

Denied 441

Chapter 441

- Josie -

I can't stop imagining the small ten year old Kit watching his own family die before his very eyes.

A horror nobody should witness, let alone a small innocent child.

Kit, my own mate, had a horrendous childhood...because of my family.

My own blood.

The blood that runs through my veins is the same blood that has tortured him.

I can't breathe...my heart keeps pounding against my chest as mixed emotions of anger, sorrow, hatred and love spread through me all at once.

I love him so much, to the point that it hurts me not to think of us being together but how can we be together after this.

How can he be with me...he won't, he can't.

How could we have children together when he

knows that same blood is the blood that killed his own family.

I'm at my cabin in the meadows before I even know how I got here.

A thick black fog has covered my mind, my legs acting on their own accord. I just needed to move.

I need a gun, I need to shoot...it always helps me to think clearer...helps me calm down.

But after the attack and being the pack's Head of Weapons, I locked the armoury down. Just to be safe for a few days whilst the pack mourned.

The White Moon pack was gone, far from here. The pack was no longer at threat, not for now anyway.

I could go back to the alpha house and get my pistol but I have to be away from there right now, I can't listen to their excuses any longer.

My grandfather...had not only killed my grandmother, and his own pack.

But he had killed my mate's pack.

My mate's family...rendered him homeless, an alpha with no pack to lead.

My knees give way, as my body can no longer carry this heavy load of guilt.

As I fall to the ground I scream out, my heart's agony no longer deniable. How will he ever look at me again.

My hands feed through my hair, pulling at the ends as I open my eyes, my vision blurred from the tears...a red glow emitting out of me.

It's different this time...it's not coming from my hands, it's around me. As if it was trying to heal me, even protect me.

"Rein it in!" He demands out, my eyes darting to the door where he stands with Lobo barking.

"I...can't!"

"Rein it in!" He orders again, moving towards me.

"You need to leave, I can't control it." I gasp out as the light glows brighter around me.

"Yes you can. It's feeding off your emotions, now rein it in!" He commands at me, his heavy aura crashing into me, fighting against the glow.

I'm scared as he steps into it, scared it will hurt him, but it doesn't. It lets him pass through.

I feel his hands reach for me, feel his touch upon my skin as he pulls me into him. His firm touch calming me.

He shouldn't even be here, he can't be here.

"You can't be here...you shouldn't be here." I muffle out against his chest, my head tilting up to look at him.

"Where you go, I go."

"No..." I push myself out of his hold, the glow around me starting to soften as I start to take control back. Force it back in on itself.

No this wasn't right.

"Don't you see...we can't be together. Not after this."

"What are you talking about?"

"How can you be with me Kit, why would you want to be with me. My family is the reason you are alone." I pant out, needing him to see...no matter how painful this would be, he needed to see what this means.

"No, Josie..."

"Yes Kit, listen to me. The same blood that runs through these veins, is the same blood that killed your parents, killed your family...your entire pack. How can you look at me..how can you want to be with me now knowing that." My arms lift up in the air, my veins becoming more visible as I clench my muscles. Wanting to emphasise my blood in my veins.

"Because it isn't about us."

"How can you say that, how can you have children with me knowing what their great grandfather has done?" I scream out at him, my soul aching as my heart and head fight one another.

"Because you are mine Red, mine by fate, mine by right." He's in front of me again, his intoxicating scent of leather and sandalwood invading my senses...making my body turn into him.

Judging by the smirk on his lips he knew what he was doing, he knew the mate bond would be too hard for me to fight against.

"Kit..." I breathe out, trying to move away but he grips me close to him. Pulling my body firmly against his chest, his thumb tilting my chin up... giving me no choice but to look him directly into those additive eyes of his.

"I don't blame you in any way at all Red. Just like I don't blame your mother. How can I, how can I blame her or you for something you had nothing to do with..."

"But..."

"No, you listen to me. We've come too far now to throw us away. We are destined Red...and I won't let that psychopath win again. I am bound to you Josie, just as you are bound to me. In fact..." His dark brown broody eyes continue to try and reason with me, try to make me feel better.

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But why should he, this is about him, about the crimes to him.

His other hand snakes up my body, from my waist up to my jawline where it joins the other hand...and both cup around my face.

"I, Kit Knoxbridge, accept you Josephina Varon, daughter of the alphas, as my fated mate..."

