

## Chosen by Fate 51

### Chapter 51 - Trinity-Attacked Again

Trinity

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We were walking back to the car at the university chatting and laughing. We had parked in the back today like usual, I didn't mind the walk and it meant not fighting for a space with the humans near the building. We were almost to the car when I sensed that someone was running right toward us.

"Luna." Vincent shouted, grabbing me around my waist and spinning around and moving me out of the way. We took off running back toward the buildings we had just left. It was just now that I started paying attention, we were the only people in the area. That was unusual but not impossible. Most people would be in class or attending clubs or sports. I can't believe we didn't notice though.

As we ran toward the nearest building, Performing Arts I think it was, I noticed that there was more than one pursuer. And these weren't just people chasing us. They were wolves. They had to be from another pack or rogues. But what were they doing on our territory? And why are they attacking me? Vincent spun me out of the way again, changing direction to avoid the new threat.

"Stay behind me." Vincent growled. "I'm going to have to shift." He said through clenched teeth. I sensed a third person coming at us then. Could this get any worse? I thought as the first wolf made to attack us again. But the new arrival did not come toward me and Vincent. No, they went after the charging wolf, smacking into him and knocking him off course.

I could smell the newcomer now. I knew the scent. I had smelt it that morning.

"Professor Thompson" I asked confused. She turned to look at me with the bright green eyes I had grown accustomed to seeing over the last few months. "Watch out." I cried out as the second wolf charged her. Vincent charged him at the same time Professor Thompson did. They crushed the wolf between them, knocking him unconscious.

The first wolf still hadn't given up, he was slinking around the other two trying to get to me without them noticing. I watched him move out of the corner of my eye, letting him think I hadn't noticed. The moment he made his move I kicked off from a car and used it to propel myself away from him. He skidded to a halt and doubled back, coming at me again.

This time I timed his run with a backflip, just like grandfather's tutors had taught me. I caught him in the jaw, just as I planned. I sent his head flying backward with such force that, combined with his forward momentum, his wound up doing an almost backflip as well. I heard him roar in pain and frustration when I hit him.

Once he finished his flip, he was already scrambling to his feet, ready for another assault. That's when we heard them, the sound of at least half a dozen more rogues that were very close by. Someone had engineered this whole event. They had deliberately cleared this particular parking lot and waited for us to return. It was an ambush.

"Luna, we need to run." Vincent growled, grabbing my hand and running toward town. He knew the rogues were less likely to follow us wherever the humans were. He pulled me along behind him as he ran as fast as he could. I was faster than a human, but he was still faster than me and I couldn't keep up with his speed.

"We need to keep going." He told me.

"I know, I'm just not as fast as you. I'm sorry Vincent."

"Come on." He snapped, pulling me again, this time lifting me up into his arms to carry me.

"This will just slow you down!" I protested.

"No, this is fine." He continued running, not decreasing his speed at all. The car we had been trying to get to was now abandoned. I mentally calculated how far it was from here to the compound, and how long it would take us to run there.

The sound of snarling wolves interrupted my thoughts, I looked over Vincent's shoulder, worried for Professor Thompson. I didn't see her. She must have gotten away, that was good.

Vincent and I had made it back to town, not far from where the diner was.

"Is there somewhere in the city you consider safe? Or someone you can trust that you would be willing to go to?" Vincent asked, setting me down at a corner just a block away from Franny's.

"The only person I know who lives in the city is Juniper, and I'm not sure if she's home. I don't know anywhere else well enough. We could go back to Franny's but it's bound to be mostly empty. If we're looking for a crowd, I'd suggest the mall." I was answering his question but also musing at the same time. We needed a crowd of people to disappear until it was safe to get home.

"Then I would say the mall is the best. The sheer number of people there will help hide our scents somewhat, but it will also likely be so full of humans that they will not show themselves in wolf forms. Come on, let's go." He took my hand again and pulled me along.

Vincent, for all his nice guy personality, was quite assertive when it came down to doing his job. It was a different side of him to see, but he seemed so cool. He reminded me of how I used to look up to my cousins when we were kids. As he pulled me along behind him, he pulled out his phone and pressed a number without me seeing who he was calling.

"I need you to get the others together and get down here now." He growled into the phone. I heard a muffled voice answer but couldn't make out what they were saying. "Don't give me any of your games right now David, there are at least half a dozen rogues in town, and already they've tried attacking the Luna.

"What." David must have yelled because I heard that clearly. Before the muffled voice continued.

"Bring the twins and the other two. We'll be at the mall, the smell should help mask her, hopefully." I heard the muffled voice once again. "Trinity where exactly is the mall?"

"You don't know? I thought you did because you just started walking. We're not far, thankfully. It's close to the university, just about a mile that way still." I told him, pointing. Vincent nodded.

"Close to the university. About five miles north, follow Chancellor Blvd, we will be waiting for your call." After that he hung up and continued pulling me in the direction of the mall.

We were sitting at the fountains in the middle of the mall, there were no large stalls or walls blocking the view of the fountains which made it the perfect vantage point. We weren't here to shop, and I had no desire to. My heart was still thumping loudly in my chest from the adrenaline.

"Are you alright Luna?" Vincent asked me with a concerned tone.

"I'm fine. Just got a little over excited earlier." I smiled at him.

"I'm sorry I didn't do more to protect you." He looked depressed. "I was going to shift, but we were aided by your professor. Then when I realized there were so many, I knew that the odds were stacked against me. I could probably handle them myself, and possibly survive. There's no telling for certain though because I don't know how they fight. But I wanted to prioritize your safety over all else."

"And I'm happy you did." I tried consoling him. "I would have fought them off too, but I know that with as many as there was, we would have most likely lost. And it would have been my fault. So, I'm happy you thought to protect me over fighting them."

"We've done nothing but apologize to each other today." He laughed at my words.

"Well, maybe we should make this the last time for a little while." I laughed as well. We lapsed back into silence.

As I sat there in silence, looking over my section of the mall trying to spot any enemies coming our way, I smelled a wolf coming right toward me. A wolf I would know anywhere. I had not expected him to come. His sweet, spicy, and robust scent of chocolate, cinnamon, and coffee followed by the smell of the forest. I would know it anywhere. I tensed visibly as soon as I noticed it.

"Is something wrong Luna?" Vincent asked when he noticed my distress.

"Well, I've got company." I told him quietly. He looked worried, thinking I had spotted an enemy.

"Let's go." Reece growled the order out as soon as he and the others got to the fountain.

## **Chapter 52 - Trinity-A Prisoner Again**

Trinity

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"How did you know where we were?" I asked him. This made Reece smirk for some reason. He leaned forward, putting a hand on either side of me on the edge of the fountain where I was sitting. He brought his face down close to mine before putting his nose into my hair.

"I could have tracked your mark, but just like I'm sure you noticed my scent as soon as I was in the mall, I was able to track you by yours." He growled into my ear.

"So, coming here would not have hidden us from the people that were after us?" I asked him.

"No, it would hide you from them, just not me." He grinned. "Your smell is stronger to me than anyone else's as I'm sure mine is stronger to you." I just nodded to him, there was no reason not to.

I noticed then who all had arrived with Reece. Behind him was David, Shane, and Shawn, the rest of my guards. On his left was Noah, and on his right was Carter. There was no one else in the world who could make me feel safer than those here. Reece included. I knew how strong he was, and the others had sworn to protect me. Noah and Carter, my family, would always protect me, and I loved them for that.

"Come on." Reece said to me. "Vincent, you, David and those two, search the area, find at least one of those rogues if you can. I want to know why there were rogues on my land going after my Luna." He growled.

"Yes, Sir.

"Carter, I want you to follow us in one of the cars up to the estate, if there are no problems, drive back down here to drive some of them back home. Noah, same to you, but you lead us back." He commanded. His words spun for a moment in my head before clicking. There were seven people here besides me. Reece had just given orders to six of them. That left two. Me and him. Oh Goddess, we're going to be alone again.

We walked back the way Vincent and I had come into the building. Back along the trail Reece had apparently followed. I watched as all four of my guards dispersed, then as Carter and Noah went to separate vehicles. Reece was walking to the car. It was a car I had never seen before, it was still expensive, but way less expensive than his Ferrari he had driven before. This was a Shelby Mustang.

"Another new car?" I asked him curiously, mostly to distract myself from having to be alone with him again.

"Well, someone doesn't like my ostentatious sports car, so I got a much less gaudy muscle car." He spoke sarcastically. "So, stop complaining." He added.

"But isn't it a little gratuitous to have so many cars?"

"Not when I let my staff use them too." He retorted.

"Fair enough."

