

Alpha Nocturne's Contracted Mate Chapter 296

Alpha Nocturne's Contracted Mate by A E Randell

Chapter 296 Things Changed

Lord Brarthroroz guided Lexi over to one of the chairs around the table and gestured towards the flap of the tent.

"Make sure no one enters for the time being, Steve." He said with an air of resignation to his voice as he took a seat next to his daughter. Steve nodded expressionlessly as he moved to the open flap, released the material to close it and ducked through to stand outside.

"You two should sit as well," Lord Brarthroroz advised as he gestured to the seats across from Lexi, "This isn't easy for me to talk about." He continued with a grunt.

Greyson and Allen moved to comply and took their seats next to each other, both of them focused on Lexi.

Lord Brarthroroz sighed as he turned back to his daughter and cupped her face fondly.

"Before I start, I want you to understand that before your mother and I had you, neither of us realized just how deeply we could love and the desire to protect you from harm eclipsed everything else in our lives completely." He said gently as Lexi smiled.

"I know Papa, don't worry. I've always known that you both loved me. I know the orphanage wasn't a choice you took lightly..."

"It just wasn't safe in my realm Lexi. There are far too many corrupting influences there and I know your mother would have wanted you to love your own opinions before being exposed to my world." Lord Brarthroroz murmured regretfully. "I wanted desperately to keep you close, but it was all that I could do to ensure that you were safe here, beyond certain people's reach as you grew."

"I mean... it was an experience that I would rather forget, but I understand why you did it Papa," Lexi smiled reassuringly as her father returned her smile with sadness in her eyes.

"After your mother died... or at least I thought she had died, you were all that I had left of her," He snarled suddenly as his fist clenched tightly, "If I had known that Eromaug had taken her then I would have done everything I could to get her back."

Lexi reached across and laid her hand on his arm, squeezing lightly.

"I know Papa. I just don't understand why Eromaug wants me..." She sighed looking up at her father with pleading eyes, "If all of this is because Eromaug wants something from me then I deserve to know. Mother, Aoife and countless others have suffered because of this, if I can do something to get them back..."

All three men growled loudly at her words and she narrowed her eyes at them.

"I will not sit back and do nothing. If he has my mother, and has Aoife... and is willing to invade a realm just because of me then what the f**k am I supposed to do?! Let him continue his murderous rampage?!" She snorted, "All of you are f*****g insane if you think I'm going to sit idly by and do nothing. I just want to know WHY he is after me. At least tell me that. I need to understand, Papa."

An uncomfortable silence seemed to fill the tent until Lexi couldn't bear it anymore.

"Look, if you won't tell me Papa, then there is nothing stopping me from seeking out Eromaug and hearing it from his own mouth." She hissed angrily, "f*****g secrets won't get anyone anywhere, if anything, you're only making yourself complicit in any future deaths by not telling me!"

"You don't understand how difficult this is Lexi. You are my daughter..."

"Then tell me! I can't change what has happened in the past, but we might be able to stop something in the future if we know everything Papa! You would hate for me to lie to you...how can I trust you if I know that you're keeping secrets from me!"

Lord Brarthroroz flinched as an expression of hurt flickered across his face, the sight of it pulling painfully at Lexi's heart, but it yielded the results she wanted and her father began to speak.

"Eromaug hasn't always been this... homicidal. Petulant, wild, jealous and irrational, sure. When you were very young, somehow the news had reached him that I had found my mate and sired a child. He was curious and approached me..."

Lord Brarthroroz sighed deeply, "He had been polite and courteous to your mother at his first introduction, and we both felt that perhaps being more involved with his family and this realm would soften him slightly. He had never experienced the utter joy of a close family relationship and the incredible feeling of love...we thought we could help with that."

Lord Brarthroroz hung his head slightly as Lexi listened intently. She couldn't ever remember meeting Eromaug before, yet... he did feel familiar.