"What are you doing..." I gasp out, my hands moving to clasp on to his.

"Hush...I love you beyond measure, I want to protect you...even at times from yourself. I want to be by your side always and I will spend the rest of my life showing you how you have saved me Josie...how you are the one that brought me back."

My eyes blink out the tears, his eyes bleeding out into black as a hunger takes over them.

I gasp out as he tilts my head to the side, his lips pressing against the sensitive part of my skin before his teeth sink in.

I scream out as he bites down on bone, vivid memories flittering through my mind, from him. Memories of everything...his younger years...his family.

The day they were killed...how he hid in the treeline...his father's eyes focusing on his hiding place just

before his life was stolen from him.

Uncontrollable emotions wash over me, hitting me all at once...making it hard to breathe.

How he wishes he could have stopped it, how he wishes he could tell them he survived, that he would be alright.

Memories of him living alone, living in alleyways...in the rain, until he found shelter with an older couple that took him in...that helped him.

How they encouraged him to train...pushed him to defend himself.

The heartache all over again at their deaths, when he was alone again...when he started the alpha training programme.

The memories continue, all within the space of only a few seconds but it feels like a lifetime.

When he met my brothers, when he faced Jaxon's wolf for the first time...all these memories are superfast and hard to concentrate on.

Then it's me...the first time he saw me in my leather jacket...the memory slows as he watches my red flowing hair bounce when I walk. His eyes scanning my body, lingering on my ass.

His fear of losing me when I was shot, how he held me in my arms and I died in them...I can hear myself crying again at his painful memory of waiting in the hospital, of my life support being pulled.

How he called out to me, brought me back from the darkness.

My sobs turn into a moan as I feel a lifetime's worth of pain within him was lifting, dark turning to light, hope burning in his heart for the first time since being a boy.

My face replacing all past memories, how to him, his past is separate to me...he doesn't hold me or my family responsible...he loves us.

"Do you see know, do you understand?" His voice is strong as he pulls his teeth from me only to lick the wound with his tongue.

"Yes." My voice shakes at the explosion of emotions and memories I was still trying to flicker through.

"You are mine Josie, I don't care what happened before us. All that matters is us, and the future before us. Our children will be my children too. My blood will be their blood."

I can feel him, feel his energy within me. Feel his intentions, his emotions...everything.

Even his wolf...I can sense his presence like I can my own.

The love he has for me is undeniable, he would move mountains for me...but I would never ask him to.

That's how much I love him...and I need him to know that.

His fear of losing me controls his actions...but I need him to see that every day is taken for granted...that we shouldn't worry when our time will end, but celebrate the love we have, this connection between us.

My lips are on his neck before he has even had the chance to realise, my teeth biting down on his bone...a gasp escaping him as he pulls me into him...that gasp shifting into a moan.

I bite down hard, showing no sign of uncertainty, no doubt...he needs to know how long I have wanted to do this.

How now being able to see into his soul reassures me that he means what he said. That he doesn't blame me, that he is unwilling to lose me.

I share my memories with him, all of them. The first time we met in the nightclub, how his dark broody eyes ruined every other male for me...I just didn't know it. Because I was too young to know what he was to me then.

I show him everything....every feeling I have had for him...even anger at him for ending things. That anger feeling spreading out and replaced with love and total acceptance of him and his wolf. How they are mine...my wolf's and mine's.

How no matter what comes our way, we will fight it side by side, as the moon goddess intended.

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- Josie -

"You could have waited..." Dad can't help but repeat his annoyance at Kit and I marking one another, for not waiting for a ceremony.

I wouldn't have changed any of it, it was perfect.

It was in private; in a place I had always felt the most secure.

It was how it should be for us.

"Dad, we've just had your wedding. I think the pack is done with celebrations for sometime." I sigh out, leaning forward to pass him the document on his desk that he was searching the drawers for. It was just Dad and I, alone in his office.

With not being a member of a pack anymore, by marking me, Kit became a new pack member of the Dark Phantom pack by default.

Which means... Dad could feel our marking through the pack bond.

He was waiting for us to return.

"Never when it involves you Josephina. The pack adores you, and I wanted to give Knox the opportunity for an official ceremony...to welcome him into a pack again." Dad takes the paper off me, his eyes scanning it before signing it.

Shoot, why didn't I think of that.

