

The Challenge Two Alphas, One Girl Chapter 66 - Tips

0 9 minutes read

Thaddeus' POV

I still had not heard back from Ezra and it was nearing the one hour mark. Fang was a nervous wreck despite his claim that Katrina was a girl he had just happened to meet in a bar and nothing more.

"How crazy would it be to go over there?" Fang asked with a nervous humourless laugh.

"Like I said, I've sent squads there before," I told him. "But let me call back first."

I put the phone on loudspeaker and we both waited, listening to it ring. Ezra did not pick up and that worried me. It was very unlike him. He did not actually need sleep. He slept out of habit or because he had nothing to do while Raelynn was asleep. I called twice more. No answers. Just ringing.

"I'll send a squad over," I said with a sigh.

Maze was quiet, just looking back and forth between Fang and me with an unfathomable expression on his face.

"You're getting soft on us, Fang," Maze said suddenly. "I've never seen you this emotional about anyone who wasn't well...you."

Fang's POV

Maze claimed he had never seen me care deeply about anyone other than myself. I winced slightly. Was I really that selfish? Had I come across that way? I sighed.

"I'm half kidding, Fang," grumbled Maze, patting me on the shoulder.

I actually missed being ignored or just barely tolerated by the old snobby aloof Maze. He and Thaddeus were spending too much time together, absorbing each other's idiosyncrasies. It was annoying. Maze joking. Thaddeus being serious.

"Thaddeus, wait," I said as he got up to organise the squad. "May I lead the squad?"

Thaddeus seemed shocked. He raised his eyebrows but did not argue the point. "If you insist," he said, his deep voice low and a bit grave. "But, it's dangerous. It's vampire territory. I understand you're a Beta so you'd outrank the other warriors but they are specially trained in combat against vampires so please allow them to guide you despite the difference in rank. I don't want them in danger either. Also, what about Astrid and your bun in the oven? You sure you wanna do this? You're about to be a Dad?"

Rumbled Thaddeus, rubbing his bearded chin.

I owed it to Katrina. I sighed. "I know you and Maze will help her out if anything, Astrid I mean," I said.

"Hey, I won't be sending you there like little lambs to slaughter!" Exclaimed Thaddeus and then he boomed with laughter. "You'll be adequately protected and armed but I'm giving you a chance to change your mind. It's not necessary for you to go."

"I wanna go," I said firmly.

Maze raised his eyebrows but remained silent.

"Don't tell Astrid where I've gone ok?" I said to the room in general. Theo nodded, Thaddeus gave me a thumbs-up and Maze was still silent.

After a long pause, Maze said, "Where exactly did you say you met Katrina?"

"At a bar," I said, panicking instantly but putting on my poker face.

"Which bar?" Asked Maze.

"A bar in Berryndale, well the outskirts just before Marigold," I said coolly.

"Does this bar have a name?" Maze asked, raising one of his brows higher than the rest.

"Do you record the names of every place you get drunk at?" I asked boldly.

Maze glared at me but then broke into a smile. He chuckled a little. He leant back in his chair, stretching and putting his hands behind his head. He seemed to still be pondering what I had said. Before he could ask me anything else, I put the heat on him. Friday had left the room so now was a good time. I had no intention of embarrassing my baby sister or putting her on the spot but I needed to know what those two alphas were doing with my sister.

"May I ask a question?" I drawled being as fake formal as I could.

"Yes, you may," responded Maze with a smile.

I looked at Thaddeus. He nodded. "Let's hear it!"

"Great!" I said suddenly dropping the formality and letting the smile slide from my face.

"What are you two alphas doing with my sister?" I demanded.

Maze stiffened.

Thaddeus paused thinking a bit before saying, "Courting her."

“So suddenly courting her requires teamwork?” I said dryly.

They were silent. The two big bad alpha wolves were actually intimidated to the point of being speechless for once.

“Because all dates since Friday’s heat and your cottage in the woods stay have comprised of all three of you,” I mused as if merely thinking out-loud. “Suddenly the challenge is devoid of challengers. You’re all team players now,” I said, sneering, my tone acrid.

“Fang...I love Friday more than I can even say,” said Maze sighing. “Thaddeus loves her too.”

I looked at him expectantly. Silence. That was it?

Maze’s POV

There was no way I was about to come clean to Fang of all people. Who needed more redemption than him, well, besides Farris. Fang had treated Friday terribly while they were growing up together. I couldn’t risk him falling back into his old ways even for a second and insulting Friday.

Thaddeus’ squad arrived, fully suited up and carrying tons of ammunition . They were instructed to hold fire as long as possible as the point was rescuing Katrina not wrecking her home. I wanted to tell Fang to stay behind. He had a baby on the way. What was the point of him running off to find some vampire princess? Who was Katrina to him really and how did he know her? Who was on the phone with their brand new friend at this hour?

Fang suited up. They were covered from head to toe in advanced form-fitting armour that. The squad leader was showing Fang the basics of their trajectory once entering the vampire territory. They were not going to storm into the Van Der Windt Manor, they were using underground tunnels and essentially the sewage system to explore the area. They would enter the mansion from below once they located Katrina.

My sweet little Friday returned to the room just then and whispered something into Thaddeus’ ear. He nodded smiling and Friday was gleeful. She brandished three sealed envelopes and gave them to the squad leader.

Friday’s POV

I found Thaddeus and asked him if I could send something to Raelynn. I had to stand on tiptoe and whisper in his ear. He said the squad leader could take it so I gave three envelopes with the DNA to him. I breathed a sigh of relief. At least, I was one step

closer to solving a twenty-one year old mystery. If Raelynn was the daughter of Malachi, he would be thrilled. Maze would be happy too. I could tell he liked the idea of having siblings very much. If she were the daughter of Farris, it wouldn't change much. My mother would be ecstatic either way to find out her daughter was still alive but she'd also be devastated realising the depth of her ex husband's betrayal. My mother would be a little bit happier if Raelynn was Malachi's, her mate and her Alpha. I silently prayed she was.

I was nervous about the DNA results but I was also anxious for my brother to come back to the pack house safely. I didn't understand why he'd volunteered himself for this mission. He must know Katrina a lot better than he was willing to admit.

"Is Katrina like your ex girlfriend or something?" I whispered to him as he adjusted his armour.

"No!" Hissed Fang, looking affronted.

Hmm.

"Please, please, be careful!" I said softly and hugged him. He didn't push me away anymore like he used to. He embraced me and kissed the top of my forehead and then he was gone.

Though I hadn't slept a wink, I was still expected to have brunch with Maximo the former Marigold Alpha apparently. I had completely forgotten about the note he had sent me until I had been summoned to brunch. I showered and dressed quickly in a demure cocktail dress. I wore the diamond tennis bracelet from my Alphas. I was a bundle of raw nerves, anxious about the DNA test, the secrets I was keeping concerning my father, anxious for Fang's safe return home, nervous about everyone's reaction to my being with two alphas and wondering if I would be permitted to carry the title of Luna for two packs and bear the alpha for two packs. Maze's grandparents would probably keel over if they knew their grandson was sharing me with the neighbouring Alpha. I stopped pondering those things as I walked into the conference room. I didn't want my cheeks to be flushed when I saw Maximo.

He was dressed to the nines in a top hat and a suit with tails. He looked like he was from another era altogether. He was certainly striking for a man of his age. He, Malachi and Maze share the same handsome, chiseled features, olive skin, glossy dark hair and stormy grey eyes. Those eyes seemed to pierce through to my very soul as they appraised me. I approached with caution, curtsying before them and then taking the chair the chair Maximo gestured to. He had wanted to meet in one of the conference rooms for privacy. Apparently, he had "delicate matters to discuss with me" so he didn't want to eat in the Alpha Dining and risk being overheard. I already had an inkling of what these delicate matters might entail. If this was about what I thought it was about, he was wasting his time and so was I.