"When he first met you, he was smitten. You couldn't have been more than two years old and you were so tiny ..." His lips curved upwards at the memory as he spoke, "He instantly felt the same protective instinct towards you and you adored him Lexi. At the

time, it made both your mothers heart and mine soar with happiness to see the close bond you were already forming at that age.”

“But as you got older,” His smile faded suddenly as he met Lexi’s gaze once more and his expression seemed to harden, “Things changed.”

When he didn’t elaborate Lexi bit back a sigh of frustration.

“But how? What happened Papa? I don’t even remember him from my childhood.”

“You were never supposed to,” He answered softly with a wry smile, “Things became inappropriate Lexi. He became reckless and possessive over you, and it wasn’t until you hit twelve years old that he made a claim on you that I refused to accept.”

Allen and Greyson growled lightly, as if they could almost guess at what he was going to say next and Lexi’s stomach sank. Lord Brarthroroz’s steely gaze and the disgusted sneer that spread on his face chilled her to the bone.

“He claimed that you were to be his life mate,” He spat furiously, “I refused to acknowledge his claim, nor give him my blessing...even when he promised to wait until you came of age and this angered him greatly Lexi. He did everything in his power to turn you against your mother and I and after he crossed the line yet again, I made a decision that you may hate me for, but I do not regret it for a second.”

“What did you do...” Lexi breathed, her heart racing in her chest so fast that she felt it would burst out.

“I blocked your memories of your time with him and sealed your recognition of him.” Lord Brarthroroz said flatly, “To you, it was as if he never existed in the first place.”

Lexi blinked at him in shock.

“Eromaug was supposed to be my mate?!” She breathed in shock, “What...”

“Perhaps it would be easier to show you the reasons why, Lexi.” Lord Brarthroroz said over the outraged snarls from where Allen and Greyson were seated, “Now that you have your mates at your side, I am confident that you will see the wisdom in my actions. At the very least, even if you do not, they will understand why I did what I did.”

He reached across and took hold of Lexi’s hand, staring at her intently as Lexi realized that she couldn’t pull her gaze away from him.

“Papa... what are you doing?!” she murmured, frozen in place and unable to move.

“Steve was right. It’s time you knew everything.” He murmured softly as he reached his free hand across and pressed two fingers to her forehead.

Lexi only had a second before the pressure built to an unbearable level in her head and her vision went black.

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Chapter 297 Because of His Obsession

Lexi knew that she was still conscious, but the pressure that engulfed her head, and the rigidity of her body teamed with the almost distant voices of protest from Allen and Greyson let her know that she had no control over what was happening right now.

The initial black curtain that had descended was suddenly filled with hundreds upon hundreds of memories from her childhood, all played out in glorious technicolor and accompanied by sounds and smells that made her heart ache with familiarity and her breath catch in her chest.

There was no way that she could catch each and every memory at once, but she could see it clearly. The bond that both she and Eromaug had shared at an early stage was filled with love and an intensity that she had known only with Allen and Greyson.

By the time the images had begun to fade in her mind's eye and her vision returned, she was overwhelmed with emotions. As she sat there trembling, clasping her hands together tightly so that she wouldn't cry with the feeling of loss and grief that threatened to overwhelm her, her father's hand was placed gently on her shoulder.

She looked up at him and as their eyes met she could see the genuine remorse that he held in his eyes and a deep concern for her that radiated nothing but love. Soon, she felt Allen and Greyson's arms around her too, as they stood at her back, each holding one side of her and the mere contact with them helped to ease the feelings of despair that her traitorous heart filled her with.

"I'm truly sorry that I took these from you Lexi, but at the time, I really had no other choice." Lord Brarthroroz said softly, "He was becoming dangerous and I refused to allow our pride and joy to be sucked into his madness."

Lexi nodded softly. "I know Papa." she whispered, her voice breaking slightly as she reached for his hand, "I understand. I don't blame you for anything that has happened."

"If anything, he saved you from corruption Lexi," Greyson growled, "We will never let him hurt you... ever."

