

## Denied 601

### Chapter 601

I was different now, not only was I a marked woman...I was a Luna. I had a new strength from within me.

The pack needs me to remain strong, which is why I have decided to return back today. The Varon's still needed space to mourn and my own parents wanted to also give them time alone. Especially Kaia and Hector.

Callie has Colt to look after and Ares has said he would come back with me, until Jace returns home.

The breakfast table was quiet, it was only myself, Ares, Kaia's auntie, Josie and Knox. Kaia was struggling and unfortunately I think she will for some time.

"Oh no dear, I'm quite alright." Kaia's auntie snatches her arm off the table just as Josie lays her palm across it. An orange glow starting to emit from it.

She was going to heal her as she drank the very thing that keeps prematurely aging her.

"I'm leaving with my brother, you're very welcome to join me. You have items back at the Amber Desert pack." I offer out to her.

"Only items that Luna Medea allowed me to have dear, it was never a home to me. I would like to return to my house." She calmly states out.

My eyes dart to Josie, surely she shouldn't be living alone, defenceless...at a time like this.

"Perhaps..." Josie hesitantly starts to reply.

"Astraia."

"Excuse me?"

"My name dear, is Astraia."

Astraia...so she does have a name. Why is she only now mentioning it. A silence forms upon us, even Knox looks at Astraia with caution.

"Perhaps Astraia, we should wait until Mum isn't mourning..." Josie clears her throat, her eyes trying to communicate with mine without the use of speech.

"She'll always mourn my dear, there isn't a day that I do not miss my sister and we were not even twins." Astraia sighs out, her hands shaking as she sips back on tea laced with her special poison.

Josie watches her perplexed as she swallows it, hardly a sign that it causes her pain.

"Can't you stop taking that now Astraia?" I ask. It felt odd to finally be able to address her by her name.

"No, I'll be found here, and he would love that. No far better that I keep taking it, the mate bond is strong...always pulling you back to one another. I rejected him, but he didn't reject me...which has kept the bond open. Just waiting for the right time to attack."

She stands, just as Callie enters into the house, a wide yawn escaping her.

"Thank you for the offer to return with you dear, I'll give it some thought." Astraia's hand lands on my shoulder, a gentle squeeze following.

Callie moves further into the house, joining us in the kitchen, her face hung low... downcast.

"It's not Colt is it?" Josie eyes widen in fright, her hand moving to Knox's side.

"No, he's doing a lot better. It's my parents..."

"Your parents?"

"They've requested that I attend the pack." Callie's brows furrow, confusion creeping into her expression.

"What for?" Knox asks out.

"To fully denounce me as heir, I don't know..." She shrugs out, placing her mobile phone out for me to read. I skim the message from Luna Louise summoning Callie to return

temporarily to them.

"Just pretend you didn't get it." Ares offers out after reading the message over my shoulder.

"I can't ignore this, this may be my only chance." Callie slowly sits down at the table, her head resting within her hands.

"For what?"

"To get her out."

"Her?" Josie presses.

"My mate." Callie looks pained, her eyes reveal her inner turmoil. All I know is she can't go alone, she can't do this alone. They've asked her to return her arrival will be expected, I won't be in harm's way if I join her.

She is Jace's best friend, which now makes her one of mine.

"Then it's settled, you are going, and I am coming with you."

Chapter 602

- Cleo -

"We aren't looking for trouble Dad. I just don't feel comfortable letting Callie go alone. If Jace

was here, he would go with her.

They won't do anything with another pack's luna around. Besides, Ares is coming with us." Dad blocks the very vehicle that Callie and I both plan to take. Callie herself wasn't keen for me to come but I didn't trust her parents, her mother especially.

"You aren't going end of." Dad bluntly declares, as if I was still a little girl seeking his permission.

"Dad, this isn't up for discussion." I roll my eyes, my arms crossing in front of me as I prepare to wait him out.

"Then I'm coming with you." He grunts out, finally moving to open the car door for me.

"What about Mum, you can't leave her alone."

"Ares will stay and remain with her. If it is only a fleeting visit like you say it is, she can cope without me for a few hours. They won't try anything with an alpha with you."

"I appreciate your offer Alpha Arancea but it really is unnecessary. As I have told Cleo repeatedly, I can go alone." Callie sighs out, standing to the side of us.

"I don't want you to go by yourself." I can't just remain here, not when I know her parent's are up to no good.

