

## Denied 511

Chapter 511

- Cleo -

"Then she suits Jace after all because he's done exactly the same." Jaxon laughs out, but in no way is his comment meant as playful banter.

He's not even trying to hide the snide remark laced within his words.

Nobody can help themselves, all eyes snapping towards him, then back to Jace.

An unsteady energy settles across the table as Jace stands, his chair violently bouncing on the floor behind him. An eery growl emitting from him towards his brother.

It manages to shake me to my core; the way he loves her, the way he will protect her.

Even against his own family, and hers.

Both brothers glare daggers at one another, both standing at full height...their spines stretching and their chests puffing out.

One sudden movement and any one of them will lunge for the other.

I've never seen them like this...never. I glance to Josie who is just as perplexed by her brother's behaviour towards one another.

Knox making the protective move to pull her back away from the table and place an arm over the back of her chair...nesting her into his side.

I wasn't there during the fight between Josie and Kaia, the hunters, and the attacking pack.

Ares and I were placed safely in hiding with all the rest of the underage wolves, and those too old to fight.

But from what I've been told, Josie and Kaia would be quite capable of pulling both males apart.

"Jace." Callie's hand snakes around Jace's, her calming voice calling out to him.

The only thing that seems to calm him and it works. His eyes linger down upon her for what feels like an

eternity before he sits back down...his eyes lifting up slowly towards me.

I search his eyes for any emotion, any feeling towards me that he can't say out loud, not in front of her... but all I receive back is a cold stare.

He has no remorse for what he has done to me.

All he needs to do is listen, listen to my heart to hear there is another. That's all it would take, but with the glare that seems only reserved for me...do I want him around my child. Do I want him to be a part of our future, this hateful eyes looking at me every time he comes to visit.

"I think I had better serve the starter... Josie?" Kaia breaks the tension by heading towards the kitchen, calling upon Josie for assistance.

If my legs allowed me, I would help, without even being asked. But I don't think I can.

"Coming Mum." Josie moves towards the kitchen, but not before shooting both brothers a scathing look.

"So...Cleo, tell me about your plans?" Alpha Bill's voice pulls my eyes down the length of the table, near towards where Jaxon was sitting. "My plans?" I repeat, my eyes finally focusing on the Alpha.

Callie looks so much like him, from her deliciously tanned skin to her silky black hair.

"Do you plan to stay at your pack or go elsewhere?"

"Well that would all depend on whether she finds her mate Bill." Luna Louise answers on my behalf, taking a slow sip on her wine glass.

I watch her for a moment before answering...I don't really know how to answer. Any future plans are not on hold for the foreseeable future.

"Cleo has no plans to leave, she is

staying with us for as long as I can keep her." Dad responds for me, leaning forward to give me a reassuring smile from his seat.

en

"Ah, a daddy's girl I see."

"You better believe it."

SW swr

I manage to keep down the starter, which consisted of a mixture of platters, thankfully it allowed me to help myself.

But with no appetite I ended up nibbling on a breadstick; not helping myself too much.

When it was time for the main meal, Callie walks out towards the kitchen to join Kaia and Josie.

I watch her leave, catching Jaxon's eyes on me.

Her walk is so confident, she's so comfortable just walking into their kitchen...like she's lived here her entire life.

I move when Maya nudges next to

me, turning to look at her she points

her head towards Jace, who is

watching Jaxon intently, who continues to watch me.

"Here it is...Beef Wellington!" Callie announces carrying a tray which she places down in the middle of the table, in front of her and Jace.

It was like a wedding banquet and them, the two love birds, together on the top table.

"Erm plates Mum?" Josie calls out as she walks in with further platters of roast potatoes and vegetables.

"Ah yes, coming. They are in the

oven to keep them warm." Kaia

responds only to return moments later carrying hot plates with ease in her bare hands. She passes each plate out, to each person sitting at the table...each one taking their plate within their bare hands.

Because they are werewolves and cannot feel the hotness of the plates...if I wasn't pregnant I would be doing exactly the same thing.

I'm praying for her to skip me, internally willing her to not pass it over the table but to plate it in front of me.

No such luck.

Kaia reaches through Jace and Callie, a smile upon her face as she passes a plate to me.

I freeze, as soon as I take it I know my fingers will burn...I'm a werewolf, such a thing shouldn't happen to me, it will open up to questioning.

## Chapter 512

After the pizza tray incident I have no doubt that this plate will burn me. I can see the steam of heat rising off the dishes. They are burning hot. Time passes while her hand remains stretched out in front of me and I am just not taking the plate off her.

"Cleo?"

"Allow me..." Jaxon appears behind me, taking the plate from Kaia and setting it down in front of me.

"We wouldn't want you to burn yourself would we. He snarls into my ear, my head turning to meet his eyes.

"Back off." I grit out, just loud enough for him to hear.

"Not enjoying the little soiree?" He hisses back, just loud enough for me to hear above the general conversation now happening around us. "What's that?" Jace demands out, his eyes cold again as they look my way.

"Nothing brother.." Jaxon pushing off the back of my chair moving back towards his seat.