Maximo's POV

It was not as though I hated Felicity and her daughter, Friday. They were physically appealing and sweet natured but they were common. I had worked so hard to prevent Malachi from marrying Felicity who had been a rogue at the time. I shuddered just thinking about it. Of course, the girl I had ultimately chosen for Malachi also had a mate, Cody. Felicity and Malachi, and Cody and Elizabeth had eventually all found their way ask to each other.

Had Malachi married Felicity all those years ago, she would've undoubtedly ruined his life. He didn't understand that. Maze didn't understand it either. Friday was not the proper choice and I would prove it to him. She was an opportunist just like her mother had been. The audacity of Felicity to marry Malachi's Beta in response to him choosing a better qualified Luna was outrageous. Felicity would've married any pack leader. She had been a rogue looking for a pack. Friday was an outcast looking for somewhere to belong.

We sat in the conference room, directly across from each other. There was a long heavy silence. I kept a smile plastered on my face as the dishes were placed before us. A huge array of breakfast items adorned the table yet neither of us seemed to be hungry. Friday was fidgeting uncomfortably. I was quite still despite my own discomfort.

"Friday, you're a sweet girl, I'm sure," I said gently.

She watched me with wary eyes.

"And Maze adores you, I'm told," I added.

She smiled faintly.

"But to be frank you're the kind of girl that would ruin his term as alpha," I said keeping my tone silkily smooth despite the harsh grating words. I was a little startled when I saw something flash behind her eyes, a sudden darkness. That couldn't be. She was borderline wolf-less. She had never actually shifted. One heat did not qualify her as a proper she-wolf.

"Friday, you're a sweetheart but I have to ask you to stay away from Maze. Choose Thaddeus! Didn't Maze reject you in the first place? Thaddeus is the obvious choice!" I said, raising a glass to her.

She did not seem surprised in the slightest. "Why would you want to deny Maze his mate?" She asked softly.

"I want Maze to have a suitable..."

She interrupted me most impertinently. "The only suitable Luna is the fated Luna, the true Luna, one who cannot be commanded!" She retorted.

I sneered. "Either way, that wouldn't be you, darling, you don't know if you really have a wolf or not! You hope you do! But there's no concrete evidence," I said smugly.

She was seething knowing, fixing me with a glare. It was so unladylike to openly show anger. Certainly not befitting of a true Luna. I drank a sip of wine.

"Here's some more incentive," I added, placing an envelope on the table.

It contained a check naturally for ten million dollars, twice what I'd given Cody. It was nothing to me. A single painting in my house was worth about that. She refused to take it. She did not even touch it.

I sighed deeply. "Aren't you going to open the envelope at least?" I asked encouragingly.

"Alpha Maximo, my decision at the end of the Challenge will be mine and mine alone, untainted. I don't need any help deciding," she said, folding her arms.

I cackled loudly. I almost choked on my wine.

"Alpha Maximo, Malachi and my mom are still getting married after you helped keep them apart for twenty-five years! What was the point?" She asked.

"I kept Felicity from being Luna. She was unfit. I also prevented her from being the mother of the future alpha, Maze, which is why he's turned out so well. I intend to do the same now. If you and Maze want to be together after he's done being Alpha, that's no concern of mine but I won't have a harlot like you ruling Marigold," I hissed, my eyes turning black.

I looked up expecting to see the wolf-less girl cower but she was glaring right back at me and her eyes were unmistakably black as coal too.

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09 minutes read

Ezra's POV

Raelynn and I went straight to my father. He was awake and staring at the raindrops streaming down the glass of his floor length bedroom windows. This was not unusual for him. He had not truly been normal since my mother's death. She had been his predestined.

"Father, Katrina is missing! Her room has been ransacked!" I said, my voice strained.

My father turned to me. His lips curved upwards into a strange smile. "I know," he said simply.

My heart plummeted. Chills crept through me. I pulled Raelynn close to me.

"What have you done with her?" I said through gritted teeth.

My father turned back to the rain-streaked window. He remained silent.

"TELL ME!!" I yelled so loudly bats flew out of the high towers of our Manor. My eyes were a glowing red and my fangs were bared. I was ready to pounce on my own father.

My father turned back to me with a disdainful expression.

"She has brought this upon herself," he said slowly, enunciating every word.

I launched myself at him. I tackled him to the ground and clasped my hands around his throat. My fingernails lengthened into claws of their own accord. I saw a flash of fear in my father's eyes for once. I felt some sense of sick satisfaction. It was usually impossible to get a reaction out of him. He was a sadist and a masochist so very little truly upset or unnerved him. Now, here, beneath me, at the mercy of my wrath he was afraid. But not for long. I heard a scuffle behind me. Raelynn. I yanked my father upwards by the neck as I righted myself. I held him in front of me still clutching him by the throat. His fingers clawed at mine to no avail. I spotted what the noise behind me had been and my blood ran cold. One of my father's loyal henchmen had my Raelynn in a vice grip and was holding a dagger to her throat. She watched me with fearful eyes.

"LET HER GO!!!" I demanded, making the room shake. Dust fell from the ceiling of the old manor at the impact of the sound.

My father cackled hoarsely. I tightened my grip and so did the henchman.

"Lord Ezra, let Lord Ezekiel go and I'll release Lady Raelynn," said the henchman.

I recognised him as Lane, a hulking vampire with skin as pale as alabaster and large protuberant light grey eyes. His long black hair was disheveled and he was panting from the effort of holding Raelynn. She was stronger than she looked. I would rather die than lose her.

"Let her go! Please!" I beseeched Lane, softening my tone and quieting my voice. I sighed. "I won't let my father go until you release Raelynn!"

Lane didn't budge an inch. That sick bastard. I had always hated him. He had a thing for my stepsister Katrina and she was disgusted with him. I had threatened him many a time for prowling about near her chambers. The burn scars near his clavicle was from me. Holy water. I had gotten it from the vampire nuns at the orphanage my father

provided for financially. They used to be regular nuns before my father set his warriors on the establishment and had everyone turned. Some had lit themselves on fire or walked into the bright daylight rather than be made to live as vampires. The holy water had burnt Lane's body from his clavicles to his navel. I knew he hated me and I him but I had to plead for Raelynn's sake.

"Lane, listen to me," I said, trying to keep my breathing even. I was terrified for my Raelynn. "My father has done something with Katrina. I know how you favour her. I know your heart is set on her."

Lane laughed. He cackled just as madly as my father. My father laughed with him, gasping with tears running down his cheeks due to the pressure I was putting on his throat.

"I have Katrina," said Lane as though that were the funniest thing in the world. He guffawed.

"What do you mean?" I hissed.

My father coughed and wheezed a little. I loosened my hold ever so slightly so that I could hear what he was saying if he chose to speak.

"Your stepsister is too hung up over that Beta," came my father's raspy reply. "I promised her to Lane so she would be out of the way. She would meddle too much in my plans on that Beta's behalf and he no longer wanted us to have his sister, the Luna Friday."

"NO!" Shrieked Raelynn. "Please, leave Friday out of this!"

"This has always been about Friday," said my father with a humourless laugh. "We had wondered if we'd suppressed both you and Friday's wolves too deeply but it seems Friday's experiment was a success! There is talk of her heat and her mind linking. Her wolf should surface soon. It was you who turned out to be a failure but I left you alive as my son found his predestined in you. It was a lucky coincidence that saved your life!"

"What?" I said softly. "What experiments?"