"Then... all of this is because of me though?" She asked, more to confirm it than really wanting to know the real answer.

Lord Brarthroroz shook his head fiercely.

“No. Not because of you, Lexi. Because of his obsession. Tell me, what rational person would kidnap the mother of the one they proclaim to love and stage her murder? Or send someone to unknowingly stage the murder of a friend, only for it to turn out that she too, is probably alive somewhere?”

“That’s not even counting the invasion of this realm with Dark that he can claim and control the throne of Werewolves....” Allen spat furiously.

“But without me...”

“Stop it Lexi.” Greyson said firmly as she turned to look at him, “None of this is your fault, exactly as your father said. The blame lies with Eromaug. What we need to do now is focus on getting the injured and that baby to safety and finding whatever pockets of the Coven that are left.”

“Greyson is right,” Allen added, “Once that is done, we can focus on seeking out where Eromaug may have gone and either preventing his return to the realm if that’s even possible, or destroying him once and for all.”

“Both of you are right, however, you cannot stop Eromaug from entering here.” Lord Brarthroroz said grimly, “The way forward lies with an alliance with one, or many, of the Daemon Lords to help protect from further incursions into this kingdom.”

All three of them turned their gaze to Lord Brarthroroz’s thoughtful expression as he mulled over the options.

“Are you able to offer that alliance?” Allen asked carefully. “Of course.” He shrugged as if it was no big deal, “But it will rest heavily on your Queen’s diplomatic prowess as to how well the inhabitants of this country take our presence.”

“If anyone can swing this, Ann and I can,” Lexi answered, “But perhaps not any of those massive Cambion’s and their handlers, hmm?” she smiled weakly as Lord Brarthroroz chuckled.

“No. Not those Cambion’s Lexi. They are only suited for serious conflicts where eradication is the goal.” The half hearted smile on his face faded as his eyes filled with concern once more, “There is one thing, though Lexi...”

Lord Brarthroroz sighed deeply as he looked between Lexi and her mates.

“With the release of these memories, you may begin to have nightmares as the memories begin to surface. Now, more than ever, you will need both of your mates’ support.” He cautioned as an unreadable look passed between Allen and Greyson. “We will do everything that we can, sir.” Greyson nodded.

"I will also caution you both," Lord Brarthroroz smiled humorlessly as his eyes flicked to Allen, but soon focused solely on Greyson, "Lexi is not a prize to be won and if you wish to possess her only for yourself... you will find yourself not liking the outcome. I want to take this opportunity to remind you that my daughter's anger is quick to rise and mine... even more so. She has been generous in her... understanding of your nature thus far Greyson, but I doubt that her patience will last much longer."

Greyson's eyes widened slightly before his jaw clenched tightly as he instantly understood Lord Brarthroroz's meaning.

"Papa!" Lexi exclaimed as her cheeks flushed lightly, "I can look after myself you know?"

"I am fully aware of that Lexi. My hope is that now that they have both seen what you are capable of, they will realize just how powerful you are and that if you wanted to, you could probably end their lives in the blink of an eye." He shrugged nonchalantly as he sat back in his chair.

A moment of tense silence passed between them, as Lord Brarthroroz's eyes seemed to bore into Greyson's soul, until finally, Greyson inclined his head.

"I understand, sir." He ground out, trying his best to sound sincere, "I promise that I will try to do better."

"Excellent!" Lord Brarthroroz grinned suddenly as Lexi groaned quietly and shook her head in embarrassment, "Now, I don't really want Lexi hanging around here too much longer. There is still a risk that Eromaug may suddenly decide in his madness to reappear and attempt to snatch her."

"That will never happen while we are here!" Greyson growled protectively as Lord Brarthroroz chuckled.

"I admire your spirit, but against my brother? I have little doubt as to who would emerge the victor whilst we are in this state." He said matter of factly ignoring the look of injured pride that flashed across

Greyson's face, "I have more reinforcements on the way to ensure that the village and the containment facility is secured and I would prefer it if you both personally escorted my daughter and the baby back to the relative safety of the Enclave."