That awkward silence returns again to the table, eyes darting around the room...not quite understanding what was going on.

If Jaxon could just keep his mouth shut I would be able to make it through tonight and nobody need know anything was wrong. Why..why is he so hell bent on ruining their special night.

I was here....me of all people...surely that must count for something. If I can do this, then so can he.

He just needs to keep himself in check, needs to remind himself that this isn't about him...that this is between Jace, me...and Callie.

"Callie dear, if you will do the honours.." Kaia passes a sharp knife over to Callie, who takes a stand...preparing to carve into the beef wellington.

As soon as she does, the juices of the medium-to-rare cooked beef oozes out.

The sight causing sickness to rise into my gullet and at the back of my throat.

I try to push it down...the burning hotness of it making my eyes water.

"Excuse me." I push off my chair, hastily excusing myself from the table...running into the downstairs bathroom just in time.

I lock the door behind me, making it just in time to

empty the contents of my stomach into the toilet. Just the thought of having to sit there and chew on the beef wellington was bringing me out in a cold sweat.

Whether it is because she made it and was serving it for me, or whether the baby has an adverse reaction to meat right now...

"Cleo?" I hear a knock on the door, only to place my head back in the toilet, trying to push out the noise of the person on the other side.

When the door is kicked in...a hand is placed upon my upper back.

"Oh Cleo..." He strokes my back before handing me a tissue.

I sit up...letting the back of my shoulders cool down against the wall, complete exhaustion washing over me.

Why was I here, why did I come.

Why was I wearing this tight black dress...my boobs were almost too big for it and the dress was making me so hot that I just wanted to rip it off me.

"Is this a joke to you?" My breathing is difficult as I wipe the tissue across my lips.

Placing it down the toilet and flushing it.

"Because my life right now, it's not funny Jaxon. I'm not here for your amusement." Defeated, I sigh out.

"I know you're not."

"Then why...why are you torturing me."

He takes a moment, takes in my words...I hope. He moves to the basin, dapping a hand towel with cold running water before placing it on my forehead tenderly. I moan into the coolness of the towel high was giving me short reprieve from my burning head.

"So it is his." He's crouched down in front of me, my eyes forced to look into his.

Gone is the arrogance, the dark aura...he was opening up to me...he was letting me see his gentle side again. Just like when he came to my pack pretending to be Jace, only for it to then kick off between us.

"Didn't you already know that?" I scoff out to him.

"Yes, but you are convincing Cleo."

I take a moment before I sit up straighter, the nauseous sensation that had hit me at the dinner table now gone.

"I will tell him Jaxon, I will. But I

can't...not when her parents are here. You must understand that... You must see the predicament I am in. need you to back off, to give me time. I make once last attempt at trying to get him to understand my side of things.

"You wont run?"

"No unless you give me cause to run. You can see how much he loves

her, I'm not just telling him....I'm

breaking a heart. He's been with her this entire time, they have a business venture together. He's cheated on her with me...I'm the

mistress, I'm the

mistake..."

"Cleo.." He cuts me off with a displeased rumble at my truthful words.

"I need you to stop, I need you to eat your food without making another snide comment, without agitating him up, please Jaxon...do it for me." "You'll tell him?"

"I'll tell him...when the time is right. But not tonight..."

"Tomorrow? Before you go home."

"Yes, tomorrow."

Chapter 513

- Jace -

"Cleo?" Without thinking I call out after her as she bolts from the dining table towards the downstairs bathroom.

"Is she quite alright?" Luna Louise gasps out, looking towards Cleo's parents who both move to chase after her.



"I'll go." Jaxon moves past them, hurrying into the direction Cleo fled to, his eyes flashing to mine as he moves past Cleo's now empty place setting.

Since when were the two of them thick as thieves.

"Here Jace..." Callie passes the knife over to me to continue with the cutting of the dish, as plates are passed up towards me already full to the brim with potatoes and vegetables. I don't respond to her at first, my ears listening to the bathroom door as Jaxon knocks on it...before kicking it in.

Then, when he closes the door, I hear nothing.

I serve up the plates, one at a time, trying to look as if I am involved in the many conversations happening around me but I'm not.

My ears and eyes are trained on the entrance into the dining room.

The only location both Jaxon and Cleo will need to walk back into rejoin us.

They've been gone quite some time, second helpings were already being dished up, yet Cleo and Jaxon's plates remained empty.

"Shall I plate some up for Jaxon and Cleo?" Josie offers out.

"Yes, they've been gone a long time...is everything okay?" Luna Louise openly asks out.

"Erm..." Auntie Rosa reddens at the questions, as all eyes now fall upon her.

"Shall I go check Cleo is okay?" Callie whispers next to me, drawing my attention back onto her.

"No need." Jaxon chimes out as he re-enters the dining room, Cleo linked in his arm.

He escorts her back to her seat where he pulls the chair out and, once she has sat down...pushes it in for her, tucking her neatly in towards the table.

"Is everything okay?" Callie asks out next to me, a soft smile upon her face as Cleo looks up with a similar smile.

"Yes sorry, I over exerted myself at training today." Her chin raises up as she plastered on a show stopping smile...before reaching out to fill her plate up.

