

Broken 221

Chapter 221

"Custos Regni." It's a hissing sound that brings back so many awful memories. " We finally found you. The Prince will be so pleased."

Cyran snarls next to me. Alessia steps forward and moves in front of Cyran putting herself between him and what we now see

are five vampires.

'Alessia?'

'I don't know, I'm not at full strength, but I'm stronger than I was the last time. we fought them.'

I feel Cyran tug on our tail with his teeth, pulling us out from in front of him.

"Kill the male. Keep the female for the prince." The leader says. It's not Sebastian this time, but he has the same confidence.

Three of his minions immediately move to take out Cyran. The vampires are so fast that he doesn't see them coming, but Alessia

and I do.

Before the first one can get his hands on Cyran, Alessia grabs his arm, ripping it from his body, then slices her claws across his

throat. He's not dead, but there are still two more going after Cyran.

She turns in time to see Cyran ripping the head off one as the other wraps his arms around his neck. Alessia snarls, jumping up

to pull him off Cyran, when the leader comes up behind us, grabbing Alessia by the throat. She thrashes around trying to break

his grip. She's strong, but still not at full strength and the vampire has a good grip, having wrapped his other arm around her rib

cage. The fifth vampire joins in and helps the leader restrain Alessia.

They begin dragging us away, Alessia fighting to get back to Cyran. Cyran is still fighting with the second vampire that attacked

and the first one I put down is starting to move. I can see Cyran is distracted, wanting to get to me.

I hear heavy footfalls and know that other wolves are on the way. One of the vampires restraining Alessia turns to fight the

newcomers. I take the opportunity. to turn and grab hold of the leader by the throat. He starts beating on Alessia, scratching at

her as we listen to the gurgling sound of him drowning in his own blood.

With the vampire still hanging from her mouth, she turns to see that two other wolves have arrived and are taking out the last

three vampires. Cyran rips the head off of his and turns to us. Alessia steps on the body of the vampire she's dragging by its

throat before shaking her head viciously, tearing the vampire's

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head from its body.

The other two wolves make short work of the last two vampires. Alessia puts her nose in the air, sniffing to see if there are any

more. She gives a short bark letting everyone know that there are no more.

Cyran comes over, nipping at her then licking her muzzle, cleaning her. I watch " as the two new wolves shift. Rik and Anders.

Cyran stops cleaning Alessia and shifts back as well.

"Rik, Anders." He greets.

Rik looks at me. "I'm guessing this is Alessia."

"Yes. I don't know if these were scouts, but at some point they will be missed. Our timeframe for war just shortened." Liam tells

the other two. "I set up a meeting room for tomorrow in my pack house. We can all meet there and talk about our plan."

We hear several other paws digging into the earth. Wolves are coming from the direction of both packs. As they prepare to

address the other wolves, Liam comes over to me, he kneels down, running his hands over Alessia making sure she's not too

injured. He leans in and quietly whispers in her ear. "You and I will have words about this later Angel."

Chapter 222

I cannot believe that Alessia fucking stepped in front of me. As if she was going to take on those five vampires by herself while I

stood around with my thumb up my ass. I'm so pissed I could punch something, but right now, I have to deal with the fact that the

vampires have found her. If the vampire prince is a decent leader, he'll know exactly where he sent his scouts and when they are

supposed to return. We can only hope that this was an early stop and they aren't expected back for a while.

Rik and I set up additional patrols to cover the canyon between us and assign some warriors to burn the vampires. Now that I've

smelled them, I know Dustin was right. That's not a smell you forget. It's so sweet it almost burns your nose. I'm thankful that

Angel stayed in her wolf form. I'm not sure I could have restrained myself if she were naked in front of all these males. I'm

already angry, and I need to harness my anger before we get back to the packhouse and I have a chance to speak to her. I also

need to make sure that she doesn't need any medical care. Alessia still isn't up to full strength and I'm not sure how much

damage that vampire did to her. When I checked her over briefly, she didn't seem to have serious injuries, but I also saw that

asshole leech beating on her.

When we're done, I look at Alessia and jerk my head toward home. She takes the hint and heads out, I shift and Cyran is right on

her tail. Her pace is considerably slower on the way home. She's overdone it and worn herself out. Fuck!