She hasn't said so, but I think a part of her is hoping they have changed their minds. That they are going to welcome her back. That they've seen the error in their ways and want to make amends...I'm not so sure.

"She won't be going by herself..." An unexpected male's voice calls out to us.

It was Colt, walking towards us coming from the direction of the hospital. I didn't

even realise he had been discharged from the doctor's care.

"You should be resting." Callie growls out to him, her tongue clicking in disapproval.

"I've rested long enough, I won't let you go alone."

"Colt."

"I won't let you go alone. Thank you Luna and Alpha, but I can take it from here."

Take what from here, he can barely stand up. Beads of sweat appear on his upper brow from the strain of just walking here from the hospital. He was in no fit state to attend, let alone back Callie up in a tricky situation.

"Colt, you need to rest more, I'm taking them, we really won't be.

long." Dad walks past Callie, tai net

on

the keys from her hand before moving to the driver's door.

"Jace would have a fit if he knew I remained here whilst his pregnant mate... congratulations by the way...left pack grounds and I remained sat up in bed."

He pauses mid sentence to offer his congratulations to me before continuing with his reason for coming.

He was an eccentric character, even in the way he dips his hat to congratulate me. I can see why Jace likes him, he's very different to the other males in his life.

A breath of fresh air.

The four of us enter into the car, Callie sits in the front to guide Dad for most of the journey, who takes it upon himself to be the driver.

Except for the occasional direction from Callie to Dad, she remains quiet for the entire journey.

Colt was doing his best to not let on that he was still in a lot of pain...shifting and taking in deep breaths when Dad takes a corner too sharply, or the road has a bump.

He really should still be in hospital, but who was I to tell a stubborn male what to do.

"So...you and Jace huh?" He steals my eyes away from my window where I was taking in the landscape.

"Hmm me and Jace." I slowly nod out, my eyes travelling down to my belly. Now it was Jace, me and a baby.

"I knew there was somebody, I just knew it."

"No you didn't." Callie disagrees from the front.

"Yes I did. He was always so cagey about his past, I knew he was running from something. From someone. If he wasn't running,. he wouldn't have found us. So

guess fate works in myst Soen

ways."

It sure does.

"Who are you running from?" I ask out, keen to know more about this male beside

me.

"Me? No one. Unlike Callie and Jace,

I don't have a pack. I was born as a

rogue,

which meant pack life has

never really appealed to me. Oguess, I don't know any different."

A rogue... he certainly does smell like a rogue. He doesn't have that rogue smell.

"Born a rogue?" Dad repeats from the front just as he takes a turning, guided by Callie.

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"Yes sir, born and raised."

"You don't smell like a rogue." I comment.

"Jace kind of made the beach club into a little pack, I guess I get away with it on a technicality." He lifts his fingers into the air, making a quotation movement with both hands.

"So what's with the hat...and the whistle?" I was intrigued more over the whistle than the hat, and as he seems relaxed about questions...I wanted to keep them coming.

The beach club was located in one of the hottest parts of the country, the hat goes without saying. Even as a werewolf any sun burn wouldn't last long thanks to our advanced healing but the whistle...that I just couldn't understand yet.

"The hat is simple, it's a style. The whistle is a bit of a running joke.."

"One you need to share with her unless you want me to whip you." Callie seethes

from the front, her increasing nerves making her have a bit of bite.

"Sounds promising?" Colt wiggles his eyebrows at me.

"Colt!" Calle growls out from the front sit.

"It's a dog whistle."

"Are you being serious?" I laugh out, as he passes it to me to touch.

"Yes. It helps me differentiate between werewolves and humans at the beach club. Thankfully we mainly only get humans come to the resort, but every now and again a werewolf reacts to the whistle...it just means we keep extra security on them."

I place the whistle to my lips, Colt giving me an encouraging nod to try it out. I blow out on the whistle, a high pitched sound forcing me to cover my ears.

"Yep, that'll do it." Dad chuckles out from the driver's seat, finding the awful sound amusing.

Having been to the beach club, this certainly would work wonders in the crowd of party goers at the pool parties. No matter how loud the music, a shifter would certainly hear this whistle. I was impressed with Colt's different approach to security.

"There, you see the gate?" Callie leans forward, pointing out to Dad.

"Yes, I do. Okay, everyone stay on guard. Cleo, you do not leave my sight." Dad rumbles out.