I watch Jaxon travel the length of the room, to his seat, where he does the same...only for his plate to be passed down towards me to serve up the remainder of the beef wellington.

I narrow my eyes at him, a smirk forming upon his face before I pass the now full plate back down the

table towards him.

Each person on my side taking it in turns to pass it to the other.

Something was going on...has he said something to her. Is he trying to fill her head with nonsense.

Even though I refuse to admit it out loud to him, he knows how much I love her...what was he trying to do...make me jealous.

Frustratingly it was working.

By the time dessert is ready, we have all agreed to take a break from sitting and return to the table later on for the final course.

The meal was heavy meaning everybody was keen to move their bodies or rest out in comfort on the sofas in the living room.

Everyone files into the living room, taking a seat...all but Cleo who remains standing back..near the hallway.

I hear her offer to make a start on clearing up to Mum, who informs her that it will be done later and she would much rather Cleo enjoy being with us.

But she remains on the spot, not entering into the living room.

"Cleo, are you sure you are okay...you look very pale." Luna Louise calls out to her and not in a discreet manner.

I feel the hot flare of anger at how this woman keeps putting her nose into other people's business.

My people's business.

"Maybe I should check you over?" Josie moves towards Cleo who surprisingly back steps further into the hallway.

"I can't be here." I swear I hear her whisper to herself.

"That's a great idea Josie." Mum nods out, encouraging Josie further.

"No..I'm fine. I think I just need some fresh air." Cleo becomes flustered at the offer, gripping tightly onto her phone in her hand. "Are you sure?"

"Yes, I'll just have a little walk before dessert, I won't be long."

Cleo swiftly removes herself from the house, the front door closing gently. My eyes follow the windows

where

where, sure enough, she heads past them.concentrating on her phone out

Then she is gone.

A phone beeps within the living room, Maya pulling out her phone where she starts typing away.

"Maybe I should go after her?" Josie offers out, only for Jaxon to speak up.

"She's fine, she just needs some air. She pulled her stomach muscles during training..."

"Then I really should see her." Josie is almost in the hallway, determined to catch up with Cleo.

"Josie, I said she is fine." Jaxon

moves. at a lightning speed, blocking Josie's access...making it

impossible for her to pa libe

without challenging him.

A gut wrenching uncomfortable feeling refuses to leave me and I know it's my wolf wanting me to go check on Cleo.

Something was wrong...I know something is wrong because I am causing it to her.

I glance to Callie who is busy talking

to Maya and Josie, her parent's deep in conversation with Jaxon and Knox... the rest talking amongst themselves.

I should be deep in the throes of tonight...of the celebrations but I can't. I can't stop the feeling of needing to check up on Cleo.

Chapter 514

If I sneak out now, nobody will notice.

I know I shouldn't, that I should stay well clear but I can't. It goes against my very nature knowing she is somewhere alone in pain...pain that unbeknown to her, I am causing.

I don't need help tracing her movements, her sweet scent still lingers in the cool evening air.

The new moon entering into her waxing crescent phase still manages to dominate the darkening night sky, which is clear from clouds...offering a beautiful canvas of stars either side of her.

I follow her scent towards the meadows that Josie adores so deeply. I haven't been here since returning home.

This was always Josie's domain, where she would practice her shooting skills on a daily basis.

My eyes flick up to the cabin...Josie's place of solitude that she used to spend every pack run hiding away in.

How she must have felt being alone when the entire pack would shift and run as one.

I'm hesitant at first, I shouldn't go any closer but when I spot a figure moving in the lit up cabin...my feet start walking for me.

She's finding solitude alone, just like Josie used to.

Pushing the cabin door open I find her standing in front of the mirrored wall, blankly staring at herself. She is so consumed in self thought that she doesn't even notice me entering, or calling out her name. She's just staring into her own eyes...which are the brightest I have ever seen them.

Turquoise large blue eyes, that look like balls of water, reflecting back through the mirror with a soft glazed cover over them.

She was talking to her wolf.

I go to leave, knowing she was well...I didn't want to disturb her when she just wanted time alone.

I also didn't trust myself being alone with her right now.

She sighs out, a sigh that threatens my resolve.

She was preparing herself...rebuilding her strength to re-enter the dinner party.

I'm a fucking jerk.

My own mate stands before me, having to smile at another female by my side.

I'm just grateful that she has picked up on the bond between us, that after tonight I promise I will stay away forever, until she claims another. I owe her that.

I tell my wolf to leave but he's gaining distance towards her, putting unadulterated fear into me.

He's getting closer and I can't seem to stop him.

"Cleo?" I lowly growl out, my hand touching her shoulder to shake her out of her thoughts.

But she's stuck so far in her own mind that she doesn't react to my touching her...so my wolf

thinks it would be better to shake her out of her mind...like the animal that he is.

Both my hands grip at her shoulders...pulling her around to face me.

"Cleo." I'm louder this time, her eyes snapping back to the present as she shrieks out to find my face inches from hers.

"Jace? What are you doing here?"

"Checking up on you."