Cyran keep

pace with her, making sure she doesn't fall on her way back up the cliff face. It's slow going but when we get to the top, I find a

tree where the pack has clothes stashed and I shift back. I throw on a pair of shorts and turn to Alessia.

"Shift." I use every bit of Alpha tone that I have. I know it doesn't work on her, but I'm hoping she'll realize that I'm not playing.

She shifts and looks at me cautiously.

I toss her a shirt and wait until she pulls it on. Once she has, I throw her over my shoulder and begin stalking back to the

packhouse.

"Liam! What are you doing, put me down."

I smack her ass, hard. "Hold still and be quiet."

The walk to the packhouse is faster with me carrying her. I know she needs to eat, but we need to talk first. Pack members start

to approach me, but when they see me carrying Angel over my shoulder, or maybe it's the deadly look on my face, they scurry

out of my way.

I head straight to my room before putting her down and rounding on her. "What the fuck was that?"

I can see her total confusion. She has no idea why I'm so upset. I start pacing, trying to burn off some of this anger. And

underneath the anger is the real problem. Fear. Fear that I could have lost her today.

I turn back to her. "Don't ever fucking put yourself between me and danger again. Got it?"

"They were going to kill you Liam." She says quietly.

"First! I'm a fucking Alpha! I've been taking care of myself since I was six years old." I'm yelling, waving my arms around like a

crazy person. "Second! You don't give your life for me. Do you understand me? Not today, not ever. Are we clear?"

I get in her face, towering over her. I'm breathing so heavy I feel like a fucking dragon breathing fire. In the back of my mind, I'm

proud of my little angel. She doesn't back down from my fury.

"I'm a Guardian Liam. It's my job. It's what I do."

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"Fuck that! Fuck that shit. Did you not hear anything that I said to you last night? Did you not hear how important you are to me?

Do you not realize that you aren't saving my life by giving yours for mine? I have no life if you aren't in it. Just like that line from

the song, you showed me what it feels like to be full, and it's so fucking light I feel like I'm floating. Do you think that I could go

back to that empty feeling again, after knowing what I was missing? I can't. I have no life without you Angel. I have nothing."

I start pacing again. "I'm only just now beginning to understand what my father was going through all those years." I turn back to

her. "And I'm telling you now, I'm not strong enough to survive it. I wouldn't last ten minutes without you, much less the ten fucking years my father survived. Do you hear me, Angel?"

I walk to her, taking her arms in my hands to you understand that there is nothing for me if I don't have you? You are my

everything. Without you, there is nothing. No reason for me to live."

I lean down, putting my forehead against hers. "I know I can't ask you to walk away. I know it's in your genes just like it's in mine

to fight when you must. But, please, for me, don't ever put yourself in between me and danger again. I will accept you standing

beside me, fighting with me. I don't like it, but I'll accept it. Just, please, promise me, you won't ever stand in front of me again."

She takes my face in her hands. "I'll try Liam. I can't make any guarantees, it's not just up to me. Alessia feels a pull to protect

you, too. But I will try to stand beside you and fight beside you instead of in front of you.

I pull her into me, taking her mouth in a fierce kiss, ravaging her, feeding my need to know she's alive and safe. I pull back. "Let

me look at you? Did that vampire hurt you? I know you didn't have any serious cuts but let me see your bruises."

I pull the shirt over her head, kneeling to look more closely at her ribcage and chest where the vampire was focusing his

punches. I kiss the bruises across her ribs, following the line up her sternum to her chest.

Her hands come into my hair and I wrap my arms around her pulling her to me. I love you Angel. I love you so much it hurts."

She tugs on my hair, forcing me to look up at her. "I love you too Liam." She runs her thumbs over my cheeks then leans down

kissing me. She wraps her arms around me then bends down until she is straddling in my lap. I stand, wrapping

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her legs around my waist and take her to the bed.

"Show me how much you love me Liam."

I rub my nose against hers. "Baby girl, there is nothing that I want more than to bury myself in your sweet warmth and show you

how much I love you, but if I do that, I won't be able to stop myself from marking you."

She takes my face in her hands, looking into my eyes. "Would that be so bad?" I pull back and look at her. "Angel, once I mark

you, that's it, you're mine forever. Are you sure that's what you want?"

