

Denied by Destiny: Trapped in the Shadows of the Mate Bond 301-310

"Actually no." I cut him off, my hand raising in front of me. "No?"

"No, I don't want those things." Well yes, but not in how he is implying. George is the closest I got to thinking I could choose someone to be with me, but his recent actions have made me think the complete opposite now. I'd much rather be alone than be with George, these small flirty fleeting moments with Knox has shown me that. Knowing Knox for only a few days has already opened my eyes to who I thought George was, and who he really is. "Then what do you want Red?" He asks me, his voice low... his eyes not leaving mine.

"A bit of fun. We seem to have a natural chemistry, a natural attraction to one another. We could just keep it casual...no one would need to know. What's the harm in exploring that." "Ah, that scratch that needs itching?"

"Precisely. I don't expect commitment, I know that you will go back to training soon and we need not think of each other again." I casually offer, my hands swiping out.

I know as soon as I say it that this wouldn't be possible for me, but if having just a small amount of him means I have to make this bargain...then so be it. He will move away, no doubt find another that can offer things I can't. But I'm prepared to pretend when the time calls, pretend I can keep my side of the deal.

"Let me get this straight, you want to enter into a no strings attached...sexual relationship? Are you sure?" His eyes are wide in surprise, perhaps this is the first time he has been offered this. But not for me.

"You aren't the first person I've done this with Knox..." Something in what I say makes his body tense, his jaw stiffen as his brown eyes become that more intense, broodier.

"You might be in real danger of falling in love with me Red." He chuckles out as he rubs his designer beard, acting playful but I can tell he is considering it...he has to be..because I am.

"There's no danger of that, I know who I am, what I can give. And love is not one of them." I say defiantly, unwaveringly as my chin is held high...I am afterall, the only daughter of the most powerful alphas alive today. That has to count for something.

"Just...give it some thought." I move away, shimmying across the bed preparing to leave when an arm snakes around my waist from behind. He pulls me with such force that the back of my head falls against the pillow and his face is inches away above mine.

"Seems I didn't need to give it much thought after all. I accept your terms Red." His lips crash into mine in a second as my hands grip at the back of his neck pulling him in deeper to me. My legs wrap around his lower abdomen, locking him in place as he presses his hard groin into me, his kiss eating up my moans.

His hands move with precision as the small vest like cami bed-time top is unbutton at the front, my breasts springing free for his firm embrace.

A moan escapes him as both hands clasp them, his tongue's movement speeding up within my mouth at such a pace I struggle to keep in control. Struggle to dominate the kiss.

As soon as he pinches one of my nipples I lose the dominance, my body bucking back as a cry escapes me, his hushing in my ear trying to remind me to remain quiet.

His tongue trails down from my mouth to my breasts, the small nipple mounts each having their turn within his mouth.

He continues moving south, his tongue leaving a trail of saliva as he licks my taut stomach, focusing a few seconds on my belly button. Tingles continue to dance upon my skin from his touch. Tingles that are becoming quite addictive.

He lifts my butt up in the air, freeing my cotton shorts and my g-string, I feel satisfied when he curses to himself.

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His lips are at my entrance before I know what he is doing, his lips sucking on my small bud as his fingers probe my lower core, separating my lips to gain better access.

My hands roughly pull at his hair as I try my best to keep my moans of arousal hushed. I even place a pillow over my face to help cover out the sounds I make as he pumps in and out of me before his tongue takes over, its warm soft wetness pushing deeply inside of me. I'm already too close, I was primed for him before even entering the room. He was all I thought about and I know this arrangement will leave me broken-hearted, yearning for him. But I'll have to worry about that later, when the time comes. All I could do was enjoy the thrills of his touch now.

"Knox.." I cry out as my stomach muscles start to contract.

"What do you want Red?"

"Say my name...my real name."

"Josie.." He huskily calls out my name before he leaves his command hanging over me.

"Come for me, Josie." My body unravels under his control, under his expert hands as I give in to that call to satisfy him, that call to satisfy myself.

"That was..." I pant out, my hands covering my eyes as my vision starts to become unfocused.

