

Denied 391

Chapter 391

- Knox ~

I close the office door behind us, Hector already on the phone to Ezra ordering that Petra be sent here immediately.

"Why didn't you tell me she was watching?" I grip onto her elbow, preventing her from walking without me.

"I...I didn't think of it...anyway you weren't listening to me at all, just loading all my belongings into the car." She seethes, her jaw tense and her eyes narrow. "Red..." I deeply sigh, the silence of the car journey a memory to me now...but clearly not to her.

"Who was watching?" I curse out as both Jaxon and Jace appear out of nowhere, have they been waiting this entire time to see what the meeting was about...yes. "What's going on Sis?" Jace smiles, taking a step closer to her.

"Erm...nothing."

"You sure about that? Why are you acting all...jittery?" He tosses an orange from his hand up into the air, only for Jaxon to catch it and pass it back to him. "I'm not acting jittery..." She remarks.

"Yes you are, we can sense it through the bond. What's going on?"

"Excuse us." I slide in front of Josie, blocking her view of her brothers.

They will know, but Hector needs to damage control the fact that Josie had a witness. Let's not add more chaos to an already chaotic situation by getting her overly protective brothers involved.

The questioning doesn't stop, as they follow us up the stairs, Jace now peeling that orange. He even heads towards her room until I place a hand on his chest to push him out of the doorway.

Their eyes scowl at me even as I close the door, they'll have to get over it. They will do the same one day.

"Maybe I should go tell them.." She moves towards the door but I place my hands on her shoulders and walk her to her bed..

"You will tell them, but you need to get your own head around this at the moment. Your Mum has had almost 20 years to get used to her abilities, I think your brothers will forgive you for taking a few hours to get used to yours." "Yes, yes you are right. Besides if your reaction was anything to go by...."

"Meaning?"

"It doesn't matter." She mutters before continuing.

"I'm going to take a shower..."

"Need company?" I raise an eyebrow, a smirk also following.

"That all depends..."

"Depends on what?"

"Are you going to keep acting like a dick?" She scolds at me. Here I was thinking we were being playful but she's still angry of the dash exit from the Clear Waters pack. ""Excuse me?"

"Knox, you all but threw me into the car to leave. Do you have any idea how you made me feel? You made me feel like a freak."

"What?" Her words take me by surprise, I thought she was angry at me for being non-negotiable...I didn't think my actions would lead to this miscommunication.

"You couldn't have gotten me out of there any quicker if you tried..." She growls out at me.

"Because I didn't want you to be in danger." I growl back.

"Why would I be in any danger...it is my Mum's pack, my brother's pack. Why would I be in any danger." She all but screams at me, her hands covering her face as she roars out in frustration.

I take a deep breath in, reminding myself this was happening to her. That she needs my support as much as she needs my muscle.

"You're right, I didn't react well...but don't think it had anything to do with you. I just needed to get you back to a place I knew, a place I could protect you."

"Knox, only you and I, and know my parents know about this..." She removes her hands from her face and sternly looks at me.

"And Petra.."

"Yes and Petra, but she is a pack member...why would she say anything."

"Because my love, you are moon blessed, and people have ulterior motives. Even the people we trust the most, they can sometimes have dark thoughts, wicked plans."

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Even pack members, even family can betray us.

It was never my intention to make you feel any different, to make you doubt me. But you are different Red, you have a moon gift and I'm now starting to understand what your Dad might have had to do to keep your Mum safe all these years." As soon as I say the last sentence out loud I regret it. Her stunned look makes me curse myself inwardly.

I need to change the topic and fast...before she starts to spiral more than she already is.

"I just wanted to get you somewhere, where safety isn't in question, and that was here. Otherwise, it would have been my training centre...and I don't think you're ready for that just yet." I take a step closer to her, my hands gently stroking her upper arms. "No?"

"Do you know how many times I have to send the cleaners into get rid of that sweaty male smell. Even for me it's too much sometimes."

"I don't know...watching men work out..." She smirks, knowing full well what she is saying.