Nothing, however, would deter me from my decision from what I want to do. For what I know is the right choice.

"About that..." This wasn't going to be easy.

"Hmm?"

"Kit needs to go back to his training base, he needs to start the next program as soon as possible. He's already getting pressure to confirm start dates and I wouldn't want him to cancel it."

"Well, we will support the two of you, I can drive you every other weekend and he is always welcome here for the weekend in between." Dad smiles out, placing his hands together and rest back into his chair.

This was going to hurt Dad, this was going to be hard for him to hear.

"No Dad, I'm going with him."

"With him?"

"Yes, I can't be separated from him and I won't have him forfeit what he has worked so hard for, not for anyone, not even me."

"It isn't safe for you to leave.." He softly growls, his disapproval of my decision clear. Yet it was my decision to make, with or without his blessing.

"Safe? What is safer than a top security training ground with alphas everywhere. I can't think of anywhere safer right now. Besides...If I were to be separated from him, it would weaken us both."

He considers my words for a moment, letting them sink in. It was the truth. Nothing weakened a werewolf more than denying the mate bond or putting distance between it.

"I don't like this."

"I know you don't. It will only be for a year..."

"No.."

"No?" I quirk an eyebrow at him. He and I both know my mind was made up.

"That's too long. Besides, with Jace missing again...I need to put firm plans in place for the Clear Waters. They need an alpha." "Jace will be back."

"I'm not so sure this time and with the White Moon pack coming forward again... Clear Waters needs an alpha more than ever.

Which means Mum will have to stay there for a while...and I can't leave here. Not until Jaxon takes on being alpha."

I take a deep breath in, preparing myself. I knew this wasn't going to be easy and I needed to remain calm.

"Please don't make me choose between you and Kit.."

"I'm not, I won't. I'm just asking for time."

"He's already lost so much because of this family..." I was prepared to fight for this, ready to argue but I am cut off.

"I understand." Dad exhales sharply.

"You do?"

"Yes...you know, your mother and I didn't have quite the same start to our bond as you two. But once I knew, there wasn't anything I wouldn't do for her. Only the fated mate can keep her safe...Something that I now understand.

Only Knox can keep you safe. This pack will always protect you Josie, but being by your mate, being by his side will keep you safe.

it wrong to admit that I was slightly glad you didn't have a wolf? That when the time came and went for your wolf to present herself, and she didn't...when you were upset, I was relieved.

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Not because you didn't deserve a wolf, not because I wouldn't want you not to have a wolf...but because it meant you would never leave me. My sweet baby girl, always by my side."

"Oh Dad.." I stand up, moving around his desk and placing my hand around the back of his neck. He turns to look up at me, placing my hands into his.

"As much as it pains me to say...you have my blessing to join him."

"Thank you Dad..."

I never thought I would be able to do this.

Never thought this day would come.

The moon was at her fullest, her ethereal white glow shining down upon me...I could feel her blessing on her beam's touch.

I was stood outside in a silver coloured silk gown, the entire pack stood behind me.

This would be my first ever pack run.

Tomorrow I would leave for a year. Kit tried to put up a fight, tried to assure me that he would make it work, that he would quit his program but he didn't have to.

I didn't want him to.

Besides I had this gut feeling that we would need as many alphas on board as possible. That bringing down the white moon pack would take both time and muscle...we needed friends in all places right now.

"Are you ready?" Kit stands beside me, his hand lacing into mine as he proudly smiles down at me.

"Yes, ready as I'll ever be."

"My loyal pack members, tonight's pack run is a night none of us thought would ever happen. For tonight, our daughter finally gets to join us." Cheering and clapping erupt from the pack members behind us, Jaxon leading on the crowd to celebrate. I turn my head, Jaxon's eyes meeting mine before he darts to the side, his eyes roaming the pack borders in the distance...he would never stop waiting for Jace, never stop hoping for his return.

Neither would I. We were a trio.

"Josie has been blessed with a wolf, and not just any wolf...a moon blessed wolf. Now join us in celebrating her first ever pack run." Dad announces, his hands raised as he addresses the pack members.

The cheering continues until Dad places his hand up higher, complete silence following.

Then I feel it, my alpha's command to shift before him, to shift before everyone.

Dad shifts first, his clothes shredding as his dark charcoal wolf shakes out his fur. Only for Mum's contrasting white fur to stand beside him seconds later.