Reece held the door opened for me like always before going around and sliding in behind the wheel. He drove us back to the estate in silence. I could see Noah driving ahead of us, and when I turned in my seat, I saw Carter, a serious look on his face, following behind.

I could tell that something was about to change. But I refused to pay it any mind. I didn't want to listen to it, not yet.

"Come to my office." Reece told me as soon as we got back home. Yeah, something was definitely about to change.

"Alright." I agreed, sensing the tension in the air. I watched as my cousins drove back down the driveway, wishing they would be there to act as a buffer for us.

I followed him silently through the house until we got to his office. He opened the door and waved me in ahead of him, pulling the door shut with a snap behind him. I was about to take my usual seat when he stopped me.

"Sit here." He indicated one of the armchairs near the sofa. This was to be an informal discussion then. I went where he directed me. I know I was going to lose my cool, probably sooner than I wanted to, but I would hold it in for now. He sat in the far corner of the sofa next to my chair, lounging leisurely yet looking anything but relaxed.

"What exactly happened today, Little Bunny?" He asked me, his voice full of annoyance.

"I thought you were already informed, Vincent told David everything." I told him.

"I want to hear it from you." He growled.

"Fine." I snapped then took a deep breath to steady myself. "I went to class with Vincent as usual. After-."

"Anything happen during class?" He asked me knowingly. I glared at him.

"Why do you ask?"

"I need to know everything." He smirked at me.

"My first class went fine, I spaced out in my second."

"Same as usual?" He laughed. I growled at him.

"And you would know that how?"

"You think I'm not told what happens when you're not here?"

"Of course, you are." I sighed. "Yes, I spaced out like usual. And Vincent had to get my attention when my professor noticed my lack of attention. That was the first time I was ever close enough to her to notice she was a wolf. I've never seen her in our pack, but I've hardly met everyone in our pack. So, I don't know if she is one of ours or not."

"She is not from our pack, she is actually from Riley's pack, she lives in between the packs so she can commute for work purposes. She is an ally."

"I know that now. After class Vincent, Juniper and I went to lunch at Franny's Kitchen, after we ate Juniper went back to meet Paul and Cedar while Vincent and I went back to the car. On our way back we were attacked by a man in his wolf form. Vincent moved to get me out of there immediately but there was another wolf attacking us as well."

"What happened then?"

"That is when my professor came. She helped protect us. I would like to thank her."

"I hear you had to defend yourself personally, what happened?"

"One of the wolves circled around. I just jumped out of the way, then kicked him in the jaw, that's all."

"Hmm." He seemed annoyed by my quick explanation. "How did you come to be at the mall when there were only two attackers?"

"At least half a dozen more were howling in the distance, they were coming to back up the others."

"So, you would have been outnumbered eight to two."

"Three." I corrected him.

"You're not supposed to be fighting." He growled at me.

"Why, haven't I proven that I know how to protect myself?"

"You don't have a wolf, so you cannot fight against one."

"That's crap!" I snapped at him. "I have been training to fight for almost fifteen years, you misogynistic ass."

"I don't care. You're not as strong as a wolf and you know it."

"That doesn't mean that I can't defend myself in the event that I am attacked. Don't you think that it would be best to have every advantage possible?"

"My number one priority is to keep my pack safe. And whether I like it or not, my pack needs you alive."

"All the more reason for me to protect myself."

"Out of the question." He snapped.

"You're unbelievable." I couldn't understand his reasoning at all.

"I don't care what you have to say, end of discussion." He said firmly. "And you're done with school." His growling words broke my heart. "Temporarily."

"I'm almost done with the semester. Let me finish it at least." I begged him.

"I can't risk you being attacked again."

"So, I'm just going to lose all the work I put in this semester?" I could feel the tears stinging the back of my eyes.

"I'll work something out so you can still sit your exams. But you cannot go to class anymore until we get this rogue situation under control."

"How long?" I asked him.

"I don't know." He looked apathetic as he spoke. My control broke and the tears I was holding back started to fall.

## **Chapter 53 - Reece-Facing Noah's Wrath**

Reece

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I could see the tears streaming down her face. I knew she was heartbroken and that she blamed me. But I just could not risk another attack. If she was attacked once while at the university, she could be attacked again. I just wish I knew what these rogues thought they could get from me by going after my mate.

I'm beginning to think that I have a mole in my office somewhere. Someone giving information to my enemies. I don't know if all the attacks on Trinity are linked or not, but they're starting to pile up and I'd be a fool to ignore them.

The first attack I thought had just been a case of wrong place and wrong time. And I was tempted to still think that. But it almost seemed like the rogue went right after her. Could she have been the target or was she just the first person that he came across that was alone?

Then there was the attack by the Warlocks. There was only one way they would know when I would be there, and that my mate would be with me. Someone had to tell them. But who in my inner circle was the mole? Who was trying to help my enemies get rid of me?

And now, these wolves, be they from another pack or rogues, were clearly trying to attack her directly. She was their target, no doubt about it. Someone was after me and they were trying to use my Luna to get to me.

I had distanced myself from her even more than I had already been, to protect her. I need her alive to protect my pack. I don't intend to let her get close to me, anyway. But if staying distant protects her then that is all for the best. Then I don't run the risk of her betraying me like women usually do.

If I can protect my pack and her by staying away, staying distant, then that is what I am going to do. I just wish I didn't have to be here to watch her cry. I am not good with watching women be emotional. All the times I've seen women cry and beg for things they thought I should give them, only to turn nasty and hateful. Women were spiteful, I wouldn't let myself get pulled in by her though. I wouldn't let it happen.

I sat silently watching as the tears spilled down her cheeks when I told her she was not going back to the university for a while. She looked devastated, which was probably an act. She didn't even try to wipe the tears away. But she didn't look at me either.

Suddenly, as if realizing what was happening, that she was crying in front of me. Little Bunny turned her head and blushed. Embarrassed she got to her feet and stammered.

"I'll be in my room." Her voice trembling. She ran out of the room and slammed the door behind her. I was shocked. She didn't yell at me. She didn't beg me for anything. She didn't blame me for anything. I was at a loss. What was going on?

After a few minutes of quiet contemplation there was a knock on my door. The scent told me it was Noah.

"Come in." I called out to him. The door flew open and Noah strode in with a cloud of fury surrounding him. "Looks like things didn't go very well." I growled.

"When Vincent and the others went back to investigate the rogues were gone. Their scents still lingered, but there was no sign of them anywhere."

"None of them?"

"No." I growled at him, even knowing it wasn't his fault. I couldn't stop the frustration and anger from overflowing.

"What are these people after?"

"I wish I knew, Reece."

"What do they think they can accomplish? How is attacking my mate going to get them my territory?" My blood was boiling. Whoever was pulling the strings and manipulating the circumstances here was going to have to deal with me soon enough. I will find them eventually.

"How is Trinity?" Noah asked. "How is she holding up after today?" I know what he wanted to hear from me. That I had done my job as a mate and comforted her. That I was being the ever-doting lover that people thought I was, that I wish I could be. But I can't. This lifestyle was not safe for Trinity, she would not survive if I was too close to her.

And if I was soft on her and let her get close to me, it would ruin me and those around me, just like it did to my father and my Uncle Nolan seven years ago. Mate bond or not, she had no wolf which meant she was incapable of being the devoted, once in a lifetime mate that we were all told to expect.

"She's in her room. She is not very happy with me right now." I told him.

"What did you do?" He asked me with a cynical look on his face.

"I told her she couldn't go back to class for a while. At least until the rogue issue is taken care of." I didn't like telling her that, I know it broke her heart, and I truly thought that she would make a good lawyer, Goddess knows she loves to argue enough to be one.

"She will understand, it will just take her time to process it all."

"I know." I grimaced at him.

"You don't look very happy yourself Reece." The somber look on Noah's face told me everything I needed to know. I wasn't hiding anything from him like I thought I was. Might as well be honest then.

I got up and started pacing the room before beginning to speak.

"I have been keeping her at bay for a while now." I told him.

"What! Why in Goddess's name would you do that?" He yelled.

"Several reasons really. First and foremost, to protect her. Look at the facts Noah, she has been attacked three times since finding out that we were mates. Do you think that it's all been a coincidence?" Noah raised a hand and ran it through his hair nervously, I don't think he has really thought about it as much as I had. The look of pure shock on his face just helped to complete the look.

"Second, Noah, is that I never wanted a mate in the first place, and I still can't believe that the Goddess chose someone without a wolf who can't feel the bond in its true strength and power. She will never match me at anything. She and I will never click. So, I've rejected her."

"You've what?" I saw Noah's eyes darken. I had never once seen Noah angry with me. He had always chosen his duty to the pack, to me, over everything else.