"Hey, I'm the only male you'll be watching.." I yank her into me, her body bouncing off my chest as her hair whips from the sudden movement. "Don't tempt me Red." I lowly growl into her ear.

"Tempt you with what?" She seductively replies, her hands roaming my chest.

"With marking you, so people see exactly who you belong to."

"I never said you couldn't mark me.." She teasingly challenges me.

Fuck, her words send my wolf into alpha mode as he tries to push forward. He thinks she has given permission, thinks he can do it.

But I've not proven myself yet to her, to her family.

If I can't let him mark her, I've got to calm his ongoing turmoil of having a mate but not being able to mark her somehow.

My lips move to her neck as I suck on her sensitive spot, the movement earning a lustful moan from her. I believe she mentioned a shower....

I pick her up in one smooth movement, wrapping her legs around my torso as I move my lips from her neck to her jaw line, her head rolling back giving me full access to her neck.

"Do it!" He commands at me. It would be that easy to do...and I would have to suffer the consequences afterwards but at least she would be mine completely.

"No, not yet." I shout back at him in my mind, reminding him of who exactly is in charge here.

I carry her all the way to the ensuite, where I place her feet gently back on the ground to switch the shower on.

By the time I turn back around to her she is fully naked, her hair tied up in a loose bun...fuck me. She was the epitome of lust, red burning lustful fire...a bloody goddess brought on this earth to test the souls of men. To test me...and I get to call her mine.

I remove my own clothes at the quickest of speeds before she launches herself at me, a mischievous glint in her eye as she leaps up back into my arms...my hands cupping her around her arse again.

I walk us both into the shower where I place my hand against the tiling and push her up against it, the water cascading down us... the building steam only adding to the lustful tonic of hers that I am so eager to lap up.

I penetrate her within seconds, thrusting myself inside of her until I feel the hilt of her...feel that spot that makes her scream my name.

"Oh Kit." She moans out in lust, just her using my real name makes me harden even more inside of her.

She was a goddess but she was also a naughty little vixen and I plan to have my way with her in all positions possible.

Chapter 393

- Josie -

I was all about today. Today was going to be the best day. Today, I was returning to work at the hospital and I couldn't wait.

I was awake even before warrior training, leaving Knox still asleep in my bed...his arms reaching for me in his sleep as I quietly slipped away.

I wouldn't be told no, I wouldn't be told to wait another day...I had it eating away at me, this inner nagging need, to heal. To help people.

Even if it meant for today I was only going to restock the medical cabinet, to me I was helping. I was contributing to the bigger picture of the hospital.

If I slipped out before breakfast, even before Knox waking...yes it was a bit underhanded, but I would already be at the hospital working, then nobody could stop me.

Just inhaling the sterile clean smell of the hospital has my body relaxing, I felt like me again...I felt at home.

I was in even before Doctor Abel. My heart sank slightly when we had no patients in the ward, but that was expected, that was the norm. After Knox outed the warriors for taking it in turns to injure one another during training, it's been pretty quiet on this ward. Doctor Abel finds me rooting around in my small storage cupboard, he must have followed the unusually early noise, not expecting to find me as he seems surprised to find me back.

"Your back?" His eyes light up with enthusiasm as he rests his shoulder against the door frame.

"I am...didn't the Alpha tell you?" I reach up to the top shelf of jars.

"No, he didn't. I wasn't expecting you back for a few days."

"I came back early."

"Why, what happened?" I'm about to ask him if he wouldn't mind getting it for me when his hand reaches up to fetch it. He takes a step closer to me, reaching up for the jar of lavender that was just out of my reach. I really need to remember to store some jars at a lower level

"Thanks." I take the jar off him, trying to think of a quick enough response as to why I am back early. But I fail miserably.

"Well?"

"Hmm?"

"Why are you back early? Did you leave Knox there?"

"No, he came home with me...I just really missed this place." I weakly smile, his eyes flickering down to my lips before moving back up to my eyes. This man was intelligent, would he believe such a flaky reply.

