods her head. Her curly brown hair falling over her shoulders as her hazel eyes watched her mate horrified.

"Please don't hurt him" The woman stammers out.

"Keep your dog on a leash next time" Mateo tells her and she nods.

"Sorry Beta King, sorry my Queen" She bows. Kat nods to her before stepping away from the man.

"Come on Sage" Kat says, looping her arm through mine and tugging me with her.

"I will see you inside after you see your mate" Kat tells the woman who nods before rushing over to him. He growls at his mate and shakes her off when she tries to help him up.

"Get off me" He barks at her and she stands before turning her back on her mate.

Stepping into the hall, off to one side had an assortment of cakes and biscuits, little sandwiches, coffee and tea. Pews lined the room and a small podium was at the front. The moment Kat stepped in, I felt her grip tighten on my arm. I place my hand over hers on my arm and squeeze gently. She smiles at me and I nod to her. I could see she was nervous, she may be Queen but she was only 19 and these women were older and used to gatherings. Walking in was a little intimidating. All these women were familiar with each other, were friends and we were two outsiders and Kat was their Queen. I understood her nervousness.

They all stood up when she entered. A woman with emerald eyes came rushing over, a huge grin on her face, her coppery hair pulled in a ponytail and she had a white sundress on with daisies on it. Her heels clicking on the floorboards as she gripped Kat's hand.

"My Queen, it's Terra, we spoke on the phone" She said, shaking Kat's hand.

"This way, this way. Come up the front" The woman gushes excitedly. Kat smiles and follows her tugging me along. A few women had scowls on

their faces as we passed but most seemed curious or genuinely happy to see Kat.

"Everyone this Kat" Terra tells the crowd of women like it wasn't obvious who Kat is.

"What's your name Lovely?" She asks before gripping my hand and giving it a squeeze.

"Sage"

"I'm Terra, so happy to have some new faces, some of theirs get a bit sour to look at after a while but we are a good bunch" She says and I nod.

"This is Sage, Kat's ah" "Sister in-law" Kat interrupts.

"Sister in-law, now I know this was supposed to be one of our annual gatherings, but I spoke to Kat the other night and she needs our help," Terra explains.

"Well she is barking up the wrong tree, we aren't allowed to help. I saw what happened outside, if you are looking for help my Queen, you are asking the wrong people. Do you have any idea what the consequences of going up against our own mates will have on us, you don't have to go home with them, we do" says a woman from the front.

Her hair was pencil straight and cut off at her chin. She had sharp features and was stern looking yet her words she spoke softly, almost timid despite the fact she just voiced her concern. A few of the other women nodded in agreement.

"Amy, let's Just hear her out, we have these meetings a few times a year and one thing we all agree on is the fact we never get a say, this could be our chance" Terra tells them.

"Do you mind?" Kat asks Terra pointing to the crowd when Mateo walks in at the back. Her eyes instantly go to him and he nods standing at the back in some secret conversation. The women turn also feeling his aura behind them and I see a few hunch forward nervously. Kat also noticed this when a few other Alphas walked in. The tension rose and I could see the woman falling into normal hierarchy with Alpha's present.

Stepping closer to Kat I nudged her. "We aren't going to get anywhere with this, if they are present. They are scared" I tell her and she nods looking at the Alphas taking up the far wall. One went over to his mate kissing her cheek and staring at her adoringly. The woman we saw outside ducks her head, darting into a seat as her Mate walks in behind her and drops a hand on her shoulder. Kat's eyes instantly narrowing in at his hand. I see her eyes glaze over for a second as she mindlinked. No doubt Mateo because he nods to her, his eyes darting to the man that tried to abuse Kat outside.

Majority of the women here I could tell were submissive to their Alpha's and I understood it, I too am but Andrei never hurt me but it was clear with some of them their Mates weren't the same as Andrei, Mateo or Ezra which made me nervous. I knew that fear.

I lived it for years walking on eggshells hoping to go unnoticed. I noticed the drop in their gazes, the sag of defeat in their shoulders, but most of all I noticed their fear. What if they say the wrong thing, what if they anger them. The nervous glances and the way they fiddled with the fingers and buckled in on themselves to make a smaller target when the fists went flying.

Time seemed to slow down and I knew Kat was surveying the crowd, their body language. Most of them clearly had great mates, but the ones I noticed that didn't, I knew would be hard to get to agree to sign. One thing I did know though was, women like them were just as strong as the ones with confidence because they knew how to survive, endure and rebuild. I know those women, and those women I knew could fight back if they only had support and the knowledge they weren't alone because I used to be one of them. It is amazing how empowering it is when you realise someone stood in your corner and was willing to back you, and that's all they needed to find their voices again, to know they weren't alone in this.

"Out!" Kat's voice rings loud and clear. Not a command she was testing them, trying to figure out who would fight against her, which women she would struggle with because they were scared.

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Almost instantly Alphas started to grumble and walked toward the aisle only for Mateo to block it. Yet my eyes darted to the woman the few men that got up to grab their mates were headed. About 20 other Alphas nodded to Kat, a couple even motioned to their mates in a nice gesture that they would be waiting outside for them- 4 however tried to remove their mates when Kat's command rushed over them.

"All Alphas leave, Mateo will deal with you" She says and Mateo's lips tug up, clearly liking that idea as he grabs one by the back of his shirt as he tries to fight

the command. He hauls him out the door before closing it behind him. Everyone lets out a breath.

"I understand some of you are afraid so I won't force any of you, just hear what I am asking, that is all, you are free to leave if you want" Kat tells them. They talk amongst themselves and one woman goes to get up, clearly petrified wanting to leave when the woman beside her jerks her back into her seat.

"Grow a backbone" The woman spat at her. The woman sits down, head hung.

"If she wants to leave she can, but I assure you everything said here, stays here. I will not force anyone to sign, it will be completely up to you if you want your names on my petitions. I want to change a few laws and- "

" No, you want to help your brother don't pretend this is about the laws" A woman calls from the back somewhere.

"Yes, that was initially my intention until I came across a few laws that are in favour of no one, laws that are outdated and wrong. I won't lie, I only looked into these laws and practises to find help for my brother but once I started digging through them, I found more that desperately needed changing, you can sign whichever ones you agree on"

'Yeah right you can just command us to sign" Another woman chimes in. Kat takes a breath rummaging through the documents before holding them up and showing everyone, she then dumps them on the table with a heap of pens.

"I am not your mate's, I am not Dominic, I don't come here as your Queen, I am not here to dictate or force your will. I am here as a woman, as a mother. The same as you, we are just women wanting a voice, wanting change, and the certainty our children will be safe, that is why I am here, I just want to fix things. I want to give you a voice too, everyone here is free to voice their concerns and as one we can work on changing them, helping each other" Silence falls and a few murmurs reach my ears.

"We sign, you will back us when we want something changed? You will hear us out?" Another woman asks.