"Yes Dad." His eyes find mine in the rear view mirror. I suppress the need to roll my eyes from his

protective ways, I am pregnant with his grandchild after all. Until the child is born, the family members will remain extra alert around me. It's just natural.



"You ready for this?" I lean forward, my hand placing on the tip of Callie's shoulder, trying to calm her.

"Yes, thank you for coming...just remain vigilant." She clears her throat, trying to sound strong.

"It won't come to that Callie." I offer her a reassuring squeeze on the shoulder.

I hope it won't.

"Just remain vigilant." She repeats.

Dad pulls the car up to the gate, opening his window just enough for a guard to grant us access.

The guard did look shocked by Callie being in the front seat which to me was a good sign, if anything had been planned, he would be in on it and wouldn't look as if he had just seen a ghost.

We drive through the pack lands, pack members looking up as we drive past farming fields, their necks tilting slightly in a sign of respect to Callie Word had been shared among the pack link of who was in the car.

"You farm your own food?" Dad asks out to Callie.

"We like to be as self sufficient as possible."

It wasn't what I would call a modern pack. There wasn't any signs of restaurants,

of entertainment...nothing that would appeal to the younger pack members.

Which means they either have to go off pack lands for entertainment, or go without.

As we pull up to a large mansion, Alpha Bill and Luna Louise are already waiting for us.

Their eyes narrowing when they realise Callie has not come alone.

"Here we go." Callie takes a shaking deep breath in before opening the car door, the three of us following her cue.

As I step outside, I don't miss the

the alpha house. My dad moving to my side instantly, taking a protective stance in front of me.

hiss coming from the direction of et

Luna Louise's face was venomous by my attendance, even more so when Callie

moves to my side, placing her hand within mine.

"You didn't think I would come alone did you?" Callie rises an eyebrow at her

parent's, surely they knew she wasn't naïve enough to trust them.

"You best come inside, all of you." Luna Louise's highly pitched voice calls out to us, her face distorting as she tries to act polite.

Tries, and fails miserably.

Chapter 604

- Cleo -

I follow Callie into the alpha house, the internal design reminding me of the alpha house back at the Amber Desert pack.

A lot of dark colours, riches on display to remind pack members of the hierarchy and where they belong in it.

Perhaps Medea and Louise had a lot in common.

"We didn't expect quite so many guests..." Luna Louise's snootiness is clear especially as her eyes cast upon Colt.

"Just keeping Callie company Luna, it was a long drive...one we didn't want her to take alone." Colt responds, surprising me as he removes his hat and bows his head slightly to the alpha and luna, trying to soothe any rising tension at his presence.

Perhaps it was good that he was here instead of Jace. In surprised knowing what I know now...that Jace even let them near his family.

You couldn't smell that he was a rogue but there is something different about Colt. Maybe it's the fact that he has never had the opportunity to integrate into pack life, or maybe it's just his care-free drifter character....but he was aware enough of pack politics to remain polite to an alpha and luna.

So somewhere among the way he has gained an understanding of pack life.

"I'll have the house maid prepare refreshments." Luna Louise offers out but I'm keen to not remain too long.

"That's not necessary, please don't go to any bother." I too sweetly smile out. There is also not a chance in hell that I would trust any drink this woman would make me, or those that she gets to command.

"Very well...he is already waiting in the alpha office."

"He...he who?" Callie's eyebrows furrow, confusion edged upon her face

"Alpha Darnell..." Luna Louise responds before turning and gesturing for us to follow.

"Who is Alpha Darnell?" I mime out to Callie who just shrugs at me, clearly none the wiser as the rest of us.

We follow Callie's parents towards, what I can only presume is the alpha office, where they knock on the door...

They knock on the door of their own alpha office to be granted permission to enter.

What was going on.

“Enter!” A deep gravelly voice responds out.

I didn't plan to enter into direct communication with Callie's parents, except for pleasantries, but curiosity is gripping me and I step into the office.

I can't believe what I am experiencing, another man sat at the alpha's desk.

A man that was already signing on documents, making decisions for the pack and the members.

If Callie didn't ask, then I would.

"What is going on?" Callie's eyes dart

between her parents and the man who hasn't even looked up from the document in front of him to greet the four of us walking into the office.

Either what he was reading was so engrossing or he was making a point of not looking up until he was ready.

Power games. I hate these type of alphas.

"This is Alpha Darnell, he is now the Alpha of Spear Thistle." Alpha Bill declares, a

gasp escaping each and every one of us.