"Why?"

"You disappeared..."

"I'm just getting some fresh air.."

"Well, that was an hour ago and I wouldn't say the air in here was particularly fresh...more stale from exercise elasses." I try to break the tension between us with light.

hearted humour but it falls flat.

There was a time she laughed at my silliness all day long. I guess the old me wasn't around much anymore.

"Got it. You can go...I'll be back shortly." Her eyes are cold as she pushes off me, my hands feeling lost now not touching her.

"I can walk you back." Her cold demeanour is something I've never experienced from her before and I know she hasn't forgiven me.

"That's not necessary."

"Why?"

"Where's your mate." She looks behind me as if Callie was standing there, as if she had followed me here.

"Where's our mate? Right in front of

us." My wolf bitterly snarls in my head, forcing me to push him back down but in doing so I've given Cleo an opportunity to distance herself further from me.

I turn to find her walking over towards the cabinets, her phone placed on the side.

"She's back at the house. Look, I owe you an explanation..." My hands run through my hair as I head towards her again.

"No." She bluntly replies.

"An apology then.."

"No, you don't owe me anything

Jace, and long gone is the time I expected anything from you." Her words are beyond cold, it's as if she's put an ice wall up and no

matter what I try...I don't think it will

ever melt away now.

I shouldn't have let her wake up alone, I should have had the decency to at least be there in the morning.

"Cleo.." I want to explain everything to her, but I don't know if I can...or where I would start.

"Just...leave me alone Jace. I'll be back in a bit...carry on without me." The final words are close to a sob, I can hear her own lips trembling as she tries to hide the pain I am causing her.

I want nothing more than to take the pain back, to take it from her.

"Cleo.." Without thinking I close the distance between us, turning her in my arms...my full alpha

frame towering over her.

Chapter 515

- Cleo ~

He is not mine, he is not mine.

I need to repeat it to myself internally as his coconut scent cocoons itself around me,



something invisible to the naked eye...yet I feel it, it can't just be me. I can't be imagining the power he holds over me.

I finally have him alone, I need to tell him...but his closeness is doing something to me...making me lose all inner thought, all inner self control.

"Jace." His voice is a longing moan that vibrates across my lips, my eyes slowly lifting to find his flashing between him and that of his wolf.

Green, dark green, green...

I just wanted to be alone, to regather myself but I spent too long away, he's come looking for me. "Jace, you can go..." I take a step back, my eyes turning when my back hits the cabinets behind me. I had no way of escaping.

His aura starts to mix into the already unbreathable closeness between us, a strength similar to the hotel night when I tried to leave.

"Cleo." My name on his tongue sends a bolt of electricity into my bones, I'm too late to bite down on my tongue to suppress the moan that escapes me.

"Don't!" I shoot my hand out in warning, trying to put some distance between us. He shouldn't even be here, his mate was back at the alpha house, he should be with her.

My hand touches his chest, and I push hard against it, trying to force him away from me. Give me enough room to back him up so that I can leave the cabin as quickly as possible.

But when it lands upon his chest, I remind myself just how muscular he is, how strong he truly

is. Flashbacks of two months ago flitter into my mind, memories that I have tried to prevent from resurfacing since then.

Fingers lace around my hand, before I am pulled closer into him, the air in my lungs being forced out by the swift movement as I bounce off his chest.

A freeing sense of rapture builds within me as he pulls my hand to his lips, my eyes fixed on his every movement as he places the back of my hand to his mouth.

"I need to explain." I can barely hear his voice from the sound of my own heart beating loudly in my ears.

I shake my head as his free hand moves down my hand to my wrist, his touch leaving a tingling sensation dancing upon my skin. The pull to him intensifies, like something so deep-rooted in me that I have no control over it, even if I try.

His sultry eyes watch mine as I try not to react to his touch, try to prove to him that I am above this now...above the silly schoolgirl crush. Soul penetrating eyes that darken before a frown forms upon his face.

"What's this?" He demands out with a low deep voice when his fingers move across the small

bump of the burn upon my wrist.

"It's nothing...just a small burn."

"A burn?"

"Yes..I.." I gasp out, all speech leaving me as he moves my

his mouth...his tongue

across the wound.

My own mouth opens as a euphoric moan escapes me, before I can stop myself.

I can only explain it a charged, frenetic energy pulsating between us and I can no longer trust myself around him.

"Jace." I try to pull away again only for my lips to be covered with his, his hands to be on me before I have even finished saying his name.

I melt into it, knowing it was wrong

but

it be, how can it

wrong when it feels like

Feels like heaven.

s to en.kikistorie ont

His tongue forces its way into my mouth, tasting every inch of me, my own tasting him back. I let

all guilty thoughts disappear, for this very moment he was mine, and if this was the last taste of him, the last touch of him...then I was going to do it, I was going to take it.

His hands snake down my body to the hem of my black dress where he pulls it up exposing my black thong to his touch, a growl escaping him as he pulls upon the material that cups between

me.

My own hands move down unzipping his trousers, as an animalistic urge drives me to have him inside of me.