"Is it really much safer there than anywhere else though Papa?" Lexi grimaced as he squeezed her shoulder reassuringly.

"You would be surprised, my daughter. The shifters' natural suspicion and rejection of magick has actually left Eromaug with little to no access through his normal means to their important cities. It is safer than most places by my assessment."

Lexi nodded and looked up at both Allen and Greyson.

“Looks like you two will have to tolerate each other and a screaming baby all the way back to the Enclave then.” She grinned, “I doubt I’ll notice the difference between you three though.”

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Chapter 298 Save the Baby

Ann and Adam stood on the front steps of the Enclave, eagerly waiting for the return of both of their Beta's. Adam chuckled as Ann fidgeted with her hands and struggled to stand still, her gaze fixed on the curve of the driveway.

“They’ll be here soon, don’t worry.” He soothed, wrapping his arm around her as she nibbled on her bottom lip.

“What if something happened though?” She worried as she rubbed her little bump in an act of self soothing.

Adam’s eyes glazed over slightly as he linked with Allen and then grinned down at his anxious wife. “Allen said stop worrying, it’s not good for the baby. They’ll be here in seconds.”

“But...”

As promised, the front end of the transport pulled around the corner of the driveway and Ann let out a sigh of relief.

“See, my Queen? Nothing to worry about.” Adam chuckled as he watched them pull to a stop in front of them.

As soon as the door opened and Lexi’s head emerged, Ann broke away from Adam and bolted down the steps towards her.

“Ann! Slow down! What if you fall!” He yelled after her with panic clutching his heart as he followed behind her.

Lexi barely had time to move away from the car door, before she found Ann’s arms flung around her neck, hugging her tightly.

“f*****g hell Queenie, I can’t breathe!” she squeaked in laughter as she hugged her back,

“Shut up!” Ann sobbed, “I was so worried about you all while you were gone!” she said as she released Lexi and stepped back sniffing loudly.

Lexi’s face softened as she looked at the emotional face of her best friend and felt her heart lurch in relief too.

“Those little smut puppies you’re growing inside there have really hijacked your emotions, haven’t they?” She chuckled softly, her eyes shining with mischief as she prodded her belly lightly.

Ann planted her hands on her hips and scowled at her.

“I’ll have you know that I would still be deliriously happy that you came back relatively unharmed with or without my pregnancy you cowbag.” She chided as Lexi laughed at the sight of her.

“I mean, I did bring you a present back Queenie,” She grinned as she turned back into the car and reached down to lift the sleeping baby from the seat.

Ann gasped loudly at the sight of the tiny little face that peeked out of the grubby sheet that had been wrapped around it.

“I have so many questions... “It’s so tiny!” she squeaked before reaching for it and Lexi handed it over gingerly, “Where did you get it?!” she continued, her eyes focused intently on the tiny little child cradled in her arms.

“Don’t worry, I haven’t suddenly begun to engage in shifter trafficking or anything sordid like that,” Lexi snorted before a complicated expression settled over her face, “It’s a long story though Ann. Perhaps we should go inside.”

Ann looked up at her with a frown and nodded.

It wasn’t like Lexi not to be forthright about things, but with the amount of people here now seeing to the others that had arrived in additional transport vans, she could understand.

After she had greeted Allen and Greyson and apologized for being so focused on Lexi, the five of them made their way inside and up to the private office that Ann and Adam had finally had set up close to their bedrooms.

“Wow... you’ve been busy in the few days we’ve been gone!” Lexi snorted as she took in the comfortable exterior.

It wasn’t quite as homey as Bartholomew’s office, but the reds and golds and warm woods of the furniture still held a warmth to it that seemed to put you at ease. Lexi had

to admit though, she missed the smell of books here that Bartholomew's office smelled richly of.

"We had people working on it from the first few days that we arrived here. I've only just started using it though because honestly...the chairs are much comfier here than the ones in our bedroom." Ann smirked as she carefully sat in one of the overlarge chairs that seemed to welcome her in the cushioning's loving embrace.