"We still have things we need to figure out Liam, I know that. But one thing that I'm absolutely sure of is that I want to be yours

and I want you to be mine. We were meant to be together. We were made for each other. So yes Liam, I want you to mark me

and I want to mark you. Make me yours forever."

Chapter 224

Liam slides my body up higher onto the bed then lays down between my legs, holding himself up on his elbows. His kiss is

scorching, his need for me is as great as mine for him.

"I'll try to be gentle with you Angel, but I'm not really good at being gentle."

"I won't break." I tell him and pull his mouth back down to mine. His hands are everywhere, touching me, pulling me closer. His

mouth moves down my neck to that spot at the corner of my neck by my collarbone, where his mark will be before the end of the

night. He licks and sucks on the spot and I feel heat flooding into my system, pooling between my thighs.

He begins to kiss his way down my body, sucking one nipple into his mouth as he squeezes my other breast in his hand. I moan

loudly and run my fingers through his hair, grabbing onto it and pulling his head up to look at me.

He growls before moving to the other nipple and sucking it into his mouth, pulling it into a hard peak. He gently bites it and pulls

is through his teeth, watching me as he does. The pleasure and pain of it causing my body to clench. He groans as he kisses his

way down my stomach. "You smell so fucking good baby girl."

As he moves lower, he pulls one of my legs over his shoulder and pins the other to the bed, holding it down with his arm, using

his fingers to rub over my clit.

"Liam." I don't know if it's a request or a demand, but I know I need more. My eyes close as I bask in the sensations that Liam is

making me feel.

His hand moves to my stomach, holding me down as his mouth replaces his fingers and he sucks my clit into his mouth. His

tongue begins rubbing circles and he slides two fingers inside me. "So fucking wet for me."

"Yes." It's a breathy response and all I can manage. My body feels like it's on fire, the pressure building quickly.

"Eyes on me baby girl."

I open my eyes and watch as he licks my clit before sucking it back into his mouth. He adds a third finger and begins moving

them in and out faster. I can feel my body begin to clench around his fingers and just when I think I can't take anymore, he curls

his fingers inside me and growls over my clit.

My body immediately erupts into an orgasm so strong I see stars. I scream

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Liam's name and my back arches up, pushing against his hand on my stomach. He holds me in place, forcing me to accept the

pleasure that he's giving me. My body is jerking against him with the force of my orgasm and I hear him groaning as lets me ride

out my pleasure.

When my body comes down, he slides his fingers out of and sits up. His dark eyes watch me as his licks his fingers clean of my

juices before sliding his shorts off and laying over top of me again.

He pulls one leg up to wrap around his waist. He lines himself at my entrance and stops, putting his forehead against mine. "I

don't want to hurt you, Angel. You're so small I feel like I might split you in two."

I smile at my beloved mate. "Liam Holstin. I was made for you by the Moon Goddess. We were made to fit together. I know how

big you are, I didn't start calling you big guy because of your height." I gently kiss him, never taking my eyes off his. "We'll take it

slow. Alessia is a fast healer."

"You tell me if it's too much or if we need to stop. I don't want to hurt you.

"I mean it when I say if you don't claim me here and now, you will not only answer to me but also my wolf."

"I love you so much little angel." He says as he slowly begins to slide inside me. He really is a big guy. I can feel him stretching

me and it's an uncomfortable invasion. I can see the concern on his face and I reach up to kiss him. He groans in my mouth and

I deepen the kiss, moving my hands back into his hair.

When he reaches resistance, he stops. "Are you ready to be mine forever little angel?"

"Yes, Liam."

He thrusts the rest of the way inside me making me hiss in pain. I can feel his body quivering with his restraint, holding still while

my body adjusts. It takes a moment before the pain subsides and then the feeling of him, so deep inside me, makes my body

tighten.

I begin to move against him, needing the friction that only he can give me. He starts slow, sliding all the way out before sliding

deep into my core again. This new feeling is unlike anything I've ever felt. Soon, he's thrusting into me harder and faster. His

hand goes to my hip, holding me in place as he drives himself deeper into my core, hitting my cervix.

He pushes me over the top and I explode around him, my claws dig into his shoulders as I scream my release. He doesn't stop

the demanding pace, forcing me to stay at this high until I cum for him again and again. He continues to command my body, pulling everything from me until I'm whimpering in his arms, tears streaming down my face at the emotional

overload.