"Josie..." He sighs out, before running his hands through his light brown hair. No, clearly not.

"Has something happened?" Not only was this man my peer, my colleague...my boss...he was also my friend.

But I don't know what to tell him, I don't even know how to put the words in place to begin how to tell him. It has been a surprise for everyone that I have a wolf but a moon-blessed wolf...no, I'm not ready to vocalise this just yet.

Like Mum and Dad said, let's not tell anyone until we know what to say. Who fully to trust.

"Nope.." I smile out as best I can to him.

"I just wanted to get back to normality." I continue, turning away from him so he can not pick up on my dishonesty through my eyes.

"Normality?" He chuckles out.

"Josie you nearly died and now have a wolf...your ideal of normal is life changing." He had a point.

"That's why I want to be here, this place doesn't change. This place I can rely on to keep me sane."

"Okay, well you know where I am if you need to talk."

"I do, thanks Doctor Abel."

....

The rest of my shift doesn't go as quickly as I had hoped. Doctor Abel doesn't leave me alone once and he keeps asking discreet questions to try and catch me out. Things that if I didn't have my wits about me today, my guard up...I would have told him by now. He's just worried about me, I know he is and when the time comes, I will tell him...I'll have to especially working here.

When I hear Knox's footsteps echoing down the ward corridor at the end of my shift, I am actually glad to see his pissed off face. I expected to see him first thing this morning, but he must have known to stay away, that I obviously needed to be here.

He said it himself; this place is safe. To everyone else, nothing has changed. I am still the same person that left to visit the Clear Waters pack...so why wouldn't I be working in the hospital.

I grab my bag from the staff room before linking my arm into his, his eyebrow quirking as he exhumes a sulky frustrated demeanour towards me.

Reaching up on my tiptoes, I place a kiss on his lips before calling out behind me to Doctor Abel to tell him to have a great afternoon.

He's angry, if his silence didn't tell me so...then the aura surrounding him certainly does. But as we walk along the path towards the alpha house, I can't think on that right now because Petra has stepped out of a car with Ezra...and walking through the front door of my home.

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- Josie -

"Woah, Josie what did you do?" Jace spots both Knox and I, and heads towards us, with that teasing glint in his eye.

"Nothing...why?" My eyes are locked on the front door, intrigue overwhelming me as I want to go inside and put an ear to the office door. It would be pointless, the alpha office is sound proof.

"You fled the Clear Waters pack, the house keeper of said pack is here the next day...just looks a bit suss." He casually shrugs but I know he's dying for information.

"Being the future alpha, shouldn't you be in that meeting?" Knox's voice isn't cold, but there is a bite laced within it....a defiant warning to back off.

Knox's hand even grips tightly on to my hip as he calls Jace out. He had a point, and judging by the way Jace's smile drops, he knows it too. "Jaxon's looking for you." Jace grunts out like a child that can no longer play with his toys.

"Really?"

"Yes, he's at the training grounds.." Jace quirks an eyebrow at Knox, a smirk forming back on those lips.

With a sigh, Knox places a kiss upon the top of my head before tapping my butt discreetly. He then walks away into the direction of the training grounds.

I move towards the house, only for Jace to take grip of my arm and hold me back.

"I think whatever they are discussing, you shouldn't be in there. So what really happened?"

"I..." Jace is my brother, a third part of me. Why can't I tell him, I would trust him with my life...he would never betray me, never betray us.

He'll find out soon enough...but then everything will change and even if for another hour...yes maybe I should let him enjoy that.

Even if he doesn't know..ignorance is bliss after all, isn't that what they say.

Not only am I going to share what has happened to me, but this needs to come from Mum as well. This is about the both of us...and I'm not sure if Mum is ready to share her abilities yet. My truth to others, completely impacts her too.

What even are her abilities...she said she could immobilise a component. Take or give energy, how did she even tap into that kind of power.

I had so many questions for Mum. When she found out, how she found out...questions, I will ask in time.

"Josie?" "Hmm?"