"The Alpha? What right have you to

give the pack away to a non

member? Callie growls out, her hands clenching into tiny balls she takes a step closer to her parents. You could see the rage bubbling up within her, almost see the steam exiting her ears.

"Every right, if we didn't have such disappointment for off spring..."

"Disappointment? My brother died protecting these lands."

"I wasn't talking about him." Luna Louise coldly responds.

I can't help but growl out myself, Luna Louise was out of order, her poisonous words towards her own daughter makes anger boil within me.

"How dare you." I growl out, letting my luna aura roll off me and onto Luna Louise.

The motion finally attracting the interest of the alpha sitting at the desk, his own aura emitting from him to counteract mine.

He was strong...incredibly strong. He could even potentially rival Jaxon. There was something very dark...dangerous about him.

I don't let it known that I was having to put in more effort, a protective hand of mine moving to my lower stomach as I try to shield the baby.

Chapter 605

Again the move not going unnoticed by him, or my own father. Who takes a step forward, his alpha aura pushing forward and mixing with mine.

A smirk finally forms in the corner of the lips of this Alpha Darnell. His lips spreading out further into

a devious smile before he pulls his aura back completely, mine also extracting back into me.

Dad hold's his for a little longer until Colt places a hand on his upper back, trying to diffuse the situation.

"Is this why you summoned Callie here, to rub her nose in it." Colt demands out.

"This will be her last chance to collect anything from this household before I redesign it. Throw

anything out that isn't wanted.." This Alpha Darnell shrugs his shoulders, sitting back down as if he couldn't care less why we were here.

"Why, where are you two going?" Callie's eyes snap to her parents.

"We are going into retirement. We are leaving."

"Leaving...leaving to go where?"

"That isn't any of your concern." Louise coldly replies to her own daughter.

"Dad?" Callie tries to plead to her father, but it goes unwanted as he stands taller, his shoulders becoming broader as he also shuts down on his last remaining child.

"You made your choice." Luna Louise seethes out.

"What choice? I was willing to be the alpha, you just didn't like my choice of partner." My heart breaks for Callie, you can hear the desperation in her voice.

"Can you take the family quarrel outside, it really does not serve me. If you have anything upstairs I will grant you this time to collect it." He flicks his hand, rudely trying to shoo us out.

"There isn't anything upstairs that I want, there is nothing here that I want. Just one person...and I will take her now. I will remove my mate from the pack."

"If she is your mate, then I will grant that. I will honour that." He nods out before returning back to his paperwork.

Callie turns towards us, the four of us moving indoors a little huddle to speak quietly.

"I'll go get Gwen, I think it best you all meet me by the car. I won't be long."

"I think maybe one of us should come with you...Dad?" I look to Dad, not wanting Callie to enter any further into this pack by herself than she needs to.

I do not trust this new alpha, whose eyes were no longer engrossed in paper work but looking between my stomach and my face.

"It is unknown of for a non pack member to become an alpha." I can't stop myself, the words leave my lips before I can prevent them.

"Yet your mate has done it I understand? The exact same thing." He raises an eyebrow at me, a smirk upon his face.

"My mate challenged the alpha and won." My jaw tenses, as I become extremely protective of Jace.

"There was no challenge for me, I was asked to take on this pack. No violence...no death has been involved...not yet anyway." His eyes burn into mine, he was challenging me.

"Gwen no longer lives here Callie, you won't find her here." Alpha Bill sighs out to

his daughter, breaking the eye contact between Alpha Darnell and myself.

"Why, where is she?" Callie's face pales instantly, fear hitting her.

"After you left, she couldn't remain."

"But that was almost two years ago..." Callie gasps out, her hands even covering her mouth from shock.

"Then she's been gone for almost two years." Luna coldly shrugs, viewing her own child as if she were a piece of dirt on the bottom of her shoe.

"If anything has happened to her.." Callie roars out, moving towards her own mother as she grips her by the throat, only for Alpha Bill to tear his daughter off his mate and throw her to the ground.

"Don't you dare touch her."

"I didn't everything you asked of me. I left so she could continue to flourish here. You promised me that. Where is my mate?" Callie screams out, as Dad gathers her up off the floor.

"If by any luck, she's already dead."

Chapter 606

- Jace -

Jaxon and I had driven throughout the night, heading up towards the mountainous region that in truth was a well known rogue area.

A place that if you were in a pack, you didn't tend to visit, and for good reason.

