

The Alpha's Contract

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Chapter 0491

"Is that a threat?" Dane cocks an eyebrow at her.

"I just mean..."

*Can you stop lying?" Damien mutters. "Is it even possible? Do you not understand that Dane would be ringing for Ryan. No one else."

*Alpha Silas will know it's me. I'm the only one that has ever made it this far. I'm sure they are still looking."

Damien shakes his head and gets to his feet. He looks at me and shakes his head. "I can't do this anymore." He turns to Eris, "I, Damien Black, Beta of Black Shadow, reject you, Eris Neoma of Nightfall Pack as my mate." He spits the words

"No." she stands her ground. If she was hurting, she wasn't showing it.

"Accept." Damien demands. Being here was so uncomfortable. I glanced at Dane and I knew he was feeling exactly the same.

Tears flood her eyes as she clutches her chest. "I can't."

"Yes you can, say it!"

"I can't."

"Why?" Damien snaps.

"Because you don't mean it. You're angry with me because I didn't handle things well. Don't reject me because of that. Give me a chance." She begs

I watch him pinch the bridge of his nose. "You don't even want to be here. You keep asking to leave so accept the rejection and be on your way."

"You are supposed to protect me." she frowns.

*And I'm also supposed to like my mate! Normally I am willing to give people a chance to a certain degree, but you are impossible."

"I'm impossible? What the fuck does that mean?" She asks wide eyed

I quietly watch Dane tapping into a phone, neither Damien or Eris are aware as Damien tries to force her to accept the rejection. A few seconds pass and the phone beeps.

"Ryan is alive." Dane confirms. "Ashburn city is still going strong."

Eris's eyes are like saucers. She managed to stop Dane from ringing, but that hadn't stopped him from sending a message.

Damien rubs his temples. "Are you some sort of compulsive liar? Do you even know what the word 'truth' means?" "Why would you continue to lie?" I ask

Her golden eyes move to Damien like she was expecting him to bail her out, but if anything, he was even more pissed off. He sort of reminded me of a cartoon Raven had shown me, where smoke comes out of their ears.

*Do you even know Alpha Silas?" Dane asks

She looks to the floor

"Answer me!" Danes voice booms, making her jump

*Cooper told me about him." she whispers

"Cooper? Why would he tell you about him?"

She shrugs her shoulders, "Alpha Silas is related to you, isn't he?" Eris asks, "Cooper told me about the eyes. When I saw yours I knew you must be related somehow, it's such an odd colour. He told me a lot of stories about a crimson eyed man and his pack of animals."

"Did Cooper know him?"

She shrugs her shoulders

*And Ashburn city?" I press

"I don't know, just a name Cooper gave me."

"You've never met him?" Dane asks in confusion.

She slowly shakes her head

*You said you were his prisoner? Samara found you tied up." Damien mutters

"He kept me safe." She smiles like a mad woman

'He's dead and he is still somehow fucking with us.' Nyx tells me what everyone else is likely thinking

"Where are you really from?" I demand

"A place called White Cliffs. It's far away from here." Her eyes grow even wider. She had slipped and Damien could now reject her.

"I, Damien Black, Beta of Black Shadow, reject you, Eris Neoma of White Cliffs as my mate." He states it again, desperate to break the connection with her.

She felt it this time. I see it in her eyes. Pain, anger, confusion. She clutches her chest differently, like she thought her heart was going to jump out of her chest. She fights back the tears and hunches forward.

"Say it." Damien demands and for a brief moment, I hear Kyle, demanding me to accept his rejection.

"Are you going to kill me?" Eris begs

"Accept my rejection!"

Her breathing is heavy as she stares back at him.

"You are a compulsive liar, Eris. Not a single word out of your mouth can be trusted."

She lowers her eyes and whimpers. "I, Eris Neoma, accept your rejection, Damien Black, Beta of Black Shadow." She falls forward from the chair, curling up in a ball on the floor as she cries in pain. Damien stares down at her before leaving the room.

'Should we kill her? Dane asks through mindlink

I shake my head. What she is feeling, that won't go away. Not for a long time. Let her leave.'

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Dane

I cock an eyebrow at my mate. It was not the answer I was expecting. Shifting my gaze to Eris, I sigh as she remains curled up, sobbing. She reminded me of Raven and how she had been after rejection. The difference, I felt sorry for my sister whereas I felt nothing for this woman.

She had only been here for a short time and already she was a pain in my ass.