"You spaced out. What's going on...you know you can tell me anything." He's taken a step closer to me, softness within his eyes. I can see that I was starting to cause him to worry.

"I know...and I will, when I can."

"You aren't settling that rising worry within me."

"Sorry..." I chuckle out.

"Anyway, whats going on with you." I softly smile, glad to change the topic for a while.

"What do you mean.."

"Jace, I mean come on. You leave, out of the blue...we can't get hold of you. Then you come back rocking this bad boy image." Today he was wearing black jeans, a black v neck T-shirt and black boots. He used to wear colours, but he was now black, grey or white. "Bad boy image?"

"The tattoos...where have they come from?"

"I just fancied a change." He shrugs out looking down at his own clothing.

"A change is a hair cut...growing a beard.."

"I'm just deciding what I want for once."

"Well in doing that, Jaxon's been an arsehole. You know his wolf attacked Knox's?" I'm all for Jace making positive changes in his life but something is eating away at me that this isn't as positive as he believes. That something really is bothering him.

"That isn't unusual, Knox can handle Jaxon's wolf. Always has been able to." Always has been able to? I don't like the sound of that.

"Well that won't be happening again, I'm not seeing my mate left with an inch of his life left." I growl out at him.

"I'm sure it wasn't that bad. Knox always heals quickly."

"Jace...the wounds were that extensive that I didn't think he was going to make the night. How often has this happened?" Why was he acting so calmly about this. What free rein has Jaxon had whilst being away...whatever has been happening it stops. I'll make it stop. "Not a lot, I'm usually there to help." Jace's calm attitude was annoying me more than his actual words. Why was he acting so casual about this.

"Well you weren't here to help. If Knox hadn't stepped in, then I would have felt the brunt of Jaxon's anger."

"Jaxon wouldn't hurt you..."

"Jace, you didn't see him...it's like he was possessed. I've never seen him that angry. I think Dad is worried about retiring.." I keep my voice low, my head checking nobody was in ear shot.

"Now I've heard it all, come on Josie..." He laughs out but stops when I growl again.

"Jace, I'm being deadly serious. Jaxon is different when you aren't here, he relies on you more than you know." I give out an exasperated groan, he needs to start taking this seriously. Jaxon can't go around hurting people just because he has an overly boisterous wolf. That's not on Knox to help him to control.

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"I can't always be what other people need of me." He mutters almost to himself but I hear it. There's a sadness in his voice, something that I wouldn't expect from Jace.

"I get that, but next time stay and tell us... rather than giving us all the cold shoulder."

My head whips to the front door as I hear it open, Ezra walking out first, his eyes landing on me.

He moves to the car where he opens the back passenger door before moving to the driver's side to enter and start the engine.

I'm about to walk over to check what is going on when Petra walks out of the door, Mum and Dad walking her out.

In the distance, I see both Jaxon and Knox walking back towards us. Petra moves towards the car, her eyes now ignoring me and focuses solely on the vehicle until she stops. Her eyes now moving into my direction.

I hold her gaze for what feels like an eternity. What did they discuss, what did she say....did she see.

Of course she did...she was having problems breathing, not with her vision. As much as I want to believe she didn't...she witnessed it all.

My back stiffens and in the distance I can see Knox heading my way, as she moves towards me. Jace turns to face me as she closes the gap on me, his eyebrows furrowing.

"Miss Josie..." She clasps my hands within hers, holding them to her heart... tears building within her eyes.

I can see in my peripheral vision, Knox's footsteps quicken...Jaxon following a few steps behind.

"I would never...you saved my grandson." She whispers to me, I look over to find both Mum and Dad talking to Ezra through the car. Kieran was never in any real danger, but the sincerity in her eyes is intense.

"I would never betray you. I was with your Mum at the Nightshade Reformed pack, I've seen what she can do...please, believe me. I would die before I betrayed you." Her words take me by such surprise that I am unable to respond to her, my mouth is open but words are not forming. All my body will allow me to do is nod.