I turn to Jaxon, waiting for him to shift, for him to go next. But he doesn't, he nods...giving me his permission to shift next.

My turn.

I let go of Kit's hand and take a step forward.

I let my alpha's and luna's command wash over me, let that need to submit take control.

She's still there, just by the veil. I haven't even tried to control pushing her back because I don't feel as if I need to. She and I have our own path to follow, our story different to others.

She had been hidden for so long, it feels cruel to push her back into darkness. She has now finally stepped into the light, we both have.

I feel my body bend, feel my bones snap as I shift...the silver coloured silk gown shredding beneath my feet as my wolf stretches out her long spine, her red fur shaking itself out as she finishes her shift.

I feel Kit shift next to me, then Jaxon, followed by the rest of the pack. Kit's wolf nuzzle at my neck, his wolf licking across my snout.

With a howl to the moon by Dad, I follow, my wolf raising her head to the sky, calling out to the moon. We then break out into a run, the entire pack running behind Kit and I, who take the lead.

This feeling, I never thought I would feel.

This feeling of complete belonging.

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Fighting Fate (Book3)

Cleo POV

"Just us girls", they said. "It will be fun", they said.

Well the initial three is now two, Josie letting us down last minute.

But I was still determined to have a great time, I mean, you only turn eighteen once.

"I can't believe you made me wear this." I mumble under my breath as we approach the ticket gate, trying to cover my bikini.

"Everyone is wearing them." Maya responds back to me as she scans her phone against the ticket machine, granting us entry.

Maya wasn't wrong. Every female here was wearing a similar thong bikini as myself, but I am not as bold as her or them...this was totally pushing my boundaries.

We had driven all the way to the coast, the hottest pool party for the entire year happening this weekend.

There was even talk of minor celebrities in attendance. Again, I was seriously pushing my comfort levels, this place really wasn't me.

But I need to keep reminding myself that this was a new me. Change never came to those that stood still.

Maya booked the tickets through her links as soon as she heard me talking to Josie about celebrating my eighteenth.

Apparently, the occasion couldn't pass without us celebrating in style. I just had to convince my parents to let me leave the pack for a few days. The Red Thorn pack isn't on lock down, unlike our friends...the Dark Phantom and Clear Waters pack...which Josie's parents are the alphas of. I wasn't surprised that Josie cancelled last minute, what with her parents and now Knox being super protective of late.

My parents are just the same, but our pack isn't in danger, not like theirs, but try saying that to Mum who is stricter even than Dad...the Alpha. It was a bit of a battle for them to let me come.

This place was A class, I can see why Maya was so keen to come. It was one of the richest hotels in the area, the pool party itself already vibing as we locate an empty double sunbed and place our bags down.

Maya was right, this was going to be fun.

"What can I get you ladies?" A cute male waiter walks over to us, his eyes skimming our outfits as I reach for my towel to cover up.

I wasn't used to being seen by males, my mother would have me wearing a chastity belt if she could.

"Shots?" Maya turns to me, that mischievous glint visible in her eyes just before she places her sunglasses on.

"Shots, really? Maybe cocktails?" I groan out to her, let's at least start off slow.

"Drinks are free with your VIP tickets, so I'll bring a selection." The waiter drops his eyes again to my hipline, my hands pulling that towel tightly around me. I knew wearing this was a mistake...it's just not me.

"I can't believe Josie is missing out on this...for training." Maya sighs out as she throws herself onto the four poster sunbed.

"She's with her mate, that's where she wants to be."

"More eye candy for us then." She grins out, showing her white teeth like a predator that was excited to hunt its prey.

"You said this was girls only, you better not leave me stranded for male action."

"Stranded? Pft please girl...you're never going to lose that V card if you keep wrapping towels around you."

"What are you doing?" I tut out as she leans forward and yanks the towel from around me. Once again revealing my bright pink string thong bikini. "You're the hottest girl here babe, let the males get a good view."

I reach for my towel, trying to claim it back from Maya but she's already placing it back in my beach bag as she shakes her head to me.

"Oh and look, the waiter is already coming over...gosh that was rather fast...I guess he likes what he sees." She chuckles out as I turn to indeed watch the waiter coming back over to us with a tray full of drinks.