"I told her she was a mate in name only, that we will never be more than two people forced together. We will eventually share a bed to have a child and carry on the family line, but until then, she was nothing to me. And I told her I hated her." I finished while looking away from him. I didn't want to see the disgust on his face when he heard the last of what I had to say.

I heard him get to his feet, and I heard his footsteps, but he never said a word. I turned to look at him when I knew he was close to me. I knew he was going to yell at me, in Trinity's place, as he should. He was like her brother after all.

As soon as I turned to look at him, his fist smashed into the left side of my face. Had I been a weaker man, it would have knocked me off my feet. But I did feel the bone in my cheek crack under the pressure of his fist.

"What the hell is the matter with you?!" He snarled. "What kind of man says that to his mate?" He was angrier than I even predicted.

"In part, I did it to protect her." I told him.

"In what messed up way is being an asshole going to protect her?"

"Because she's already been attacked so many times, Noah, imagine how much worse it would be if I openly showed my affection for her constantly. Or if people thought we were closer than we are. Someone is after me, after my position, and they think they can use her to get to me. So I'm pushing her away to save her."

"Even if it means pushing her so far away that she never trusts you again?" Noah's fury was making it hard to understand him.

"If that's what it takes to keep her alive, then yes. My pack needs a Luna."

"Our pack needs an Alpha and Luna that are united. How do you not see that?" He asked me incredulously. "I can't believe you." Noah ran both his hands through his hair roughly, displacing his usually perfectly styled hair. He then stomped to the door and stormed out, slamming it behind him, leaving without another word.

That could have gone better. I thought to myself. I really just wanted to protect everyone. My pack. My Luna. And even myself. Why was it so hard to make sure that no one got hurt?

## **Chapter 54 - Trinity-Visiting The Previous Luna**

Trinity

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I had to remind myself for the millionth time that Reece was doing what he thought was best. Even though he was a misogynistic overgrown cave dog that thought I couldn't help protect myself. I knew deep down that he was right though. That who ever attacked us before could come back. That next time

I might not get away or someone I care about might get hurt. I knew it all, but that didn't make it any easier.

Once the shock and heartache of having no life finally settled, I had to figure out what I was going to do now. And Reece had said he would try to work out a way for me to still sit my exams, he'd worked some miracles already so he might just pull it off.

A thought struck me. I had told Noah I only had two jobs going for me right now, student and Luna. Well, I couldn't do one of them right now, so I guess I better do the other. Some of my jobs as a Luna included managing disputes between the females in the pack, handling social gatherings, and making sure the women and children were provided for in any way.

So, going off those duties, I thought it was best to try and get some of the pack to trust me as the Luna more, and build my rapport. I couldn't go to class, fine, then I was going to work on being the Luna. But I just don't know how to go about doing that.

I wish I had someone to help me learn to be the Luna. Someone I could ask questions of. I'm sure Katie had it easier because Riley's mom was still alive and could help her transition into the role. I guess Reece's mom was still technically alive as well, but I couldn't ask her anything.

The thought of her sitting up there, alone most of the time made my heart hurt. I knew that Reece talked to her, but no one else did. I'm not even sure if her maid or doctor did.

Just then I had a sudden idea. Reece was gone for the day on another one of his meetings, the last of which I was supposed to go on but was now banned from. So, I knew what I was going to do. I'm going to visit his mom. I thought to myself. I knew she wouldn't be able to talk back to me, but if I was her, I would want someone to talk to me as often as they could.

I didn't want to let anyone know I was there, but Reece would probably smell my scent and figure it out anyway, so it really didn't matter. I crept slowly down the hall while no one was around. I knew that Abigail and Peter were downstairs, but I never knew exactly who would be in the house at any given time.

I made it down the hall and to her room with no incident and slipped in as quietly as I could, shutting the door silently behind me. I thought the room would be dark and dreary, but it was actually bright and open. The curtains open and let in lots of natural lights.

I saw her then, sitting in a rocking chair next to the window. She was wearing a loose-fitting white nightgown. With the light shining on her golden-brown hair and reflecting off her pale nearly translucent skin she almost looked like an angel, or a ghost, sitting there. She definitely didn't look real.

I walked closer to her, nervous and afraid that she would choose now to wake up and catch me. But she didn't move or make a sound at all. I pulled a chair in front of her and sat, looking her in the face. She was beautiful. Even withered away as she was. I could see how beautiful she was and how much Reece loved his mother.

It was clear that she had been a beautiful woman when she was younger. But having spent seven years in this catatonic state she had wasted away. She looked thin and frail. Weakened by the years of mental imprisonment.

I just wanted to help her, to make her better. Not just for her sake, but for Reece's too. Seeing her like this for so long had to be hard on him. It broke my heart thinking about it. Even with how angry he could make me sometimes I couldn't bring myself to hate him outright. He was a great alpha after all, and only seemed to be a jerk to me.

I didn't know what to do or say, so I just started talking at random.

"Hello Luna, or former Luna, you don't know me but I'm Reece's mate. I'm the new Luna of the pack. And boy, do I wish you were here to help me." I sighed looking at her beautiful face full of soft features.

"You have an amazing son." I continued, I didn't want to lie to her, but I wasn't going to tell her the truly terrible things either. Just in case she could hear me. "He's been doing a great job running the pack. Everyone loves him. He's strong, and fair, and smart when it comes to keeping the pack safe and running properly." All these things were true. He was excellent at his job.

"And he's handsome too. So very handsome. Probably more handsome than one man has the right to be. And believe me, he knows how good he looks. He's probably used that to his advantage far too many times." I laughed to myself, thinking about how he must have acted in the past.

"But I know he is hurting too. I know he misses you. Your absence has hurt him so much, but he would never admit it. He's too proud and stubborn for that. Instead, he holds it all in, bottling up everything until it gets to be too much." I could feel my heart aching. I knew how he must feel, bottling up the emotions. I had done that for years too.

"I wish you could get better." I implored as I grabbed her hand gently, rubbing my thumb along her knuckles. "I wish you could be there for him. To see the man that he has become. To help support him where I'm failing him. To give him whatever it is he needs that I lack." I poured my heart and soul into those words, I truly wished she would wake up for Reece's sake. Not my own selfish need for a Luna tutor, but for Reece's.

I sat there with her for a little while longer. I told her about all the worries I had about being the Luna. About what I wanted to do. How I wished that people would trust me more so it would be easier. After a couple hours I figured I should leave before anyone found me in the room.

I snuck back out of the room and made it down the hall to my own once again. I was amazed that I had not been caught at all. I knew Reece would come ask me later what I had been doing there, but I would deal with that when the time came.

The most important thing was, I knew what I wanted to do with all my free time now. I wanted to start bringing groups of women and children here to spend time with them. To have some sort of events on a weekly basis, or even a few times a week. I needed to build my rapport with them. I needed to get them to trust me as their new Luna. Most still didn't know anything about me except that I didn't have a wolf.

It was almost Thanksgiving, just five days away now. I could have a big feast for everyone, but that would take too much time to prepare and it was too last minute. But I could just have women and children come in small groups for different activities. That would help to get everyone to know me and trust me somewhat.

I could run arts and crafts for different groups of kids. We could do hikes in the woods for others. There was an endless list of things we could do to get the kids involved. And eventually I would need to do something to get just the women involved. There were a lot of women who didn't have young children after all.

Reece never came and asked me why I had been in to see his mother, though I know he noticed. The only reaction he gave was an intense glare on Sunday morning at breakfast, but he never said a word. What was more exciting that happened on Sunday was Vincent calling to tell me that Heather had gone into labor, they were going to have the baby that day.

Reece refused to let me go see Heather in the hospital, so I had to wait until she was recovered, and the baby was able to come visit me instead. But I was so excited for them that I went online and ordered a big bouquet of flowers to be sent to her. And then I went and ordered a few things for the baby. I couldn't help myself.

Vincent called later that day to let me know that they had another little girl, and they were naming her Faith. I was touched because that was my middle name. I didn't know if they chose it because of me or not, but I was still happy. Now they had Conner, Renea, and Faith.

## **Chapter 55 - Trinity-A Ghost On The Fourth Floor**

Trinity

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David was taking over for Vincent for a little while, so Vincent could spend time with his family. So, he was with us on that Tuesday during an afternoon arts and crafts event when we heard a maid scream from somewhere upstairs.

We were on the second floor in one of the spare sitting rooms so we would be out of the way. There were about half a dozen kids and their mothers, me, Juniper and David. We heard the bloodcurdling scream coming from somewhere above us.

"What was that?" One of the moms exclaimed as the kids all started to look frightened.

"I'm sure it's nothing to worry about." I told her. "I'll go check it out."

"No, Luna, I will." David countered.

"We will." I corrected him.