"Yes, of course. You all think you are powerless because you aren't the Alpha. Well law says you are just as equal as them, you have every right to be heard , you have every right to stand beside your Alpha as equal, you are Alpha females. I am just asking you to step into the role, I know you are scared of repercussions and those that do fear that. I promise, you will and can have sanctuary with my pack. I have my own pack but as your Queen you are all pack, every pack is pack to me, we are one pack. I am not fighting for my rights but all ours, all our childrens so just hear me out" Kat says.

No one says anything and after a few minutes Kat picks up the top petition stapled together.

"So how many of you have heard of this law? If a man of title finds their mate and the mate is underage, he has a right to take them, to preserve

their maidenhood to ensure purity and to ensure their bond will be completed or for other circumstances and the man or persons of title is in need of an heir for pack transfer? This is the stuff I want to change, how many of you would be revolted if your underage child was taken from before they could tell if the person in fact taking them, is his or her mate," Kat asks.

"I will sign that one" Says a meek voice I instantly recognised as the woman from outside. The woman turned in their chairs and looked at her, some smiled sadly at her.

"What's your name?" Kat asks her.

"Blaire my Queen, I will sign. Garret found me and took me when I was 15 and half because he knew that law, killed my father when he tried to stop him, my father was an Omega like me" She says getting out of her seat and strolling forward.

She hesitates before bowing slightly and taking the paper from Kat and walking over to the table, I see her look at the other woman. "I know at least 4 here who were dealt the same hand as me, get up!" She says yet none do.

"I have to go home with mine and I am willing to sign this, so get up! If not for yourselves do it for us who had no choice" Blaire says. Three more get up

and so does Terra and they walk over. Blaire turns and signs the document before handing the pen to the next.

"You call me spineless but yet you are scared of a piece of paper" Blaire says before walking back to her seat, the other woman I noticed followed her instead of sitting back in their original seats.

Kat stares at the crowd but no one else gets up and she sighs.

"Why?" I step forward and ask.

"Why what?" Amy asks.

"Why do you all demand change but when offered a chance to change it you sit on your hands and do nothing?"

"It's not that simple, they are our mates, we live with them, they would see this as a betrayal" She explains.

"And why is that? Is it because they feel threatened, de-manned in a way? Or is it because they realise they broke that very law we are asking to change? How many here have kids?" Most of them raised their hands.

"Okay, say someone comes to claim your son or daughter. How many Alphas would challenge that for their kids or are they as heartless with their children as they are with their mates?" I ask.

"Come on, raise your hand if your mate would fight for their kid" I tell them. All of them raise their hands.

"If they would fight to protect their kid, why aren't you signing because signing that is fighting for the next generations right to remain children until they recognise their mates themselves, if your Alphas would fight for them why aren't you, over ego is why. Kat hurt their egos because she is a woman, not because what she is fighting for is wrong but because she is a woman and all those Alphas wouldn't even hear her out because they feel like less with her in charge. You will regret not signing that if it was your child that gets taken next?" I tell them before walking over and signing it.

"Amy, sign it, weren't you a year out from finding your mate when he took you?" Terra asks her.

"But he is my mate, and he is good to me?"

"Will your son or daughters mate be good to them, because this protects them, any Alpha could come challenge your mate and take them and you will have no proof whether or not what they claim is true, this gives us assurance because they have to recognise their mate before they can take them"

Terra tells her when I realise something.

The soft spoken woman was the influence, Terra didn't address her just because of what she said, but because the rest of the woman would follow her, so whoever her mate was had influence clearly because despite her quiet demeanor the other woman flocked around her. Making me wonder if he was one of the top Alphas that left the table at the Alpha meeting where Andrei was sitting, it was clearly the table sat for higher up Alphas and Andrei said 6 seats vacated because Kat sat down.

"You said he was good to you, then if he is he would protect you right?"

"Well of course but"

"But what, do you agree this law should be changed?" I ask her.

"Of course I do"

"Then sign it, stop thinking of this as something personal, think of what is best for your packs, for your children, forget the Alphas and mates and whatever, think of what's right, repercussions we can deal with, Kat offered everyone a place if needed but if they love you like they say they do, they will stick by your decision or were you lying when you said he was a good mate?" I ask, turning back to Amy. She growls and rubs her temples before looking up.

"Give me the paper," She says, clicking her fingers.

"If this causes drama. I expect you to calm the Alphas" She says to Kat.

"Of course but with enough signatures they can't have an issue if we stand united" Kat tells them.

Amy signs and once she did so did the others but we were still short signatures making me count the woman. "We are seven short," I tell Kat.

"How many short?" A woman says.

"4 my mates will sign, so will Andrei, but we are 4 short" Kat confirms also counting heads.

"Not everyone showed up?" Kat asks. Terra looks around.

"No everyone is here"

"The Alpha book must be outdated" She mutters.

"Four right?" Kat nods and the woman walks off and opens the doors leading outside.

"Hun, can you come here?" The woman calls out. A man approaches her, all goofy faced and doe eyed as he regards his mate like she was made of gold.

They speak in hushed whispers before he looks over his mate's shoulder at Kat.

"May I come in my Luna Queen, I am Alpha Jason, Luna Larni's Mate?" He asks and Kat nods.

"You can enter," She tells him.

"I sign this, I can't go against it on the bench" Jason says to Larni and she nods before jutting out her bottom lip and he sighs walking over to the table.

"You're one of the panel judges?" Kat asks and he nods.

"I am sorry it is nothing personal, but I will sign" He tells her before leaning down and signing it.

"All these signatures were of their own free will?" He asks looking over at the woman, they all nod but I could feel the tension in the room. He sighs and nods.

"May I stay?" He asks.

"It's up to them" Kat says and the Alpha looks at the woman but his gaze wasn't like the others, he seemed willing to leave if they asked.

"Come on, he signed didn't he?" Larnie asks. They nod and he follows Larnie to her where she was sitting.

"If I may Luna Queen?" He asks and Kat nods and I tense wondering what he has to say.

"Abigail's mate Alpha Clenton is also a panel Judge, he is outside, you need three more" He says and everyone turns to face a woman who clearly didn't like being called out in front of everyone.

"This is ridiculous, seriously over three signatures?" Terra snaps, getting up and stomping toward the door in a blazing fury. She stops at the door, tossing it open when the blonde girl Abigail sigh's, her flip flops clapping on the ground as she races over to Terra.

"You want to come in, you sign this document and keep your mouths shut" Terra calls out to the Alphas waiting outside in the sun.

A man walks over to her and stares down at Terra, I watch her fingers twitch and I see Kat step down off the podium. His aura maddening as he peered down at Terra but she didn't falter except the tremble of her fingers that she clenched into fists.

"Mate?" he says and I realise that was Terra's husband. She steps aside.

"You come in, you sign" She orders him and he raises an eyebrow.

"Really, is that so?" He asks her with a smile tugging at his lips like he found her demanding him amusing. Kat goes to walk over but Terra holds her hand out for her to stop and she does.

"You sign if you come in, I will go to that stupid couples therapy if you sign it and back it in court" He folds his arms across his chest.

"You're blackmailing me"

"Take it or leave it" She says mimicking her mate as they stare off.