Raelynn's eyes were filled with tears. "Friday told me that Farris sold us to Ezekiel to be experimented on. We're really sisters, Friday and me. Farris told Felicity I was stillborn. I was injected with wolfsbane by Ezekiel as a child while Friday was injected with silver by Farris. Ezekiel wanted us to be super she-wolves. He even exposed you to sunlight ever since you were a baby, Ezra! That's why it's so easy for you to go out in the day, even more so than other highborns. I should've told you sooner!" Raelynn said, tears streaming down her cheeks. "But I was waiting on something."

My grip on my father slackened. I was nothing more than another lab rat to him. He was a bigger monster than I'd even imagined.

"On what?" I asked Raelynn. "What were you waiting on?"

"I wanted to know who my father was," Raelynn said, her voice so soft it was almost a whisper. Her eyes were glassy and distant.

I knew what she meant. She wanted to know if Farris was really her father before she revealed his treachery because she knew I would want him dead. Friday was probably keeping the same secret from her alphas. I had been keeping secrets too.

"Raelynn," I said softly. "I knew my father wanted to kidnap Friday, and Katrina knew too."

Raelynn gasped.

"But I would've never let any harm come to her. I swear! I swear on my life!" I said, my eyes watering.

"How touching," cooed Lane.

I fixed him with a glare. "You're going to let her go! And then, you're going to take me to Katrina!" I snarled.

"I don't think so," said Lane with a fake pout.

"EZRA! LOOK OUT!" Screamed Raelynn.

A searing pain shot through my side. I released my father and stumbled backwards. I looked down. I had been stabbed with an athame, a special ceremonial dagger. It was sticking out of my side. My vision blurred. It must've been blessed with holy water. I fell to my knees. I gripped the ornate handle. I looked behind me and saw a triumphant looking warrior along with a few other high-ranking coven members who were loyal to my father. The warrior was Fiord, a vampire with flaming red hair who worshipped my father. He had stabbed me! They had planned this, to get rid of me and marry Katrina off to Lane. I couldn't let them take Raelynn even if it was the last thing I did. My eyes found her. She was shaking. Raelynn!

Lane actually released her out of confusion at her convulsing. I heard several snapping sounds. My father crawled to one corner away from her. What was happening? Fiord had another blessed blade, this one a throwing dagger. He aimed it at Raelynn. I used whatever energy I could muster to propel myself at inhuman speed towards him. I snapped his neck and yanked on his head with all of my might, ripping it from his body. He was a made vampire and they tended to succumb easier to death. The others involved in my father's plot surrounded me. There were about ten of them. I had the

bless throwing knife now. I caught one of them in the chest with the blade. He keeled over. My body was weakening. They circled me. At least, they were distracted from Raelynn by me.

Raelynn fell on her knees, bracing herself with her palms flat on the marble floor. Her brown eyes became black and her features hardened. My eyes widened. Was she about to...

In a matter of seconds, her form grew and grew and fur sprouted all over her until a massive light brown wolf stood in her place, its black eyes on the warriors and its jaws opened wide to reveal huge dagger-like teeth.

Friday's POV

I sprang to my feet. The emotions inside me were too much. I was outraged, the indignity of it all was too much! I felt my body shaking. Pain coursed through me like wildfire consuming my form. It hurt! But it felt right, natural, predestined, fated. It was meant to be. Maximo looked at me, his mouth agape, his face contorted in horror. I could feel my eyes turn black. They had done this before. I could feel my teeth lengthen into fangs. That had never happened before! I lunged onto the table in one seamless jump, crouching on it. I felt myself growl. I heard the deep sound emanate from me. I looked down and my tiny hands were growing, their nails lengthening and darkening, the tips becoming sharp. Claws! I clawed the tablecloth shredding it effortlessly. I opened my jaws wide. I was halfway between beauty and beast as my she-wolf tried to fully surface. She wanted to sink her claws and her canines into the wicked old former alpha.

Finish him.

Maximo was too shocked perhaps to shift also. I crawled towards him. I felt something growing out of me: my tailbone was lengthening. The coccyx of my spine shot out of me covered in flesh and fur, forming a long tail that curled its end around a nearby butcher knife for carving the turkey. My she-wolf had a mind of her own. My tail put the blade against the former alpha's throat.

All the colour drained from him. I smiled at him with black eyes and bared canines, still half-human, my long waves swirling around me, my dress frayed but not shredded. I caught sight of my demented reflection in the shiny blade as it pressed against Maximo's throat.

I had made my point. I was not my father. The control came to me easily all of a sudden, like breathing. There was no need to think about it. My tail removed the knife from his throat and plunged it into the wood of the table. It was stuck there. Within a few breaths, I was back to being a girl, petite and wide eyed, sitting on her knees on the table top.

Maze and Thaddeus burst into the room. I had not told them explicitly about the brunch.

“Grandfather, what is the meaning of this? I did not okay any brunch with you and Friday on my day!” Snapped Maze.

“She’s a monster! A monster! She’s not a normal she-wolf. She’s like a...a...” Maximo stopped yelling and pointing at me, taking in the tiny human-like me.

I looked up at Maze and Thaddeus with my doe eyes. I smiled sweetly at them. Thaddeus smiled back. Maze was upset with his Grandfather.

“Why is her dress like that? All frayed? What did you do?” Demanded Maze.

“Nothing!” Hissed Maximo. “The girl is a demon! A wraith! A friend!”

“Oh, please,” said Maze, rolling her eyes. “She’s an angel.”

“Alpha Maximo, I can’t accept this money to stay away from Maze. Both of these alphas are priceless,” I said with a smile, handing the former alpha the envelope.

He took it with a shaking hand. I hopped off the table and ran to my Alphas, leaving the former Alpha to think about everything that had just happened. I needed to think about it too. I had no idea how I had done that. I was not a normal she-wolf? I had gone from being wolf less to having a she-wolf but an abnormal one. He would know. He was a pain, but a former alpha nonetheless. I needed to talk to Raelynn and we needed to come clean to my Alphas, her Ezra and our whole family.

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Fang’s POV

We stormed the Manor. Something was not right. It was eerily silent and strangely devoid of vampires. That day when I went to meet Ezekiel Victor Van Der Windt the Manor had been dotted with vampires at every turn. Now the hallways were empty. Deserted. Evacuated? What was going on? Dread threatened to consume me. What is this were as trap?

I heard a scream, a girl’s voice. Katrina? No. The tone of the voice reminded me of someone else. It almost sounded like Friday’s voice. That girl! The one who had flipped me off! The Friday lookalike. I ran towards the sound of the voice. The squad followed my lead. I smelled blood, a lot of it. I could hear screams. I needed to be in wolf form for this! I shifted instinctively, bursting out of my armour as I expanded, growing, my bones breaking and lengthening until I became my colossal dark brown wolf. I was instantly connected with someone, another wolf, a she-wolf. Her mind linked with mine

effortlessly as if we were from the same pack, more than that, as if we were from the same family.

Raelynn's POV

Without warning, Fiord the flame-haired warrior had plunged a blessed dagger into my predestined's side, and his blood soaked his shirt. NO! I began to shake so violently that Lane let me go and Ezekiel backed away from me. What was happening to me? I looked down at my hands, they were growing. My fingernails grew sharp pointed ends. I gasped but it came out as a whimper. I cried but it emanated from me as a howl. My bones were breaking, lengthening and reshaping themselves. I found myself on my palms and knees.

Ezra's eyes were on me. I had to get to him! He was surrounded by his father's henchmen. I hadn't even realised Fiord had been about to throw a knife at me until Ezra grasped him by the neck and twisted his head around, snapping his neck and severing his head in the process. His headless body hit the floor.