My hands reach for his already hardened length, gripping it tightly with my clasp...a euphoric moan escaping him as he lifts me up and pushes me against the cabinets, spreading my thighs wider to give him even closer access to me.

A hand moves up to cup a breast, the fabric being pulled down by his heavy touch.

He bites down on my lower lip, before pulling away from the kiss just as I place the tip of him into my lower core entrance.

"Jace.." My husky moan is hardly

to him. I need him, I need

him like I've never needed anybody before in my life.

His eyes hold mine, passion burning strongly within his that I know for certain that he wants this  
Chapter 516

too, that he wants me....

Until...he blinks, snapping out of the desire he has for me only to remind himself that I am not  
her.

I watch it, slowly.

Watch the way his eyes search mine before moving down to my lips, watch the change in his eyes...  
he doesn't need to say the words, I can see it playing out first handedly.

His cold rejection.

Suddenly those hands that ignited a passionate burning fire within me...tingles from his touch... now  
feel cold, feel heavy.

I push them away slowly lowering myself down from the cabinet where I pull the hem of my  
dress back down, trying to prevent the warm tears that are prickling at my eyes.

It was him that followed me here, him who backed me into a wall...he who licked my wound. His saliva was still on my skin, the act of him sharing it something only reserved for mates. He did that, not me.

He's the one that keeps calling me out and each time he regrets it instantly.

"Jace?" A voice interrupts us, both our eyes darting to the cabin door where Callie and Josie both stand, open mouthed.

They are a few seconds too late to catch us doing anything, but the lustful stench still lingers in the air, it would be very clear what we both just intended to do.

Her piercing eyes scan the length of me, before moving on to him.

I am a bad person; he has a mate...and she's just found him alone with another female. Ashamed, my hand runs down my hair, flattening it before I move away from him...towards the door.

"I'm sorry." I mutter out to Callie before pushing through both she and Josie...stopping just as I move through the door. I glance back towards him, the females watching me...this was his last chance.

As soon as I walk through this door; if he gives me no hope, no sign that it can be between us then I will let my feelings for him go.

I cannot fight the mate bond they have, but one word from him and I will stay, I will fight for him...

He closes his eyes, a deep sigh escaping him as he throws his head back before zipping his trousers back up.

The loud sigh of regret emanates off him.

Enough said between us, it was over. No words were needed, I understood his regret.

I know that no matter what the future holds, I cannot be alone with him. He may be the father of my child but...I can't be in his life, and he in mine.

If I told him right now that I was pregnant, he may pick me but only because of the child. And I don't want that for me, I'm not that type of female.

"Cleo?" Josie calls out to me, as she chases after me through the meadows back towards the alpha house. I can't look at her, I can't look at any of them. I've just been caught with her brother, when he has a mate. I can't believe I allowed that to get so out of control. "Cleo...just wait." She hurriedly calls after me, but my eyes are locked on the cars out the front of the alpha house. I need to leave, now.

I can't confront her, any of them. I can't have them look at me with their judging eyes...not when

I carry their heir in my belly.

I round the corner of the alpha house only to bump into Jaxon, his arms gripping tightly on to me. "Cleo, what is it? What's wrong..."

"I need to leave now."

"Tell me.." He commands out as his hands tighten around my shoulders.

"Please Jaxon, I need to leave now." My plea is one of desperation as the warm prickly tears start to free fall.

"Please..." I can only see blurry shapes as my eyes water.

His hands cup my face, searching my face only to look behind me to Josie. I don't need to look behind to know that she is the only one that has chased after me, that Jace is with Callie. Most likely trying to save his mate bond with her.

"Jaxon, wait..." I hear Josie call out behind as she joins us.

"You take my car; you call me when home. Do you understand?"

"Yes!" I don't wait, I snatch the car keys out of his hand before

towards his car, diving Couple

s to en.kikistomet

into the front seat and getting the hell out of here.

"Cleo...wait Josie's hands b

by my attention, but I

can't. I've ruined everything...just for one taste.

In the rearview mirror I notice the alpha house front door open, the light of the hallway

expanding just as bodies start to file out onto the driveway. The commotion must have gained their attention.

Jaxon pulls Josie back, just as I floor the gas pedal.

I speed out of the driveway, towards the gates where they were already open...Jaxon must have mind linked ahead.

I leave the Dark Phantom pack as quickly as I can, Dad's concerned voice trying to push through the mind-link.

Chapter 517

- Jace -

"Eh...what the fuck was that?" Josie's growl echoes through her own cabin, bouncing off the wooden built walls.

What was that, what have I just done.

I lost myself in her, in the need to touch her...to be near her. I've potentially just ruined everything.

"Josie, can you give us a minute?" Callie calmly requests to my sister, her voice a little too cool.

I was fucking stupid, giving in yet again to temptation...and this time being caught red handed.

At least back at the beach club it was just Cleo and I, nobody else knew what had happened between us.

As soon as the door was closed, I could hear Josie calling out after Cleo in the meadows, leaving

Callie and I alone.

"You lied to me." Callie takes a step closer to me, her body rigid and her jaw tense.

"How?"

"You've never mentioned you were in a relationship with another woman, I wouldn't have tied myself to this agreement if I had."