"Fine, but you go to every one of them" "5 of them"

"8, it's a 12 weeks of sessions" he replies "2" She snaps and he growls.

"Fine 5 then" he grumbles before trying to step past the threshold before stopping unable to.

"Luna?" he asks Kat.

"You can all come in but don't cause issues" Kat announces. Terra's mate walks over and signs and the other Alpha's file in. Some head straight to their mates but we only needed two more signatures.

"Please Abigail" Asks her mate and he follows Terra's mate to the table and signs. Kat's lips tug up triumphantly and so do the other women's.

Mateo heads straight to Kat, kissing her cheek softly.

"Thank god I was sweating my ass off out there" He says sitting on the edge of the podium. When Blaire's husband walks in though everyone watches him. Blaire drops her gaze as he heads over to see what everyone was signing, a few of the other Alpha's also getting up to see for themselves after Abigail and Terra's mate signed. I watch as Blaire's husband looks over at.

"You signed first?" He asked her, though his voice sounded more shocked than anything else and I held my breath. Blaire surprisingly lifts her head looking straight ahead.

"Correct, it needs to be changed" she says and I look at her mate who was significantly older than her. He turns back to the document staring at it.

"Do it for Grace, or would you accept that as her fate?" Blaire says finally looking at him. His shoulders tense before he looks at her.

"Grace" he whispers.

"I was only her age" Blaire says softly and he looks back at the document before picking up the pen and signing it and walking over to her. He falls in the chair beside Blaire before dropping his arm across her shoulders and tugging her to him. He kisses her temple before turning to the front to realise we were all staring but we quickly avert our gazes. Once the last Alpha signed he walked over handing Kat the paper.

"I believe you just got a date in court" He said nodding to her before sitting down next to his mate. Kat went over a few other laws which everyone signed off on which were no brainers before we came to the one I had been waiting for.

"Now this one is the last one, the blood purity law about the placement of children"

"Dominic has specifically asked us not to sign off on that when it appeared in court" One Alpha admitted and the others agree.

"Dominic isn't here" Kat tells them.

"F*ck it, we have signed everything else" Alpha Jason says getting up and taking it from Kat to sign and Larni also gets up to sign it. The others are more hesitant even as Jason looks around to see any other Alpha's would get up.

"My mate and I are begging you, please sign this.

Alpha Dominic took our son because he is not blood and handed him to a man with an extensive criminal record who is abusive and a drunk. All because he could because of this law. The same man that beat his own mother and sister who is Jonah's mother. He is 6. No child should live in fear" I tell them.

"We are sorry but-" Amy stops looking around. Alpha Dominic clearly had his claws in everyone. I walk over to Kat shuffling through the paperwork for Clive's criminal history and his photo that she enlarged before holding it up.

"This man has my Jonah," I tell them, holding up his smiling mugshot. I hand it to Amy before reading out his criminal report. It took a good twenty minutes to read out every charge and report before I got to the human court reports. I read everything to them before reading out the law that allowed it.

"So who is handing their kid over?" I ask. No one says anything, they all just stare at me.

"You are willing to let a 6 year old boy live with this man, who has a violent history and didn't want him, so who is handing their kid over. If this man is good enough for my Jonah, then he must be good enough for you to trust your kid with, right?" I ask them.

"He is a child, children shouldn't be put at risk, we are adults, we make our own choices, children don't get that say, we dictate what happens to them because they are minors but what does it say about us if we allow them to go to a household that puts them at risk. We are meant to be their protectors, it should be what is best for the child not about purity of bloodlines especially when there are no pure bloodlines anymore" I tell them becoming angry that they would sign everything else but this.

"Well I wouldn't want my kids going to my mother" Abigail says with a deep frown on her face before getting up, her mate nodding also got up and followed her. One after one eventually they all got up. But it showed the power of one person willing to step up, giving way to change, showing how others feel confident enough with someone standing beside them.

"You have the signatures, now you just need the panel to agree" Alpha Jason says coming over to Kat with the last document. She sighs before taking it.

"Thank you," She tells him.

"Send it straight through tonight to this email it is mine, I will have some dates moved around to squeeze you in on Wednesday, be ready because Dominic is on the Panel and he will kick up a fuss, but you have what you need and I will stick by my word and back it" He says, handing her his card. She nods, accepting it.

"I will too, Luna Queen," Abigail's mate says before bowing to her. Everyone leaves and Kat stays back to thank Terra for telling her about the Luna meeting. Terra also told us she would add us to the Luna group chat which is how they keep in touch.

"Thanks again Terra," Kat tells her.

"It was the right thing to do, even if I now have to attend stupid couples therapy with my mate" She says pulling a face.

"It will be good for you," Kat laughs.

"Yeah if the woman running it wasn't his mother, but I can deal with the old bat for 5 weeks"

"Isn't that biased though" I ask.

"Apparently not, but she isn't so bad, I do love the old wolf. Damn mumma's boy he is," Terra chuckles.

"It's a win for all of us" she says before walking over to her mate. We pile in the car and I couldn't wait to get home to tell Andrei that we could be getting Jonah home soon.

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We stopped off at Kat's on the way home so she could email it through to Alpha Jason and not even halfway home she got a confirmation email that she had a court date scheduled for Wednesday at 1:15 PM. We stayed for coffee and to check the kids. Mateo wanted Ezra to run me back but Ezra insisted he was to stay with Kat at all times. Mateo didn't seem to pick up the edge in his voice or the way he looked at Kat when he said it, but it was like they were hiding something from Mateo. I was excited to head home. The day had been a long one and Kat gave me a copy of the petition to show Andrei when I got home.

"So what happens next does anyone know?" I ask them.

"We attend the court date, like Jason said there's no reason for anyone to dispute it, there are enough signatures" Mateo answers.

"Then another court date will be set to apply for Jonah back, hopefully though Dominic will see it is inevitable and just hand him back" Kat says and I pray that is what happens. 5 days and I could have Jonah back home where he belongs. We continued to drive for another twenty minutes before pulling up. Everyone

was already celebrating for the initiation that happened today for Nora's siblings and I felt guilty I missed it but I knew they would understand, they were just as eager to get Jonah back as well.

As soon as the car stopped Andrei was ripping the door open and fumbling with my seatbelt and pulling me from the car with a growl.

"Yes, yes I missed you too" I tell him as he crushes me against his chest and I try to push him away. He growls before I give up burying my face in his chest, his growl changing to a purr. I shake my head and roll my eyes at his affection.

"How did it go?" He asks. I mumble against his bare chest where I was being smothered.

"Huh?" He asks, pulling away.

"I said I would tell you if I wasn't being smothered" He lips tug slightly and he lets me go.

"Sorry you stink of Mateo," He says.

"I don't stink?" Mateo says before sniffing himself.

"To me you do, you smell like my sister, not a scent I find attractive" Andrei says.

"I don't mind smelling like your sister, plan on rubbing my essence all over her when I get home"

Mateo says, wiggling his eyebrows at Kat. Kat slaps his chest and Mateo grunts at the impact. "Don't be rude" She snaps at him.