"But Luna-."

"David, we're in the house, I'm sure it was nothing major." I told him firmly. "You and I will go together."

"Yes, Luna." He conceded.

We left the room together, assuring the others we would be back soon. David and I headed straight for the stairs. The first thing we noticed was the sound of footsteps running toward us. David stepped in front of me protectively. Then we noticed it was just Julie, one of the housekeepers. She looked terrified.

"Julie, what happened?" I asked her, concerned for her safety.

"There's a ghost on the fourth floor." She squeaked, completely frightened by whatever she saw. She didn't pause more than a moment before she continued to run away. David and I looked at each other incredulously.

"Do you buy that?" He asked me.

"Not for a second." I answered. Then I had a thought. Did she go into the room with Reece's mom? "She might have gone into a certain room though. Reece's mother is up there, she's catatonic and I thought she looked like a ghost or an angel when I saw her." I told him.

"You saw her?" He asked me in disbelief. "I can't believe he took you in there, he never lets anyone in there." I didn't respond to his question.

David and I continued up the stairs steadily. We had just reached the landing when we heard someone stomping up the stairs behind us. I paused and turned around, already knowing who it was.

"Alpha?" David asked in surprise. I remained silent.

"Why are you up here?" He demanded.

"Julie said she saw someone." David told him nervously.

"Go away." He growled.

"Reece?" We heard a very weak voice call his name.

The three of us turned in unison. I don't know what they felt or noticed first. But for me, I thought I was seeing a ghost collapse on the floor. But I knew who it was. Reece's mother was leaning weakly against the wall, barely able to support herself.

"Mom!" Reece gasped in shock as he ran over to her. I followed him halfway down the hall and watched as he supported her in his arms. "Mom, you're awake." He blurted, clearly in shock.

"Reece, my son, my boy, you've grown so much." She cried putting her hand to his face gently. I could see tears glistening in her eyes as I felt my heart both melting and breaking at the sight of the scene.

"How are you awake, Mom? What happened? This is like a miracle." I could see pure joy on his face, pure happiness. I was overjoyed to see that he was so happy right now.

"I have been lost, Reece. Lost for so long. I'm sorry I wasn't there for you, so very sorry. Please, don't hate me." She was nearly crying now as she held her son's face in her small frail hands.

"No, Mom, I could never hate you. Never." He was crying now. The tears flowing slowly down his cheeks. It was a moment that I didn't think I should see.

I turned around slowly and crept away. I didn't think Reece would notice.

"Where are you going?" He asked me.

"There is a room full of women and children on the second floor that are waiting for me to return. Don't worry, I won't tell them anything about this." I told him, smiling softly.

"You? I know you. I've heard your voice." Reece's mother called out to me.

"No, we've never met before Ma'am." I told her.

"I was so certain. I feel like I know your voice." She said looking confused.

"Perhaps I just have a common voice." I told her. "I'm going now." I sighed looking at Reece.

I returned to the sitting room and rejoined my crafts group. They were scared and nervous about what had happened. I assured them that there was nothing to be scared of.

"Someone just saw something that scared them, it happens to us all from time to time. Everything is fine." I told them gently. Everything calmed down and the event ended without incident. All in all, it was an exhausting day.

I didn't know what to make of what had happened. I was happy that Reece had his mother back, but what had caused it? Surely it had not been me going to visit her. And if it was, if that was all it took, just one visitor, how would that affect Reece? How would he feel knowing that just having someone sit there and talk to his mother, was honestly all it took to wake her up? I didn't know how he was going to react to that.

But I would soon find out.

I had decided to skip dinner that night. I was too nervous to see Reece but I didn't know how he would react to me eating in my room, so I skipped it altogether. He didn't like that at all.

Right after the start of dinner I could smell Reece coming down my hallway, his footsteps stomping loudly, echoing off the walls. He was angry with me. When he reached my door, he pounded on it fiercely, not bothering to say anything. I knew it was him, so I simply told him to come in, I was surprised he didn't just storm in to begin with.

"You're avoiding me again I see." He snapped as he slammed my door shut. I sighed.

"Can you not slam that so hard, or you might break something." I took a steadying breath before continuing. "And I'm not avoiding you, I just wasn't hungry." My stomach chose that moment to betray me, growling so loud that I know he heard it. He raised an eyebrow at me quizzically.

"Really?" He asked.

"I wasn't before, but I am now." I amended.

"Uh huh. What happened? I know you went to see my mother the other day, and now she is awake. What did you do?" He demanded as he stalked closed to me, backing me up against the wall.

"What do you mean? I didn't do anything to her." I was shocked by his accusations. I hadn't done anything.

"Then explain it to me. How did my mother, who has been catatonic for seven years, wake up only three days after you went to see her?"

"I don't know what you expect me to say. I don't even know what you think I could have done. All I did was go and talk to her."

"Talk? That's all?"

"That's all."

"What did you tell her?" He asked me. I blushed crimson and looked away from him.

"Tell me Little Bunny!" He growled at me.

"I told her you were a great man, and I wished she could be there to see it." I snapped at him, nearly yelling in his face. "I told her you were a great alpha, fair and good. I told her you were handsome and that you knew it. And that you missed her, a lot." When I finished, I was nearly in tears, I didn't want to tell him everything because I was embarrassed to admit it to him.

I saw the shock in his eyes at hearing my confession. At knowing exactly what I had said. Learning what I said about him to his mother, and probably others, surprised him.

"All I did was wish that she could wake up and be there for you. Because I thought you really needed that in your life. There's something you need, something I can't give you. I wished that she would wake up and be there for you in a way I will never be able to. I can't comfort you. I can't mend whatever broke you so long ago. But maybe your mother can." I cried looking at the floor.

He backed away from me. He continued to back away until he was halfway across the room. Then he turned and was at the door before I knew it. Just before he pulled the door open, I heard him whisper in a soft voice.

"I'm sorry." Then he was gone.

I collapsed on the floor and cried. I didn't know why. He had done nothing to me. He hadn't even accused me of anything, really. But I felt so heartbroken and hurt at his words for some reason. I just sat there, crying for several minutes.

I wanted things to improve. I wanted things to get better. But he just didn't want that with me. But he never would. Why did he have to treat me this way? Why couldn't we just be civil at least?

## **Chapter 56 - Trinity-Hiking With Pack Cubs**

Reece

~~

I heard her, on the other side of the door. I could hear her sobbing, and I knew that I had caused it. I didn't know why I had gone there in anger. I was happy that my mother was awake. But I was frightened.

I knew that my Little Bunny had gone to see Mom on Saturday while I was gone. Her scent was very strong, and it was all over the room. It had seeped into the whole room. I had known that she knew about Mom, but I had no idea why she had gone to see her.

I said nothing about it though. I took a wait and see approach. I wanted to see if she would confess to me that she had been there, knowing that I knew about it, anyway. She had to know. But she never said anything, so I didn't either.

Then, when I came back inside today, I saw Julie running down the stairs in a panic. When I asked her what had happened, she rambled something about a ghost on the fourth floor. That shocked me, Julie was never supposed to go into Mom's room. Then I caught something about the ghost being in the hall. I bolted and ran up the stairs as fast as I could.

To my horror, David and Little Bunny were already up there. Apparently, Julie had screamed loudly when she saw whatever scared her. I was about to make them leave when someone called me in a weak voice. That was when I noticed Mom for the first time.

Mom was leaning against the wall, barely able to stand up. I could see she was about to fall down so I rushed to support her. I couldn't believe my eyes. And then to make matters worse, my mother who had been sick for so long, started begging me for forgiveness, like she had chosen this path.

My heart ached just listening to her ask me to forgive her. I couldn't stop the tears. They were from the joy of seeing her awake, and the heartache of knowing she blamed herself for everything.

I saw Little Bunny trying to leave then and asked where she was going.

"There is a room full of women and children on the second floor that are waiting for me to return. Don't worry, I won't tell them anything about this." She whispered, smiling nervously.

"You? I know you. I've heard your voice." Mom seemed surprised to hear Little Bunny talk.

"No, we've never met before Ma'am."

"I was so certain. I feel like I know your voice." Mom looked confused.

"Perhaps I just have a common voice. I'm going now." Little Bunny looked at me once more before fleeing the hallway.

How was I not supposed to be suspicious of her after that? It was like she was trying to hide something. She didn't want me or Mom to see her there.

I don't know what is going on. But I'm beginning to suspect that Little Bunny isn't just what she seems. Something else is going on here, with her, with me, with everything.

~~

Trinity

~~

I felt like things between Reece and I were just getting more and more tense. But I couldn't help the feelings growing inside of me. I hadn't spent enough time with him that I could say I was in love with him, but my body wanted me to. And my heart was telling me crazy things too. My brain was the only rational organ I had left. Too bad we often forget to use it when we need to.