Rogue life was deadly, vicious and cruel. One day you might be a ruler, the next... a knife was in your back before you had even had breakfast.

As soon as Jaxon pulls the car up where the road ends, I open the passenger door to be hit with the smell of rotting flesh.

Rogues have a pungent sulphuric-type smell which you can scent from a mile away.

Here that scent is being covered by rotting flesh, my own gag reflexes are in full motion as the wind suddenly changes cause...revealing the scent of rogues.

Which burns at my eyes.

The high winds at this altitude were unforgiving on marking the hilly peaks as belonging to the rogues.

This was their land, there was no mistake about that.



I just hope the rotting flesh was from the decaying dead that hadn't been buried properly...not the remains of them eating their own....

"You good?" Jaxon coughs out, his hand moving to his nose as he tries to acclimatise to the damn awful mixing smells around us.

"Yep, you?" I make a point of breathing through my mouth and not my nose.

"Fucking annoyed we didn't bring masks." He grunts out, moving to the boot of the car where he pulls out a black satchel each.

Unlike Josie, we didn't like to rely on weapons...using the claws and teeth of our wolves, what the moon goddess intended.

However, we were entering into uncharted territory where there are no rules... anything goes. Therefore, having weapons and protection was now a necessity.

"Let's just get this done, as soon as possible." I grunt out, thinking of my sweet smelling mate waiting for my return.

"The dream duo, back together again aye?" Jaxon smirks as he pulls out a grey car blanket, closes the car boot and locks the car.

I help him place then blanket over the car, it certainly won't go unnoticed here but

in the mountains, it would look like a large rock...at least that was the plan.

Uncovered the car would be stripped of parts within minutes.

Rogues have to survive somehow.

"You ready?"

"Can't believe I've left my mate for this shit."

"Then let's get you back to her as soon as possible. Come on." Jaxon whips his head as he pulls his phone out for coordinates of the last

know location of the Amber

Knights and Dark Phantom warriors.

A few miles hike where no road went...from now on we were on high alert and couldn't take too long...alpha auras like ours won't go unnoticed in these parts.

We find the group of warriors from both packs after a few hours. At first the area they had pinned as their location was empty, until slowly they came out of their hiding places.

Each and every one of them looked worn, grey, if not green. I understand why... they had been sleeping rough in these surroundings with these smells for the last few days.

"Alphas!" Osborne tilts his neck to the side as he walks towards Jaxon and me. His eyes burning into the landscape around us. He doesn't trust one sound, one gust of wind.

"Osborne, what updates?" I request of him as Jaxon moves to his own warriors, standing beside them as they give their own updates.

"We think she may be at the top of that peak, it offers the best protection from all surroundings. It's where the most of the rogues reside, however, there was a mass movement yesterday.

That could be due to internal be du

fighting...especially if she has taken control, which we imagine she has He deadpans at the end, perhaps there was no love lost between the previous luna and the knights as I had thought.

"Jaxon." I call my brother over to us for us to plan the next stage and carry it out with exact precision. This place wasn't forgiving, one fuck up and you'd pay for it with you

life.

I drop my bag to the ground, arming myself with protection gear and ensuring

bullets were loaded into the AK-47.

Chapter 607

Now was the moment of trust, I had to trust Osborne, he hadn't let me down this

far...

"Can you handle this?" I place a pistol gun out to him, offering it out for him to use.

"Yes Alpha." He takes it, examining the piece before removing the barrel and checking the number of bullets it was loaded with.

I can see him make a mental note, he had 6 clean kills if he used it correctly.

We move out, approaching the tallest peak from a number of angles as we split up into three small teams. Jaxon leading one team of the Dark Phantom warriors, while I led one without Osborne. He took charge of the third group.

The climb as treacherous, climbing gear was needed at an altitude as high as this but we didn't have the time or the equipment, we had waited long enough.

Pushing through my aching thighs I find my sub team is the first to reach the top, a sign of a small settlement in the near distance.

I hold my hand up in a halt position, myself and the warriors kneeling down as we survey the area in front of us.

Wooden huts that look barely put together, with ripped fabric strewn across the top for makeshift roofs offer no protection against the battling cold winds.

I just hope to the moon goddess children hadn't called this place a home.

It may be close to the heavens but there was no doubt about it, this place was a hell hole. A place you would be lucky if you survived.

I see movement in the distance, on the other side of the mountain top...Jaxon had just arrived. Forming a similar position to ourselves. With him watching my surroundings, I didn't hesitate to move in.