I can see it in her eyes, she means what she says, she won't betray me. Yet she isn't fazed, isn't disturbed by what she saw.

Why do I have the feeling maybe she already knew about Mum...that perhaps us kids have been in the dark...but not others.

"Petra?" Dad calls out her name, earning a squeal from her as she turns and scurries off to the car. Dad closes her door then the car slowly drives away.

With a satisfied look, Dad walks Mum back towards the house, his eyes falling upon me before he pushes on the mind-link.

"She won't say a thing, don't worry."

"That was weird." Jace comments next to me, forcing me to cut the mind-link with Dad. My face must look how I feel.

"So there is something?" He looks to me with a pinned look, which is only enhanced by Jaxon's look as he joins us with Knox. "What was that about?"

"Seems Josie here is holding out on us?"

"Spill.." Jaxon demands curtly.

"1.."

"There's nothing to tell." Knox defiantly declares, earning a scoff from Jaxon.

My eyes follow the car driving into the distance. Petra mentioned the Nighthshade Reformed pack...I've never heard of that pack before and what has that got to do with Mum.

"What's...." Jaxon starts before we hear Lobo starting to bark in the distance, near the meadow. His bark completely cutting our conversation, it was unusual for Lobo to bark....without me next to him. Usually he did it to tell people to back away from me. I take a step forward to fetch him myself when his barking takes on a more aggressive insistent tone.

Then I feel it...feel nausea wash over me.

Both Jaxon and Jace turn to look at each other, both growling. Someone has intruded onto our land.

I have never felt this before, but now that I have the pack link, it feels like someone stepping on my grave. A foreboding sensation roaring my wolf to life. She's pushes through that veil instantly, she hasn't waited to be called by me.

Who ever it is, she knows shouldn't be here. Judging by my brother's responses, they feel it too.

I hear a bang, the front door being almost ripped off its hinges as Mum and Dad run out of the alpha house's front door running into the direction of the meadow.

Complete panic takes over me as Jaxon and Jace are already running in the same direction, already running towards danger.

"We are under attack!" Dad growls through the pack link. His voice a deafening roar that shakes me...I've never experienced just how powerful he truly is. "All fighters to the meadow....NOW!"

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- Josie -

"All fighters to the meadow...NOW!" Dad commands through the pack-link, his aura thick and heavy.

I move, taking a step closer towards the location of the scene, towards my family, to Lobo...who needs me. Hopefully, it is one or two rogues that have penetrated through the borders in a desperate act for help...but something deep inside of me thinks not. I've never seen both my parents react like that.

I take a further step, only for arms to rip me back and lift me in the air. For the air in my lungs to be knocked out of me.

He pushes me towards the front door, my hands gripping on to the door frame to prevent him from pushing me in and locking me inside. Like that would stop me.

I would break through a window.

Not only do my family need me, but my alpha has given a pack wide order for all available fighters to get to the border by the meadows. My meadows.

"Go inside and hide!" His command is just as thick and heavy as Dad's was.

"No!" I seethe out through gritted teeth, as I fight against his hold.

"Get inside now." He growls at me, his head whipping behind him as pack members run past the alpha house towards the direction of the meadows. I need to go, I need to be with them.

"Knox...Stop." I growl back at him. The pack mind-link has been opened by Dad for the pack members to openly communicate; leaving my head spinning from all the shouting through it.

I can't concentrate on one voice, there are just too many. All shouting louder than the other.

"Shut it off!" My wolf commands for me to do, and I follow her order.

"I need to be with them." Determined than ever I fight against his hold, trying to pry his fingers off me.

"You need to be inside, where I know you are safe and I can help them." He roars back at me.

"Knox."

"Josie, please...I've only just got you back. You will go inside and wait for me to return... Josie please. You aren't trained to fight yet, I can't help your family if I'm watching you..."

"Knox..." I continue to seethe out only for a high pitched scream through the pack wide mind-link to stop me.

The pained scream informs me that somebody has died... Dad's ferocious growl echoes through the pack bond as a pack member passes on to the moon.