Ezekiel was cowering. He looked flabbergasted. He scrambled backwards. He kept to the far corner of the room near the exit. The dozen or so coven members he had with him divided themselves. Six of them surrounded me and six surrounded Ezra. Ezra was weakening. I could feel it through our bond. I needed to get him out of here and quickly. I had never fought before, not even in my usual form as a girl far less in this unfamiliar body as a she-wolf.

A vampire warrior lunged at me trying to wrap his arms around my thick furry neck. Ezra moved towards us but was held back by one of the others. He was busy with the six surrounding him. Even wounded, he held his own. I snapped at my assailant instinctively. It was a small bite. A few puncture wounds that matched my front teeth. The vampire recoiled withdrawing his arms. He then looked at the shallow puncture wounds and laughed. The others smirked.

"This she-wolf is mostly bark and no bite, huh," said the warrior with the small wounds.

"Someone should have taught you how to fight, eh, Lady Raelynn," mocked another.

The bitten warrior frowned suddenly. His face contorted. The others stood back from him. I heard a strangled scream. Ezra had killed one of his six attackers. The bitten warrior let out a blood-curdling scream that startled everyone and drew all eyes to him. Ezra seized this opportunity to snap the neck of another warrior.

"It's burning!!!!" The bitten warrior screeched, ripping his upper armour off to reveal the spread of an excoriated area. The wound was causing a hot angry redness to spread across the skin from the small puncture sites to rest of the body almost as though...

“Her bite is poisonous!” Hissed the other warrior who had mocked me.

The wolfsbane. Also called devil’s helmet and queen of poisons. Lethal to werewolves but still poisonous to others.

I quickly launched myself at the other warrior who had mocked me. I snapped at his chin and neck leaving puncture wounds. I was hesitant to tear at anyone’s flesh. Being lupine was so foreign to me and the taste of their blood disgusted me. The second warrior screamed and was frothing at the mouth by the time I had moved to another warrior. The other four actually retreated, running in the opposite direction as their two comrades lay writhing from the poison, their cries filling the air. Ezra had killed another two of his assailants. Thus, four of the six who had surrounded Ezra now lay dead. The remaining two followed the four who were running from me. Ezra moved to run after them.

“No!” I yelled, surprised to hear my human voice, magnified by the wolf. I could still speak as myself in wolf form if I needed too!

“We should kill all of them! They’ll tell others you’re different. I don’t want them hunting you!” Cried Ezra.

“People will find out anyway,” I said soothingly, nudging him with my nose.

He fell forwards onto my back and scrambled on top of it. He wasn’t heavy to me in this form. He clung to me. We needed to get out of here. I could feel his blood dripping onto my fur. I heard another series of screams and shrieks. I smelled more blood. I smelled something else. A wolf! I was instantly not afraid of the other wolf. He seemed so familiar. My animal instinct pushed me to go to him. I dashed forwards.

The six retreating vampires were being taken down by a massive dark brown wolf. He tore into them effortlessly. He was ruthless and his bites were not timid like mine. He tore chunks of flesh and ripped out throats, raining blood all over the floor and his fur. A small whimper of fright escaped me.

“It’s ok, Raelynn,” murmured Ezra in my furry ear. “That’s Fang. That’s your brother,” he said before he lost consciousness.

Friday’s POV

I felt a constricting feeling around my heart. It was Maze’s day. After he and Thaddeus had plucked me from that beastly brunch with Maximo, they had decided to remain at the pack house to coordinate any backup the squad storming the vampire Manor might need. Thaddeus was mind-linking with Fang and his other warriors when I felt the squeezing pain in my chest. Only one thing I’d ever felt compared to this pain. It was similar to the intense pain I had felt when Maze had rejected me and I had fallen to the floor. I felt giddy and consumed with worry and anxiety. It was unbearable.

I slid out from the chair where I sat between my Alphas. I would have hit the floor if both Thaddeus and Maze had not grasped me and pulled me up, placing me back in the chair. Their worried eyes were upon me. They kept their hands on me in case I slumped over again.

“Friday! Little Luna! What’s wrong?!” Asked Thaddeus, concern evident in his face.

“Baby, talk to us!” Demanded Maze, cupping my face.

My heart was racing. I was panting and trembling but this was different than what I’d experienced earlier when I had shifted. I had not even told my alphas I could sort of shift yet. I closed my eyes as beads of perspiration formed at my temples. One of my alphas was holding me in his lap, cradling my head to his chest. The other alpha was sponging my head with a cold washcloth. They had alerted a few others. I heard Theo’s voice. He had Titus the baby with him from the sound of the cooing.

I heard Ida’s voice as she placed a hand to my forehead. “She’s burning up. She’s got roasting fever!”

“Summon the pack doctors!” Ordered Thaddeus.

I heard the shuffling of feet. A few people were running down a hallway, the sound of their footsteps fading and then a rush of sound came back to the room as the pack doctors descended on the scene. I felt a sting on my arm. An intravenous catheter was being placed. I heard a doctor asking a nurse to do my vitals. Thaddeus gently placed me to lie down on a soft bed. I could smell Thaddeus on my right and Maze on my left, reminding me of the first day I had fainted. They had hated each other then! That was the last thing I remembered before I lost consciousness.

Theo’s POV

Everyone was so focused on Luna Friday fainting that the squad storming the vampire Manor was momentarily forgotten. Thaddeus’ head snapped up from where he was gazing down at Friday.

“Theo! Take over the remote monitoring of the squad storming the Manor for me! Check on Fang and the boys! Send backup if needed! I’ll need an update on Fang, Katrina, and please locate Ezra and Raelynn. Something’s not right. Ezra still hasn’t gotten back to me!” Thaddeus said, clapping me on the back.

“Westwood!” Boomed Thaddeus, addressing our friend and Gamma. “Help Theo!”

Westwood nodded and smiled at me. As we exited the room, I heard the doctor say, “Seems like a simple case of Lupine Fever.”

"Isn't that what young wolves get when they first shift? That's impossible! Our little Luna has never shifted!" Said Maze.

"Maybe she has," rumbled Thaddeus.

"When?" Asked Maze.

"Her dress was frayed earlier," mused Thaddeus.

Friday had shifted?

I rounded the corner and ran right into Felicity and Malachi. Felicity had dissolved into tears and Malachi was trying to calm her down.

"Theo, one of my babies is sick and the other one is missing!" Cried Felicity.

"Fang's not missing, Baby!" Cooed Malachi, holding her as he led her down the hallway towards Friday's room.

"He's not missing, Luna Felicity! I'm locating him now!" I called down the hallway. I was under strict orders not to reveal to Fang's mother or his pregnant mate where he was.

"Where is Fang?!" Demanded Astrid coming out of nowhere with her arms akimbo and making Westwood and me jump.

"Astrid, he's nearby...give me ten...no fifteen minutes!" I said. "I'll be right with you!"

The Berryndale pack house had a surveillance room. There was a team of wolves keeping communication with the squad. I walked into the room and many nodded out of respect. A few stood but I waved my hands for them to sit.

"An update, the Alpha wants Beta Fang of Marigold, the Lady Katrina, Lord Ezra and his predestined Raelynn located!" I commanded.

"I've already dispatched an ambulance and a security team for the ambulance, Beta Theo," said one of the high ranking pack wolves on the surveillance team.

"An ambulance?" I said, alarm bells going off in my head.

Westwood was reading through the written reports on the screen. There was always someone taking a record of things. I looked at the playback of the feed of one of the body camera's on a squad member. It showed a huge dark brown wolf ripping at vampires' throats. Fang. There was another wolf! I was told the squad members had not shifted. They had backed up Fang in human form with ammunition. Who was this? I instantly recognised it was a she-wolf. I furrowed my brow. She was carrying a vampire to safety, his blood dripping on her fur. I narrowed my eyes.