With the gun aimed out, the back of it firmly wedged by my shoulder blade for support I press forward. One of the warrior's hand on my back....communicating with me on steps incase there was sign of hidden mines.

When we make it to the clearing, there is not one sign of another soul being present that hadn't arrived with us.

It was empty.

I move into the small huts, one at a time, checking the small living spaces for any clues of where the rogues may have gone next.

They may be gone but their stench remains.

Jaxon moves in, also searching the small huts.

My eyes dart to the left of me where I find steps carved into the mountain side leading further up. I start to take the steps, the higher I climb....the more intense the cold becomes snow still covering parts of the landscape.

Battling against the bitterly cold wind, I find a small cave, not much to it but enough to offer shelter from the cold wind.

I pull my phone out of my back pocket, putting the torch on to shine into the cave for signs of life.

I'm disappointed to also find it empty but as I step in further I do find rope on the ground, rope that has essence of blood across it.

Whoever had been held here, it had been against their will and they were injured.

"Anything? hear Jaxon's voice Side."Nothing, don't bother

from

y behind me.

in..." I call back out

"A fucking waste of a journey. I'll tell the men down below that it's

is

square one.I toss the rope aggressively to the ground.

back to the packs. Back to it a

I was fucking annoyed, all this way for no lead whatsoever.

I exit the small cave, heading back to the mountain edge when I turn to find Jaxon

unmoved from the spot I left him in.

He was frozen on the spot, his shoulders trembling.

"Jaxon?"

"She was here..." He grunts out before crouching down to pick up the rope I had tossed to the ground.

He turns to face me, placing the rope to his nose where he inhales the blood, a ferocious roar escaping him.

"Who was here?" I demand out, confused by his sudden change in behaviour.

Even watching him now, his eyes bleed out from green to black, as his wolf pushes forward.

The beast being unleashed.

"My mate." He growls out, pulling the rope tightly in his hands.

Chapter 608

- Jace -

What a fucking nightmare. Not only did we leave not having any further leads... but Jaxon was stuck in a state of fighting against his own wolf for control.

He could hardly move, his entire body trembling as his wolf fights for control, trying to find a sign of weakness in the barrier to push through and shift.

One wrong move from my brother and his wolf will be ripping this car to shreds... with me in it.

We were heading back to the Clear Waters, not having any clue on where Medea had gone and now we had the new issue of Jaxon's mate being in danger.

It was her blood on the rope, I managed to gage that much from Jaxon. He could barely talk, it was just a grunt in response.

The Dark Phantom warriors were heading back to the family pack and I ordered the Amber Knights to return back to the Amber Desert pack, Cleo and I to join them as soon as possible.

We had things to plan, we needed to pause for a moment so that we could gather detail on where we think the rogues may have gone to, and what spooked them enough to move.

I am unwilling to let my brother enter into a situation where he may not be thinking properly because his mate is in harm's way.

Jaxon has always been the military leader...but I've seen a side to him I didn't even know existed...panic, fear.

It was a fucking disaster, the entire thing.

I was already driving over the speed limit, desperate to get Jaxon back to Clear Waters where he could finally give his wolf control.

I'll need help to contain him, to stop him escaping the pack lands in the hunt for his mate.

Knox will need to help me. Like this, I can't take him on alone and survive.

The energy emitting out of Jaxon was dark, like a broken electrical charge preparing to explode. It wasn't a case of if, but when.

"Just keep him under control." I grunt out to him, only for him to grunt back at me taking a deep breath in, bending down to clasp his head in his hands.

He was struggling...

He was pale, the pain not just mental but physical as well.

The music dies down as Josie's name pops up on the car's media display system,

thank the goddess, maybe she can calm him down.

"Josie?" I answer without hesitation. She's always had a way of being able to stand up to Jaxon, even without her wolf.

"Where are you?" She voice is almost like a shriek.

"We are on our way back...why, what's wrong?" I do not miss the panic in her voice.

"It's Callie, she's gone into shock. Mum keeps having to calm her down by taking energy from her. How long will you be?"

"Two hours tops...what's happened?"

"She went to her parent's pack.."

"Alone?" I growl out, anger pushing forward. Her parent's could not be trusted, why the fuck would she go to them.

"No not alone..." Josie cuts her self off hesitantly.

"You went?"

"I would have, but they snuck out before I woke up. Jace, I promise I didn't know...otherwise I would have stopped her."