Pressing my lips to Neah's forehead. I tell her I will be back in a little while.

"Get up." I mutter to Eris.

She doesn't move and continues to whimper in pain, but she had brought it on herself. Damien would never be happy with her.

"Get up!" I snap, pulling her to her feet by her elbow.

"Where am I going?"

*There is no place for you here. You get to leave, just like you wanted." I tell her

"Really?"

I nod and guide her through the hospital. We pass Klaus but he doesn't say anything. He had done what he could, but it just wasn't going to work out. It would be too much of a risk to let her stay here. And she doesn't acknowledge him either.

She shuffles along at an awfully slow pace and I had to keep tugging her forwards.

"Wait, this isn't the direction of the gates." she protests. "The gates are over there." she points in the opposite direction.

"We are not going to the gates." I direct her into the forest.

"Why?"

*Too many eyes. And Damien doesn't want to see you." I murmur

"Okay. You will have to point me in the right direction once we get to a road. I'm getting all turned around."

I nod. She was already all turned around. "Cooper spoke of Silas?" I ask, wondering if I could get a tiny bit of truth from her.

"Yes. At first I thought they were made up stories, but after a while, I knew that they must be true."

"How?"

*Facts, small details. They never changed."

"Why did you panic when you saw me?" I ask

*Because you are the picture Cooper painted in my mind. You might look like him, you might not. But I do know

from the stories, he has eyes just like yours. Strange and weird for a Wolf."

"And you could be lying." I mutter as she scoots around a tree stump

"It's hard sometimes."

"What is?"

"Everything." She frowns as she ducks under a low tree branch

"Are you just saying it to try and get some sympathy votes, because that won't work on me."

"My mate just rejected me."

"I was there, I saw and heard everything. But what does that have to do with everything being hard?"

She stops and her golden eyes find mine. "Because people never see me for me."

"Understandable when you lie to everyone."

She scowls at me. "And you haven't lied?"

"I didn't say that, did I? Now keep walking?"

"He could have had me. I could have been his perfect mate, but no, I am not good enough."

"No, no you couldn't have. You are too much of a liability."

*Excuse me?!"

*Damien was right. It's impossible to tell what is a lie and what is the truth when it comes to you. You are all over the place. Scattered."

"I am not!"

*Then tell me who are you running from?"

"I told you."

"You did. Then you admitted it was a lie. That you had never met Silas. So who in White Cliffs are you running from?"

"No one."

"White Cliffs are not a local pack, they are far north. So you travelled a long way before Cooper."

"Why do you want to know?"

*Just curious. Plus I need to know who to alert about your death."

She tugs her arm free. "What?"

"I love my mate and usually, I would agree with her decision. But lately, things have become too problematic to allow you to live."

"You can just let me go. I won't say anything. I promise."

"That's the problem, Eris. You might be more believable if you had just told everyone the truth in the first place."

"I mean it." She begs, her voice going all squeaky. "I really won't say anything and I won't come back here. It will be like it never happened."

She takes a step backwards. Holding her hands up. "Neah said I could go. I heard her."

"Yes, she did say that. But did you not take notice of her surroundings? She was in a hospital, exhausted. She wasn't necessarily clear in her thinking, but I am."

With each step I take towards her, she backs up until her body crashes into a tree.

"Please!"

She freezes as a gun goes off, not even a second passes and I see the small bullet hole in the centre of her forehead. A tiny trickle of blood runs down between her eyes. The light dimming from them before her body slides down the tree trunk.

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"How long have you been following us?" I ask as his footsteps crunch on the ground.

Brax steps up behind me "Long enough."

"I was going to kill her."

"And if you had, it may just screw things up between you and Neah."

I spin around to look at him. "Neah understands more than you will ever know. I was going to kill Eris for her, for us, for our family. Letting her go would have been a mistake."

"We all know that." He walks to Eris who is still slumped against a tree. Using his fingers, he carefully closes her eyelids. "But Neah is pregnant and she is going to need you. And this way, you don't need to lie to her. Besides, Neah already knows that I will do what I need to do, to ensure that she and her babies are safe. That was the deal right?"

"I wasn't going to lie."

"Okay." He mutters, pulling Eris over his shoulder. "Let me deal with this, you head back."

I take my time going back to Neah. I wasn't sure why Brax thought I would lie to my mate. I had no intention of lying, that wasn't the agreement between Neah and I. I just needed to kill Eris first. At least now, she was another problem cut from our lives.