As he approaches us, I feel my cheeks blush, I really wasn't confident around males...unlike Maya who seemed to have them wrapped around her finger. Werewolf, human...she didn't care. To her, they were all fair game.

He carefully places the heavy tray down on the sunbed and I have to clench my hands not to help him.

"You star!" Maya grins out as she takes a cocktail for herself and slowly sips on it.

"Delicious."

"Pace yourselves ladies, perhaps I'll come join you when my shift ends."

"Is that a promise?" Maya pulls her sunglasses down to reveal her eyes...her eyelashes unashamedly fluttering at the male.

He should run away, she literally is the big bad wolf

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that would gobble him up and spit him back out.

The pool party was heaving, to the point that it was hard to move in the water.

I hate to admit it, but Maya did good, this place was awesome. I was letting my body unwind, letting my hips flow to the loud music as the DJ mixed song after song.

The countless of cocktails aiding in my body's awakening to living for the here and now.

Yet I can't shake that feeling of being watched.

Dad promised not to send guards, but my wolf knows when we are being watched. She keeps pleading with me to lay off the alcohol, but I was just having too much fun.

We must have been here for hours, the hot afternoon sun had now turned into the starry night time sky.

In the distance I could see yachts in the tranquil sea waters, and if I really pinpoint my hearing over the music of the DJ I could just make out the sound of gentle waves crashing against the beach.

"Looks who's back...oh and he brought a friend." Maya calls out to me over the music as our cute waiter makes his way over to us.

He stops at our sunbed, removing his work polo-shirt... revealing his toned torso as he winks for catching me staring.

He whispers to his male friend before they both make their way into the water, four little shot glasses in his hand as he swerves through the pool crowd.

"Here, I've finished my shift, now the real party can start."

I can feel myself starting to back away. How it was all fun when he had to get back to work, but now this felt very real, his forwardness all day suddenly making me apprehensive as he stood in front of me topless.

Push through your boundaries Cleo, it's the only way anything is going to change.

That sense of being watched intensifies, to the point that I actually look around...try to find Red Thorn guards in disguise.

My eyes scan the crowd, nothing but party goers...nobody stood out of place.

I take the shot, downing it in one go. If I was being watched by Dad's guards then they would have already reported my location and what I was getting up to.

I might as well sin properly if I was going to have to beg for his forgiveness. What do they say, don't ask for permission, ask for forgiveness. "Yes girl!" Maya cheers next to me as she downs her own shot.

"Shall we move on to another club?" The male waiter leans in, his hand snaking around my waist.

"Another club?"

"Sure, we can head back to your hotel room first and get changed."

"I'm game, Cleo?"

"Sure.." I override my wolf's hesitation, pushing her back down. She can sense what is being said between the lines, but screw it. I was here to have fun, to finally lose my virginity.

I don't even know his name.

He pulls me out of the pool, my legs slightly wobbly as I climb the metal steps. I'm regretting my drinking marathon now, I've clearly had too much to drink, my own legs starting to punish me.

I reach for my towel, but in doing so I accidentally misjudge my angle, my arm touching his chest. I look up to find him looking down at me, thinking it was some kind of play for his attention.

His hands snake around my back as he pulls me into him, his mouth opening slightly as his eyes take on a seductive look.

I've never even kissed a guy before.

I was here, I was young, I was meant to make mistakes...learn from experiences.

This was it, I needed to remain calm and just get it over with.

I lean in myself, my mouth opening slightly in anticipation...I would have hoped my heart would be pounding with my excitement, not filled with dread. But I can't ever think of losing my virginity when I haven't even kissed someone yet.

I had been waiting, waiting for the one person I thought would be mine...but he was long gone. His cold last words to me still ring out in my ears at times.

My lips are almost touching the waiter's, dryness suddenly burning at the back of my throat. I close my eyes only for them to snap back open as he is violently pushed into the pool. It was super crowded here...

"Huh, are you okay?" I call out to him, as he emerges from the water, gasping for air.

I reach down, extending my hand out to help him when I freeze.

An unmistakable growl erupting from behind me.

"Touch him and I'll kill him."

"Jace?" I gasp out.

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Cleo POV

Goosebumps erupt all over my skin, my body stilling from shock.

No, it can't be, I have to be imagining things.

The hairs on the back of my neck stand up as his breath fans between the nape of my neck and my ear...

Jace.

My heart stops beating, my body longing to turn to face him...to see him.