"Callie.."

"No...Cleo." My sister sighs out as she mentions my own mate's name.

"Cleo fucking went?"

"She's fine.."

"She fucking better be."



"Uncle Orpheus went with them, and Colt."

"We are on our way, don't let Mum do anything...just contain her." I cut the call,

my foot pressing harder on the pedal...the car speeding even more.

I can't believe Cleo left the Clear Waters, putting herself at risk like that.

I can feel the shift in the atmosphere in the car as my dark aura rolls off me, almost pushing Jaxon's back in.

I'm counting the clock, I was in a complete panic induced state. My wolf was working with me to read the sibling bond with Jaxon to watch out for signs of a shift....whereas, I was pushing through the traffic ahead.

Swerving through cars like a mad man, my knuckles white as I held on tightly to the steering wheel.

"Get us back alive at least." Jaxon deadpans, his body starting to relax.

"Has he gone?" I cast a quick eye over my brother who seems to be gaining colour back to his face.

"For now, but I don't know how long for."

"I'm impressed."

"He could feel you need me right now...he could feel your anguish. She's fine...

you know she is, the baby and Cleo are fine. Just calm down..."

"I can't believe she fucking left." I squeeze the steering wheel tightly moving from the fast lane to the slow lane to undertake a stubborn car that wouldn't move out of my way.

I didn't have time for human driving pricks right now.

"You don't know the whole story yet, just wait until you hear her side." Why was Jaxon suddenly being the more sane one of the two of us. He could hardly move ten minutes ago, now our roles seem to have reversed.

Chapter 609

"Since when did I take relationship advice from you."

"Since you get to hold your mate in bed every night. Just calm the fuck down Jace, you'd know if she was injured. Besides, she's a tough cookie Cleo, you need to give her more credit. Fucking scared the shit out of me when she tried to threaten me." It sounded good to have my brother laugh.

"Threaten you, when?"

"When I found out she was pregnant, I might have dressed up and pretended to

be you..."

"What, when was this?" I have to fight against my urge to slam the breaks down to give the conversation my full attention, I needed to get home.

"You had just arrived with Callie, I knew...I knew you loved her, I was just trying to bide you some time. But she fucking knew, she knew it was me."

"Well the missing tats will do that."

"No, she knew, I was covered from head to toe. She wouldn't have done something to put her and your baby's life in danger. Just hear her out before you start pointing the finger."

Why is this the first I am hearing of Jaxon pretending to be me. Shit, I'm surprised Cleo didn't give him a black eye. She's innocent and squeaky clean...until you really get to know her. The privilege my siblings and I have had for all her life. Now I get to call her mine.

"I didn't know that, thank you brother."

"I knew you just needed time."

My heart warms before it is replaced with guilt. He went to great lengths to stop Cleo making decisions that would take her from me, he bought me time before I woke the fuck up.

But now his own mate could be bleeding out and I can't fucking help him.

I've never felt so useless.

His words did offer a soothing affect on me but I couldn't ignore the adrenaline pumping through my body, my knee even bobbing as we drove into the Clear Water's gates, my foot not letting off the gas pedal until we were outside of the alpha mansion.

I rip the car door open, that urge to see her completely taking over my mind and body.

I didn't try the mind-link with her because I couldn't trust myself not to react and lose control of the car.

But now that we are back I scream out her name through the mind-link, pushing through any barriers she may have put up to keep me out.

"Cleo!" I roar out only to find her already running towards me from the front door. "Jace!" She screams out, running towards me before leaping into my arms.

I lift her up, twirling her around as I sink my nose into the crook of her neck, letting her scent calm me and my wolf.

"What the fuck were you thinking?"

"I can explain, I didn't want her going alone. I went in your place."

"Listen to me carefully..." I place her feet back down on the ground, clutching her face in my hands.

"You and bump are the most important things to me, you do not do anything...no matter what you think I would do...do you understand?"

"Yes, I understand but...I'm glad I

went. You won't believe what homet

parents have done." She cuts the

link, her eyes moving to Jaxon.

BUMS

"Is everything okay?" She looks back to me with concern for my brother.

"I'll be inside..." Jaxon grunts out before heading into the alpha house.

"What's happened? Did you find

Medea?" Worries, Cleo bites down on her lower lip. A move that has my thumb pulling her lower lip from under her tops teeth.

"No, we found signs of a rogue camp in the mountains but they had already gone.