'Dane, come to mine!' Eric links me

What's the problem?'

'Um, it's a little too complicated for me to explain. Just hurry.'

Eric is outside with Luca and Logan when I arrive. "What's happening?"

"Evrin." He points to the house and I hear a crash come from inside. "Mall is trying to contain him."

"He's shifted?" I ask as there is another crash along with Mallory telling Evrin to stop.

Eric nods at me

I walk inside to a house looking like a tornado had ripped through it. Furniture was uprooted, broken dishes scattered the floor. Clothes and food had been flung around the room.

I hear Mallory upstairs, talking and trying to calm my son down. It's met with growls and footsteps pounding across the floor.

Evrin tears down the stairs towards me, throwing his Lycan frame at me. His arms lock around my neck as he buries his nose against me. His breaths are heavy and his heart races but as I hold him, I feel his body grow heavy and he slowly starts shifting back.

A frazzled Mallory descends the stairs, staring at me. "Is that really all it has taken?"

My eyes move over the trashed house. Evrin couldn't do a lot in Human form, but he could as a Lycan.

"Mumma." He whispers tearfully.

"I think we have found what this was all about." I look down at my son. He was a miniature version of her. But unlike Logan, Evrin seemed to know when something wasn't right with his mother.

"Is Neah okay?" Mallory asks

"She's resting, but she will be okay."

"Mumma." Evrin whispers again.

"Let's get dressed and go find her." I smile at him and tell Mallory that I will be back to clean up.

Logan stands up when I'm outside, holding his hands up and waiting to be picked up. In true sibling style, they start pushing each other, but start laughing when I carry them like footballs and purposely swing them through the air.

They are giggling all the way to the hospital and are desperate to get down when they see Neah. The boys scramble all over her, both fighting for attention as she hugs them and I feel my heart burst with pride.

If anyone had asked me a few years ago about my future children, I would have laughed in their face, but here they were and soon enough two would become four.

"Has she gone?" Neah asks as the boys settle down.

*You don't need to worry about her." I tell her

She studies me for a second. "Did you..."

"I was going to, but Brax beat me to it."

Her eyes remain on me as she combs her fingers through Logan's dark hair.

"I understand what you said, but after all that's happened..."

*She was too much of a risk." she bobs her head.

"We didn't know who she was or if Cooper was using her and she was playing us. This way. There isn't a chance that she can screw us over."

"Okay. What about Silas? Do we need to be ready for him?"

"Maybe, maybe not. But he isn't my priority right now. He might just be a story. Cooper may have found out a few things to try and use against us. If something comes, I will deal with it."

*I would prefer it if nothing happened for a while."

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Damien

*Rejecting Eris was the right thing to do." Mallory sighs as she rocks back and forth, cradling Luca.

I glance around her chaotic home, "And I'm pretty sure she is dead now anyway."

She freezes. "Care to explain?"

"I was going home to check on Dottie but I changed direction to come here. I saw Dane take her into the forest and shortly after, Brax followed. Dane came out."

"But Brax and Eris didn't?"

"Exactly."

"Are you feeling guilty? Because that isn't like you."

"I'm not sure what I feel. Everything that I've been working so hard to ignore and bury, has come right back to the surface. When the hold on Eris broke and I realised who she was, all I could think about was Raven and what happened to her."

"You know that what happened to her was not normal."

*Is anything about us normal?" I cock an eyebrow at her.

*Okay, poor choice of words." she mutters.

"What I'm saying is, I don't understand how Eris could have been mated to me. She was a self righteous, crazy bitch. And that is putting it lightly."

Mallory laughs at me. "Yep, definitely not your type."

"And Dottie hated her."

"Dorothy does have a pretty clear view on who she likes and who she doesn't. Speaking of Dorothy, how is she doing now that things have changed with Kade."

"Better."

"And Kade? What is going to happen to him now?"

"Now Cooper is dead, I think that he will be allowed out. He will probably not be able to go anywhere on his own for a while."

*Just like his sister."

I hadn't given much thought to Blair. She had kept her head down and got on with everything. "I'm going to head home."

*Sure you don't want to stay?"

"No, I need to clear my head."

ANA

I stand at the front door of my home, listening to Dottie squealing with pure happiness. For a moment it reminded me of how Raven had made her laugh. Each and every time I had heard it in the past, Raven had always been right there with her.

Dottie appears at the window, her skin flushed and what looked like beads in her hair. "Are you coming inside, Daddy?"