I wanted to fight, I could fight...I didn't want to sit back and let my entire back fight whilst I hid in the house. That just wasn't me.

"Josephina...please, I'm begging you." The plea in his voice is unmistakable, it is uncharacteristically not Knox right now. He was desperate...he needed to know I was safe so that he can fight by my family's side.

"Be careful." I place a hand to his cheek, my fight against him ending as my body softens. I need him to protect my family but also protect himself and if staying here does that, so be it.

He pulls me into him, his lips crashing into mine before they are gone, those tingles a burning memory of his kiss as I watch him run away from me.

I close the front door, running downstairs to the basement....to my vault.

I might not be able to fight with my wolf yet, but I am still the best shooter in this pack.

My hands are shaking from a true threat being amongst us as I open the secure vault and pick up my gun.

I take the bullets out, reloading them with silver ones. I drop the first one, shrieking out as the silver burns at my skin. I was no longer immune to silver. Pulling my hoodie off I crouch down to retrieve the bullet, using the material of my jumper to pick it up with my now protected fingers.

Carefully I load my gun, my eyes scanning the rest of the vault... the main armoury has sniper guns. If I could make it to the armoury I could help take out the threat from a distance.

My parent's bedroom...they have the best view of the lands behind us, sometimes if I squint enough I can see the meadow and my cabin.

Determined, I shut the vault locking it back up before running back up the basement stairs and continuing up another flight of stairs until I am in my parent's bedroom, swinging open their window.

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My sight, with my wolf now, is clearer. I can see everything with clear vision, even at this distance. My heart sinks when the naive hope that it was a handful of rogues disappears. It's a swarm, an invasion of fully kitted gun bearing hunters. Our wolves are taking them down but not quick enough...bullets are being fired as a line of hunters stand at the back shooting randomly into the crowd of wolves. More screams hit me through the pack link that I keep trying to suppress. I need to be there, I can take them all down with ease and still maintain a safe distance.

Mum hasn't shifted yet. She is among only a few that remain still in human form. Dad, Jaxon and Jace in wolf form, as is Knox.

Why isn't Mum shifting...

I scream in panic as she is knocked to the ground by a bullet, my heart racing...that's it I need to be there. I can feel she is safe, that it is a skin surface wound but I can't just stay and wait. Watch my family fight, I need to do something.

I move away from the window, rushing out of their bedroom door...my hand on the stair railing just as the front door is kicked in with a brute force. Holding my gasp, I take a step back out of view as four figures covered in complete black attire step into the house, their guns raised in front of them preparing to take aim.

My heart pounds uncontrollably in my chest as I reach behind my back to take my gun out of my waistband.

Holding it firmly within my grip. These bastards that have entered into my house will not leave alive. They have entered their own tombs.

I need to act now, before they come up the stairs.

Trying to calm the rising adrenaline inside of me, I take a step forward, preparing to ambush them as they have divided in order to scout out the lower level, when Jaxon pushes into my mind.

"Josie?"

"Jaxon?"

"What's wrong?" He growls out as he must be continuing to fight whilst also mind-linking me.

"They are in the house." I whisper back, I can't help it...I'm being mindful not to make any noise even when they can't hear the mind-link.

"Hide!"

"I have my gun."

"Josie NO!" He orders out at me but I cut the link...he won't be able to get here in time. None of them will, and I don't need them to. I've got my gun, I've got my wolf. I can fight.

I slowly move down the stairs, my gun at point in my hands as I scan the hallway. One is standing at the alpha office door trying to knock it down.

He has his back to me...he'll never see me coming. He can't even hear me creep up behind him...they must be human.

He's wearing a black helmet but with his back to me, the nape of his neck is exposed. Human or not, no one can survive a silver bullet to the head or neck.

With a steadying deep breath in...I shoot, hitting him in the back of the neck, his body immediately collapsing to the ground. The silencer on my gun taking the bang out but I hear another nearby.

There's a scuffle, one of the kitchen island benches being knocked over, one of them giving their position away as they watch their comrade fall.