“The ambulance has been ordered for Lord Ezra,” reported Theo.

“Update on Katrina?” I asked.

“We’re still trying to locate her,” said Westwood. “We’re trying to locate Raelynn as well!”

“No,” I said smiling. “No, no, we’ve found Raelynn!” I said, looking at the light brown she-wolf. “She’s found herself too.”

The Challenge Two Alphas, One Girl Chapter 69 - Tips

0 16 minutes read

Maze’s POV

The twenty-first day of the Challenge was my date day but for perhaps the first time in the Challenge, there was no date. My sweet little Luna, Friday, was being treated by the Berryndale pack doctors. Thaddeus and I were at her bedside. The sun was setting outside. Its slow descent cause a myriad of colours to blend across the canvas that was the sky. Pinks and golds, oranges and yellows, blues and purples. Night was coming. For the first time since the begging of this Challenge, I would be permitted to spend the night at Friday’s bedside along with Thaddeus as she was ill and under surveillance. My Dad stood in a corner of the room, his eyes on the sunset outside. Felicity was half-asleep in the chair near to him, tears still staining her cheeks. She was worried about Friday and Fang. The doctors had assured Thaddeus and me that Friday was expected to make a full recovery. Nevertheless, I refused to leave her bedside and so did Thaddeus.

Suddenly, Theo burst into the room, making everyone jump. The Berryndale Gamma, Westwood, was hot on his heels. They were panting.

“What’s wrong?” Came Thaddeus’ deep rumble of a voice, his tone grave.

“It’s Ezra. He’s badly injured. The pack doctors are with him and Raelynn. Fang is back,” said Theo.

Felicity stirred. “Fang!”

Thaddeus got to his feet. He glanced at me. “You’ll be here? You’ll watch over her?” He asked, his blue eyes filled with worry. He needed to see to Ezra as a potential future Aly receiving treatment at the pack house.

I nodded fervently. “Always,” I said, smiling. Thaddeus nodded. He moved towards the door but I stopped him and pulled him into a bear h.ug. “Everything will be ok, brother,” I murmured.

He nodded and clapped me on the back and then he was gone.

Thaddeus' POV

The last thing I wanted to do right now was leave my little Friday unattended. Maze was with her. Her mom followed me to see Fang and Ezra. It dawned on me that Felicity had never seen Raelynn! I wondered what she would make of the Friday lookalike. We were still unsure of her true origin as far as I knew. I wondered if Felicity or Farris could tell me more, if one of them was keeping secrets. Malachi came with us too. I had called in a full team of pack doctors when Friday fell in so the timing of Ezra's misfortune was actually good. There were many physicians in the pack house today, a team of ten. Five were still upstairs with Friday and five were working on Ezra along with a few nurses.

Theo led me to the infirmary. Friday was actually being seen to in her regular bedroom but Ezra needed more care and he needed continuous monitoring of his vitals. The first person I noticed was a scared-looking Raelynn wearing a long T-shirt that must have been given to her by one of the men. Her face was tear streaked as she watched the doctors and nurses work on an unconscious Ezra, her predestined. I knew how she felt. I walked over and pulled her into a bear h.ug. She seemed startled at first but quickly relaxed in my arms. I wondered if I was holding my future sister-in-law. She was so very like Friday. Someone in this mess was lying. She broke down, sobbing in my arms. Malachi seemed weirdly drawn to her. He sauntered over though he had never met her before as far as I knew. He began rubbing circles on her back to comfort her.

"Raelynn, I know you don't know me, I'm Friday soon-to-be step-dad. It'll be ok. Nothing is worse than losing a mate or being separated from them. Trust me, I know, but the pack doctors will do everything possible," said Malachi softly.

Felicity was h.ugging a bl00d-splattered Fang. She pulled away looking at him in horror, just noticing all the bl00d.

"Relax, Mom! It's not mine, ok," he said.

"Whose is it?" She demanded, sniffing.

"The vampires that attacked us," Fang said.

"What happened?" I asked.

Raelynn extricated herself from me and Malachi and answered.

"Ezra and I were looking for Katrina. Her room had been ransacked and she was missing. We went to his Dad, Ezekiel. Ezekiel revealed that he knew she was missing. He planned it all!" Said Raelynn through tears.

Fang growled. Astrid came running into the room and threw herself in to Fang's arms literally wrapping her legs around his waist and flinging her arms around his neck. She was always one for theatrics. Raelynn ignored and continued her story.

"Katrina has been sold off, promised to the gross vampire that always had a thing for her. Lane," said Raelynn.

"What?!" Snarled Fang, apparently just finding this out. "We were forced to come back because Ezra was so badly injured but I still need to go back for Katrina," said Fang.

"Could you direct me to where the Lane would be?" Fang asked Raelynn.

Astrid stiffened. "Who is Katrina and how do you know her?" She demanded, her eyes turning black.

Fang recoiled from his angry, pregnant mate and wife a little. "She's just a friend, Astrid," he said cupping her face. "She's a vampire I met in a Berryndale bar. She's Ezra's younger stepsister," Fang added, gesturing towards the gravely injured vampire nearby.

Astrid was seething. "And you ran off to save her without telling me? What if something had happened to you? What about our baby? Huh? What about me?" She squealed as tears ran down her cheeks.

"Shh, shh, Astrid," cooed Fang.

"There were about twelve vampire warriors that came out of nowhere. One of them...stabbed my Ezra...with a...a...a blessed blade. It had been dipped in holy water I think," cried Raelynn.

Malachi had a hand on his shoulder. Felicity was staring at Raelynn, her mouth agape but her shock was not due to the sad story.

"Who are you?" Whispered Felicity.

"Raelynn," said Raelynn softly. "The predestined of the vampire Lord Ezra. He's my mate basically."

Raelynn continued. "Ezra being stabbed hit me with such force. I was devastated and so scared. I was trembling and then...and then...I...I just grew and grew."

Fang was smirking, with something like pride in his eyes.

"I turned into a wolf!" Said Raelynn.

I knew it! fvck yeah! She was a she-wolf after all! That must mean she was...

“My bites were poisonous. I took down a few warriors as best as I could and Ezra killed twice as many as me even in his wounded state,” she whispered.

Poisonous bites?! Wow. Ezra was impressive too! However, I already knew he was a great fighter.

Fang was gazing at Raelynn with so much pride. He looked at her like a father looking at his toddler taking her first steps.

“Do you know why you have poisonous bites, Raelynn?” I asked, intrigued.

Raelynn shrugged. “I have some speculations...um...where’s Friday? I need to speak with her urgently!”

I winced thinking of my sick little Luna. I sighed. “She’s not feeling well. She has a fever and is unconscious...”

“What?!” Cried Raelynn starting to cry again.

“It’s ok! The pack doctors have stabilised her. They gave her paracetamol and brought down the fever. She’s getting IV fluids and she’s being monitored overnight,” I explained.

“Ok. Please let me know as soon as she wakes up!” Raelynn said, her eyes glassy.

“Of course,” I said softly.

“I can’t leave Ezra to go see her just yet,” lamented Raelynn.

“It’s ok. Maze is with her and five doctors are up there too,” I said.

“It’ll be ok, Raelynn and congratulations on shifting!” Said Theo warmly.

Raelynn smiled for the first time since she’d been here. “Thank you, Beta Theo!”

“Please! Call me Theo!” Theo insisted.

“Congratulations superstar!” I boomed, grabbing her shoulders and giving her a little shake.

“Congrats,” said Malachi smiling. He also looked proud of her and the whole time she had been here, he could not stop staring at her. Felicity was the same except she was so busy just staring at Raelynn, she didn’t even say “Congratulations.” I was pretty sure Felicity had not even heard most of the story.