Ann chuckled at Lexi's face as she sank into the chair next to her with a groan of pleasure.

"You're right. These are heavenly. I want my own now." She said with a pointed look at both Allen and Greyson, "I'm sure you two can rustle up a couple of chairs for us all." Ann chuckled as she glanced from the baby in her arms to Lexi's face.

"I'm pleased you three seem to be getting along better anyway." she said softly as Lexi smiled back at her, "So, tell me about this cutie."

Lexi shifted uncomfortably in her seat as she seemed to avoid Ann's eyes.

"I don't want you to be upset with me." she murmured as Ann snorted.

"Why on earth would I ever be upset with you Lexi? For rescuing a child?! You're insane." She scoffed. "Even if it was Ada's child?" Lexi said quietly, watching Ann's face for any reaction.

Ann stiffened slightly as a complex emotion flickered in her eyes as she gazed down at the helpless little bundle in front of her.

Was this Ada's and Brad's child?

Her stomach rolled uncomfortably as she gazed down at the child that reminded her of the betrayal, but thankfully, her own burgeoning motherly instincts seemed to call louder to her soul than any other fleeting remnant of emotion that had once wounded her so deeply.

Ann lifted her head to meet Lexi's eyes. It saddened her to see that they seemed to be filled with guilt, and she reached across to clasp Lexi's hand tightly.

"Whatever they did together Lexi, is not this child's fault. You did the right thing." She smiled as she squeezed her hand, "I can't imagine that Ada gave the child willingly though."

"Actually... it seems that she had a change of heart. She didn't want any part of what was happening but couldn't find a way out." Lexi smiled sadly back at her, "She helped

us and met her end at Narcissa's hands. She begged me to save the baby... so... that's what I did,"

Ann blinked at Lexi, not knowing what to say or why her heart pulled so damn painfully in her chest.

In her last moments Ada had actually turned away from the life that she had been born into and asked for help? Was it possible that she had made the wrong choice in sending her with her mother? She hadn't for a minute thought that Narcissa would actually kill her and the child.

Suddenly Ann felt disgustingly responsible for Ada's fate and she felt a solitary tear drift slowly down her cheek.

"I feel like I've robbed this child of its mother." Ann said softly as she stared down at its peaceful little face.

"Don't, Ann." Lexi said as she felt her own emotions bubbling uncontrollably inside, "If anything, all of this madness with the Coven and the kidnappings disguised to look like murders...the blame lies at my feet."

Ann's head shot up to stare at Lexi with a frown of confusion. "What are you talking about? How is any of this your fault?!" She exclaimed.

"Like I said, it's a bit of a long story." Lexi sighed.

"Well, none of us are going anywhere. We have all the time in the world." Ann answered as she sat back and listened intently to Lexi's explanation.

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Chapter 299 Kindred Spirits

"Well, I certainly wasn't expecting that." Ann said a little breathlessly as she looked between Lexi, Allen and Greyson.

Adam shared the same concerned expression as she did at the revelations that Eromaug would clearly stop at nothing to get his hands on Lexi.

"You're absolutely sure that your father is willing to ally himself with us?" Ann asked as the baby in her arms began to stir and protest at the noise and unfamiliar surroundings it had found itself in.

Lexi snorted loudly.

“Of course, he is. How could he not when his daughter is your right hand woman?” She winked. “We should put it to the council first.” Adam said somberly as Lexi groaned loudly.

“I’m sure they’ll be thrilled at the opportunity,” She muttered sarcastically as Ann laughed.

“I think we should get hold of Bartholomew so that he can help us find a way to ‘tell’ the council of our alliance, rather than ask for their permission.” Ann mused thoughtfully, “He’s pretty knowledgeable about who supports us, who is on the fence and who still flat out opposes us. Although I will admit, the amount of opposition that we face does seem to be dropping off.”