I move to the opposite side of the hallway... readying for one to step into the hallway. And he does.

I push his gun to the ground, where he fires and shoots himself in his own foot. He collapses to the ground, exposing his neck to me...I take aim... That's two down.

The other two aren't upstairs, so they must be in the dining room or in the back garden.

I move to the sitting room, preparing to wait them out. They've come to kill, they can at least work for it.

I crouch down behind one of the sofas, my hearing being so strong now that I can hear their heart beats.

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- Josie -

I can hear they are close by, at least one of them in the dining room.

Keeping crouched down low, I move behind the furniture, using it as a source to hide behind until the very last moment.

They made a mistake coming here, this was my home. I knew every part of this house, every corner. They've completely underestimated us yet again.

Who were they, what exactly did they want... I can't think of that right now, I need to keep calm, not let the growing rage within me take over.

I need calmness, complete control.

I see him, he's moving around the dining room table...arrogantly. He's taking in the paintings on the wall, the pictures...even running his spare hand across the dining room...I feel sick just watching him touch what is ours.

The scoff he gives as he stops by the picture of all five of us, brings nausea to the back of my throat. It was a silly family portrait shoot Auntie Alora made us do. We were only young, innocent children...how dare he base judgement upon us.

I don't wait, I don't even give him the chance to acknowledge that someone was watching him, that I was better than him. I point my gun and take aim.

Three down...I was shooting to kill and not wasting any time. I didn't have any time to waste.

With stealth I move into the hallway again, discreetly moving towards the kitchen. Two bodies laid on the floor, untouched. I said this would be their tombs. The other one has to be in the kitchen or near the back door, by the utility room that leads off from the kitchen.

As soon as I've taken this last male down, I can move on to the meadows, help my family...get to Knox.

That's all I can think about...that he and they are safe, that they aren't hurt.

Just the thought of them in danger gives me the determination I need to push my feet towards the kitchen entrance...until I freeze.

I feel it through the pack bond and it temporarily immobilises me. I feel as if the floor beneath me has disappeared and I'm being dragged under.

Stunned...I can't breathe.

"The alpha is down!" Beta Riley's voice roars through the pack mind-link, my entire body frozen in a state of panic.

Dad... Dad was hurt. What about the others...what about Mum...she was shot also. I saw it with my own eyes.

It's the voice behind me that breaks me out of my trance...surprisingly a female voice.

"I've located her, fall back to primary positions." She talks into some kind of radioed ear piece as I turn around to face her.

To face the gun staring point blank at my face.

I didn't hear her coming, I had lost my focus on the task in hand by the news through the pack link. She had used that opportunity to come out of hiding. If things weren't so dire, I'd congratulate her. "You need to come with us."

"Us?" I quirk an eyebrow at her, her fallen comrades scattered around the house.

"You didn't think we came alone do you?" She smirks out to me, taking a step forward...lowering

her gun so that it is now touching my chest, right above my heart.

If they had silver bullets again, I couldn't take the risk...I don't think I would come back to life a second time.

My wolf is forward, she's growling...poised to shift. Ready to attack. But it won't help us right now, she'll shoot before I've fully shifted.

Yet if I move my gun higher, she'll act first...she pull the trigger. I'm stuck.

It was a stale mate, and she was winning. Shit...

No sudden movements, I keep my eyes on her as I take a step back...only for her to click her tongue at me and take a step closer.

"If you come willingly... they'll hold back on the silver tools." She smirks out at me, before it stretches out into a full demonic smile. They'll need silver just to cut through my skin so that was a lie.

I need to act now and take the risk, with any luck she'll miss my chest and hit my arm instead. It's going to hurt like a bitch, but at least I'll have beaten this bitch.

I start to raise my gun up slowly...

"Don't!" She grips hold of her gun more firmly.

A shadow moves behind her and my heart sinks when I realise she has back up. I'm contemplating how to take another out when, and to my own shock, hands wrap around her throat from behind and twist her neck. I close my eyes as I hear the snap before hearing her body collapse to the floor.