"I will be back in a minute. Is that okay?"

"Okay, but hurry, me and Sammie have a surprise." I couldn't get over how much Dottie liked Sammie when everyone else around here had a problem with her.

I take the long way around to the small cemetery. I hadn't set foot here since the day Raven and her twin were buried. I didn't have the words then and I'm not sure if I do now.

The cemetery was kept spotless. Weeds and fallen leaves had been removed and brightly coloured flowers lined each grave. I stand at the edge of hers. My hands in my pockets and silently wishing that she had never given up on life. That she had found a way to tell me that she was done.

I still blamed myself. I had watched her fade and the little things I did to stop her fading further, were just not enough. I should have tried more. I should have made her more of a priority. I should have fought harder for her. "You couldn't have changed anything."

I glance up to see Brax. Dirt all over his face and a shovel over his shoulder.

"I thought I would find you here. I did the exact same thing when I realised Madison was my mate. I returned to my first mate's grave."

He lowers the shovel, balancing it against the small gate and makes his way over to me.

"You wish that things had been different. That you could have found a way to save her. Trust me, I know. I saw it that night and it's also the way I felt about my wife."

"When my mate and children were taken from me, I went on a mission, hunting and slaughtering every Rogue could find in my search for Blair and Dorothy. I didn't stop because I didn't want to feel. You distanced yourself, because the slightest conversation about her brings you right back to feeling this." He points at Ravens grave.

"Is that why you don't spend any time with your daughter?" I snap

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*She looks just like her." He murmurs. "The eyes, the hair, even those little cheek dimples. I should be more than happy that she looks just like her mother."

"It's a constant reminder of what you lost." I sigh

*I love her. She is mine and she will always be mine."

We stood in silence for a few minutes. "Is Eris dead?"

"Yes."

I nod, "Raven would have hated her. I don't understand why I was paired with her."

*The higher powers work in mysterious ways. But I do have a theory,"

*Please enlighten me." I mutter with an eye roll.

*You were Human once."

"That's all you've got?"

*The story is that each and everyone of us has a life expectancy. A day where we can no longer recover or heal from whatever is thrown at us. Part of that story includes us

finding our mates. But Wolves and Lycan mates are decided long before we even touch this Earth."

"If that were the case, why are Lycans being mated to Wolves?"

He shrugs his shoulders at me. "As I said. It was decided long ago. But your kind threw a spanner in the works." "Lycans?"

"Bitten Lycans. Maybe it was something they didn't see coming."

*That makes no sense. If our mates were already chosen, then they would have known we were in the works otherwise we wouldn't be mated."

He looks up to the sky. "Or maybe they are just playing with our lives and throwing challenge after challenge at us. A game of survival. But we all die in the end. That much is guaranteed."

I cock a brow at him, "Did you eat some mushrooms when you were in the forest?"

He smiles at me. "No, but sometimes we are missing what is right in front of us, Damien." He walks to the gravestone and places his hand on it as he looks back at me. "She was your step to finding the one that you are supposed to be with."

"Are you talking about Eris or Raven?"

"Maybe both." He picks up the shovel as he walks away.

Sometimes, I was certain he was high on something.

Lowering myself to the grass, I stare at her gravestone for far too long. Wondering what she would think of all that has happened.

Maybe Brax was right. Maybe she did have an expiration date and was never meant to live this long. But I knew a part of her would always be with me.

It's late when I get back. Samara is sitting on the sofa, with her hands clasped around a mug as she practically inhales the coffee. I glance around the room. Sheets were stretched out everywhere being held up with pegs and string.

*Sorry, we made a den. Dorothy wanted to show you, but she crashed out."

"She's asleep?"

She nods at me as puts her mug down. "She had a bath. A story and is asleep in her bed."

I glance over my shoulder towards the stairs and furrow my brow. "She hasn't made a sound?" There were very few people who she would allow to tuck her in. "How long has she been asleep?"

She glances up to the clock. "About an hour. When you didn't come back, I told her that you might have been called to do something for the pack and that she was fine." She pauses and frowns. "Sorry, did you not want me to

"It's surprising, that's all. Excuse me for a minute."

Quietly moving upstairs, I poke my head around Dottie's door. She's sprawled out on her stomach. Her light brown hair is braided and soft snores fill the quiet. It was odd to see her so relaxed in her sleep and not curled up in a tight ball. And the teddy bear that she had been given not long after I rescued her was on the floor instead of in a death grip.