“It’d be much easier if you just let me kill them.” Maeve muttered moodily in Ann’s head, “I’m sure Lexi would help too,” she added hopefully as an afterthought, but was shot down almost instantly.

“I’m not discussing this Maeve.” she said gently, “We’ve been through this countless times before. No killing, murdering, mainiming or other forms of violence against the council members of the Enclave... okay? I would like to earn their trust rather than have them agree with me through fear.”

“A little dose of fear never hurt anyone...” Maeve tutted sullenly as she narrowed her eyes, “If we got rid of them, then we know that our babies would be safe...”

“Maeve, enough.” Ann warned, causing Maeve to snap her jaws at her sullenly and slink to the back of her mind.

“Everything okay?” Adam asked as he took in her frowning expression.

“Yeah, just Maeve being her murderous self.” She shrugged as Lexi grinned widely.

“I knew it. Me and her? Kindred spirits.” Lexi commented triumphantly as she fist bumped the air and Maeve sniggered in Ann’s head.

“I’m sure she’d fist bump you right now as well if I would let her, but right now, we still need to figure a lot of things out.” Ann sighed with a roll of her eyes.

“Felix needs to know as well,” Adam said as he rubbed his chin thoughtfully, “I’m fairly sure that when we choose to move against Eromaug he will want to be involved.”

“Okay, then let’s put together a plan of action. We still have the move to the Palace to sort out and I still have the design and construction of the Portal room to organize. There’s no chance at all now that the Elders will want it here, especially with Eromaug still out there,” she paused for a moment and frowned, “I had hoped that if we were successful in destroying Eromaug then they might be willing to rethink.”

"I mean... one out of two isn't bad right? The Coven's base of operations is under our control now and, as far as we can tell, its members are either dead, injured and soon to be imprisoned, or they are on the run. I'm sure that Papa's hellhounds won't take too long to track the scents of any stragglers down." Lexi grinned.

"The village and containment facility have been cleared and secured too, so really they just need cleaning up, repairing and re-staffing." Greyson added seriously, "I can help with suggesting transfers from existing garrisons for security."

"That would be helpful, thank you Greyson. Well enlist Bartholomew's help again for advice regarding transfers to the containment facility once it is in workable order." Ann nodded, "I don't suppose any of the prisoners...?" She trailed off hopefully, already knowing the answer.

"All dead or escaped previously," Greyson answered, "I have a small team currently working on finding the bodies so we can figure out who is missing. Then it only remains to determine whether or not they have been eaten, used by the flesh crafters, or were part of the lucky few that escaped early on in the takeover."

"What do you plan to do with the baby?" Lexi asked curiously as she looked at her friend holding it protectively at her chest.

"I vote we keep him." Maeve answered instantly.

"We can't keep him Maeve, he's not ours. Besides, how do you even know he's a he?"

"He smells like a he," Maeve sniffed, "And I don't see why not. Do you really want that prick to raise a child to be just like him? He'd be better cared for by us."

"That's not fair to the child, nor to Brad or his wolf." Ann sighed, "Who knows, perhaps this will entice his wolf back and go some way to repairing the relationship between them."

Maeve snorted her disagreement with Ann, but didn't argue further. Honestly, Ann could understand her reluctance to hand this defenseless child over to the man who had betrayed them, destroyed their plans for the future and then shockingly saved them from certain death.

However, forcing her overwhelming maternal instinct aside, Ann knew that she couldn't possibly deny him the chance of parenthood. Especially if it was the catalyst that repaired the bond between him and his wolf. She knew that his mother would help if he was struggling so that eased her worries a little bit.

"Ann?" Lexi asked with a knowing smirk as Ann sighed and stroked the gurgling child's face softly.

"I want to give this task to you, Lexi. I would like for you to escort the baby to Brad at his pack, and spend a little time there to make sure that he takes to parenthood well. Otherwise, in the worst case scenario, I can request to take this child as a ward of the Royal Line."

Lexi blanched suddenly.