Just as I come to my fourth climax, he snarls, "Mine!" and sinks his canines into my marking spot.

The exquisite pleasure, the absolute ecstasy, has me screaming his name again, just before my canines slide out and I sink

them into his marking spot, making him mine.

Liam roars as my teeth sink into his neck, making the windows shake with the power of it. His body begins jerking his release.

As I hold on to his neck, milking my canines into his flesh, I feel the mate bond kick in. All of Liam's emotions flood into me –

relief, happiness, pleasure and most importantly, love.

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If I thought the taste of my little mate was amazing, it is nothing to the feeling of being balls deep inside her. She's so fucking

tight. I know she must have torn. Thank the goddess for Alessia's advanced healing power.

When she starts to move under me, I take the lead. I want to watch her come undone, I want to know that I'm the only man that

has or will ever make her feel this way. So, it's not enough for her to cum for me once. The feel of her clamping down on my dick

is by far the best feeling I've ever had. I need to feel it again, and again and again. By the fourth time, I know I've pushed her

nearly to her breaking point, I can see her tears and I can't hold back any longer. My canines come out and I need to mark her,

like I need air to breathe.

"Mine!"

As I drive her over the cliff again, I sink my canines into her neck. I'm immediately flooded with her emotions, raw pleasure, joy,

and so much love. I only have a moment to enjoy her emotions before I feel her canines sink into my neck.

The overwhelming surge of power has me roaring my release. I cum so hard I nearly black out. I could never have imagined this

sort of rapture from marking my mate. It's only her canines in my neck, milking her venom into me that keeps me from going under.

When she finally pulls her teeth from my neck and licks the wound closed, I pull back and look at her. "Are you okay?"

She sniffles a bit. "I've never been better."

I lean down, nuzzling my nose against hers. "Why the tears?"

"I feel so good. I never expected it to feel like this." She says and I kiss another tear as it falls down her face.

"You're mine now Angel. There's no going back for either one of us." I start to pull out but she grabs my hips.

"No, don't. I like the way you feel inside me.

I groan. "Baby girl. It won't take long for me to get hard again if I'm going to stay inside your warm sweetness."

She gives me a devilish grin. "Is that so bad?"

I growl, rolling us over so she's laying on top of me. "Now you can take charge if

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you decide you want another round."

She sits up, seating me deep inside her making me instantly hard again. "Aren't you sore, little angel?"

"Advanced healing, remember?" She says and she slowly starts to move her hips, adjusting to the new position. She takes her

hands into her hair, pushing it out of " her face and behind her. I can feel it draping over my legs.

I put my hands on her hips, guiding her movements, watching as her head falls back. Her hair is cascading all around me and

I'm living the dream I've woken to every day this week.

"You're so fucking beautiful." As she gets her rhythm, I move my hands to her breasts, tugging on her nipples until I feel her inner

walls fluttering around me. "You were definitely made for me Liam. You feel so good inside me."

"Are you going to cum riding my cock, baby girl?"

I watch as a smug smile spreads across her face. "I'd rather make you cum, big guy."

Oh, my fallen angel. "Is that so?"

She nods and I move us so we're closer to the top of the bed. I take her hands and put them on the headboard. "Hold on here,

use it for leverage."

She begins moving her hips again. There is something extremely sexy about letting my mate have control, a control I've never

given to anyone before. I watch as she gets her rhythm, my hands on her hips, just touching her, letting her set the pace.

I look up and see her stormy grey eyes watching me. I growl softly, seeing my mate take her pleasure. I watch as a fleeting look

of indecision crosses her face before she leans forward, cupping her breast in her hand, bringing it to my mouth.

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I take it in my mouth sucking her nipple at the same pace that she's riding me. As I watch, her eyes close and she leans her

head back, picking up her pace. I hold her breast in one hand, keeping it firmly in my mouth until she pulls back, the suction of

my mouth causing a soft 'pop' as her nipple pulls out. She slows her pace and moves to cup her other breast, bringing it to my

mouth.

As soon as I latch on, she's riding me hard again. I hold her breast with one hand and the other goes to her clit, giving her the

friction she needs. I'm getting close to my own orgasm, and I want my girl to get her release at the same time. She begins

chanting my name over and over, until I feel her walls clamp down on me like a vice grip. I snarl my release, biting down on her

nipple as she screams my

name.