"You live with vampires?" Asked Felicity, gazing at Raelynn.

Raelynn nodded.

"Where are your real parents?" Asked Malachi.

"I was told by Lord Ezekiel that I was an orphan," Raelynn said simply, shrugging.

Raelynn's POV

I was simply not ready to reveal my possible identity as the daughter of Felicity and Farris or Felicity and Malachi. I wanted to know who my father was first. Friday had sent DNA samples to me with one of the Berryndale squad warriors. I had it in my pocket. The DNA of Friday, Farris and Malachi. I needed to take a few strands of my hair and send it too. The use of the lab at the Van Der Windt Manor was no longer a possibility. I approached who seemed to be the head doctor.

"May I have an update on my predestined?" I asked softly.

"Sure," said the doctor. "We've managed to stabilise him but he isn't completely out of the woods yet. He lost a lot of blood and his fast healing won't work on a wound from a blessed blade so the wound will heal over the course of several days rather than hours or minutes. He's getting some analgesia. By that, I mean painkillers. Strong ones. The painkillers brought down his racing pulse. Some of his tachycardia which means a fast pulse was due to the pain. His blood pressure is a bit low because of all the blood he lost. We're giving him fluids so he won't go into hypovolemic shock where the volume of blood is too low. We haven't done any blood transfusion yet. We sent his blood samples to the lab to find a match for his blood type if needed but vampires respond better to blood that they just drink and that can be any blood type. It doesn't have to be a match."

I nodded. "Thank you, Doctor. The lab you're talking about is nearby?"

"It's right adjacent to the pack house on the same estate," said the doctor.

"I want to do a DNA test," I whispered so softly even the werewolf doctor had to lean in.

"Ok, on whom?" Asked the doctor slowly, raising his salt and pepper eyebrows.

"I want to see who my father is. Please it's very important but it has to be kept confidential!" I pleaded.

"Of course," he said.

I got a small sample cup and put some of my hair in it. I labeled it with my name. The junior doctor was a really young-looking she-wolf with long curly hair. She was wearing in purple scrubs. She introduced herself as Joanna and she helped me sort out the DNA

samples. She insisted I call her by her first name or her nickname “Jo,” rather than call her doctor.

“How long will the results take, Doctor Jo?” I asked, compromising by still calling her doctor but using her nickname.

She laughed a little at my choice of name. “The lab here is great! One of the best I have encountered. They take just four to five days. That seems long but there are labs that take three to twelve weeks,” she said, emphasizing the last word.

I widened my eyes. She nodded. “Paternity tests can take a while. I’m going to rush this one and try for forty eight hours.”

“Thank you, Jo!” I squealed, hugging her before I could stop myself.

She seemed shocked at first but then giggled. She gave me a thumbs-up then went to review Ezra along with the same senior doctor from earlier. The courier came and picked up the samples. Jo had called him. I was filled with anxiety about the results. Ezra seemed stable. Thaddeus had returned to Friday upstairs. Felicity and Malachi had gone with him. Fang came back to the infirmary.

“Raelynn,” he said seriously. “You already know that I know.”

“Know what?” I whispered feigning innocence.

Fang sighed exasperatedly. “That we’re sibling,” he whispered.

I was silent.

“So why are you hiding it from everyone else? Does Friday know?” He asked.

“We’re not sure about what we know!” I said. “I’m not sure who my father is.”

“But you’re sure that we share a mother?” Inquired Fang.

I nodded.

“How did you find you out?” Fang asked.

I could not tell him just yet. Friday and I had decided to tell everyone together after the DNA test results and I was sticking to that plan. Fang was looking at me expectantly, prompting me to speak.

“I’ll let you know everything once I find out more,” I respond vaguely.

He sighed deeply. “Ok, look, take care,” he said. Huh.

Why did it seem as though he was saying goodbye?

Without warning, he snatched me up and gave me a long bear hug. He sniffed my hair and sighed.

“Your brother loves you. He doesn’t really know you,” chuckled Fang. “But he loves you.”

I realised he meant himself. Fang loved me? Friday loved me too! I had two family members who loved me! They wanted me! I had always thought no one did and that was why I had been chucked in the orphanage. I hoped Felicity would want me as her daughter. I hoped Malachi was my father and not Farris. I felt sorry for Farris because she was definitely the child of Farris and not Malachi otherwise she would not have been fated to Maze. No one could be fated to a relative, half or not. I sighed and Fang released me.

“Where does Lane live?” He asked, his expression serious.

Thinking about Lane made me feel sick. “He lives in his own manor near the border between Berryndale and Ambrosia. He’s from a rich old vampire family. Ezra told me they still live like they’re in medieval times with sword fighting and jousting. Do you know where the Berryndale Bevy is?” I asked.

“Yeah!” He exclaimed. “With the mermaids?”

I nodded. “On the other side of that lagoon, there’s a forest and the first residence after that forest is the estate owned by Lane’s family. The location after the Bevy keeps those old-school vampires away from Berryndale. The shrieking or mermaids is unbearable to vampire ears.”

Fang nodded.

Fang went out into the hallway. I heard Astrid’s voice. They were fighting over him wanting to go back to get Katrina. Astrid’s sobs were loud. I felt so sorry for her. Having your mate risk his life was the scariest thing. I felt helpless and I was sure she felt the same.

I sighed. I kissed Ezra on the forehead and cheeks. I kissed the tip of his nose and smoothed his blond hair.

I sat in the chair by his bedside and soon fell asleep.

Friday’s POV

When I came to, I spotted Thaddeus and Maze both sleeping in my bedside chairs. I sighed. I wished they had climbed into bed with me to sleep but I knew the Challenge

had specific rules. I ran my fingers through Thaddeus' long ashy brown hair. He stirred. He caught my hand gently and kissed the palm, his lips lingering against my skin.

"Little Luna, you're awake," he rumbled softly. "You scared me the sh!t out of me."

I giggled and Thaddeus silenced me with a steamy kiss. He left me breathless and aroused. He reached under my blankets and his hands found my underwear. I sighed happily as he slid them off. He was watching me with hungry eyes. I knew what he wanted to do. He licked his lips. I touched Maze's silky long hair. I laughed to myself. Neither of them was ever going to get those haircuts. Maze had not wanted one but Thaddeus' wanting one was what brought me to the pack house in the first place.

"Maze?" I said softly. His eyes slowly opened. He yawned and stretched.

"Baby, you scared me half to death," said Maze, his voice low, silky and smooth.

"I'm sorry, Thaddeus," I murmured, cupping his face with one hand while I cupped Maze's face with the other. They were both sitting on the edge of the bed now on either side of me. Maze smelled my arousal and his grey eyes darkened.

"Don't apologise, my little Luna, there's nothing to be sorry about. You did nothing wrong, Friday," cooed Thaddeus, his rumbling voice in my ear. The tip of his nose brushed against my ear, making me shiver. My skin was very prickly and sensitive now, all of a sudden. I needed to tell them about my wolf and my sister and my father, but first the DNA tests needed to come back...

"No need to apologise, Baby," murmured Maze sweetly, his hands reaching under the covers to massage my thighs.

Maze pressed his lips against mine. I savoured the kiss. He and Thaddeus had such a delicious taste. I quickly launched into what I needed to find out before I got too extracted and exhausted.

"What happened to Fang and Katrina? Did you take to Ezra? Is Raelynn ok?" I asked my alphas. They looked at each other.

"We have a lot to tell you," said Maze.