The only upside was that he tended to be such a jerk when I was around him that I couldn't stop myself from being sarcastic and snarky to him. He just naturally brought it out of me. That meant I didn't embarrass myself by being all lovey-dovey towards him all while he hated me.

I was continuing to have events at the estate for the women and children. I had even had some women only events that were kid free. They loved them as it gave them an excuse to get away and relax. I wanted to focus on being a better Luna.

Reece's Mom, Lila, was really nice. She was giving me advice and helping me out where she could. But she needed to get her strength back, so she needed to rest often and couldn't do anything too strenuous yet.

I wanted some fresh air. I had been cooped up inside the house for almost three weeks now and it was already a week into December. If I didn't get out and get air and exercise now, then I would miss my chance before the snow fell. So, I decided to take a group of kids on a hike.

Most of the kids were still really young, though still really rambunctious. All the older kids were still in school so I had decided that the preschoolers would like going on a hike. A group of about five moms, myself, and a dozen kids went out in the morning.

My plan for the day had been to hike up the mountain to a clearing I knew of. It overlooked the river at the base of the mountain and was pretty flat at that spot, so it was perfect for the picnic I wanted to have for lunch. After lunch the kids could go on a scavenger hunt and look for treasures to take home. My thought had been that all the treasures could be used to make a Christmas ornament.

Everything was going perfect. It was a beautiful day, clear with not a cloud in the sky. The picnic was perfect, and the kids were having a great time. I was happy that everything was going so well.

After lunch, when we started the scavenger hunt, all the kids were excited. Well, all but one. Dillon Bagley just didn't want to do it. He wanted to stay there and watch everyone else as they looked for their treasures. I knew he would regret it later, so I was looking for his scavenger hunt items for him while keeping an eye on him where he sat.

I could hear everyone laughing and having fun. It was a wonderful day, and I couldn't have been happier, as their Luna, as I watched them enjoying themselves.

Then I noticed the scent in the air.

I could smell a wolf coming our way, and he was coming fast. First, I could smell just one wolf, then there were several others. Among them I could smell Reece, his scent the strongest of them all. But I also noticed Noah's. There were other familiar scents as well, but not ones I knew the names for.

I didn't know what was going on. I didn't know if Reece knew we were out here. Or if this situation was dangerous.

"Everyone, get back to the house, NOW." I commanded. The women heard me and started gathering the children to get them back to the estate.

I noticed movement then. A wolf running all out, right in our direction. I could see a large group following him, chasing him. My guess, another rogue had made it onto our territory, and they were bound and determined to catch him.

Oh Goddess no! I said to myself as I noticed where the wolf was running. If he didn't change course, he would run right into Dillon. The little boy, only four years old, had seen the big wolf coming his way and

was frightened. He knew it was someone he had never seen before. He was frozen in place, standing where he had been able to look over the forest below the mountain before we all had noticed the commotion.

I didn't stop to think. My instincts took over. I ran toward Dillon as fast as I could. I was no more than fifty yards away from him. But the big wolf was closing in fast.

"Please, Goddess, let me save him in time." I prayed. "Please." I put on a burst of speed, pouring my all into running as fast as I could. I didn't know if I would make it in time.

I felt my hands push Dillon just in time. He went sprawling to the side and out of the path of the wolf that had been bearing down on him.

## **Chapter 57 - Reece-Little Bunny, Over The Edge**

Reece

~~

We were chasing the last of the rogues through the woods. There had been almost a dozen of them this time. They were determined to get onto my land and get something. I had a feeling I knew what. They were trying to make it to my house, to my Luna, to my mate.

We had eliminated almost all of them. But this one had stayed back and out of the fighting when it started so that he could break away and make a run for it when we were all distracted. Well, that wasn't going to work on me. I chased after him immediately. Noah, Henry, and Will followed suit.

We had chased him up into the mountains. Almost to the house. He was faster than most, but I was gaining on him and he knew it. I could hear his growling wolf voice as he snarled at me.

"Why are you so fast? You can't be fast and strong." He was upset. He would not make it to his goal, and he knew it.

That was when I smelled them. Little Bunny, and a group of others. She must have taken some kids out in the mountains because it was a nice day. This couldn't get any worse. I had to catch him before he got to her.

Then things did get worse. The crazy rogue I was chasing, the one I was just about to catch, was making a beeline for a cub from my pack.

"No!" I snarled at him. "Leave that boy alone."

"I can't get what I was sent to fetch, so I'm going to hurt you another way." He sneered at me.

"Leave him alone." I howled at him.

That was when I saw movement. I knew instantly what it was. I would never mistake her for anything else, I've only been watching her everyday for the last two months now. Little Bunny was running toward the boy. I knew what she was trying to do. She wanted to save the boy. She was too selfless for her own good sometimes.

I watched in horror as she pushed the little boy to the side, he was safe. But she had reached him just in time. The crazy rogue slammed into her, the body no longer being where he had anticipated he jaws missed when biting down.

It seemed to happen in slow motion. I could have sworn she was falling so slowly that I would get to her in no time at all. But I still had to watch in horror as she went over the edge.

The slow motion seemed to stop as soon as she was out of sight. I knew she was falling to whatever lay below. I could already smell the sharp scent of her blood filling my nose.

The others and I caught up to the rogue then. Henry and Will latched onto him immediately, but I didn't stop. I leapt over the edge after my Little Bunny. I instantly saw where the blood had started. I couldn't tell what she had hit to cause the bleed, but I knew she was hurt, and badly by the look of all the smears of blood that led down the mountain.

I ran as fast as I could down the rocky slope, but I couldn't see her anywhere. My heart sank as my eyes locked onto the river at the base of the slope. If she was nowhere in sight, she had to have fallen into the water. If I didn't get to her in time, if she was unconscious, I didn't want to finish that thought. I pushed myself to run harder.

I dove into the water. It was cold even to me with my wolf metabolism. I could smell her just slightly down stream. I searched for her frantically.

Finally, I found her. She had been caught on a large rock, her face under the water and blood seeping from a wound on the side of her head. I roared in anger as I shifted back to my human form and pulled her to me.

She wasn't breathing. Oh Goddess but she wasn't breathing. I laid her down on the riverbank, pressing my lips to hers, breathing for her. I followed that with chest compressions. I repeated this process over and over.

"Breathe!" I whispered loudly as I pulled my mouth from hers. "Dammit Little Bunny, breath. Don't die on me." I begged her as I went to breathe for her again.

I felt her body jerk then as she tried to take a breath. The water in her lungs was being expelled.

"Oh thank Goddess." I exclaimed as I rolled her onto her side, thumping her back to help get the water out. She took a few shaking breaths, gasping for air, before she settled into a shallower, yet wheezy, breathing.

"Thank you." I cried over and over. "Thank you for not dying." I held her in my arms, holding her close to my chest.

I felt her body begin to shiver. First slow, then fast hard shakes. She was freezing. The water was cold, and the air was colder. She needed to warm up fast.

I lifted her into my arms and carried her back to the house as quickly as I could. I cradled her to my chest as I went, hoping my body temperature would help warm her somewhat. It took me five minutes to get her back home, but that was longer than I wanted to leave her outside.

I ran through the door, not caring that I was naked and might scare the staff. I yelled for Noah to call Griffin then meet me in her room with some fresh clothes for me. I could hear Noah's footsteps moving right behind me before he overtook me on the stairs and hurried to my room.

I made it to Little Bunny's room and laid her gently on the bed. Wanting to stop the blood I ran to the bathroom and grabbed a handful of towels. I was back at her side almost instantly, pressing a cloth gently against the wound that was still seeping blood.

"Here." Noah snapped thrusting a handful of clothes at me. "The rogue is in the basement, detained, along with two of the others from the city." Noah growled. He had taken charge of the prisoner personally, and if unchecked might kill the man for what he did to his cousin.

"Good, I plan to interrogate him later."

"Not without me you won't." He snarled.

"Fine by me." I took the clothes and got dressed. I didn't need to sit there naked anymore, just in case she woke up. But her stillness was beginning to worry me.

"Is she going to be alright?" Noah asked the question that was on my mind.

"She'd better be." Anger boiled throughout my body.

I was dressed and pressing a warm wet washcloth to her head when Griffin came storming into the room. He didn't pause and wait to be given permission. Given the circumstances, I was content with his attitude.

"What happened?" He demanded as soon as he saw her lying motionless on the bed.

"She was pushed off a mountain, hit her head, and nearly drowned." I summed it up for him quickly.

"For crying out loud, Reece, what's going on around here?" He asked me.

"Someone is after my territory, and they think going after my mate is the only way to do it."