She rides out her orgasm before collapsing against me. I could definitely spend every day inside my Angel.

I know she's exhausted and I still need to feed her. I mind link the kitchen staff to bring us up a cart with food. While we're

waiting, I pick up my girl and carry her into the bathroom. I set her on the counter while I turn on the shower, getting the water

warm for her.

I turn back to her, brushing her hair out of her face. I can feel her fatigue, a little smugness from our love-making and so much

love coming through the bond. You know you're my everything, right Angel? You're my whole world."

"And you're mine Liam." She runs her hand over my face, leaning in to gently kiss me.

I pick her up and carry her into the shower. Setting her down, I grab the new shampoo that smells like berries. "Much better." I

say as I rub it into her hair.

She wraps her arms around me and holds on while I wash her hair and rinse it out. When I'm done, I grab a washcloth and wash

her body, being gentle with the bruises that are still healing on her ribcage and between her legs where I know she must be sore.

As I rub the washcloth across her stomach, I ask "How are you feeling? How's your stomach?"

"It's sore. But it's a good sore."

"I've ordered up some food, we'll get you fed and into bed so you can get some sleep."

"What if I don't want to sleep?"

I smirk down at her. "Let's see how you feel after you've had some food."

When we finish, I kiss her on her new mark and dry her off before putting her in one of my shirts. I pull on a pair of sweatpants

and walk to the door. There is cart with all sorts of food and lots of water. I pull the cart in and roll it over to the loveseat. I sit

down, pulling Angel into my lap and then we proceed to feed each other. That leads to more kissing, more touching and

eventually me taking her several more times throughout the night.

As the new day dawns and the sun begins to shine in through the curtains, I look at my sleeping mate, beautiful in all her naked

glory. I have never felt the sense of peace and calm that I feel having my mate laying beside me. I can't believe this amazing,

strong, yet delicate woman is all mine. I decide the best way to wake her is by dining on my favorite breakfast of raspberries and

cream. I feast until I have her screaming my name. The perfect way to start the day.

Chapter 227

I wake to Liam between my legs after having him inside me all night. My body is sore in ways that I could have never imagined

but the feeling that I have, both my own and coming from Liam through the bond, brings me a happiness I haven't felt in years.

I'm not alone any longer.

m loves me, I can feel it. I can feel his

joy at our bonding, at my acceptance of him.

We're laying in bed, my head on Liam's chest, his hand running through my hair, when he brings me back to reality.

"We have the meeting with Rik and his pack members this evening about the vampires and our plan. Do you want to go visit Eli

this morning, since we didn't get to yesterday?"

I look up at Liam. He's looking at the ceiling, but he looks at me when I look at him. "I do. Don't you want closure Liam? Don't

you want to be able to move past. this?"

He sighs, looking back up at the ceiling. "I do want closure. I want to leave this behind and start our slate clean. So, let's get up

and go see Eli." He reaches down and kisses the top of my head. I reach my hand around his waist and hug him. close.

"You and me,

Liam. It's you and me." That gets a smile from my big guy.

"Yes, it is little angel."

I get up, and start to crawl out of bed, only to have him smack my ass. I turn and look at him over my shoulder. He shrugs at me.

"It was there, tempting me." He says with a smirk, getting up too.

"Also, I want to move your things into this room today. Are you okay with that? You can redecorate any way you like. I don't have

anything personal that I want to keep other than the pictures of my parents."

"We'll make memories together and create our own private little space here over time." I tell him. "And yes, I'd be happy to move

my things in here, what little I have."

A smile, similar to the one that he has in his picture as a 5-year old, spreads across his face. He walks to me, wrapping his arms

around me. "You and me, together. I love the sound of that."

After we get dressed, we walk downstairs hand in hand. "Let's eat breakfast then head down to the cells."

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When we walk into the dining room, the entire room goes quiet. I squeeze his hand tighter, not knowing what I should do.

Liam addresses the room. "Everyone. I thank you for your patience with me lately. I've been busy the last couple of weeks with

some things that have come up. I'm making a formal announcement to the pack later this week, but for now, let me introduce

Angel Bennis, your future Luna."