We are guessing her with them."

"So, it was a waste of a journey."

"No...we did find something." I sigh out, pulling her into my chest.

"What?"

"Jaxon's mate...he found signs of his mate being in the rogue camp."

"She's a rogue?"

"We don't know...but I would guess not."

"What makes you say that?"

"Because her scent was on a rope covered in blood, I would say she was being held hostage by rogues..." Pain radiates through me for my brother. I even hold Cleo a little

tighter, knowing I can.

He can't, not yet but I'll make it my life's mission to help him until he can do the same.

"Goddess!" Cleo gasps out, her hands moving to her mouth in shock.

I am one hell of a lucky man to be able to hold my mate, to kiss her lips.

My mouth moves to hers, my tongue running across the bottom lip eagerly

wanting her to open those peachy plump lips of hers.

With a moan she does, giving me full access to plunge my tongue to claim hers as mine.

Chapter 610

- Cleo -

We were back at the Amber Desert pack now. Callie and Colt had both returned with us as we try to help Callie navigate around her missing mate.

Both Jace and I were non stop searching for clues on where Gwen could be, but except for sharing amongst the alliance packs a few pictures on Callie's phone... we didn't have a lot to go on.

It was like trying to find a needle in a haystack.

Each day that passes we are at risk of losing Callie that little bit more.

She was spiralling, the guilt eating away at her. All this time she had left the Spear Thistle pack to give her mate a chance at a life without her, only to find out that her mate has been missing all this time.

Having been forced to reject her, she can't even feel the bond...she doesn't even know if she is alive.

I can see the guilt on her face, the pain eroding at her from the inside.

We needed leads and fast.

On top of this, Jace when not performing alpha duties, was also helping Jaxon in trying to find information on his mate.

Trying to find any information on the band of rogues that had been based in the mountains but had moved.

Was Medea with them, was his mate still part of that group...was she safe.

Jaxon headed back with his parents to the Dark Phantom pack, with an unamused Astraia. Who

tried to fight her case of returning to the woods but Kaia flat out refused for her auntie to now be

off any of the pack grounds.

In a true testament to her character, Astraia argued...only agreeing to the compromise set out by Josie. Where she would take on her cabin in the meadows, that she would make it her new home.

Josie no longer needed it, and for what Astraia needs, it was the perfect size. It just needed a new

fit out, and she could still attend meals in the alpha house when she wanted.

She kept drinking that tonic, even though Kaia refused at first to supply her with wolfsbane, I think she finally gave in. Knowing that if Astraia was found on Dark Phantom pack lands... it will put the pack at risk of an attack again by the White Moon pack.

Mum, Dad and Ares returned back to the Red Thorn pack leaving Josie and Knox

to settle in to their new titles as Alphas of the Clear Waters alone.

Ares is due to start alpha training soon but with Knox now an alpha, his training program was now up in the air for the time being. The future was still unclear but we had to keep faith in the moon goddess' plan for us all.

With all the chaos of our daily lives, of helping Colt settle into pack life and keeping Callie feeling positive, which was a difficult task... Jace and I were able to take a break today, take some time out for us.

Just the two of us.

We were nervously waiting in the doctor's office in the hospital. The pack members had so far been good on their word in giving us a chance and the excitement of an heir on the way was buzzing through the pack bond.

I was starting to show now; older females stopping me in the day to bless the child I am carrying, to ask permission to place their hands upon my stomach.

At first I felt uncomfortable but I am used to it now, they are just wanting to touch the future...to let the

child know they are thinking of them.

With the pack behind us, I think the anxiety of a safe delivery was more pressure than I had expected.

With just the two of us in the doctor's office, I am laying back on the bed...Jace holding my hand as he sits on the chair next to me.

He was just as anxious as me, this was our first scan and I'm so glad I waited for this moment. I didn't think it would come but I had hope...and I'm glad I didn't do this without Jace.

I can feel Jace's nerves plough into me as the door opens, the doctor walking in, followed by a nurse.

"Alpha, Luna." He greets us both with a smile, as he moves towards the bed, turning the ultrasound machine on.

"Doctor." We both greet back, our eyes darting to one another as we both feel the rawness of our mixed emotions, happiness, nervousness...

excitement.

"This is a real priviledge for me. I must admit I didn't think this day

would come. Let's take a look shall we." He sits down at the monitor, his hand reaching behind him as the female nurse passes him

documents, I'm assuming my records.