"Are you serious?" He looked doubtful. "Someone needs to protect her."

"She was at the estate, the rogue made it too far in." I confessed, feeling pathetic.

I watched as he checked the wound on her head.

"It's already starting to close up, but if she keeps getting head injuries like this, I am going to demand a scan of her head. Faster healing or not, there could still be permanent damage."

"We can go now." I conceded. "I want to make sure she is alright."

"I'm more concerned about hypothermia right now. We need to warm her up." He said, looking over his shoulder at me.

"What about her head?" I asked him, concerned about the bleeding.

"The blood flow has almost stopped, I'll bandage it, it might need to be changed once or twice but it will be mostly gone in a few days."

"That's good." I sighed in relief.

"How are we going to warm her up?" Noah asked.

"Well, I doubt you have any heated blankets, and I'm reluctant to use hot water, taking her out would just lower her temperature again." Griffin looked serious as he contemplated what to do.

"Then what?" I wondered. "Just pile on blankets?"

"That's an option, though less effective. She needs warmth. Her body isn't warm enough to create warmth under the blankets. So, she needs someone else warm under there with her." He finished looking at me.

"What?" I asked in disbelief. "You mean me?" I was trying to ward off his stern glare. I could see Noah looking at me with a monstrously angry look as well.

"You are her mate, who else would do it." I sighed at his words.

"Fine, I'll do it." Noah growled at me when I said this. He still hasn't forgiven me completely for what had happened. He was doing his job like usual, but he had not acted like my friend once since the day he had punched me. I didn't blame him.

"Just go Noah, you've got an interrogation to get to." I encouraged him.

"Behave yourself." He snapped at me as he left the room.

"Make sure her temp is back to normal before you leave her. She will most likely sleep until the morning, perhaps longer. Her body has a lot to recover from."

"Alright." I told him.

I watched as Noah and Griffin left the room before nervously turning back toward her bed. She would kill me if she knew what I was about to do. But I had no choice. I walked slowly to the side of the bed furthest from her before I pulled back her comforter and spread it over us both. I pulled her body in close to mine and I could instantly feel how cold she was.

I stayed like that, with her cuddled against me, for at least two hours. Resisting sleep and trying to ignore where I was and who I was with. The sooner I could get out of there the better, no need for her to wake up and have yet another reason to hate me.

I could tell her temperature had regulated, but she had begun to have a nightmare. Tossing her head from side to side and moaning slightly. I didn't know if she was in pain or if it was in response to the dream. I rubbed small circles on her back gently, just long enough for her to calm down. Once she was settled, I slipped out of the bed and rearranged the comforter around her before quietly leaving the room. With luck she would never know that I had been where I was.

## **Chapter 58 - Trinity-After The Fall, Real Or Dream?**

Trinity

~~

I had felt my body falling over the cliff, and some thirty feet or more below, my head smashed into the rocky side of the mountain. That was the last thing I remember clearly for a while. I had tidbits, bits and pieces here and there, but I didn't know if they were real or dreams.

For one, I dreamt that Reece pulled me out of some water and gave me CPR, but I know that didn't happen. I remembered, or dreamt, a lot about Reece. Most likely because he had been there right before I fell, I knew he was close by. I even thought I could smell him once, but it was fading now.

I was starting to wake up. I could tell that. I had an intense headache unlike anything I had ever had before. And I felt dirty, like I hadn't showered in days. I could smell another wolf in the room, my anxiety momentarily rising, but then I just noticed that it was Noah.

Noah must've noticed that I was waking up. I heard him move from his chair and rush to the side of the bed.

"Trinity?" He sighed, relief was clear in his voice. "Trinity are you awake now?" He asked me.

"Noah?" I tried to talk like normal, but my throat ached from being dry. Not to mention it felt like I had the entire river pour in and then out of my throat.

"Oh thank the Goddess, Trinity, you're finally awake." He sighed in relief. "If you didn't wake by this afternoon, the doctor was going to send an ambulance to take you to the hospital."

"How long have I been out?" I fought through the pain that gripped my throat to force the words out.

"Almost three days." He seemed so upset as he spoke. I could see his eyes darting side to side before he looked back at me again. "I was worried you would never wake up Trinity."

"I'm sorry Noah, I just couldn't let him hurt the boy. I moved without thinking."

"I know Trin, I know how you are. But we've all been so scared." He hugged me then, pulling me into his arms. The movement sent a jolt of pain through my head causing me to cry out. "Are you alright?" His voice rushed out in a panic.

"I just have a really bad headache." I groaned.

"Griffin did say that would probably happen." I watched as he rose and walked toward the table. "Here, take these." He told me, handing me three pills and a glass of water. "Griffin said these would help."

"Thank you." I immediately popped the pills into my mouth and swallowed them. The water was a relief to my dry throat, so I finished the glass before handing it back to him.

"Thank you for saving me Noah, I would probably be dead if it wasn't for you." I told him, trying to convey how thankful I was to have him.

"Trinity, I'm not the one who saved you." He denied it adamantly. "Why do you think it was me?"

"You were there. I know you were there. I smelled your scent."

"But I wasn't the only one there." I was confused, but he didn't say anymore.

"Noah, who saved me?" I asked him, I didn't know who it could have been, of the people that had been there. Maybe one of the pack females had saved me.

"Trinity, who do you think would save you?"

"I don't know Noah. You were the only one I thought would." His face fell then, like he was heartbroken.

"He was telling the truth, he's caused this." He mumbled to himself.

"What?" I asked.

"Trinity, Reece is the one who saved you." Noah's words shocked me to my core.

"No! There's no way. He said he would never save me again after the attack by the Warlocks."

"That asshat." Noah snarled. He rarely acted like this. "Look Trinity, I know he has said a lot of hurtful things to you."

"How?" I interrupted him. "How do you know? I Never told you."

"He told me, and I punched him in the face for it."

"What?!" I could not believe what he had just told me. "He told you? And you punched him?" I asked him, my voice cynical.

"I've always put my pack duties above everything Trinity, but I couldn't let that slide. I couldn't let him do that to you and get away with it."

"Noah." I was so touched by his words, tears formed in my eyes. "Thank you."

"I love you Trinity, you're my family, and I won't let him mistreat you like that."

"They were only words but thank you Noah."

"Anyway, as I was saying, Reece is the one who saved you. He saw you go over the edge and didn't stop. The rest of us apprehended the rogue but Reece leapt right off the cliff after you without even a moment's hesitation. He landed on the slope and ran down after you then pulled you out of the water. He gave you CPR and carried you back to the house."

"It wasn't a dream." I whispered to myself.

"What?"

"Nothing."

"I know he's said somethings, Trinity. But just so you know, he was trying to keep you at bay to protect you. Because from day one of finding out you were his mate you were attacked by a rogue, it could have been a coincidence, but it might not have been."

"How is rejecting me and hating me protecting me?" I snapped at him.

"That's exactly what I asked him, but he really thought he was doing what was best. I think maybe you guys need to talk, a lot, about everything."

"I don't think that man is capable of talking. Not to me anyway. It always ends in an argument." I thought of our last discussion. I had actively worked to avoid him ever since he accused me of doing something to his mother. I couldn't stand to be in the same room with him most of the time, and when I had to be, I simply ignored his existence.

"Make an effort, or things will never get better."

"I'll try." I resigned myself. I didn't know what my future might hold, but I was more confused now than when I first woke up.

I was tired and weak for a few days. Juniper, Paul, and Cedar came to visit me in my room while I was recovering. Aunt Eve and Uncle Wesley came as well, with Nikki in tow. Carter was apparently working for the Alpha now and was away on business. Noah said he made the decision after I came to live here with Reece. He didn't want me left without an ally fully on my side.

I was also visited by Vincent and Heather. They brought baby Faith to see me. She was almost a month old now, and this was the first time I was seeing her. She was adorably chubby, wrinkled, and had the cutest little pink cheeks. She was a perfectly healthy little baby. I could tell that Heather and Vincent were very proud.

"Luna, how are you feeling?" Vincent asked me very seriously during the visit.

"I'm fine Vincent, no need to worry."

"Don't tell me not to worry." He snapped at me frustratedly. "Trinity, you almost died. Don't take risks like that ever again." He looked furious with me.

"I was not going to let a child die right in front of me."

"I understand that, I do, but you just need to protect yourself better." He resigned. "And always take a guard with you, please." I promised, somewhat.

"I will try to take one with me, almost everywhere I go, from now on." He glared at me. "That's the best I can do for now, Vincent."

We spent the rest of their visit talking about the baby and everything that had changed for them so far. I had insisted on changing the subject and not talking about my life anymore. I wanted to be cheered up.