"What? I was being honest" He chuckles "going to hit that so h" Her hands clamp over his mouth.

"I will get him home, I will see you Wednesday" Kat says with a smile on her lips as she winds up the window. I could hear her scolding Mateo as they drove off for his foul language in front of her brother.

"Are you leaving again?" Andrei asks, looking down at me as he pulls me inside the house. I reach into my back pocket pulling out the folded petition and handing it to him. He unfolds it, his hands shaking.

"It got signed," He asks, his voice shaking as he tries to open the paper without tearing it. I take it from him and open it before holding it to open to show him and he glances at it before snatching it from my grip.

"We need a minimum 94 signatures, we got 97" I whisper to him when he suddenly falls on his bottom on the floor. "Andrei" I shriek, clutching at his arm to try to pull up. Did he faint? I wondered when he pulled me in his lap and buried his face in my shoulder.

"We can get him back" His words hitching and shaking as he choked with emotion.

"We can get him back, Wednesday we have the laws changed and we file for custody. Jason will push the hearing through for us hopefully the next day" I tell him.

"Jason, you are on a first name basis with him now?" Andrei chuckles and I shrug. "His Wife Larni is lovely, they all were, especially Terra" I tell him.

"Yes, she is nice. My mother used to be bestfriends with Terra's mother before they both passed away" Andrei says, pulling back. He looks at the piece of the paper again.

"We get our boy back" He says, resting his head back against the wall.

"Soon" I tell him, I smile excitedly before leaning down and pecking his lips. Pulling away, I go to push off his shoulders and hop off him when he pulls me down on him, his lips crashing against mine hungrily. His tongue invaded my mouth as he devoured my lips. I moan into his mouth and a deep purr vibrates out his chest as his fingers tangle in my hair pulling me closer.

My fingers dig into his shoulders and he nibbles on my lip as his mouth moves to the side of my mouth letting me suck in much needed air as he nips and sucks at my skin, his hot mouth devouring my flesh when I hear fabric tearing.

The front of my shirt reduced to scraps of cloth hanging off me as his mouth moved to my breasts. I suck in a breath when I feel his claws break my skin as he tore the front of my bra open before his mouth was licking where he nicked me.

Arousal floods me, and I don't ever think I will ever get used to the foreign feeling only Andrei could induce. My breathing becomes harsher, his grip tighter when he suddenly pushes off the ground with his hand. A panicked noise escapes me as I fall backwards before grabbing his shoulders and wrapping my legs around his waist to stop from falling backwards and smacking the hard ground. Andrei chuckles.

"I won't drop you" He mumbles against my lips before turning toward the stairs when I hear the door open. Andrei curses under his breath.

"Just a sec dad" Andrei calls out and I drop my face on his shoulder to shield my face and my embarrassment when Derrick walks in.

"Oh crap, sorry. I will stay at Malik's, carry on" He says blurts out before turning and walking out.

"No, we aren't" The door clicks shut before Andrei could finish.

"I will never be able to look your father in the eye again" I mutter with a laugh.

"F*ck, I forgot he was here" Andrei curses before stomping up the steps. He places me on the top letting me slide down. I clutch what's left of my shirt before giving up knowing it was covering nothing anyway.

"I liked that one," I tell him.

"I will get you another one, go shower I will go find my father" He laughs, shaking his head.

"Maybe he could stay at Malik's" I whisper as he turns around to head out of the packhouse. Andrei stops on the stairs, his hand clutching the bannister as he looks back at me. Shame washes over me. Shit why did I say that? I was always careful with my words not to get his hopes up because we both knew it never went there.

"It's fine, nevermind" I tell him, darting off toward the bathroom.

"Why are you running from him?" Sierra growls at me, clearly annoyed.

"Because I just made an idiot of myself" I tell her, turning the shower on. I hear the front door open and close and let out a breath.

"For wanting your mate, hardly" She snaps. We hardly spoke anymore and I know it's because she wanted to complete the bond. The bond was complete but she insists it would be stronger if we mated, yet I never could and Andrei never pushed me for more, though I was more comfortable touching him now.

"Please don't start"

"We are supposed to Mate Sage, Donnie and I aren't bonded until you do, you and Andrei are connected, we aren't. Never in all of my lives has being mated been this hard" She says.

"Huh? Lives? Sorry don't know what life you're living but last I checked I only had one, we are not cats" I tell her.

"Yeah, you have one. Forget it" She says, stalking off into the depths of my mind and blocking me out like she usually does.

I had to wash my hair twice to get the hairspray out that helped hold my braid together, grabbing the conditioner. I reached out the shower screen and over to the sink basin for my hairbrush when Andrei passes it to me.

"Thanks " I tell him, running the brush through the lengths to get the tangles out. Andrei undresses and steps in behind me.

My cheeks are flaming but he says nothing about what I said earlier. I rinse my hair out when I feel his hand run over my stomach making my eyes snap open. His other hand cupping my breast and squeezing it when I feel his lips move up my

neck before he pushes me out of the water spray, his chest pressed flush against my back.

He kisses behind my ear, the hand on my breast moves and flips my hair over my shoulder giving him better access to my mark before his hand goes to my chin and turns my face up to his. He dips his head over my shoulder, his hand on my stomach pulling me closer as his lips capture mine.

My breath hiccups when his hand moves between my thighs cupping my pussy making me moan into his mouth, my earlier embarrassment gone and it was only Andrei, my mate, he is mine.

Andrei presses his erection against me, my body instantly reacting to him and I push back against him. He pulls away letting out a breath before kissing my shoulder. His fingers brush over my slit, his finger parting my lips before prodding at my entrance when he stops. His breathing heavy next to my ear and I knew he was waiting for permission, he always does.

I press back against him. His lips go to my neck and he sucks on my mark, tingles spreading everywhere as his tongue runs over it before he shoves his finger inside me. I groan at the feel of him pushing against my walls as he slowly slides it out before adding another. A breathy moan escapes me as he works his fingers into me. My walls clamp around his digits as he builds up friction and I lean against him, my legs going weak but I wanted more, wanted him even though the thought petrified me.

My own body betraying me as desire coursed through me, It felt wrong to want something when that very thing destroyed me. "We can stop"

Andrie says despite his erection pressing against me. But I didn't want him to stop, but I did. Fear, pain, shame, smashed and battered me yet Andrei never made me feel any of those things.

I turn in his arms, his fingers leaving me before I look up at him. He watched me with concern like he pushed me too far. I reach up on my tippy toes and wrap my arms around his neck. He leans down letting me kiss him, his hands gentle on my hips as I press closer to him before pulling away slightly.

"I want to" I tell him and I feel Sierra pressing calm over me, but also not forcing me, she never did though I could tell she wanted to force control but that was one thing I knew she wouldn't do.

"Sierra?" Andrei asks. I shake my head.

"No, I want to Andrei, it's not Sierra pushing me to" I tell him and he grips my face staring at me intently.

"I can feel her forward," He growls, letting me go and shutting the water off. He always stopped if she was forward because he was worried she was taking my choice.