The room erupts into applause and Liam guides us to a table. He leaves me there to go get our food and several pack members

come over to congratulate me. At Liam's request, I'm wearing a top that clearly shows my mate mark. For once, I'm not

embarrassed to show the markings on my body. I'm proud of this one.

Liam comes back and we eat, more pack members join us and I watch the easy conversation he has with his pack. I can see the

respect that they have for him. Many of them ask me where I come from and Liam easily redirects the conversation, telling them

that he'll explain more when he makes the formal announcement.

When we're done, we head down to the cells. The smell is terrible. I can tell that anyone down here is required to use the

bathroom in their cells and it doesn't smell like there are toilets. Before we get to the bottom, Liam leans in to whisper in my ear.

"Remember your promise, Angel. You stay by my side."

I reach out and take his hand, intertwining our fingers as we make our way to Eli Gunnar's cell.

As soon as we step up to the cell, Eli is on his feet.

"What the fuck, Alpha." He makes the word sound as derogatory as possible. "Why the fuck did you bring a she-wolf down here.

She doesn't need to see what you do to me."

"She's not here to watch Eli, she's here to listen."

"Oh, yeah, because that's so much better. She won't watch you beat the shit out of me, she'll just listen to you do it? You're more

of an asshole than I thought you.

were.

Liam snarls at him, lunging at him. I turn, putting my hands on Liam's chest. I don't say anything I just look at him until he looks

at me. I watch the muscle in his jaw tick until he gets himself under control.

When he's calm, I turn back around. I can see that Eli is looking at us curiously. "I want to hear your answers to Liam's

questions."

"You mean question, don't you? He only ever asks me one question and he doesn't like my answer."

"I'd like to hear your answer."

"Why?" He asks me.

Alessia comes forward and I see the moment he realizes what I am. "Guardian." He says it reverently.

Liam yanks me to his side, wrapping his arms around me. "I've already marked her so you can forget trying to take what's mine."

He snarls at Eli.

Eli looks at Liam. "I already told you, I know what I did with Cara was a mistake. I was wrong. I wouldn't do that to her."

"Sure you wouldn't." He snarls and I see Eli rolling his eyes, about to jump into what I'm guessing is a long-term argument. I

interrupt before this goes too far.

"That's not why I'm here Eli."

I turn and look at Liam.

"Why did you do it?" Liam asks him.

"I didn't do it. Not that you'll believe me, even with your Guardian here." 'Angel, he's telling the truth.' Alessia tells me. I know it

already. Deceit has a distinctly metallic taste to it. There was none of that with Eli's answer.

I take a step forward, earning me a growl from Liam. "You were found with her body in your arms." I say, my head tilted, trying to

get a read on him.

"Yes. I never said otherwise."

"If you didn't kill her, why were you holding her dead body?"

He looks from me to Liam. "It's a long story and your mate there won't believe me anyway, so why should I tell you."

I turn and look at Liam. He's looking at me, expecting me to tell him that Eli is lying, but I can't.

"Liam, he's telling the truth."

Chapter 228

I grab Angel by the arm and walk out of the cells to an area where Eli can't hear us. "What do you mean he's telling the truth. He

was found with her body."

"Yes, and he admits that. Every word he said back there was truthful. Alessia confirms it.

This can't be. This can't be! I've been searching my entire life for this man, this man that I thought killed my mother and now I

found out he didn't kill her? It makes no sense.

"Then why was he with her? Why was he holding her dead body?" I'm pacing, running my fingers through my hair. Angel comes

up to me, taking my hands in hers.

"I don't know. The only way we'll find out is if we ask him."

I look into her eyes. "Are you sure? Absolutely sure?"

"Yes. I'm positive." She says.

FUCK! I've been chasing the wrong person all these years? I've been using Eli as my personal punching bag, and he didn't kill my mother?

I take a deep breath. "You'll tell me the minute anything he says is a lie. Anything!"

"Of course, Liam." She cups my face in her hand, and I lean into her touch. "You and me Liam.'

I cover her hand with my own, then pull it to kiss her palm. "You and me little angel."

As we walk back, I grab two chairs to sit on, so we can hear what he has to say. When I sit, I pull Angel into my lap. I need her

scent close to keep me calm. She doesn't resist and once I have her settled, I look at Eli.

"You said it was a long story. Start at the beginning."