"I'm not in a relationship, that was just..." I scoff out, my hands running back through my hair as I try to make sense of what had just happened.

If we haven't had been interrupted would I have

gone back there with her, would I have been with her?

I wanted to, fuck, I wanted to be so deep in her that I was the only person she would ever need.

But I hesitated, pulling away and breaking our moment first.



I could see the hurt in her eyes even before that door opened.

I've signed my fate with Cleo now, I just need to see it through to the end.

Any love she had for me with now be pure hatred. Which is what I wanted...wasn't it?

"What?" Callie was coming at me as if she was an enraged lover of mine, that I had really been caught cheating on her.

She didn't expect me to be celibate for the rest of my life did she? Just like I didn't expect her not to take a lover...I couldn't please her just like she couldn't please me. "Another mistake." I try to move towards the door, play down what had just happened...only for her to block me.

"Another mistake...how many mistakes have there been?" Her roar is deafening as she grips me by the arm.

"Just now..." I respond but her pinned look lets me know she isn't falling for it.

"...and when she was at the hotel." I admit.

"Fuck Jace..." Her arms fling up into the air, frustration acting out as she moves to the window to look outside.

I

In the distance I can just make out

Josie leaving the meadows, her

swnov

pace now breaking out into a jog as she tries, no doubt, to catch

Cleo.

up

with

"I know, I know..." My hands move to my face where I hold them for a brief moment, trying to think on what to do.

Cleo won't want anyone to know about this, but Josie...she's already had her suspicions on my match with Gallie. Now she has ammunition to come after me for certain.

"How could you be so stupid as to mess around with someone close to your family." Callie accuses me, as if I ever had any choice.

"I can't help it, she does things to me.." I groan out, the frustration of it all... of being caught, of

Cleo wanting me to say something but I couldn't, how I yearn for her but can never have her...how I shouldn't have pulled away earlier.

How I should have stayed in the alpha house and not come here.

Her scent alone, the sweetness of ripe peaches, tipped me over the edge.

That pull to her clouded my mind, my self-control. My wolf didn't help, he completely took advantage of the situation, and I just wasn't strong enough to fight him.

Her intoxicating scent blinded me with passion.

Then when I saw she was jealous, jealous of Callie a part of me wanted to reassure her, wanted

to let her know that it wasn't real...

"I shouldn't have followed her here." I mutter out, more to myself than to Callie.

"Then why did you?"

"She'd been gone for so long I was worried, I wanted to make sure she was safe...not upset."

"Why would she be upset?" Callie turns from the window, her eyes narrowing.

"Jace, why would she be upset?" She presses when I refuse to answer.

I try to move my lips but all that comes out is an exasperated sigh.

"No..." She gasps out, as she places her hand to her mouth.

"Is she your mate? Your fated mate?" Her teeth grit, anger twisting her facial features.

"Yes.."

"Fucking hell Jace...you've been parading me around since the moment I arrived and in front of that poor girl...I've been touching you all night...trying to calm you..." She moves away from me, stepping further into the cabin where she starts counting things off with her fingers.

"We aren't...we can't be together.." My head rolls back as I say the words out loud that I've thought for too long.

Chapter 518

"Does she even know?"

"No...or at least I don't think so."

"Why can't you be together?"

"Because I can't lose her."

"Lose her to what?"

"Being a mate of the Varon family comes with threats.."

"But you can lose me?" She raises an eyebrow at me.

"No...you're twisting it..." I seethe out, the bitter taste of anger spreading into my mouth.

"Shit...my parents."

"I'll sort it, Cleo won't say anything and...I can handle Josie."

"You have a mate Jace, a mate who clearly is in love with you. Are you certain, a hundred percent certain the two of you can't be together. You're an alpha, you'll have warriors at your disposal to protect her." Her words are aimed to reassure me, to rethink things but I can't, I won't.

I won't lose Cleo to fate.

If that means I can't be with her, at least she will be alive. I can love her, protect her from a distance.

""No!" I roar out, my fists clenching by my side.

"So you'd be willing to let her go completely, let another man call her his..."

Her words are hard to hear, a lump forming in the back of my throat as I consider the real possibility of being able to watch Cleo take another.

A chosen mate.

After tonight she'll never contemplate that I am her mate, because a mate of hers would never be so cruel. Wouldn't have let her leave.

As far as she knows, Callie and I are mates, and I am now having to do everything I can to save my mate bond.

"Jace, I let my mate go...don't make the same mistake as me..."

I can't listen to this, I can't hear her words of advice. I know she means well but I made my mind up a long time ago, I've missed a year of my family's life, strained my relationship with them for this exact reason. Otherwise, it will have all been for nothing.

"Where are you going!" Her tongue clicks out to me as I head towards the cabin door.

"I need fresh air." I grunt out, needing space.

My head was a mess from my wolf's anger at me

and also Callie's words that hit the nail on the head.

No, I wouldn't be able to cope with Cleo taking another.

"Jace!" She roars after me as I barge open the door, exiting the cabin and moving through the meadows back towards the alpha house.