Andrei hops out grabbing a towel and wrapping it around himself. I hop out of the shower grabbing my own as he walks into the bedroom.

“Command me to answer, command Sierra to back off” I tell him when I feel his doubt hit me. He stops and I nearly walk into the back of him. Sierra never pushed me but her influence has forced me to freak out before because I couldn’t recognise my own limits with her urges.

Andrei turns around looking down at me. “You know I don’t like doing that to you, Sage” He says and I step around him drying myself. Andrei watches me for a second.

“If it’s not Sierra, why did you run?” he asks and my cheeks flush.

“I was embarrassed,” I tell him. “Of what?”

“Of wanting you when I usually shove you away” I tell him before sitting on the edge of bed. Why was I so f*cked up? Now even Andrei doubts my words, I think to myself when he grips my face forcing me to look at him.

“Sierra recede” He commands and my eyes flicker before I feel her shoved completely out where I can’t reach her. Andrei lets out a breath feeling her leave.

“Do you want this, answer me” He commands and I see him swallow nervously.

“Yes, yes I want you Andrei” I breathe before relaxing when I hear my own answer. Though I knew it wasn’t Sierra, the fact Andrei was doubting my answer did make me doubt my own thoughts at times and Sierra’s influence over me.

Andrei growls, his eyes flick onyx before returning to their normal color. His grip on my face tightens before his lips smash against mine in

a bruising kiss that makes me gasp. His tongue delving between my lips yet his hands remained gentle as he wrapped his arm around my waist hauling me to the centre of the bed with him. His chest is warm against mine as he pressed himself between my legs, his heart beating against mine calmly despite the torn feeling swirling inside him. I wrap my legs around his waist tugging him closer wanting to make the doubt in him vanish as I kiss him back with just as much hunger.

“Let Sierra go” I mumble against his lips and he pulls away.

“Why?”

“So she can sense Donnie,” I tell him. “I don’t like the idea of that Sage”

“Please” I whisper and he looks away before he sighs and nods before I feel his aura rush over me making me shiver.

"Sierra return" He growls and I feel the veil lift granting her access to the front of my mind. I tug Andrei back to me and kiss him but he pulls away his aura rushing over me again.

"You don't force her" Andrei tells her before I feel my eyes bleed black to my wolf.

"Never" Sierra purrs at him before she gives me back control. Andrei relaxes before dropping the command, his aura slipping away as he stares down at me. I lift up slightly and kiss him, his caution slipping away as he kisses me back, his weight pressing down on me and one of his hands grips my hip pushing it higher up his waist as he presses his erection me, his hardened length running through my slick folds and hitting my clit making me moan into his mouth which he quickly swallowed as kissed me harder. My heart beat erratically in my chest but not out of fear just out of realization of what we were doing.

I roll my hips against him, liking the friction it caused against his heated flesh, everything felt heightened, and alive and some dead part of me awakened knowing he would never hurt me and it was myself that trapped me in the confines of a past that was no longer my future, smashing through a barrier I placed to protect myself. Andrei groans as my arousal coats him but he doesn't move. Instead letting me move against him, as his lips drove me crazy as his open mouth devoured the skin of my neck, his hot mouth moving lower as he dipped his face, taking my hardened nipple in his mouth. My back arches a whimpered moan leaving my lips as he flicks his tongue over it.

His hips move slowly before I feel the tip of him press against my core and my breathing hitches, my body's natural reaction kicking in despite wanting this, my body anticipating pain making my eyes clenched shut.

"Open them, you are safe with me" Andrei says,

his lips pressing against the corner of my mouth.

"Open your eyes Sage" Andrei repeats and I force my eyes open to see his hypnotic penetrating gaze watching me. He presses his forehead against mine.

"Right here with you, always with you" He whispers, grabbing my hand and placing it in the centre of his chest so I could feel the steady rhythm of his heart beating against my palm, his arm moves back to the side of my face. I nod sparks igniting all over me and calm washes over me in waves.

I turn my face up, capturing his lips and I move hips against him, my heart falling in beat with the rhythm of his under my palm. Andrei pushes against me kissing me harder, his tongue playing with mine when I feel his aroused flesh stretching me as he thrusts into me, no pain just stretching and a sense of feeling full, no violence just his hand running up my thigh and gentle lips moving against mine. My walls clench around him and he groans into my mouth before pulling out slowly and pushing in again.

I roll my hips against him, getting used to the feeling of me stretching around him as he slowly moved against me. My hips meeting his gentle movements while his lips moved down my jaw to my mark, he runs his tongue over it making my walls flutter around him and my hips buck as arousal floods me, coating his length in my juices as he moves a little faster.

Friction builds up and I felt myself reacting and wanting to chase the feeling, find where it ended as I moved my hips wanting him to go faster. He growls as my heels dig into him, my nails digging into his hip while the other grips his hair pulling him closer. He nips at my neck, his canines grazing and teasing my skin making my breathing heavier and my skin heats up, warmth flooding me.

Andrei purrs, thrusting in harder but not picking up pace and I growl at him needing him to move faster when he suddenly rolls, pulling me on top of him. His cock still buried deep within my walls. He moves so he is leaning against the headboard with me straddling him.

"You're in control" He whispers, pressing his lips against mine, my hands go to his shoulders.

Andrei's hands move to my hips, rocking me against him and I inhale nervousness sweeping over me as he gently shows me how to move and I roll my hips against copying the movements, his hands fall away letting me move at my own pace.

I roll my hips against him when I feel him grip my wrists, placing my hands on the headboard above his head and I grip it moving faster.

"That's it love" he says before his mouth wraps around my nipple while his fingers rolled the other. My body moves and clenches as I move quicker finding my own rhythm and I become lost in the feeling building within my stomach, sparks dancing along my skin as it heats the faster I move. Euphoria ran through my veins as I writhed above him, his hands trailing down my sides, his mouth on my heated flesh when I felt him grip my hips before thrusting up into me, making me gasp as he met my movements making me moan.

The sound is dirty and guttural as flesh slapped flesh. The room filling with the heady exotic scents of my arousal and s*x. His hand goes to move away but I pull it back wanting him to impale me on him as my stomach tightens, my muscles tensing as I climb higher to the precipice, my head falling back as he slammed me down on him. Andrei leans forward clutching me to me as I ride the high of my pleasure building before I feel my walls clamp down on him. He purrs loudly and the vibration sends me plummeting over the edge making me cry out as my walls grip him, pulsating and my orgasm ripples through me leaving me breathless. I feel my canines lengthen his scent washing over me and I sink them into his neck as I fall into pleasurable bliss. My entire body feels heavy when I feel Andrei groan, his teeth biting into my mark making me clench tighter around him, milking his cock as he comes deep within my walls, spilling his hot seed into me leaving me breathless as I collapse against him.

"I love you" I whisper against his neck and he chuckles turning his face toward mine.

"I love you too" He says, pecking my lips before moving and rolling me onto my back. I felt heavy and relaxed, sleep wanting to take me as he pulled out of me. Andrei tucks me against his body.