My eyes snap back open to find Doctor Abel standing over her body.

He bends down taking the gun out of her hand and then moving to her chest where he seems to disable some kind of camera from a pocket in her bullet proof vest.

"Josie?" He takes a step closer to me, adrenaline easing as shock starts to take its hold on my body. I almost just died...again.

Chapter 399

- Knox -

The bullets were not silver...that at least was something.

I watch in horror as a bullet hits Kaia, knocking her to the ground. Images of me holding a weeping Josie flit through my mind. How am I going to tell her...how am I going to break her heart.

Only for relief to quickly wash over me as Kaia stands back up, the hit a flesh wound on her upper arm and she jumps back into another fight.

I'm not given time to pause, to be grateful that my mate's mother remains alive...the bullets keep flying above our heads.

I'm in my wolf form, the bullets whizzing past my wolf's ears constantly. I don't know how we haven't been hit yet, luck...pure luck.

Even being normal bullets, a shifter cannot survive a hit to the head...which is the fate of many already here in the meadow.

A line of hunters stand behind those that have taken the forward position. They fire openly at us all, as the others try and survive our wolves.

These were without a doubt humans. They were suited up with the best protective gear but it made no difference...nothing would stop our fangs and claws.

It's killing me not to have the mind-link to Josie, to make sure she is staying in the Alpha house. She promised but I know her, she has that innate need to protect the ones she loves. To fight for them. "Knox, behind you!" Kaia shouts out at my wolf just as a hunter fires a gun at me from behind. With her warning, I manage to dodge the bullet just as he prepares to fire again.

Turning, my wolf roars with such venom that it seems to immobilise him until my eyes fall upon Kaia who is staring directly at the hunter.

Her eyes are in a sort of fixated state until the hunter's legs give way.

I don't wait, I don't give him the chance to recover...my hands easily ripping through his protective armour.

Did Kaia just do what I think she did...did she just steal that hunter's energy?

We were starting to make a dent in their numbers, their bullets not having the impact they would expect...not without being silver. Otherwise it would be a complete massacre. Jaxon and Jace are trained, I do not need to worry about their safety, they were born for battle.

Hector also, his charcoal black wolf is tearing through skin. These hunters have invaded his land, have killed members of his pack...he won't let them leave.

I continue to fight, my wolf covered in blood when I hear an almighty roar. I turn to find Hector's wolf blocking Kaia from an assault of bullets...where they hit him scare on in the chest.

His paw swings out to take down the shooter only for the hunter to dive out of the way, pulling out a silver dagger and stabbing it into Hector's chest. Kaia kills the hunter in the blink of an eye.

She's so fast, he doesn't even get the chance to celebrate his achievement. He's taken down the notorious Dark Phantom Alpha, the untouchable.

Hector shifts back...his wolf relenting full control as his body falls to the ground.

Fear takes over me as Kaia's scream echos through the meadow, the wolves of the Dark Phantom pack stepping up their game.

They need to get their Alpha to safety.

"Hector...just hold on." I shift, crouching down by his side and place my hand over the burning silver dagger and painfully pull it from his body. I toss it away, as far as I can as if it were a grenade about to explode. "Hector?" Kaia calls out to him as she continues to fight, her eyes focusing on the hunters near her son's.

One by one they fall, like paper cut outs in a gale force wind. She was using her energy trick again, taking them down to protect her children.

So they can get to their father dying on the battle field.

"Hector, just hang on!" I push down on the wound to try and stem the bleeding.

"Fuck, Dad?" Jaxon shifts pulling up to Hector's side as Kaia makes an opening for Jace's wolf who starts to charge this way.

My only thought is Josie, that she needs to be here. That she'll never forgive me for keeping her away from her Dad like this.

"They are falling back." Beta Riley roars out as he holds a hunter by the throat in the air. The pack members were shifting back as the hunters were retreating. Why were they suddenly retreating, now was the time to push hard...the alpha was down. The pack slightly weakened.