I can already hear Callie jogging behind me to keep up.

As we gain distance on the alpha house we find Uncle Orpheus' and Auntie Rosa's car driving up

the pathway towards the direction of the gate, cutting the evening short.

I expect Cleo to have made an excuse for them to leave early but when we come to the front

courtyard I'm surprised to find Jaxon and Josie arguing with one another.

"Why did

Met her take your Josie is fuming, her anger to

misdirected towards Jaxon

belongs to en.kikist

right now.

"I said leave it Josie.." He tries turning his back on her, only for Josie to yank him back.

"You never let anyone drive your call, so why did you let Cleo drive it and alone. She was upset,

s to en.kikistorie ne

you shouldn't have let her leave."

"Why was she upset?" He takes a step closer to Josie, his frame engulfing her but she doesn't back down.

"I...I don't know." Her eyes flicker mine

to return back to

bay mayen. Th

Something, he picks up Cont s to en. to net

on, his eyes turning to mine.

"Why was she upset Josie?" His powerful aura is directed solely on Josie who refuses to submit,

she doesn't even look as if she is in pain struggling to fight it. Perhaps she isn't.

"Knock it off!" Knox roars out, practically running to his mate's side.

"Mum, Dad?" Callie moves to the side of me, where Alpha Bill and Luna Louise are both standing by the front door watching the show.

"Oh, there you both are, you missed all the drama. The Cleo girl returned apparently needing to leave, she took Jaxon's car. Is something going on with the two of them, they seemed very cosy at one stage."

Just the very suggestion has me turning to Luna Louise with a ferocious growl.

"Perhaps Callie, you can take your parents inside, we will be in momentarily." Mum calls out

politely yet taking a step closer towards Jaxon, her eyes fixed on him.

"Where are you going?" Jaxon calls out to Josie as she barges past him, purposefully colliding her shoulder into him.

"I need to make sure she is okay, she's driving all that way alone."

"Her parents will catch up with her. Don't get involved.." Jaxon words a mere whisper.

She spins back to facing him, but her eyes falling on me. Her eyes a raging fire of orange.

"How could you let her slip through your fingers?"

Chapter 519

- Cleo -

I'm not home twenty minutes before I hear my parent's car pulling up outside.

I'm pacing the floor of my bedroom, the toxic mixture of both guilt and anger threatening to erupt out of me.

She caught us, his own mate caught us together.

My lips could still taste his on me, even now. One moment I was in heaven, the next in hell. Callie's and Josie's interruption would have pulled us apart; however, he had already pulled away from me.

He had already rejected me.

How could I have been so weak, yet again I allowed my feelings for him to get the better of me. To lose control.

I had gone to the cabin for a moment's peace, to collect myself before returning back to the dinner table.

I just needed to regain my strength.

Jaxon had already easily extracted the truth from me; he found me in a moment of weakness...nausea completely taking over me.

I agreed I would tell Jace tomorrow, once the

celebrations were over...I just needed to get him alone.



Which I did, I had him alone.

Why didn't I tell him then, why didn't I find the strength to pull away from him.

Just a few words, that's all it would take...but the allure to him was just too strong. His coconut scent polluted the cabin and like a drug I found myself powerless under it.

A pang of guilt forces itself through me again at the flashback of her reaction. Her face, she was so shocked...so appalled. I touched what was hers...

The anger within me is like a demon, each time I try to make sense of what had just happened, how I showed lack of control...only for the anger to flare up...blaming him.

Wasn't he the one that came after me, wasn't he the one that touched me first. I believe it was his lips that thrust on to mine.

Just like the lift in hotel, I was willing to leave...but it was he that refused to let me leave.

"Cleo?" Mum's voice calls up to me, my body freezing on the spot... my pacing stopping.

I've stopped in front of my mirror, my eyes locking onto my reflection.

My eyes shine brightly, that noticeable turquoise blue growing in strength as my wolf pressing forward, her exhaustion temporarily forgotten as she tries to stop me from spiralling. "I'll be down in a minute." I call back out, yet again, wanting to calm myself. It was getting more difficult though, to keep my emotions in check.

I was fine, I was confident...I knew my life's plan before this dinner party.

I was having a human baby, my family were supportive...they were going to build a house next door for me.

But now Jaxon knows for definite,

Jace's and Callie's mate bond was hanging on with a thread after being caught with me... the Varon's will know by now.

Know everything.

If Callie remains with Jace then my entire family and pack will be ghosted by them.

They will never forgive me for this betrayal.

All because he couldn't leave me alone...for once I refuse to take the complete blame. Twice now he has put me in a position I didn't ask for. For someone that has a mate, why did he keep

seeking me out.

"What is going on?" Dad is up the stairs first, clear concern in his eyes as he moves into my bedroom... finding me staring at myself in the mirror. "Nothing." My voice catches in the back of my throat, forcing it to come out as a whisper.

"Nothing? You just completely humiliated us." Mum pushes past Dad, forcing her way into my bedroom where Dad tries to reach out to pull her back. Her words are like a sharp-ended arrow hitting the heart of me.

"Embarrassed you how?" I seethe out, refusing to turn to look at her.