Goosebumps rose on my skin as the high started to recede and my temperature started dropping. Andrei tugs the blankets up before wrapping his arms around me and I melt against him letting my eyes fall as sleep takes me.

I fell into a dreamless sleep, sleeping heavily when I felt the bed move and I could vaguely hear the sound of a phone ringing in the distance. The bed dips as Andrei gets up leaving the bed. His voice husky as he answered his phone yet I didn't want to wake yet.

"Hello" I hear Andrei say as I started to drift off again. Andrei growls loudly making my body jolt and react at the pure rage behind the noise. My eyes snapping open as I try to figure out what's going on when he grabs my face.

"I need to go, stay here" He says and I rub my eyes wondering what has angered him.

"What's going on?" I ask, rubbing my sleep filled eyes and sitting up.

"Jonah needs me, I am going to go get him"

"What?" I panicked, tossing the covers back and scrambling for clothes.

"Stay here, I will be back soon" "But Jonah"

"I will bring him home with me, I promise I will get him back to you" He says before letting go and heading for the door, a ferocious growl escapes him that echoed off the walls in his anger.

"I am going to f*cking kill him" I hear Andrei mutter as he runs down the stairs leaving me in a panicked state.

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Andrei POV

I felt Donnie's relief at completing the bond, his tether to Sierra blown right open and I could hear her purring through him. Sage's soft body tucked snuggling against my hard one felt right.

Everything about her was fragile, I was petrified of breaking her. One slip and she was right back with them. I hated seeing the way her body locked up, her muscles tensed and her face got that faraway expression like she was being transported back to a time before us. I expected it to happen but it didn't, which was a relief. I hated feeling her slip away from me.

All made worse by feeling her emotions when she got trapped in her head, It was like I was living the horror with her and it sickened me. The things they did to her, I could almost see it in my head just through what she felt at the time, her pain becoming mine. The scars on her body are the only traces left of what they did to her physically but her mind, I struggled with the most, wounds heal but the mind relives and remembers long after the damage is done, those scars don't heal it. Instead it tainted her and her soul.

Blackened parts of her, making her ashamed of what she saw in the mirror. Yet I looked in awe of her strength. She was broken, maybe irreparably in some ways but she survived. She endured and she survived, lived through unthinkable horror. She carried the burden of their torture alone at least she thought she did, now I carry the burden of never letting her know that I know what they did because I could feel it through her each time she was forced back there. I couldn't tell her and I wouldn't unless she told me herself and I would never drag up her past to ask.

I never understood PTSD until I watched her relive the things they did, taken back in time it was like she was right there, transported back like it was happening all over again. She is a warrior, she sees herself as broken and ugly while I saw her as delicate and soft, yet strong, withstanding all that life tossed at her, there's beauty in her pain because on the other side of it. I saw her, I saw how amazing she truly is, how strong she is, how patient and understanding she is.

She has something I will never have and that is a gentleness and softness despite everything that should have made her angry, bitter and cruel.

Instead she possessed an inner strength and resilience, along with pure determination to be better than them, better than I was when led by my own pain.

Sage is the flower that bloomed without water and sunlight, without care or love to nurture her, yet still she blossomed into the woman she is today, despite the storms harsh wind and everything that tried to destroy her beauty she stood and endured and stayed strong. She bloomed instead of letting her petals wilt and die, by giving up. She became a warrior in her own right and I am blessed to call her mine. I stared down at the woman beside me.

Climbing out of bed, I gently pull my arm out from under her head trying not to wake her.

Walking into the bathroom, I grab a cloth and wet it with warm water and rung it out before scrubbing my thighs of the secretions that leaked on them. Walking back into the bedroom I tug the blanket back that was covering her.

"Make sure you let her know what you are doing" Donnie mumbles at me like I didn't already know that, I knew that better than anyone else not to touch her.

Leaning down I kiss her, nibbling on her bottom lip. "Sage" I whisper, running my hand across her stomach gently, she mumbles incoherently against my lips in her sleep making me laugh.

"Sage, I am going to clean you" I tell her, dipping my face into her neck and licking her mark. She moans softly, turning her face into mine, my stubble brushing her cheek.

"Let me sleep, " She mumbles. I pull away and chuckle as her nipples harden from me touching her mark.

"I am about to touch you, so don't freak out" I tell her, pecking her face as she tries to swat me away.

"Damn I hope she doesn't sleep like this everytime, it's like trying to wake the dead" Donnie mutters.

"Andrei it's cold, get back in bed and be my hot water bottle" She pouts half asleep, turning into me where I sat on the edge of the bed. I lean down nuzzling her neck and she growls at me wanting to sleep.

"Touching you now" I tell her and she mutters something that sounded like do what I want just let her sleep. I roll my eyes before moving the washcloth between her legs, she reacts to my touch instantly and I froze for a second when she moans softly. I quickly clean her before walking to the bathroom and tossing the cloth in the hamper.

Walking back into the room she was laying in my spot and I move her over before climbing into bed beside her, eager to sleep myself. Sage draped her limbs over me and pressed closer when she began to purr, the sound she was making putting me at ease and I yawn, closing my eyes and letting sleep take me.

I slept heavily with Sage wrapped around me, her scent sticking to my skin. Rolling her on her side, I tuck my body around hers as I try to figure out why I had awoken. I was still tired when I hear it, my phone ringing and vibrating on the bedside table. Sitting up, I reach for it and don't recognise the number.

"Hello?" I ask bleary eyed.

"Hi, is this Mr Andrei?" A man's voice says, only one person calls me that and that is Jonah.

"Yes, who is this?"

"He said you're his dad, is this correct because I have a small boy here with me, he said you would come and get him"

"Yes, put him on" I hear the phone change hands.

"I want to come home, please" Jonah's frightened voice comes through the other end.

"Where is Clive?" I ask him and I see Sage stirring on the bed, my heart hammering a million miles and hour.

"I ran away, he was drunk. He wasn't supposed to drink but he stunk and pulled my hair please, please come and get me"

"I will be right there, put the man on for me" I tell him.

"Where are you?" I ask, He tells me his address and it was a Chinese restaurant around the corner of the Casino. He assured me he would keep Jonah with him and give him something to eat. Jonah tells him he was hungry because Clive didn't feed him dinner. Hanging up, I can't help the growl that rips out of me. I was going to fucking kill the bastard. Sage jumps up at the noise and I feel terrible for waking her. I felt terrible that I couldn't stay snuggled next to her but our son needs us and she would understand, she always understands.

"I need to go, stay here" I tell her, grabbing my jeans and slipping them on.

"What's going on?" she asks, rubbing her eyes. "Jonah needs me, I am going to go get him"

"What?" She says, instantly alert at his name and she starts tossing blankets back.

"Stay here, I will be back soon"

"But Jonah" She says and I grip her face before kissing her cheek.

"I will bring him home with me, I promise. I will get him back to you" I tell her before letting go and heading for the door, a furious growl escapes me that echoed off the walls in my anger.

"I am going to fucking kill him" I growl rushing down the steps. He was going to fucking die for touching my boy.