Long story short. Katrina had been sold to a weirdo vampire by her own stepdad. Raelynn had shifted in response to seeing Ezra stabbed by a vampire warrior named Fiord. My sister and I shifted on the same day. I wondered if we had shifted at the same time. We shifted for similar reasons, threats to our relationships with our mates, except her situation had been life and death. My heart went out to my big sister.

"I need to see Raelynn now," I specified.

“You need to rest,” grumbled Thaddeus.

“Exactly,” said Maze sternly, folding his arms.

“Nope!” I said defiantly.

My alphas frowned. Maze smirked suddenly. “You’ve earned yourself a spanking, young lady.”

My core moistened but I pushed the dirty thoughts away.

“I want to at least speak with Fang,” I said in a serious tone.

My alphas exchanged looks again. What?!

“What?!” I asked.

“Fang went to save Katrina from Lane. He left a note for you actually. He said you can read it aloud for everyone but he asked that you didn’t open the envelope until he was gone,” explained Maze.

“He went alone?” I asked softly.

They nodded. “But...but that’s practically a death sentence...one werewolf against a family of vampires!” I exclaimed, gulping. “Why would he risk himself like that?”

I picked up the envelope on my bedside table. Just then, my mother and Malachi came in followed by Raelynn, Theo and a distraught-looking Astrid.

“I heard you got a letter from him, too,” whispered Astrid with tears in her eyes.

“May I hear it?” Whispered Raelynn.

I nodded. Did you get the DNA samples I sent?

Yes but I don’t have access to the Van Der Windt lab anymore so it’s in the Berryndale lab. They told me two days and I sent it last night.

I grinned and so did she. We hugged each other. It was a relief to be reunited. We needed to go get Fang though. I sighed and looked the letter. I read it aloud to the rapt attention of everyone present.

It said:

Dear Friday,

I have to confess two things to you.

The first confession is that I was going to do the unthinkable. I had been in communication with Lord Ezekiel Victor Van Der Windt, the so-called Vampire King. I fed him information necessary so that he could arrange your kidnapping. There are no excuses for my treachery. Like father, like son I guess. I am so ashamed and I am filled with remorse. I did that because I thought whether you chose Thaddeus or Maze, my post as Beta would be in jeopardy. I reasoned that if you chose Maze, you would reveal what a substandard brother I have been and he would dismiss me as Beta. If you chose Thaddeus, I thought Maze would blame me as one of the negative factors prompting you to want to leave. Words cannot express how disgusted I am with myself.

For what it's worth, I soon changed my mind and tried to call off the kidnapping. Ezra was against the idea from the start. He was horrified that I would set up my own sister. I am horrified too. I can't believe I did that. Ezekiel would't let me call it off completely and thus I got Ezra to monitor any vampires that were tailing you. Ezra followed you and your alphas to the camping trip. He made a noise to alert you to the two vampires there and thankfully, Maze and Thaddeus handled them easily. I was working on keeping you safe after the fact and that brings me to my second confession.

I love you Friday. You're my baby sister. I have always loved you but I think I kept it suppressed because I was taught to shun you as weak and wolf-less. That is the second greatest mistake of my life. The greatest was betraying you in the first place. You didn't deserve that. You didn't deserve the way I treated you growing up. You deserve the best, always. I wish you that. Please take care of yourself and please don't hold my sins against your future niece or nephew. Please make sure he or she is nothing like me. Teach him or her your integrity, your bravery, your selflessness, your capacity for love and forgiveness.

I have written to Astrid, my mate, my one and only and explained things to her also. I wanted to say that she the love of my life again in this letter because I didn't say it enough in person. Please take care of Mom and let her know how deeply sorry I am for any pain I cause her. I hope she knows I love her and wish her happiness with Malachi. I know Maze and Thaddeus will hate the very ground I step on once they realise what I have done but I would have been honoured to have him or Thaddeus as my brothers. I hope you choose based on love, Friday, and nothing else. Raelynn, I know we are connected in some way and I am so glad we spoke before I left. Stay strong. I was so proud to fight alongside a formidable she-wolf like you. I hope Ezra fully recovers. He is good person. I wish Elizabeth happiness with Cody. Tell the twins, Fargo and Fallon, I love them even though they're pests. Tell my future son or daughter I didn't give up on them, I only gave up on myself. Daddy loves you more than anything. He didn't need to meet you or know you to love you.

I am going to get Katrina. If I succeed I will send her back to the pack house. If she doesn't return please go after her. She is a sweet girl. She reminds me of you, Friday. I

will take out as many enemy vampires as I can on my own. It is the least I can do. It is the least you all deserve. Please take care of yourselves and each other.

Your brother, Your mate, Your father, Your friend, Your son, Your former Beta, Fang.

The Challenge Two Alphas, One Girl Chapter 70 - Tips

09 minutes read

Maze's POV

Fang was dead to me already. I didn't care what Friday said. I ignored her as I made my way down to the conference room, following Thaddeus. Thaddeus sighed deeply and walked with me. Likewise, he refused to respond to Friday's pleas.

"Thaddeus! Maze!" She cried. "Please, you have to send a squad now! You have to! They'll kill him! I know what he did was wrong but he was trying to fix it! Think about my nephew or niece, please!"

She had tears streaming down her face. "Please, please, I don't want my brother to die. I'm already losing my father, I..."

"How desperate can you be?" I hissed at her, my eyes black. It was not my Baby I was mad with and I shouldn't have taken it out on her but hearing her plead for someone who would sell her to a bunch of bloodsuckers made me sick. Forgiveness was one thing but lack of self-preservation was another.

"The brother you're begging for would have had you carted off to live with vampires! Who knows what they would have done to you?! How they would have treated you?! How long you would have lived?!" I snarled, grabbing her by the shoulders and staring into her eyes. She sobbed brokenly. I sighed. She had no idea how important she was to me.

"Stop it, Maze," said Thaddeus softly. I released her. I was seething.

"Come here, Friday," said Thaddeus.

She climbed into his lap. He was in the head chair in the largest conference room. Thaddeus had called an emergency meeting to discuss battle strategy moving forwards. Ezekiel had slipped away in the fight with Ezra and Raelynn. Someone named Lane who apparently had Katrina was also at large. Friday sobbed quietly into Thaddeus' chest while he gently but absentmindedly stroked her hair. His mind seemed far away. Friday stopped crying. She was pulling herself together. The three of us were alone. I sighed, sitting in the chair on Thaddeus' right hand. I had called my Gamma, Slogan, in Marigold and told him to get ready for battle. We would strike Ezekiel's vampires before they struck us. We had a war on our hands.

"You say you want me as your Luna? Both of you say that!" Friday said, sniffing.

I nodded weakly and so did Thaddeus. That was a given so I did not understand her point.

"I want a squad to go retrieve my brother. I was told the Luna gets to decide the punishment of anyone who harms her. After the squad brings Fang back, I'll decide on an appropriate punishment," said Friday, sitting up straight in Thaddeus' lap.

I snorted with humourless laughter. Thaddeus shook his head.

Friday took a deep breath. "If you don't comply, I'm not sure if I can be with either one of you!" Friday said, her voice shaking.

I cackled. Was she for real? "You're bluffing!" I said incredulously.

She took a deep shuddering breath. "Try me," she said.

Thaddeus growled. Friday jumped a little.

"Little Luna, you are out of control," he grumbled, making her face him and grasping her chin to tilt it upwards so he could still see her face. He stroked her cheek with his thumb.

This was the first time all three of us had truly argued.

"You are ours!" I snarled slowly, enunciating and emphasising every word carefully. Friday fixed me with a determined stare. I was livid. How dare she threaten to be done with both of us over Fang? I had never been more insulted in my life. She was lucky I was hopelessly in love with her. I hadn't even gotten a proper chance to tell her what she really meant to me yet.