Eli

I don't know why this alpha asshole wants to hear my story now, after all this time. I'm not sure I really want to relive it, but if I

have a chance to finally clear my name, my family's name, and make that asshole of an alpha, Jerome pay, even if he's dead, I'll

do it.

I go sit on the makeshift bed in my cell. "Do you know how I became the Banished

Beta?" I ask them.

The Guardian, I haven't gotten her name, starts to shake her head but Liam speaks. "Your Alpha banished you because your

father was a traitor."

That was the story Alpha Jerome told everyone, that my father was a traitor, that he went on a rampage and killed my younger

brother, and the alpha heir, James.

rather Alpha Jerome, being the kind-hearted Alpha that he was, banished me, than killing me. From start to finish, the story was

a lie.

"That was the story that Alpha Jerome told everyone so he could save face. Do you want the real story?"

The Guardian leans back against Liam. "Yes, we'd like to hear the real story." She tells me.

I scrub my hands over my face and begin.

"When I was twelve, my brother Evan was fifteen. He was meant to be the next Beta, taking my father's place. The Alpha Heir,

James, was a nasty piece of work. He thought being an Alpha made him special, above everyone else."

"James was 17, older than Evan, when it happened. He and his friends took Evan out into the forest. I don't know if it was a

coincidence or if it was planned, but they came across a mother

gar and her cubs."

"James ordered my brother to prove his worth as his next Beta and protect him. as the Alpha. James and his friends ran, leaving

my brother to fight the big cat alone. My brother was strong, but not strong enough to take on an angry cat, protecting her young,

especially on his own." I stop for a moment, collecting myself and my thoughts. "My father and I found him ripped to shreds, huge

claw marks covering his body."

"My father confronted Alpha Jerome and James. James made up some excuse that if he had been worthy of the title of Beta, he

would have defeated the big cat. Alpha Jerome said that my father should have done a better job of raising my brother, making

him strong and worthy of the Beta title. My father was furious. He wanted to leave and renounce the pack, but Alpha Jerome

wouldn't allow it."

"My father lost it and he challenged James to a duel. Alpha Jerome forbade it, but James didn't listen and agreed to fight my

father. My dad defeated James in the fight and in his grief, chose to kill him rather than let James concede."

GET

Chapter 229

"Alpha Jerome was distraught, losing his only child and heir to the Alpha line. He sentenced my father to death. I was forced to

watch as Alpha Jerome beheaded my father, telling everyone in the pack that he was a traitor and responsible not only for

James' death, but also Evan's. Then as an act of mercy to show his benevolence, I was banished. He sent me off with nothing

but the clothes on my back at twelve years old. Some mercy. After he spread the lies about my father, no one would take me in,

so I was living as a rogue in the forest, barely surviving.

I stop, running my hands over my filthy and knotted hair. The Guardian has tears in her eyes. Liam's eyes are hard, but it's him I

look at as I continue.

"I had been on my own for several months when I first ran into Luna Estella. I was at a lake that extended past your borders,

trying to catch fish or find anything to eat. Your mother saw me and she knew who I was. She came over and sat with me, talking

to me and asking me how I was surviving. When she realized that I only had the clothes that I was wearing and I was scrounging

for food, she told me to meet her back there the next day. I was worried that it was a trap, but I was starving, so I waited a little

farther away, until I saw her arrive at the lake. She was carrying a basket of food and clothes."

"I met with her and she gave me food, clothes, shoes and a knife. Then she asked if there was anything else that I needed. She

wanted to know where I was living and if I was safe. After that first day, we started meeting three or four times a week. I would go

every day to see if she was there, and when she was, she'd bring me food and clothing and we'd talk, sometimes she would

read to me."

I look at Liam again. "Your mother was the only positive thing in my life during that time. She told me she never believed the

stories that Alpha Jerome had told and that she knew my father was a good man. It helped me to heal just a bit from the pain of

losing my only family. If it wasn't for her, I'd probably be dead."

I looked down again, coming to the end of the story. "I kept tabs on Alpha Jerome. I wanted to some day take my revenge for

what he and his son did to my family and that's how I heard about it. He wanted to take over the Canyon Ridge Pack, but they

had two Guardians. They were too strong to overthrow, so he was going to come here, to take over your pack. He knew the best

way to take out your father was to kill your mother. Get to Luna Estella, weaken Alpha Leander then kill him and take over the

pack and pack lands. He planned to take another mate and have another heir."