Opening the mindlink I search for my fathers link now that he was initiated into our pack as well it was so much easier then ringing. I feel his mind come alert as I force the link while unlocking the front door and grabbing my keys.

"What's wrong"

"meet me at the car, Jonah is in trouble" I tell him.

"On my way" he says instantly before cutting the link. I pull my shirt on as I head toward my car before seeing Malik's porch light turn on and he and my father rush out of the house pulling clothes on while jogging over.

"What's going on?" Malik asks, reaching for the back door, I see Zane's light turn on before he rushes over to. "Andrei" Zane asks.

"Keep an eye on Sage, and ring if anything happens while we are gone" I call out to him.

"Yes Alpha" He says and I climb in the driver's seat. My father hops in the passenger seat and Malik gets in back.

"Where are we going, is he alright?" My father asks.

"We are going to get my son back, then I am killing that bastard Clive" I tell him. He growls at the edge in my tone.

"Is my grandson, okay?" He asks as I tear out of the driveway heading for the highway.

"He is safe for now" I tell him, the car sliding onto the bitumen road as it leaves the gravel. I floor it heading toward the Safari casino.

It would take at least 2 hours and the longer I drove the more anxious I became. It was a little after midnight already and I had my father text the owner of the restaurant to let him know we were on our way.

He said he lived above the restaurant and Jonah was watching TV with his wife.

"Pass me my phone," I tell my father. I flick through the contacts looking for Dominic's number. I was fucking livid. The phone rings and I growl as it rings out before hitting redial.

I listen to it ring but this time he answers.

"Who the fuck dares to ring me at this ungodly hour" He snaps into the phone.

"It's Andrei, did you see Clive today?" I ask him.

"Yes this morning, why the fuck are you ringing me what time is it?"

"After midnight"

"Yesterday morning then, the boy is fine Andrei" Dominic growls.

"If he was fine, why the fuck did I just get call from a stranger saying they have Jonah?"

"What, who has the boy?" Dominic says and I could hear him moving around whatever room he was in.

"Where is he?" Dominic asks.

"Not a chance, I am getting my son. We got the laws changed Dominic it will be changed Wednesday, we got the signatures Kat needed for the petition, if you try to stop me"

"I am getting dressed now, tell me where he is"

"You should know, he was trusted into the care of a man you fucking vouched for" I spit at him.

"I will head over and check in on them, Tanya watch Kyan for me" Dominic calls out.

"Don't do anything stupid Andrei"

"Too late, tell Clive his time alive is ticking away because when I get my fucking hands on him, there won't be much left of him when I am done, no one touches my kid" I snap at Dominic before hanging up.

I toss the phone in my fathers lap while trying to contain my anger. Donnie pressed beneath my skin and the closer we got to our destination, the more my anger increased. He was going to pay, he was going to pay for taking him, for hurting him, and he was going to pay with his life no matter the consequences afterwards. I would deal with Dominic afterwards.

The city was alive, neon lights were seen as we came over the hill heading toward the city limits. I didn't slow, I needed to make sure he was okay, I needed him where I knew he was safe and loved back in our arms, in Sage's where she would nurture him and love him. He was ours even if not by blood, I loved him just as much as if he were.

"Next left" My father says and I see the Safari Casino come into view. The streets were crawling with people, clubs were pumping and packed full, all shop lights on and people moving about. The place never slept.

"Should be on the corner on your right"

"He crossed a road by himself," I growled, looking at the traffic. I stop double parking and cars honk their horns.

"Malik, find a parking spot and meet us inside" I tell him, climbing out of the car. Malik jumps over the seats and into the driver seat and my father climbs out and walks over to the curb. Malik pulls the car away looking for a parking spot.

Walking over, I looked at the restaurant windows, red lanterns hung from the inside and Chinese writing I couldn't read was scrawled in gold along the black walls as we stepped inside the dimly lit restaurant.

A woman greeted us as we stepped in. My father talks to her, giving the woman the owner's name who we were looking for.

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"Right this way" She says and we walk past all the round tables and towards the kitchen.

"Tom, two men are here to see you" the woman tells him before disappearing. A man in his early twenties comes over with his hand out.

"Tom, which one of you is Andrei?" "I am" I tell him, shaking his hand.

"No, offense my friend but I need to see some ID. I am not going to hand a kid over if I am not sure you are the person the boy asked me to ring"

I grab my wallet and hand him my ID and he looks at it before reaching over and grabbing his phone off the bench. He pulls a crumpled piece of paper from his pocket, the same piece of paper I wrote my number on and gave to Jonah before he was taken.

"Just a precaution" He says and I nod, not caring, just glad he wouldn't have handed Jonah over to anyone else. He calls my number and my phone starts ringing in my fathers hand. He shows the man and he nods as he reads the number.

"Do you mind if I take your picture to show Jonah, so I can verify you are the man he asked for?" Tim asks and I shake my head.

"Go for it" I tell him and he quickly snaps a photo before rushing off out the back somewhere. My father looks around at the chefs, most of them staring at us and we must look out of place. We chucked on the first things we grabbed and I was in a wrinkled shirt and jeans. My father dressed in a tank top and jeans.

"He came, he came for me" I hear a squeal and look toward the door Tim walked through. Jonah comes running toward us and I rush over, scooping him up and hugging him tight while burying my face in his neck.

"You came for me" he says, his arms tight around my neck.

"Of course I did, I will always come for you Jonah. You are mine, I never should have let you go" I tell him.

"You promise?" Jonah asks.

"I promise, I will even pinky promise" I tell him and he pulls back smiling. He holds his pinky up and I grab it with mine before kissing his cheek.

"I missed you so much," I tell him.

"I missed you too, I can come home right, you will take me home?" he asks when I notice the handprint on his cheek, his ear red and I turn his face. A growl emanates out of me and my father starts coughing loudly making me realise I am surrounded by humans.

"I am taking you home and you are never leaving again" I tell him and he nods resting his head on my shoulder.

"Thank you," I tell him Tim.

"It is fine, I am just glad he didn't get hit by a car, he nearly caused an accident when I grabbed off the road" Tim says and my stomach drops.

"He said his uncle was supposed to be watching him but he didn't want to go back"

"Custody dispute, he won't be going back there" I tell him.

"I am glad, he has a few bruises on his arms and legs. I was nearly tempted to call the police until I spoke to Dominic Octavian. I rang him an hour ago. He said to let you take him"

"You know Dominic Octavian?" I ask him.

"Yes, Dominic owns half the City, everyone knows who he is, I rent this place off him. Good man but not someone I would want to cross but anyway I know what you are, so it was probably best I didn't ring the police, he needs to be with his own species" He says but not in a harsh way.

"Bye Jonah" Tim waves to him.

"Wait!" My father says, trying to give him the envelope full of cash.

"No, I don't want anything, he is a good kid. I am just glad he is okay" Tim says, walking off back to his station in the kitchen.

"Come on, let's get you home" I tell Jonah and he nods against my shoulder. We walk out to see Malik talking to the woman at the service counter. "Ah that's them" He says rushing over.