Friday's POV

I had no intention of leaving either one of them and it was a pretty bold move to threaten my two possessive alphas but I'd been a pretty bold person of late. I knew they probably thought me naive, too soft-hearted or foolhardy, but I knew Fang was truly sorry. I could feel it. He wasn't a lost cause like my father despite what anyone including Fang thought. Astrid needed him as her husband, mate and the father of her pup. My future niece or nephew needed his or her father. Mom couldn't take any more disappointment and emotional upheaval. I needed him. I had begun to think he might walk me down the aisle instead of my father. Even Fallon and Fargo would need their elder brother. They didn't know yet. The position of Beta would fall on them through our family's lineage and honestly I did not foresee them being quite as conscientious of a Beta as Fang had been.

I loved my big brother and I forgave him. End of story. I was the one who had been mainly wronged here and yet everyone else was taking it personally.

"Maze, remember when you saw me and I was a wreck and you said if that was what my situation was doing to me, then you'd save my father?" I asked.

"Yeah," Maze mumbled softly after a long pause.

"Truth be told, that was about way more than just my father. Fang dy-...if Fang doesn't return...I...that would wreck me," I managed to say wringing the handkerchief Maze had given me between my hands. Maze sighed and put his head in his hands.

"It's too much to forgive, Friday," murmured Maze. "He turned his back on you. He betrayed you"

I knew this was a low blow but here went my last shot.

"You turned your back on me," I said softly. Maze winced. He looked as though I had slapped him. Thaddeus regarded me with an expression of shock. "I forgive you," I whispered to Maze. "You didn't betray me but you did turn you back on me, at first," I said, remembering how Maze had rejected me and walked away from the cottage that night without looking back as I fell to my knees.

"Friday," whispered Maze, his grey eyes sparkling with tears. "You know how sorry I am. I'll always regret that. I love you," Maze whispered, a stray tear escaping and rolling down his cheek.

I wiped the tear away.

"I'm in love with you! I just want to protect you," Maze said softly.

Maze had said he loved me for the first time. Thaddeus had said it before but not Maze. Maze came over and knelt before me, right in front of where I sat on Thaddeus' lap. My breath hitched in my throat. For one incredibly intense moment, I thought he was going to propose to me right then and there with me on my other alpha's lap. However, he simply took one of my hands in his.

"Friday, I didn't deserve your forgiveness either. I'm so sorry for everything I put you through. I don't know if I'll ever forgive myself for treating you like that. You deserved so much better. I was pompous, narrow-minded and myopic. I couldn't see how special you were because I was blinded by my own arrogance, my prideful expectations, my upbringing...I didn't know how powerful love really was until I got to know you, Friday. I love you and you might hate me for it but I won't let Fang back into your life just to risk your safety all over again. I can't do it. I put your safety above my own, above all others. Please understand, Baby," said Maze looking up at me. He buried his face in my midriff and I tangled my hands in his long dark silky hair. I sighed.

“I love you too,” I murmured in his ear. “And I forgave you weeks ago.”

I tightened my hold on him. I did love him and I loved Thaddeus. They were my Alphas. I wanted to please them but I could not let my brother die this way. I had already forgiven Fang too. My forgiveness wasn't limitless. Maze more than deserved my forgiveness. We ended up bonding so deeply and he had given me much more pleasure than pain. I flushed a little recalling just how much pleasure Maze and Thaddeus had given me. Farris, my traitorous father, was beyond forgiveness in my mind. I couldn't forgive him. I felt as though he had no natural love for me or Raelynn. He had been prepared to watch us suffer and possibly die even in infancy. Fang deserved forgiveness as far as I was concerned but I couldn't force my Alphas to feel the same way.

I extricated myself from Maze and Thaddeus. “I need a little time alone to process everything,” I lied, kissing Maze and then Thaddeus as passionately as I could in my dreary state. They both nodded and let me sit out on the meeting. I wasn't going to my room to process anything. I was going to go get Raelynn and then we were going to get our brother back!

Thaddeus' POV

My wolf had gone from agitated to murderous as Fang's treachery had been revealed. All this time, a snake right in the midst of us all, ready to strike at my little Friday. I knew she would never wish him dead. If it were up to her, she would absolve him completely.

I could not force my little Luna being very happy with the way things were working out. She was losing the one thing she craved the most. Family. Her father. Her eldest brother. Ten minutes from now, her twin brothers, tweedle-dumb and tweedle-dumber, would reveal they'd been embezzling pack funds or something.

Her family did seem like it was falling apart, but as things fell apart, they also came together. Her parents' marriage was over but Farris was no suitable husband and father. Now, Felicity finally had her mate, Malachi, after years of longing. Of course, this made Friday and Maze step siblings but there you go, family. We were a family. A weird, hodgepodge but loving family formed from bits and pieces of other families.

I still hoped that Friday would get over this. I wanted the Challenge to be over. I wanted my happily ever after with Friday and even Maze, my fussy snobby bro. Today had been my day, day twenty-two, but all thoughts of dating had been forgotten, same as yesterday on Maze's day. The battle strategy meeting had been a blur. The sun was setting on one sh!tty day after another so quickly.

I still needed to locate Katrina for Ezra's sake. I still considered him an Aly. He seemed to have had Friday's best interests at heart from the beginning, protecting her from the shadows. I was almost certain that had a lot to do Raelynn. She was still a mystery officially but anyone could see how plain as day the truth was. She had to be related to

Friday somehow. She was likely Felicity's daughter. Her father could be Farris. It could even be Malachi. I wouldn't assume my future mother-in-law had a third potential baby Daddy just yet. Not that it mattered but there were no other candidates that I knew of.

I was rounding the corner when I almost ran into a small figure clad all in purple. I grabbed her shoulders so she would not go hurtling into the wall.

"Doc!" I exclaimed.

"Don't call me that!" Said Jo.

I grinned at her. Jo was the youngest pack doctor and a friend of the family. She was a petite she-wolf with long golden-brown curly hair. She had a Cherubic face but an impish sense of mischief. She was always in purple. Her brown eyes were calculating something. She tried to dart away.

"Where are you running off to? You're not even on call!" I said. I had the call schedule for the pack doctors sent to me each month.

"I know," she said sheepishly. She was up to something. "I have to chase a result," she admitted.

"Let the on-call Docs do it! Go rest!" I ordered, actually turning her around.

She trudged in the direction I had put her in. When she neared the corner, I saw her dart in the opposite direction out of the corner of my eyes. I sighed. I was not going to chase her down. If she was determined to be at work she would find a way to stick around.

Jo's POV (Junior Pack Doctor)

I escaped from Thaddeus. He tried to send me home which was nice of him but I had a really important favour pending. I ran to the lab. I was not a skilled runner. When I got there, my friend, the lab tech, grinned at me! Yes! He had rushed the result. I had told Raelynn the shortest possible time was forty-eight hours usually but it was actually twenty-four hours if the lab tech owed you a favour. I had gotten the samples to have first priority even though my senior doc (Jerk!) didn't sign off on it.

I high-fived my friend and grabbed the envelope with the paternity test results. The lab was just outside of the pack house. I ran back to the pack house. I opened the result on the way. I was allowed to review all lab results pertaining to my patients. I had to counsel my patient on whatever the result was and depending on who her father was she would need a lot of counselling. There were two papers. One was Friday's. I felt so sorry for her. She was really sweet. I knew that criminal was her biological Dad. That was a given. Especially because Maze was her mate so there was no way Malachi could be her Dad. Raelynn on the other hand could be anyone's daughter. I looked at

the second paper. I almost walked straight into a wall. I stopped in my tracks and caught my breath. I needed to find Raelynn right away.