*Is everything okay?" Samara asks as I make my way down the stairs.

"Yes. There has just been a lot happening today. A few things I need to wrap my head around."

She smiles at me and nods. "Do you want to talk?"

"Not yet."

"Okay, do you mind if I get some sleep. Your kid is great but I am exhausted. It's been a long time since I've been this active." She lets out a small laugh

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*Sure, take the bed. I will sleep on the couch."

*Thank you, Damien." She runs up the stairs as I settle on the sofa

Dottie talks her ear off at breakfast. Between mouthfuls of cereal, Dottie tries to give Samara every detail she could think of when it comes to school. I couldn't get a word in anywhere and instead, I found myself watching Samara.

Her grey eyes are bright as she listens to every word that comes from Dottie's mouth. And I was still surprised that Dottie had slept through the night without a single nightmare and because I couldn't quite believe it, I hadn't slept a wink. Well that and the fact I couldn't get Raven out of my head.

"Daddy?"

I blink a few times and smile at Dottie.

"When am I going to shift?" she asks curiously and the question catches me by surprise,

"When you are much older."

"But Evrin can." Dottie smiles at me, 'and he can barely walk."

"Neah's twins?" Samara asks

"Yes.

"One of them can shift?"

I nod

"Is that a thing?"

"Neah could when she was young."

"Wow. Do you know if my mother could?" she asks with a frown

"I don't know. I don't think there is much information on your mother and I think it's more to do with who Neah is."

"The last female Alpha." Dottie proudly announces and she looks at Samara. "Don't be sad about your mummy. I don't have one either and I'm okay."

Samara looks away, running her hand through her short blonde hair, it was starting to grow out, though she still hated it. I liked it, it suited her.

"Go get ready." I tell Dottie. She shoves another spoonful in her mouth and runs off towards the stairs.

"You want to find out about your mother?" I ask.

She frowns at me. "Yes and no. I understand that Neah and I are cousins and that our mothers were sisters. I know she gave me up to my dad. I know that she wasn't ready to have me. But that doesn't stop me from being curious about her. What was she like? Do I carry any of her traits? Do I resemble her?" She sighs. "Then there is the part of me that wonders if it's better this way. I can't see what I missed out on."

She passes me as she takes the dishes to the sink. Holding out her hand she waits for my mug. Her fingers catch mine as I hand it over. A sharp current makes its way up through my finger and I almost drop the mug.

Samara doesn't react to the spark. Instead she asks me if I didn't get enough sleep while slowly taking the mug from me.

*The brain is on overdrive." I tell her

"I take it you didn't talk to Eris then." she mutters with her back to me

"We talked and I rejected her."

I see her freeze, but she doesn't turn around.

"I was at the hospital with Neah and Dane. Neah wanted to talk with her, and everything that came out of her mouth was a lie."

"I lied." she whispers and I hear the sadness in her tone

"It was different. You were being forced to do something you didn't want too. She just kept spewing more and more shit. Making demands. She couldn't even look Neah or Dane in the eye as she was bullshitting them. And that Alpha Silas, was just something Cooper had told her."

"So it's not true? There is no Wolf that is trying to claim power?"

"No."

*Are you sure?" She turns around to face me, supporting herself on the counter. "They seem to come out of nowhere. And she did say she was running from him."

"I can't be sure about anything these days. But Alpha Ryan of Ashburn City is alive and well. It hasn't been taken over. Eris came from a place called White Cliffs."

She frowns at me. "I know that name."

"White Cliffs?"

"Dad told me that was where he met my mother."

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Samara

"Your mother was in White Cliffs?" Damien's dark eyes lock on mine and I try to ignore how much I wanted him to kiss me. To feel his lips on mine now. To lift me up on the counter behind me.

'Make the first move.' Dakota cheers me on

"It's not like I know anything more than that." I shake my head, ignoring Dakota and wondering if I should have mentioned it when they confirmed Neah was my cousin. But it wasn't something I had been thinking about. "I only know what I have already told you. She didn't want me. And other than Dad telling me where they met, he never spoke about her. No matter how much I asked."

I sigh and lower my gaze. "Sometimes, I wish I could speak to him, just for a chance to get a tiny bit more information. Does that make sense?" "You should have said something?"

"I didn't think it was important." I run my thumb across my finger tips, I'm certain I had felt something when my hand brushed his. A spark, some kind of heat snaking up my hand, it had taken my breath away but he hadn't said anything. So I kept my mouth shut.