Later, Lila visited me as well. She was concerned that I was taking so long to recover. She told me that Reece was acting strangely. He had been a lot more reserved and leaving the house less over the days that I had been recovering. If he could get out of leaving entirely, he would.

"I'm worried about him." She told me with a voice full of concern and sadness. "I just came back to him, just got back myself, and now I feel like I'm losing him again."

"I'm sorry Lila, I really am, but I don't know what I can do. He won't listen to me even if I talk to him. He doesn't like me, he doesn't want me around, he hates me."

"Honey, I'm sure he doesn't hate you." Her voice was soothing and placating as she tried to settle the issue, but she needed to know the truth now.

"He does, he told me so himself." She gasped, placing a hand over her mouth and heart at the same time, her eyes wide in shock. My words had clearly surprised her.

"Trinity, sweetie, tell me you're joking." She begged.

"I wish I was, but he told me he would never accept me, and he hated me. It's all true." I saw the pain in her eyes at that.

"Honey I'm so sorry." Lila was so distressed at what her son had done. She didn't stay long after that, I think she was uncomfortable with what I had told her.

## **Chapter 59 - Reece-Explained**

Reece

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After I slipped out of my Little Bunny's room that night, I immediately went to see Noah. I wanted to know what our friends in the basement had to say for themselves.

"Did you behave yourself?" He had asked me.

"Did you really think I wouldn't?" I countered. "Of course, I did. I held her to keep her warm. She had a nightmare once but settled down. Her temp is normal now. You can check on her soon."

"Good." He continued to glare at me. "Did you keep your hands to yourself?"

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"You know what it means. You rejected her. I don't want you pawing all over her."

"She is still my mate Noah. I have every right."

"You have no right until she gives it to you."

"I know that." I sighed, conceding to his words. "She has told me the same thing by the way. She threatened to remove something if I didn't have her permission." Noah laughed at that and I couldn't help but laugh with him.

"Good, she's a strong girl, and stubborn."

"I'm learning that."

I learned from Noah that none of our prisoners were talking. No matter what Noah did or said. Looks like they needed a little push from the alpha to persuade them. I stalked to the basement and went into the room with the man that had pushed my Little Bunny over the edge of the cliff.

"Do you want to explain yourself now, or do I need to get creative?" I asked him. The man had the audacity to glare at me.

"You won't frighten me. You will never learn anything from me about our mission."

"Creative it is." I grinned at him. "I'm going to show you what happens to anyone who hurts my mate."

His screams echoed throughout the room for the next hour. I made sure not to kill him, otherwise I could do whatever I wanted. He would heal, eventually.

I had just snapped his thigh bone, an excruciatingly painful injury that would only take him an hour or so to heal. His agonizing cries of pains reverberating around me were like music to my ears.

"Who are you working for?" I growled at him again. "Why are all of you working together?"

"Go to hell, you pathetic low life." The rogue was crying in front of me.

"You're not going anywhere until you tell me." I told him.

"I'm not saying a word."

This process went on for hours with him and the other prisoners. We never learned anything. We continued interrogating them over the next few days and still, nothing. I was getting frustrated.

And to add to the frustration. It had been three days and my Little Bunny was still not awake. My anxiety was growing with each passing hour that she didn't wake up. Griffin had only said she would sleep until the morning, maybe a little longer. He didn't say anything about three days.

Even Griffin was worried about her. He gave a deadline. If she doesn't wake by that time, he will send an ambulance to bring her to the hospital. We were all worried, even my mother. The pack was about to lose another Luna. How could I let this happen?

I'd been in a bit of a stupor this whole time as well and I knew it. I couldn't help it. I was just too worried. That's why I was currently pacing my office and staring out my window instead of working when Noah walked in without knocking.

"Noah?" My heart sank. He had been sitting with my Little Bunny almost this whole time. "Is something wrong?"

"You would know if you went to see her yourself." He didn't look happy at all. Something bad must have happened.

"Is she alright? Did something happen?" My heart ached, and I felt like a bucket of ice water had just been dumped down my spine. Noah sighed causing my stomach to drop. I sank into the chair at my desk.

"She's fine." He finally told me. "She's awake." It felt like a balloon had just inflated inside my chest.

"Oh thank Goddess." I sighed so quietly he couldn't hear me.

"I told her the two of you need to talk." He glared at me. "About everything."

"She won't want to talk to me."

"I told her that you're the one who saved her. She didn't believe me. She didn't think there was any way you would save her. You need to stop pushing her away." He lectured me.

"I know. The attacks are not stopping even without me near her. And I don't know what's going to happen next."

Noah continued to lecture me on what I should do when it comes to my Little Bunny. But I didn't know if she would ever let me near her again. And I was nervous. I had kept her at bay to protect her, and myself. I didn't want to let her in.

I had built walls, thick high walls, around my heart to protect myself from ever getting hurt and having the same problems that had nearly destroyed my pack and Riley's pack. I didn't want to let her destroy those walls I had built. She was so unlike the other women I had met, that I had been with, that I knew she could do it. She would worm her way in and tear them down until I was soft and exposed, vulnerable to her every touch, to her every word, to her.

I was still avoiding her room. I had yet to go check on her, though I thought about it all the time. I wanted to see her. To see for myself that she was awake and safe. To even have her yell at me again. Hell, I'd even take her calling me Fido or Benji again, just to know that she was back to her old self. But I couldn't bring myself to take that last step. Not yet.

That's when mom came to see me. I was holed up in the music room tuning the piano. I had neglected the thing for so long that it was nearly impossible to play right now. She knew I wouldn't leave it until I was done, unless she made me so mad that I couldn't control it. I sat there and listened to her lecturing me.

"What in the world have you been doing?" She yelled at me as soon as she came into the room.

"I'm tuning this damn thing." I told her as I worked my way up the row of keys, I had just finished with middle 'C', halfway done.

"I meant with your mate. The story that she just told me. Honestly Reece." She snapped at me. I groaned knowing all too well what she must have heard.

"I have no excuse good enough, but I have my reasons for why I thought it was best." I told her.

"I don't care what you thought. There is nothing on this planet that should make a man, an Alpha, say those words to his mate. Do you understand me? What you did was wrong on so many levels."

"You don't understand Mom, I-."

"No Reece, you don't understand. That girl is your mate. Don't you see. She is your mate and will love you forever if you only give her a chance. But if you push her away like this, she will hate you with every fiber of her being. And she will hate herself, because she will still want to love you because of the bond you share."

"But she doesn't have a wolf Mom, the bond won't make her love me." I looked away from her, hiding the pain in my eyes.

"What makes you think that?" She demanded, her voice roaring in the room.

"Only wolves can be bonded, only wolves can be dedicated, only wolves can be true mates."

"Now, I know I've been lost for the last seven years, but boy I know I raised you better than that. What gave you the idea that only wolves can be true mates? Why is it you think that only someone with a wolf can be dedicated? She was born and raised as pack, she is pack, she may not change into a wolf, but she is wolf enough."

"But look at what happened to dad and Uncle Nolan, they died because a woman who wasn't a real wolf betrayed the man who loved her. They died because she was a spy for an enemy pack and used Steven for their own personal gain, I can't trust someone that can't form a true mate bond with me."

I watched my mother then as she threw her hands up in frustration. She paced away from me and over to the window, strumming her fingers across the harp as she went. I remember when I was little, I used to love watching her play the harp. It seemed so magical to me. It was why I wanted to learn to play so many different instruments.

"Reece, you know that Steven and Mandy didn't have a mate bond right. Steven had never met his mate, but he fell in love with Mandy and wanted to be with her, bond or no bond."

"What are you saying?" I could feel the shock coursing through the air, almost like a pulse beating against me, I didn't know anything about what she was saying.

"Most people in the pack didn't know, I guess. But no, Steven fell in love with Mandy on his trips to her family's pack. As you know she was human, fully human. Her father was a member of the Black Moon Pack, but her mother was human. She was not fortunate enough to be like the other half wolf-half human children that are born. She was not simply a weaker wolf. She was a human. But as she was born in the pack, they raised her in the pack."

"I knew she was human yes, she was no wolf, but I had assumed there had been a mate bonding but that she simply didn't feel it like we do."

"No, Reece, there never was. Steven was nearly thirty, and he was lonely. He wanted a mate, and he fell in love with a beautiful woman. She said and did everything just right to get him to trust her and fall for her. But they never had a mate bond. Steven said he didn't care. He loved her and wanted to be with her, traditions be damned."

"But I was right though, she was just using him."

"Yes, but it was not because she didn't have a wolf, it was because she was a bad person. Don't you get it Reece?"

"She was far from the only bad woman out there, Mom."

"What happened to you?"