"Wait... you're not seriously putting me in charge of that tiny little thing are you?!" Lexi protested loudly, "What if I break it?!"

"You won't break him," Ann chuckled, "Think of it as an opportunity to..."

"Don't you dare say it," Lexi growled, narrowing her eyes at her friend who had a mischievous twinkle in her eye.

"...gain some early experience for motherhood." Ann finished unabashed as Lexi glowered at her. A sly glance to the side of her revealed Greyson and Allen looking at her with hope in their eyes and Lexi groaned.

"Please stop putting ideas in their heads. They're only just starting to get along without wanting to tear each other to shreds." Lexi mumbled irritably.

"Sorry, not sorry?" Ann grinned wickedly.

"If I had more energy for it, then I would find a way to get my own back but right now, all I want to do is take a hot bath and relax for a little while." Lexi snorted, "After that, then sure. I'll take the little bundle of joy to the sad-sack at the Crystal Pack."

"Thank you, Lexi, I would take him myself but..." Ann began but was cut short by Adam's warning growl, which caused her to laugh, "See? He explained better than I ever could."

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Chapter 300 We'll Find Him

When Coral had returned with the Omega that worked as a nanny to the nobles, the baby boy was handed over to her and she waddled off happily, cooing at the baby in her arms as it gurgled happily back up at her.

Coral began to work through updating the schedule for Ann as she dictated, adding additional notes that she shared with Alien's device. He would see to their schedule tomorrow as he had several days worth of reports to hear from Adam as to what had happened within the businesses and the Dark Moon Pack while he was away.

Lexi made her way back to her room with both Allen and Greyson following behind her. She paused outside her door and turned to them both with a smile.

“Sorry to disappoint boys, but I don’t feel like getting frisky right now. Quite honestly, I just want to soak all of this crap off me.”

They nodded at her as she looked at them thoughtfully.

“We really should sit down and have a discussion about how this is going to work between us all, you know.” she said as she eyed Greyson shrewdly.

“You know my stance already,” Allen answered with a faint smile, “As long as you are safe, happy and content, then I will accept whatever you’re comfortable with.”

“Before we go there,” Greyson interjected hastily as he saw the lustful glint that suddenly seemed to ignite in Lexi’s beautiful eyes, “I’m not yet entirely comfortable with... sharing you just yet.” he continued vaguely.

“Are you serious? I thought we’d been through this already!” Lexi huffed, folding her arms in front of her in irritation.

“I mean sharing you with Allen in the same bed!” Greyson almost slightly and he shifted uncomfortably on the spot.

“Oh!” Lexi breathed, suddenly realizing that this was going to be her reality at some point.

Two very different men that hit the spot in two very different ways. Her body craved them both but she wasn’t about to force either one of them into her feral fantasies if they weren’t completely comfortable with it.

“Besides, after how I’ve treated you when I let my nature get the better of me, I feel like I need to earn your trust a little before we even explore anything like that again.” Greyson mumbled.

Lexi sighed. “Listen, we can work something out so that we both have time with Lexi when she wants it, as well as when we need her closeness.” Allen suggested gently.

“Oh, shall I start to book you into my busy schedule then?” Lexi smirked sarcastically.

“Lexi, behave,” Allen warned lightly, “I’m trying to find a solution that will work for all of us. You clearly need us both and I accept that. I’d rather not allocate set days if it can be helped. It’s obvious that we’re meant to be a team and I understand that Greyson will need time to adjust, so...I’ll let you both lead with how you want to proceed.”

Greyson nodded gently. "Thanks Allen," He said, clapping him on the back lightly, "You've adjusted to this far quicker than me. I want you to know that I'm trying though, and I'm determined to be the mate that Lexi deserves."

"Don't be ashamed of your heritage," Allen said sincerely, "You descend from a strong and proud people with incredible instincts. Fighting those primal urges will be hard, but we will both help in any way that we can."

"Either that or I'll just smoosh you Mister Ragey." Lexi interjected with a shrug as Allen frowned at her.