'It's your chance.' Dakota mutters

'He is still hung up on Raven. And I don't even know what I felt. It's not like I can smell him.'

"Was that where your mother lived?" Damien interrupts my conversation with Dakota.

I shrug my shoulders, feeling a strange fluttering in my chest. There was just something about the way he looked at me. Not like I was a bad person and not like I was just around. Like he could see me for me.

"Is that the original location of the Kitson family?" He asks

"I don't know. My father would never say anything more."

"But Eris was a Wolf!" He mutters to himself

"There are Wolves and Lycans here. Maybe they did the same there." I hunch my shoulders up

"That doesn't make sense. Eris didn't know about Lycans. Or if she did, she was very good at hiding it. Then again, that could be a possibility when she lied about so much other shit."

"Why wouldn't those Lycans have come here?" I ask. I knew Neah had called them in. Blair had told me that much.

"It was never an order. She gave them a choice." He moves away from me and I didn't realise how tense I had been over our closeness. "But that would mean they are aware of her."

"Wouldn't Klaus have known? You told me he is a researcher."

"Depends how well the information was hidden. We will drop Dottie off to school and you can come with me to Eric's place and speak to Neah."

He comes close to me again and I

on

hold my breath as his hand rests on my shoulder sending another sharp spike of something. "This might actually be helpful Samara."

I could feel the blush creeping up my chest and knew it would show itself on my face at any second if I didn't excuse myself.

"I just need to go wash up." I blurt and hurry past him.

Running up the stairs, I slip into the bedroom and quietly close the door. Leaning against it, I let out a sigh. This crush was stupid. It made me feel like a teenager. And he was off limits. We are not even mated. And then there is the fact that he still longs for his first mate.

'You're overthinking it.' Dakota murmurs.

'Please don't encourage this.'

'I don't have anything to do with it. This is your natural reaction to him. I'm just enjoying the ride.'

'So helpful.' I whisper

In the bathroom, I stare at my reflection in the mirror. My hair was stuck out everywhere, not that there was much of it.

Running the water, I flatten it down until it looks somewhat tidy. The day that it is back to its long length, it will be extremely satisfying.

There's a knock on the door followed by Dorothy calling for me. "Daddy has asked if you are ready. We need to leave."

"I will be right there."

Splashing my face with cold water, I

take a deep breath and make my way to the top of the staircase.

Damien is waiting at the bottom et

Leaning against the wall with a foot propped up as Dorothy races back and forth, calling out a list of all the things she needed for her session.

"Dottie, we do this almost every day. I promise you, you have everything."

"But..."

"If there is something you need. I'm sure your teacher will let you borrow it or she can link me and I will drop it off."

He was so good with her and she wasn't even biologically his.

'Our children are going to be beautiful.'

"Dakota!" I shout mortified at her words

Damien and Dorothy look up the stairs at me. Both wide eyed and full of curiosity.

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"She's winding me up about my short hair." I lie, completely and utterly embarrassed.

"Well Dakota." Damien mutters as he stares at me. "I think it suits her."

My stomach practically trips over itself. Compliments were never said to me.

He offers me a smile. "Are you ready?"

I nod when I don't seem to be able to form any words.

Dorothy holds my hand as we walk to the school. But I could see the looks. I could feel the judgement. A couple of days ago I had been locked in a dungeon because I wasn't trustworthy and now I was walking with the Beta to the pack school.

We come to a stop and I see Blair with a young boy. Her brother I assume. I watch him hug her before he hurries inside. As she turns to leave, she spots me. I could see the immediate anger in her eyes. She hated me for keeping her in the dark, for lying to her and letting her trust me.

I open my mouth to apologise, but she walks straight by without a single look back.

"She will get over it." Dorothy tells me as she lets go of my hand. Throwing her arms around me, she squeezes me tight and tells me to make sure Neah sees the sticker. And puts another one on the tshirt that I'm wearing

"Do I get a hug?" Damien mutters as Dorothy starts to walk away.

"You should hug Sammie." She smiles and runs in through the school doors.

He doesn't respond and just sort of stares ahead. Clearing his throat he asks me if I'm ready to speak to Neah.

"As ready as I can be." I had made sure I had eaten enough breakfast to last me a while, just in case she puts me back in the dungeon.

Damien doesn't say another word to me as we walk by the ruined packhouse. There were already people inside, clearing the rubble.