"I waited until the day of the battle, following the pack into your territory and

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when the battle began, I took my opportunity to run to your mother. I wasn't exactly sure where to find her and in the time it took

me to get to her, one of Alpha Jerome's warriors had already gotten to her."

My voice was getting thick with the memories. "When I reached her, she was still alive. She told me to take care of myself and

stay strong, just before she died." I can still feel Luna Estella reaching up to cup my cheek, before it fell to the ground with her

death.

"I don't remember what I did after that. I think I was hugging her and crying when they found me. The warriors that found me

immediately assumed I had killed her, so I ran. And I've been running ever since."

I swallow, trying to relieve the lump in my throat before speaking again. "My own mother died giving birth to me. That time with

your mother, Luna Estella, was the only time I've ever had a mother figure in my life, and I wasn't fast enough to save her."

Cooper

Author

What do you think of Eli's story?

Chapter 230

Tears are streaking down my face at Eli's story. Everything he said is the truth. There was not one moment in his story that I

could taste deceit. Liam had set me in the second chair and had begun pacing. Through the bond, I could feel his indecision, his

frustration at hearing this story.

"You could have told my father this story back then, why didn't you?" Liam asks him.

"Your father was a grief-stricken man, out for blood. He wouldn't have listened to me any more than you have the last six

months."

I can see the impact of his words on Liam, feel them through the bond. Liam knows he's right and his own guilt is threatening to

eat him up.

I stand and go to him, him. It takes a moment, but his arms come around me and he pushes his face into my neck, breathing

deeply, calming himself. We stand there for a moment, while Liam collects himself.

When he's calm, he looks back at Eli. "What about Cara? Why did you try to forcibly mark her?"

It's Eli's turn to stand and begin pacing. "There are too many power-hungry, piss-poor Alphas out there. Many don't care about

their packs, they only care about themselves or furthering their own power. When I was a rogue, I ran into so many others that

left their packs because of their Alphas' injustices against them or others in the pack. The Alpha line is passed down by blood,

but maybe it shouldn't be. You have bad Alphas teaching their sons to be even worse Alphas and all you get are shitty packs that

are poorly run and miserable werewolves with nowhere to go."

I understand this much better than Liam. I was on the run for six years, several of those with no where to go. My family and I ran

into people just like Eli is talking about.

"What does that have to do with Cara?" I ask softly. I feel Liam come up behind me, wrapping his arms around my waist, holding me against him.

"I wanted to give those people a place to go, a safe place where they could live their lives and raise their families without having to worry about the tyranny of their Alpha. I wanted to create my own pack, a sanctuary pack for those needing to escape their own or just those looking to make a new start. In order to have a chance at creating a pack like that, I needed a strong Luna. I'm a second son of a Beta, but a strong Luna would have made me stronger. And there is no one

stronger than a Guardian. It was a mistake on my part. I never should have tried to force the mate bond on her, and for that I am truly sorry."

Liam looks at me thoughtfully for a moment before turning to Eli. "I need to think about what you have told me. Cara and Rik will be here this evening. I won't make any decisions about you until I speak to them."

Eli nods and goes to sit. Liam turns to the guards. "See that he gets a shower and have a tray of food sent down for him. Give him clean sheets and a clean cell." I see Eli's head shoot up to look at Liam.

"Yes Alpha." The two guards say in unison.

As we start to walk away, Eli speaks. "Thank you, Alpha."

Liam nods but continues walking, taking my hand and keeping me close. When we get upstairs, he pulls me into his arms and

holds me. His guilt and frustration through the bond are palpable.

"Clean slate, right Liam?"

"How could I have been so wrong for so long? I could have killed an innocent man. As it is, I've treated him horribly, and all he tried to do was save my mother."

"We can't undo the mistakes of the past. All you can do is try to make it right going forward." I tell him, holding on to him.

He takes a deep breath before pulling back. "Come on, I have a surprise for you. before you head over to Clint's for training."

We walk out to his truck and he takes me back to the main street that borders the two packs. This time, we stop in front of a hair

salon. I turn to him. "I'm getting my hair cut?" I'm so excited I'm bouncing up and down in the seat.