That call to him I have felt all my life threatening to engulf me.

I know as soon as I turn I'll lose all self control around him, I'll want to touch him, to hold him...to make sure he is real.

I prepare to act on my relief in knowing he is safe, that he is alive...until my wolf sends me a flashback of the last time I saw him...of how he humiliated me in front of all those people at his parent's wedding.

My body stiffens as painful memories filter through my mind, he had hurt me...hurt me and abandoned his family.

After all this time it's still there, that gravitational pull to him. Like a silent call to be his, to be only his.

With an exhale of air, I gather myself...pushing back on that pull to him, instead letting anger take control.

My arm stretches out, not to touch him...but to help the barman out of the pool. My hand stills, freezing mid-air as a menacing growl erupts behind me...daring me to defy him.

"I mean it Cleo....I will kill him where he stands if you so much as lay a finger on him."

He'd be a fool to start something in front of a hotel full of humans.

"No, you won't...because I won't let you." I whisper out knowing full well he will still be able to hear me over the loud music and singing of the partygoers.

"Are you alright?" I ask out to the barman as he reaches out to clasp my hand, continuing to climb out of the pool.

He's completely drenched, his lips part to respond only for his eyes to lock on the male behind me.

There can be no denying the aura emitting behind me, Jace making no attempts to rein in his command to the human, who will struggle to make sense of it.

His eyes roam the length of me...only for him to fetch his polo shirt off the sunbed and back away. Back towards the hotel.

I turn...frustrated, as he moves back towards the bar area. Not once glancing back as he makes a swift exit.

That anger within me only ignites once more, spreading further throughout my body.

"Careful." My wolf warns in my mind as I turn my line of vision back to the tall, muscular male in front of me.

He had spread out, but not as much as he would have if he had claimed his alpha title by now. Piercing green eyes stare back at me as I drink him all in.

He had always been handsome; his added charm being his wit and zest for life, only adding to his beauty.

He was wearing a white fitted shirt, the buttons the hardest working buttons of all time, as they struggle to keep the shirt fastened with all the muscle his was packing.

Blue chino trousers with smart leather brown shoes and those tattoos that make him now completely distinguishable from his identical brother Jaxon. If I didn't know his true character I would perhaps think to take a step back in caution.

Something had happened for him to not only leave the first time, but to return with a new bad boy image...one that does nothing to deter my undying love for him.

If anything, it makes me want him even more. I'm torn between my anger from his stunt just now, to the need to pull him in my arms and check he was actually real, that he wasn't a mirage I was imagining from prolonged heat and alcohol consumption.

My heart continues to beat erratically at the sight of him. Almost a year since I last saw him, since any of us last saw him...and so much has happened.

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We thought him dead at one point. Jaxon was convinced even though he could still feel the triplet bond...how could he do that...to his family. To his pack.

Any hopes of a smile breaking out on to my lips disappears as anger takes point, continuing to burn wildly throughout me, anger like I've never felt before.

Who did he think he was.

I keep my eyes on him, my wolf more than anything keen to not turn our back on him, this was a predator wolf...the highest ranking in a pack who had crept up on me already today without my noticing.

Slowly, I reach over to the sun bed and retrieve my bag. I needed to get out of here, to get away from him.

I needed some space to clear my head.

I move, almost the pace of a run, towards the main hotel building when he yanks at my elbow, pulling me back into his hard chest. A static shock noticeable from his touch.

The heavenly scent of coconut, that has deepened in his absence, invades my senses...almost rendering me unmoveable until my wolf reminds me again why I was moving in the first place.

Why he can't be the only one to run away.

I escape out of his firm clasp taking a step into the hotel, the automatic doors sliding aside for me. Only to stop when his alpha command ploughs into me. He wasn't my alpha, he wasn't even from my pack...but I felt it all the same.

"I told you I would kill him if you touched him again..." His deep, emphasised growl, echoes through the lobby of the hotel.

Is he mad, this was human land.

I'm not an angry person but something about seeing him here, knowing this is where he has been all along makes me seethe.

He's been soaking up the sun, sipping back beers,

living his best life whilst his family have been going through shit, have gone through hell.

Of all the hotels we had to come to, it was the one he's been hiding away at, ignoring all attempts to hear just one word from him...to know that he was safe.

I'm not sure who is angrier, me or my wolf. I'm not even sure who is in control right now.