We stop at a house further along. There is a lot of noise coming from inside as Damien knocks on the door.

Dane answers. His strange crimson eyes casually drift over me before he invites us both inside.

Neah is sitting on the sofa with her feet up on a small ottoman. The twin that looks most like Neah is clinging to her while the other one is pushing toy cars down a little ramp and squealing as they shoot across the floor.

"How are you feeling?" Damien asks her

"Like I'm being watched constantly." She murmurs, looking at Dane

"I'm just making sure you are getting what you need." He mutters back

She rolls her eyes and they settle on me. "How are you finding things?"

"Um, I've pretty much just been at Damien's house. I did go for a walk with Dorothy, but that's it. I promise." I really wanted to stay out of the dungeons, I hated being down there alone.

"No trouble." Damien confirms. "Samara has actually been quite helpful."

There was just something about the way he said my name. He made me sound far more exotic than I am.

"But you have something to tell us?" Dane asks

"I told Samara about some of the things Eris said." Damien tells them. "Particularly the story that Eris is from a pack called White Cliffs." Damien gestures to me.

"Apparently that is where my Dad met my Mum." I blurt out.

"Your mother?" Dane asks

I nod. "And before you ask, that was all my father said. He never gave me any more information. I knew more about Cooper's mother than my own."

Dane starts asking the same

questions that Damien did.

Questioning why Wolves and Lycans

existed in the same location. If Eris had lied about her knowledge. They pretty much have the same conversation as me and Damien, only this time, Damien tells him what I had said.

I see Neah watching me, but I keep my mouth closed. It's easier that I didn't talk see how she moves the twin that is hugging her. He is fast asleep, yet he looks so much like her. He must be the one that can shift.

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"White Cliffs were never mentioned to you?" Dane asks Neah.

"As far as I'm aware, I always lived in Moonshine. But then again, I don't know much, other than what happened to me." Creases appear in her forehead as she frowns. "Is that where the rest of my family are?"

"Not necessarily." I mutter

Her eyes snap to mine.

"You are the Alpha. You became Alpha because your mother died. She would have been Alpha too, right? But it normally passes down when either the parent has died or they've completed a ceremony, right?"

They are all looking at me.

"There might not be anyone there. But then there might be others, a wider family." I shrug my shoulders. Deep down, I wanted to go. I wanted to know more about my mother. I wanted to know what she was like. Someone there must have known her.

Chapter 0499

Neah

'She could be right.' Nyx murmurs. 'There could be more out there.'

'Even if there are, they never bothered to look for me? You know as well as I do that they would have felt it when my binding was broken. They would have heard me when I linked everyone. Not one of them has even tried to contact me. Not one of the Lycans here have mentioned White Cliffs.' Dane watches me as I shuffle Evrin around, trying to get comfortable. I don't remember feeling like this so early on when I was pregnant with the boys.

I frown when I could feel Dane searching my mind, looking for some clue on my silence.

"Do you really believe that was where your parents met?" I finally ask Samara.

She hikes her shoulders up around her chin and lowers her gaze. "I don't know. I just." She frowns. "When Damien told me the name, it rang a bell. Like a forgotten piece of information, hiding in my brain. I hadn't even thought about her until Dakota arrived and now it's like an itch I need to scratch."

After a brief pause, she looks up at us. "You know, find out about her and learn about that side that makes up my gics."

"We know what you mean." Damien speaks softly to her and I watch as she gives him a small smile. Her cheeks slowly turn rosy. Quickly, she starts talking to me again, trying to hide the blush that was deepening the colour on her cheeks.

"Don't you wonder? If it really is a place where our bloodline runs deep, don't we deserve to know?" Samara presses and points at my twins. "Don't they deserve to know everything about themselves?"

I couldn't hide my scowl. I already knew where this was going. She wanted to go to White Cliffs. And in a weird way, she was asking my permission.

"I need time to think." I mutter. "It's not a simple case of packing up and heading to a pack I've never heard of. I have kids."

"She is also pregnant." Dane adds, "And supposed to be taking it easy." He gives me a look that dares me to agree to this stupid idea.

"Klaus." I murmur to Damien. "Go and ask him if he can find any other information on White Cliffs other than them being up north. And take Samara with you."

"No dungeon?" Samara asks quickly.

"For now, no." I confirm. She had a hand in killing her brother, letting her have a bit of breathing space was the least I could reward her with. She smiles at me. "I won't let you down."

