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"We would have to be 'on' all the time. That's why mom and dad had the rules about who could be on which floors at the packhouse and keeping the greenhouse completely private. It was so they could have moments away from everyone, even if they were only small bits of time."

Dakota's tone is just as strained as Oliver's but they are both trying to reign it in. It makes me smile.

"Alright, I just want time alone with you guys, whatever that means." I say as we pull up. "But first..." I practically jump from the truck before it's in park as Oliver tries to grab me. I use Sierra running at us as a distraction. She launches herself into my arms, which is a sight, I'm sure.

"Oh wow, you and your mates need to go find a dark corner for all of that s*xual tension." She giggles in my ear making a point to take a deep breath in.

I ignore her comment and look at her closely like I should be able to detect a change in her after being apart. "How are you feeling?"

She laughs. "Not much different than a few hours ago. You're going to be as bad as Sam aren't you?"

"And all the rest of the guys!" I giggle at her. "This is so exciting!" It feels so good to have something to smile about.

"I'm fine. I was able to get in touch with Mom. Her and Dad will be here in a few days and will more than likely overstay their welcome." She playfully rolls her eyes. I know how close she is with them and they are amazing. I

wouldn't want anyone else here with her and Jena.

"Can you blame them though? This is so exciting!" I pull her in for another hug. 1

"Well it won't be just me for long with the way your mates are looking at you right now." 1

She looks pointedly over my shoulder and I follow. They look like Alphas observing a scene, but to those of us who really know them, they are wound up tight. I don't know why I am in a teasing mood all of a sudden, but making them wait a little longer seems like the best course of action right now.

"Stop! I haven't even had my heat yet and for once I would really like something about me to be normal and not happen early." I bury my face in my hands feeling bad about feeling so selfish. I want kids, but not yet. I feel like we haven't stopped to breathe since we have been here. There is so much more we still need to do to put the pack back together.

"What about you is normal?" Jena asks as her and Lil walk up and hug us both. "Cause from where I'm standing 'normal' isn't even in your vocabulary."

"I told her her mates look like they want nothing more than to knock her up, but she doesn't want to hear that yet."

"Yeah, you have three of them. That's three times the chances. I'm surprised you aren't pregnant now." Lil bumps my shoulder with a big sh*t eating grin.

"Everything else happened early, why not your heat? And aren't you like part witch? They don't need to go into heat, remember?" Jena shrugs.

I grimace. "So not helping."

Oliver comes up behind me and wraps his arms around my shoulders. "Why are you giving Bitty a panic attack? What are you four up to?" Just his smell has me relaxing.

Jena waves her hand in front of my flat stomach. "We're taking bets on when the future alpha will be conceived. It's making her squirm." They all giggle. So much for girls sticking together.

At a choking sound behind me, I look up. I don't know if I've ever seen Oliver's face go slack. As the realization dawns on him. I couldn't help but laugh. He's not ready for any of this either, good.

"Come on big guy, let's go get everyone settled." Then I need a shower and a nap, I think.

The rest of the day was a blur of moving people into the homes that were still standing. We did our best to cluster everyone for now. I'm just so glad that we didn't have pups and our older members to deal with. They were all still safe in the Alpha King's care, but that was going to be my next project. We need to bring our pack members home. This war zone needs to be turned back into a home

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"We will do all of those things Tiny. But first you said you wanted a bath and a nap."

I slapped my hand over my mouth. "Did I say that out loud? We need to do one more check, to make sure everyone is covered..."

Dakota pinches my lips with his fingers. "Enough, you have done enough. We are not under any imminent

threat. All your warriors are fed and happy. All of your friends have left to go take a well earned break. You have been switched to 'fight mode' for too long, I don't think you even know where the 'off' switch is. Let's go."

He tries to turn me around. "But..."

Cam throws me over his shoulder. "No 'buts' Skylar. You are ours for the rest of the night. And let's be honest all day tomorrow." 1

"But..." I try again, propping my hands on Cam's butt to push myself up.

CRACK!

"OWW..What the hell." I squeal. I can't see who smacked my ass but all three of them are laughing. "That might actually leave a mark."

"For about five minutes, you're an Alpha."

"It's still my favorite sight." Oliver groans and I roll my eyes, just before I am thrown back in the truck.

"Wait, where are we going? All the houses are within walking distance."


"Not ours. We told you, boundaries are really important. This is one we are making and you are not getting a choice in."


Why is Cam's assertiveness giving me goosebumps down my arms? "Okay. So where exactly is our place?" I am ignored.

We are driving through the wilderness. I love our pack lands. We have so much area that is protected and won't ever be built on, it just lives in its natural state. Not

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manicured and trimmed up to fit the public demands. I lean on Oliver's shoulder and let myself drift off. It's finally over.

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