"Not that it is any of your business....but, I wasn't going to find him, I was leaving." I turn, the towel now wringing in my hands as I picture it being his neck instead.

"Leaving? Like that...no!" He takes a step closer, his eyes taking on a darker green...almost a black as his eyes roam the length of me.

"What you think I want to be around you?"

"At least put some fucking clothes on first, you look like a..."

"A what Jace? I dare you to finish that sentence." I close the gap between us, my eyes burning with my wolf's own rage. I don't break eye contact not even as his state takes on a softer look.

"Look...I'm just a little startled to see you here...to watch his hand's touching you..." He pauses, his eyes slamming shut before his thumb and forefinger pinch at the bridge of his nose. He was trying to mask his anger, mask his disappointment in seeing me here.

He had changed, he may not be the alpha of the Clear Waters pack as was his destiny, but he was still emitting power.

This male before me, even without a pack, was powerful, was a leader...he may not have claimed his birth right, but something about his wolf was giving off signals that it wasn't affecting him, not like it should do.

"Just...come upstairs...so we can talk...please Cleo, for old time's sake." His hand reaches out to touch my shoulder before he stops it mid air, regretting his decision before he even made it.

There was a time he would fling me in his arms, catch me if I fell, even taught me to swim...now, not only can he barely look at me without anger clear in his expressions...he can't even bare to touch me.

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Against my better judgement, I nod, agreeing to follow him towards his hotel room, for old time's sake. Because above all we had been close as children.

We step into the elevator, the mirrored walls reminding me that I was only in my pink thong bikini. I curse myself internally before I slowly wrap the beach towel around my waist, just as the elevator door closes.

I had hoped I was discreet but as I slowly look up, I find Jace leaning back against the elevator side, his eyes lingering on my hips. Before they move up to my bikini top which I have yet to cover.

He makes no attempt to look away, not even when I clear my throat...my face blushing from his stare.

"What floor?" I feel my own brows furrow as I break the odd tense silence that had fallen upon us, my finger preparing to press any of the ten floors. "Pent house." He grunts, his eyes finally breaking away from my chest.

"The pent house?"

"The pent house...." He pushes off the wall with a sigh, his eyes locking on to mine as he looks at me strangely.

If I knew better I would think he was hungry, those predator eyes of his eyeing me as prey...but I'm not a daydreaming young girl any more, he just wants me to promise him that I'll keep quiet about his location.

That I won't inform his parents.

The air between us becomes harder to breathe, my heart pounding violently against my chest that it now causing me some pain. A charged energy forms between us, I guess I've been around human males for the most part of the night...and to stand in front of an alpha born that isn't from my own pack might create this level of atmosphere.

"Why are you here Cleo?" With each step closer he takes towards me, I take a step back; until I press against the elevator wall. I was caged between him and the mirror.

"I'm...it's my...I'm with Maya."

"Yes, so I saw. But why are you here?"

How many times have I fantasied about Jace as a

young teenager how many times have I played this scenario out in my head...that we would be alone...that he might finally see me as more than just a family friend...more than just the little girl that doted on him since forever. That romanticised for more.

He was playing me, he has to be....he was using my childhood crush on him to manipulate me, to seek out information...

"I'm not here for you, if that's what you want to know."

Ding!

The elevator doors open behind him, my eyes darting to the penthouse suite. The Varon's weren't short of money that was well known but to live here for the length of time that Jace has would rake up quite a hotel bill, one...without his pack's backing...he wouldn't be able to pay.

"Quite a pad you have here..." I move past him, stepping out into the stylishly designed hotel pent house that was shrouded with darkness from the windowed wall design.

It was pitch black outside, a few lit up boats in the ocean water breaking the blackness of the night. Flashing lights glowed from the massive pool party downstairs, yet the noise didn't prate through the windows. It was silent.

I move towards the windows where a balcony is now visible. White sofas adorn the outdoor space...the pang of jealousy surges through me of how many females he has had up here, seduced outside.

While he's been shagging women in bikinis, his family has been worried sick of his well being.

This is where the missing alpha had been all along. Not bleeding out in a ditch but living quite the glamorous life on the coast.

"Have you been here all this time?" I ask out, my voice dry.

"Yes."

"Here...you've been here all this time? You can afford this...without your family knowing?"

"Cleo, I own this. This hotel is mine."