"When I first became alpha, so many people thought I was too young. There were many men in the pack that tried to manipulate me. Most directly, some by sending women my way. They would try to sweet talk their way in, worm their way into the house to control things. But I never let any of them. Any woman I was with was taken elsewhere." I told her firmly, making sure she knew I never brought those women home.

"Those women were never allowed here at all. And when I refused to give them what they were after, when they were done prostrating and prostituting themselves for whoever sent them, when they failed, they turned ugly, nasty and mean." I remember those women clearly, those evil, vile, succubus like women.

"And as time went on almost every woman who tried to get a chance at my bed was the same way. They would degrade themselves. Flaunt their bodies for all to see. Act like their only worth was sex. And when they got the sex, and nothing else, they turned into vile demonic creatures barely resembling the women from before."

"With power comes the power seekers. That will always be true. I am sorry you had to deal with that on your own. And I am sorry I was not here to help you with your women troubles. I wish I could have helped you talk through it all, to stop you from getting to this point where you seem to have so much hatred built up." My mother looked at me with eyes full of sorrow.

"It's not your fault mom." I tried to comfort her, but I was still awkward with her. In my mind my mother was a shell of a woman who sat in a room all day. Not this woman who stood here lecturing me.

"Oh, but it is, Reece. I wasn't strong enough to survive your father's death. The sight of it, the feeling of having his bond ripped away from me, it broke me."

"Mom." I said as I wrapped my arms around her.

"You're so much like your father, mostly with how stubborn you are." She laughed at me.

"Mom, what made you wake up?" I asked her, she hadn't told me yet, and I wanted to know, now more than ever.

"I heard a voice calling out to me. Telling me to come see you Reece."

"What voice?"

"Trinity's." I knew she was going to say that.

"Mom." I swallowed hard, a lump forming in my throat as I pulled away from her. "There's something I want to tell you, about who I think Trinity's real father might be." I was nervous to tell her about my suspicions. I didn't know if I was right yet, but I had to tell her.

## **Chapter 60 - Trinity-Trying To Say Thanks**

Trinity

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After sleeping for three days and resting in bed for another two I was more than ready to get up. Which was why I had gotten up with the sun. I had changed my clothes recently, with the help of Aunt Eve and Nikki since everyone was treating me like I would break if I moved, but what I needed more than anything was a shower. Or a bath. Yeah, I think a nice long soak in my pool sized bath would be great, and just what the doctor ordered. Or what he should have.

An hour later, and a million times cleaner, I was dressed and ready to be somewhere other than my room. I went to breakfast, expecting to see Lila and Reece, but only the former was there. Reece was once again nowhere in sight. He truly was avoiding me.

I had wanted to thank him for saving me. He said he was never going to do it again, but Noah told me he didn't even hesitate before rescuing me. I didn't understand him. Was it because it happened when I

was right in front of him? Was it because there were other pack members around? That seemed likely. He couldn't afford to lose face in front of everyone.

After eating the breakfast that Abigail made, 'special for you' as she told me, I had intended to go read in the solarium, but it had started snowing at some point this morning and it was now too dark to read in there. Bummer. Looks like the library would have to suffice.

I was on my way to the library when I heard a sound I didn't usually hear at the house. There was a soft, soothing music coming from the room down the hall opposite of the library. It was a piano. But who could be playing it?

I followed the sound of the music. It was so lovely I had to see if it was someone on a recording or if they were playing right now. Then I noticed the scent, Reece was down this way? Was he the one playing the music?

The door to the music room stood open just a crack, letting the beautiful notes slip out into the hall. Reece was sitting at the piano, his eyes loosely shut, as if he had been following the music in his mind, or heart, rather than on the paper sitting in front of him. I watched as his hands danced beautifully across the keys. I hadn't played the piano since I've been here. Actually, I hadn't played it in years.

"Are you going to come in, or are you going to stand there all day, Little Bunny?" I growled at his use of the name that I hate, but I pushed the door open further and walked into the room, just barely into it.

"I didn't mean to spy on you, you just caught me off guard." I told him.

"I caught you off guard? You were the one watching me." He laughed.

"Yeah, I didn't expect to hear you playing the piano. It's the first time I've heard it since I've been here."

"I just tuned it. I haven't played it in a long time." He looked longingly around the room.

"It sounds great for being neglected, usually you'd need to tune it several times to get a sound like that out of a neglected piano." I was inadvertently lecturing him, trying to tell him something he mostly likely already knew. His eyes went wide.

"You play Little Bunny?"

"Grandfather insisted." I told him. "I can play the piano, among other instruments. Once you learn piano, they're all that much easier. It's the building block of all music after all. Or so Grandfather used to say." Oh Goddess., I was rambling. I had wanted to thank him, but now I didn't know how to be around him. We had avoided each other for most of the last month, and now it was just plain weird. UGH!

"What all can you play?" He asked me. It seemed like he was making a conscious effort to be civil toward me.

"Piano, violin, cello, oboe, and flute are my best, I dabbled in others. Then I also taught myself guitar and drums."

"Taught yourself?" He asked, an eyebrow raised in question at my words.

"Grandfather had this notion that I had to know the classics, that it would somehow make me more appealing as a future mate, a better wife or something. I don't know his reasonings really, he was always coming up with strange rules for me. So, I taught myself the guitar and drums as an act of rebellion." I didn't know why I was being so honest with him. Maybe it had to do with the fact that he had yet to act like a jerk to me today.

"Ahaha!" He laughed, long and hard, at my words. He seemed to think it was hilarious.

"Is it that funny?" I asked nervously.

"Yeah, it is. It proves you've been this stubborn forever, and it's not just me that brings it out." He laughed again, this time at his words.

"Well, to be fair, I think it's stubborn mules, I mean men, that brings it out of me." I joked back. It was actually kind of fun right now. I just had a feeling it wasn't going to last.

He stopped laughing and looked at me, a serious look coming over his face. See I knew it wasn't going to last.

"Can we talk, Little Bunny?" His voice was strangely devoid of the anger I thought would be filling it. I nodded my head.

"That was kind of what I wanted. I thought I was going to see you at breakfast." I could feel the nerves now, ricocheting around inside of me. I just need to thank him and go before he could get mad at me. Don't let this turn into something horrible right now. I tried giving myself a mental pep-talk.

Reece went over to sit on the bench seat next to the window, I sat across from him on a piano stool. Reece looked out the window before looking at me. I could see that he was tired, rings of exhaustion were forming under his eyes.

"How is your head?" He asked me, his face as blank as he could get it. I couldn't tell if he was angry or not.

"I'm better, I didn't need to sit in bed for two days."

"It's good you're better but you don't know that it wasn't the resting that made you better. It was better to be safe than sorry."

"Is there something specific that you need to talk about, Reece?" I felt like Reece was avoiding whatever topic it was he wanted to talk to me about.

"It's not easy for me to talk to you like this, so give me a break, alright." He looked at me self-consciously. "Look, I'm not going to apologize for what I've already done, it would be pointless. But moving forward I will attempt to not ostracize you so much." He looked so uncomfortable that it almost made me laugh.

"So sincere." I snickered. He glared at me.

"I'm trying here, alright. What are you doing about it?" He stood up and walked back toward the piano in anger.

"You're right, I'm not trying anything yet. But can you blame me?" I couldn't help the sarcastic tone of voice from creeping back in like usual.

"You're right." He growled back at me. "Why should we bother at all?"

"You're the one that's always treated me like this." I yelled. "You're the one who hates me, you're the one that never wanted me around, the one that told me that I wasn't good enough. So, excuse me if I am reluctant to accept what you're trying to say now."

"You're right. I've said it all. You're my mate in name only. I reject you. I don't want you. I hate you." His teeth were clenched, and his eyes were narrowed, it was clear that he didn't want to be anywhere near me. Why was he trying to force himself to be nice to me when he hated the sight of me? It made no sense to me at all.

"I can't do this right now." He snapped before he turned and stormed out of the room. The door to the music room was left standing wide open. I had wanted to thank him for saving me, but never got the chance. I had wanted to mend bridges, and now I felt like I had just burned them even more. Why did he have to be such a jerk? Why did he have to hate me so much?

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Reece

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"Well, that didn't go according to plan." I growled as I slammed my bedroom door. "Why does she have to be so damn difficult?"

I wanted to apologize to her. I wanted to explain to her why I had said those rude things to her before. I wanted to tell her that I was wrong. Why couldn't I do that?

Will I ever be able to fix this? Will she ever forgive me? Will we ever be proper mates now with the mistakes that I've made? Have I ruined our lives forever?

I have a feeling I am destined to be miserable and frustrated for the rest of my life now. She drives me insane. She drives my wolf wild. I just don't know what to do anymore.