"The way you just ran out of there. Heaven knows what Callie's parents must think of us."

"Is that what you are concerned about, how an alpha and luna that you haven't met until this evening think of us?"

"Mum didn't mean it like that, did you Rosa.." Dad tries to diffuse the rising tension between Mum and me.

"Plus all the drama of you disappearing at dinner time.." She continues not even hearing Dad.

"I told you I didn't want to go, I was being sick in the toilet Mum. That happens when you are pregnant, it wasn't something I could control" growl out in frustration, if I had just stayed here this night wouldn't have turned out into being a disaster.

"What Jaxon must have thought you were doing in there..." She gasps out, her hands moving to her face.

"Jaxon already knows Mum..."

"What?" Mum shrieks out.

"He's known for a few days..."

"Since when?" Dad demands, his voice growing icy. He knows I have been lying to them, again...something I didn't usually do. "Since he was here and heard the second heart beat." I sigh out, closing my eyes as I prepare for the onslaught of their words.

"Is that what the hole in the wall is about?" Dad motions to the wall where the fist sized hole remains. "No...yes...a little."

"So, Jaxon knows that you're having

a human baby? Which means by now they will all know." Amy other time I could handle Mum like this,

but not today, not when my own life was unravelling before my very eyes.

Chapter 520

Just tell them Cleo, tell them who the real father of the baby is...

"You're acting Mum as if my baby is an issue, you said yourself that the entire pack was behind me...that you didn't care about the baby's father."

"Human or not, you are still having a baby without a mate..." Her words are like a hundred arrows to the chest.

"Rosa, you didn't just say that?" Dad, shocked by her words, looks as if she had slapped him across the face.

"Don't pretend that isn't what you are thinking.." She seethes out, her eyes glowing to that of her wolf.

"Of course not, you and I of all people know that our past doesn't define us." His lowly warns Mum.  
"I don't have a mate."

"Yes you do, everybody has a mate you just couldn't wait could you. You had to get yourself

knocked up.."

"Rosa!" Dad's roaring aura emits out of him at such a speed I have to check that it isn't directed at me. My bedroom is now shrouded in a state of darkness, the lights flickering, as he places his command completely on Mum.

With a whimper escaping her it doesn't take long before she submits to his command. Like I've always said Mum can't breathe without Dad, it's like she stops functioning.

So for him to place a command upon her, she wouldn't dare to fight it...she never once has tried to fight it.

Knocked up... Mum has always had moments of madness. She was doing better in recent years,

maybe because Ares and I weren't as demanding on her time, but it's like I'm a child again, protecting Ares from her erratic behaviour.

What she has said cannot be taken back, she meant what she said...knocked up.

A wave of undeniable protection washes over me, my baby wasn't a mistake.

I want this baby, I might have been doubtful at first but my baby has done nothing wrong.

And I can't stay in a pack, in a household that will throw it back in my face, that will make any child of mine feel any less wanted, any less loved than if they had been conceived in a mate bond.

"Got it!" I tiptoe, grabbing a weekend bag off the top of my wardrobe and violently throwing clothing and necessities in.

I need to get out of here. I was past doing what they wanted, needing to put on a show...I was going to be a mother myself.

I needed to do what was right for me, what was right for my child.

"Cleo..." Dad's voice calls out to me, trying to sound calm against the concern of his mate's erratic behaviour.

"I won't stay where I am not wanted. Where I might damage the Arancea's good name. I understand..."

"No, she didn't mean that, Cleo just wait.." Dad reaches for me but I thrust my arm away from him.

"I bet you regret your own policies don't you. How when Doctor Sophia told you it was me...how you wished you could have turned a blind eye and let be go through with it."

"No, of course not." My words are cruel, Dad was the best man I knew...I was just hurting right now.

"Yes!" Her whisper creates such an uproar from Dad that for once I am frightened of the aftermath of his anger. But I'm not sticking around to find out.

I plummet down the stairs, passing Ares who was standing at the bottom listening to the commotion coming from my bedroom.

My hands reaching for Jaxon's car

keys and my phone...I had already

packed the charger along with the few essentials until I decide what to

do. The problem is, even

know is linked to my parents even Maya.

I can't go there, Alpha Jude will immediately tell my parents to come and get me. He won't want to get involved with another pack's drama. Not when we are all linked in an alliance.

I will be back here, under lock and key.

"Cleo? What's going on?" Ares tugs my arm, pulling me back towards him. The look of fear on his face. I sometimes forget that he is only sixteen.

"I can't be here." I shake my head out, adrenaline continuing to surge through me. My heart pumping far too fast, I needed to calm down and do it quickly...what it is hurts the baby.

"I'll come with you."

"No, no..." No Ares will not be tangled in my argument, I will continue to protect him from Mum's erratic behaviour.

He was the future Alpha, he has to stay here.

"I love you, I'll let you know where I am." My arms wrap around him before I pull away, pickin up my bag and walking through the front door.

I enter Jaxon's car, tearing out of the pack grounds not knowing where I am going, just knowing for the sake of me and my child I have to vanish for a while.