"Hey Kiddo," Malik says, brushing Jonah's hair from his face.

"You look tired, you can sleep on the way home" Malik tells him. We walk out of the restaurant and Malik shows us where he parked. I place Jonah in the back with my father who takes him. He was already dozing off and I found bruises on his arm in the distinctive shape of a handprint. His little cheek is bright red and he looked exhausted like he hadn't been sleeping well.

"Andrei, let's get him home" My father says.

"I will be back soon, put the heater on for him"

"Andrei, you heard Tim. Dominic could be around here somewhere"

"I don't care where Dominic is, I want Clive" I tell him, shutting the rear door before he could say anything else. I looked over the building rooftops where we were parked around the side of the restaurant.

"Stay with them" I tell Malik before walking off and heading toward the Casino. I move through the crowds of people before turning the corner and seeing the Casino. Valet were out the front and armed guards. Crossing the street I walk toward the front entrance. The guards are staring at me and I see a few call across their radio's as I approach the doorman. He opens the door and I ignore the staff at the front counter heading for suites above the casino. Taking the stairs two at a time. I hear footsteps behind me. Looking over my shoulder I see two guards following me. A sniff of the air proves they are Werewolf and both had Beta Genes. They keep their distance but continue to follow me through the corridors while I look for the room Clive and Jonah were in.

Walking up yet another flight of stairs I stop looking at the guards behind me.

"I am assuming Dominic knows I am here?" I ask and one steps forward. He was a stocky build with a shaved head and scar across his eyebrow.

"Yes Alpha Andrei"

"Take me to Clive's room now, I am sick of walking in circles" I watch his eyes glaze over and know he is mindlinking. The other man's hand hovered over the gun at his waist.

"This way" The man says, pointing toward an elevator. We step in and the guard presses the button to the second highest floor which I knew were units.

"He put them in a unit?" I ask the guards and they both nod. When the elevator opens up the man speaks again.

"Third door on the right" He says and I nod walking off down the corridor. Just as I am about to kick the door in, it opens. Dominic stepped out and blocked it. He cleaning blood off his hands on a tea towel before he tosses it over his shoulder and back in the room.

“Try not to break anything and make it look like an accident for the tourists, I hear the balcony views are amazing up here” Dominic says, patting me on the shoulder.

“You aren’t going to try to stop me?” I ask.

“Would you like me to?” I shake my head and a growl slips past my lips.

“That’s what I thought, I may be prick but I would never hurt a child, and to think he thought he could under my watch sickens me, I saw Jonah.

When you are done take the boy home where he belongs” He says looking over my shoulder at the guards.

“Clear the ground below the balcony, I believe we have a jumper” Dominic says and I smirk.

“I will be over on Tuesday to check on Jonah, and see Sage. Tell Kat to come if she wants, I will see you then and I will bring Kyan, the boy has no one to play with, it would be good for him” He says before walking off toward the elevator and talking to the guards.

The moment he steps away from the door, I see Clive bleeding heavily and wiping his face. He looks up and whimpers, the entire room stunk of beer and whiskey. I shut the door and lock it and he jumps up with his hands out.

Gripping the back of my shirt I take it off hanging over a chair. “Don’t want to get blood on it” I tell Clive.

I feel Donnie press forward, my claws slipping from my fingertips and Clive shrieks like a little girl darting behind the table to put distance between us. He grabs a chair, lifting it to use as a weapon. He swings it at me and I grab it, tossing it away before lunging at him. His screams are like music to my ears as I grab him. I punch him in the gut and he doubles over before I bring my knee to meet his bloodied face. His head snapping back with a sickening crunch as his nose breaks.

Dragging him to the kitchen, he struggles digging his heels into the floor and I smash his face into the counter repeatedly while turning the burner on. He crumbles to the floor and I hunt for a knife in the drawers. Finding one, I crouch in front of him before plunging the knife into his thigh.

He screams loudly, his leg bouncing as he tries to pull the knife out but couldn’t bring himself to do it. His hands trembled that badly and the knife was all the way to its hilt.

“You laid your filthy hands on my son” I tell him, yanking the knife out. He screams again when I grab his hand, bringing the sharp knife down on his fingers and severing three of them cleanly. Sweat coated him as he screamed and begged, crying out as I cut each finger off.

"You slapped a 6 year old" I tell him, slashing his face before gripping his head. I drag the dulling blade down his face and he paws at my hand with his nubs left for fingers. Grabbing his ear, I pull it before cutting it off. His screams are dying out as he starts to lose his voice and I haul him upright to the stove. The burner was bright red as it reached maximum heat.

"No, no, no" he begs, pushing with his legs and palms against the oven as I drag him toward it. I slam his face down on the burner and he thrashes and screams. I hold my breath, the stench of burning flesh and face hair makes me want to puke. Ripping him off it, he sags against me having passed out. I start dragging him toward the balcony. Pushing the sliding doors open I am hit with a chilled breeze. Dominic was right. The view from up here was great I thought as I hauled his lanky body toward the barrier. I toss half his body over and he groans waking up. Before pushing back against me, I growl at him, and he looks at me horrified over his shoulder. A cruel smile tugs at my lips and I grab his face.

"You hurt him for last time" I tell him before shoving him over, his hands flailing about trying to catch onto air as his body falls over the edge. I step out of sight and listen for the thud. Screams sound out from below before I hear his body splat on the concrete. No way he would survive that fall, we were nearly 50 stories in the sky.

Walking back into the apartment, I turn the burner off before retrieving my shirt. I open the door to find Dominic waiting in the corridor leaning against the wall.

"You came back," I tell him.

"Yeah something delicious about hearing a grown man scream" Dominic says, pushing off the wall.

I pull my shirt over my head and walk toward the elevator hitting the button, the doors open and I step in and so does Dominic.

"I suppose I should call in the clean up crew," He says.

"Yes, the kitchen is filthy" I tell him. His eyes glaze over as someone mindlinks him. The elevators stop and I head for the main doors when Dominic grabs my arm.

"Fire exit, I will handle the police, but best you aren't seen leaving out the front. I will have the footage taken care of too" He says.

"Why?" I ask, as he opens a side door that reads fire exit.

"Like I said before I hate child abusers, and I feel responsible for what happened. I didn't think he would hurt his own nephew, doesn't matter why though we are both fathers and werewolves, this can't get out to the media Andrei, we aren't so different you and I. Now get your son home while I deal with the authorities"

"I will see you Tuesday then"

"That you will" He nods before heading toward the front exit.

I walk out and head back to my car, a crowd has formed around his body on the ground further up the street, police cars lined the street and I crossed the road heading back to the car. Climbing in, Jonah is asleep and my father looks at me.

"What happened?"

"I took care of it with Dominic's help" I tell him. "He helped you?" My father asks and I nod.

"Yes, he is bringing Kyan over for a play on Tuesday" I tell him and my father shakes his head shocked and I was shocked too but he seemed genuine and let me trash one of his units.

"Let's go home"

"Yes, and you should ring Sage, she has been ringing constantly" Malik says.