"You just can't be serious for a few minutes can you?" He chided as she smirked at him.

"Life's too short, Beta boy." She grinned as she turned and stepped into her room, "Don't miss me too much, hmm?" She winked as she closed the door on them both, leaving them standing awkwardly in the corridor.

Ann and Adam stood overlooking the courtyards and streets below them on the balcony just off the throne room.

She sighed contentedly at the feeling of Adam's arms wrapped protectively around her, as her hand rested gently on her bump. She could already feel their babies wriggling around inside of her and it spurred an overwhelming maternal instinct within her.

Before she had fallen pregnant, she was sure that she wasn't ready for children but now, she was practically counting down the days until they arrived.

It was going to be tough for sure with so many little hungry mouths demanding attention all at the same time, but Ann knew she was luckier than most that faced this situation.

Once they had returned to the palace she would have the staff that she had grown up with to help take care of her and her little family. Coral had already reviewed and put forward an initial list of good candidates for live-in nanny's for her children to help take care of them when she was required to attend meetings, deal with the Royal company, and anything else that might crop up.

She was inherently grateful that at the very least, the two main threats that she had been faced with when she was initially crowned, the rogue incursion and the Excidium

Coven's attacks, had been mostly resolved.

The Coven had been decimated and only a few members remained unaccounted for, but Lord Brarthroroz's hellhounds were already making progress in tracking them down.

The most pressing issue that they faced currently though was organizing the best course of action for finding and rescuing both Lexi's mother and Felix's wife, Aoife.

Ann frowned deeply as her mind worked on overdrive. Trying to think of possible solutions to the issues that they faced, but everything that she could come up with would take time.

“Are you okay, my Queen?” Adam asked softly as he bent his head forwards and k*issed her neck.

Ann sighed in contentment as a pleasurable shiver traveled down her spine.

“I was just thinking of how much we’ve managed to achieve already in such a short time.” She murmured, tilting her head to the side to allow him more access to the sensitive skin on her neck.

“I promised you that we would face everything together,” He murmured into her skin as his lips danced across her skin, “I would say that I’ve kept that promise well.”

Ann chuckled as she reached up and ran her fingers through his hair, tugging gently as she felt the flutter of excitement in her belly and a tiny moan escaped from between her lips. “Indeed you have.”

She breathed, her breath hitching as he allowed his canines to graze over the spot on her neck that his mark lay, “It’s just a pity that we didn’t manage to get a location for Eromaug yet.” she continued distractedly as Adam’s hand slipped over her belly and brushed across her aching, swollen breasts. “We’ll find him, my Queen.”

Adam assured her as the intoxicating scent of her arousal drifted up and invaded his senses.

He growled lightly as he slipped a hand under the skirt of her dress and found his way inside of her underwear.

“I can smell you, My Queen.” he murmured into her ear, his hot breath across the cool skin of her ear eliciting another little moan from her, “Do you want me to take you here on the balcony?”

“Adam... we can’t here... don’t be silly...” Ann protested half heartedly as she opened her legs wider, allowing his fingers easier access to the area that burned with desire for his touch.

“You are Queen, my precious mate. You can do whatever you want, wherever you want.” He murmured as he slipped a finger inside of her and moved it slowly and deliberately, curling it slightly so that he hit that delicious spot inside of her that made her legs weak.

“Let me f**k you right here, my Queen.” He murmured into her ear as her breaths became ragged and she nodded wordlessly.

Adam unzipped himself and lifted her skirt, positioning himself at her entrance.

“I’m going to f**k you slowly Ann and anyone that sees us here will have no idea that I’m filling you and f*****g the stress from your mind.” He purred as he slipped himself inside of her quickly, pressing into her as he wrapped her in his arms tightly.

There would be enough stress to come over the coming months with the move and the hunt for Eromaug.

The most important thing to him right now was ensuring that Ann forgot about everything else for just a little while.

Eromaug wasn’t going anywhere. They would find him and when they did, they would destroy him.