Damien is grinning at her too, and not in a 'we're just friends way'. He liked her more than that, but she seems to be completely unaware.

They leave together and Dane sits next to me as Logan climbs up on to his lap. "Did you see what I saw?"

I nod. "They will figure it out. It's not our business."

"I don't think they're mates."

I shrug my shoulders. "Eric wasn't mated to his wife."

"True." He throws a giggling Logan up into the air and catches him

easily. You really don't want to

know anymore about your background do you?"

I shake my head. "If the way my parents tried to get rid of me is anything to go by. I can only imagine the others, if there are any, they are probably just as bad."

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"It's not necessarily all of them. And in no way am I trying to defend your parents for their actions. But maybe they weren't prepared for you. Maybe they didn't know that you shifting so early was a possibility He frowns, "The whole situation has me thinking about what Blair said in the early days. How she wanted what was hers. To take the pack as she was the eldest even though it was never your fathers. It sounds like your mother may have left everything behind to be with him. To set up a new life and there were a bunch of them that followed."

"You think they were some kind of forbidden couple?"

"Possibly. Maybe your father was nobody and your grandparents didn't want them together."

"Does that happen? They were fated mates." I ask

"It happens more than you realise."

"It would explain why Moonshine was always hidden."

Chapter 0500

He nods his head and bounces Logan on his knees. "And why Trey was so desperate to make a deal with me. Who were they preparing to fight against?"

"You think they were going to fight White Cliffs?"

"The eagerness. The unwillingness to read the contract even when warned. How he so easily agreed to letting you come with me. It sounds like we missed something. Never have I had an Alpha that has been so desperate to make a contract with me without reading through my terms and conditions. Normally, it has always been the other way around. I would practically force them into it, but I would still give them a chance to opt out, if it suited me."

He pulls faces at Logan as he catches him, "But Trey was beyond desperate. It may not have been that they were going to fight, but maybe the plan was to protect themselves and they did not in any way have the numbers. They needed help."

"What would they have been fighting over?"

His crimson eyes lock on mine.

"Me?" I scoff

"Your mother had died. You had become the Alpha. Though Trey and Cassandra were pretty quick at binding you again. But you said it yourself, the day you turned eighteen, for a short while, you were unbound again. If you had stayed that way long enough, Nyx may have shown up and they would have been able to find you. They couldn't locate you when you were bound."

"You really think they were coming for me? Because that sounds insane."

"In the grand scheme of things, does it?"

"They could have come and found me at any point since I've been here." I mutter

"They could have. Or maybe something changed. Maybe they realised just how powerful you can really be and have decided that it's best to keep their distance."

"That is just crazy."

"Is it? Think about how things have happened. And I'm not talking about the stuff that happened to you. Changing Humans into Lycans long before they attacked us and long before I was in the picture. Damien has said Cassandra did it because they would be great weapons. Yes they had plans for you, but it seems like they must have had other plans too, because I didn't know you until I set eyes on you in that office of Treys."

"Even if we consider that what you are saying is true, why would they have come for me?"

"To take you back to where you should live. Raise you to be the strong female Alpha that you are."

I shuffle over and slide Evrin onto Danes' lap so I can get up. I loosely retie my hair into its bun, ignoring the escaped strands as I mull over Danes words.

"It's a lot of maybes!" I sigh

"It is, I'm just trying to work through

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possible scenarios. Maybe it was because they knew your parents tried to abandon you. Maybe, they were trying to save you. Maybe they wanted to offer you something better."

"Anything would have been better than the crap Trey and the others put me through. Practically starving, dehydrated and barely able to stand sometimes without the room

spinning. All I ever wanted was to be Content

accepted for who I am" vel

"Like I said, it's only theories. We don't know if any of it is the truth." He shrugs his shoulders at me

"But you think I should consider it?"

"I think you should do whatever it is you need to do. I'm not forcing you either way. This has to be your choice."

"As I said to Nyx, not one of them

has bothered to contact me when

they could have quite easily done so. I'm not chasing after something that doesn't need to be chased after. Besides, I am carrying another set of twins. Would you really be letting me travel way up north when we don't know what we will be walking into?"

"You have a point." He smiles

"If Klaus can give Damien something that is worth investigating, I might consider it, but not until these are here." I pat my stomach. "We could try and sift through the links to find them." Nyx offers

'No.' I mutter. I wanted the quietness to last. I wanted to focus on the pack and my growing family. Especially with my ever shifting son.