"I'm not done with you yet, that was just a little warm up. I hope you didn't expect to sleep tonight?" His eyes are possessed, drunk, with desire as he stands up to remove his own shorts, his manhood standing to attention as he lets me take him all in.

Oh goddess, he was the epitome of a god himself. Each muscle ripped, he doesn't waste even one of them as his body is like defender of a world unknown to me.

He slides back on top of me, his hands gripping at my thighs as he opens my legs and raises them higher. His eyes look deeply into mine as he slides inside of me, pushing through to the top of my cervix, hitting the hilt.

He lets me catch my breath for a second, I thought he would and he had stretched me. My lips reach up to kiss him sensually, giving him permission to continue as my body relaxes beneath him. The I tia burning sensation having now disappeared.

His movements start slow before I can tell his own need to chase his release takes over him. He speeds up, my body bucking under him as my eyes start to see stars, my own release returning to me. I want him to stop calling me Red just like this. It's the equivalent of calling someone babe, or hun. It's as if he can't remember my name, my hair colour being a dead giveaway of what to nickname me.

"Say my name." I whisper out, my own body on the edge.

"Jospehina." His voice growls at my ear, his face buried deep within the nook of my neck.

No one ever calls me that, no one outside of the family.

I feel his release spill into me, his hot sweet nectar shooting into me as my walls clamp down at the sensation, a guttural moan escaping me as he places a hand over my mouth to muffle the noise.

His body collapses on top of me, our panting lungs trying to regain a steady even rhythm. My mind was blown, I had never had such a mind shattering orgasm as that, even his hands now that grip at my hips leave the gentle soft kiss of tingles.

I should leave, I don't want to, but we had just agreed that this was sex only. Me staying here would give the impression that I wanted more, which I promised him I didn't.

I didn't want to sleep tonight, I wanted more. But wouldn't it be better for me to leave now, to make it look like I was in control?

I place a gentle kiss on the side of his head before moving from under him, grabbing my vest and shorts and putting them back on without looking back at him.

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- Josie -

Deep breath in...relax your shoulders...remember I'm the one in control of my own destiny. Bang! A direct hit.

I was leading weapons training in an hour, my nerves kicking in. I didn't care before, but knowing Jaxon would be watching...watching and ready to criticise at anything has made me slightly on edge. I decided to arrive at the meadow, the firearm's training location to give myself extra time to set up.

I also had to request weapons from the main armoury due to the number of guns needed just for training.

I had already set up a number of extra targets, my own attempt at ensuring that if the holder of the gun listens to my instructions, they would be able to make the shot themselves.

After tweaking a few targets, Lobo entertaining himself by chasing butterflies in the overgrown meadow, I place my gun down on the long table just as my mobile phone starts to ring.

I gasp out as Jace's name lights up...I reach for it immediately. As far as I know he hasn't called anyone yet.

"Jace?"

"Josie..."

"Where are you, are you okay?" My voice is fast, my need to know how is safe.

"Yes I'm fine, look I've left your car..." He sounds...calm, like he hasn't put his family through the wringer with his sudden disappearance. My relief at knowing he was alive being pushed aside by my growing anger at his audacity.

"I don't care about my car, how could you leave like that. Everyone's been so worried about you. Jaxon even.."

"Jaxon what?"

"He..."

But I stop myself. Whatever was going on with Jace, it wasn't fair to put Jaxon's recent attack on Knox and his overbearing command on me on Jace's conscious.

"Nothing....Where are you?"

"I'm just having some time away, re-evaluating things."

"Re-evaluating what?"

The line goes quiet, before he sighs out...I press my hearing but all I can hear is heavy rainfall and the sound of traffic in the background.

"I'll text you the location of the car." He says in a monotone voice, preparing to cut the call.

"Wait...Jace." I shout down the phone, not ready for him to go silent on me again for who knows how long.

""What Josie?"

"What's going on?"

"Just let Mum and Dad know I am safe, that I just need time to clear my head." He growls down the phone to me before cutting the call.

Leaving me now staring at my phone in disbelief as he sends a text message of the car's location.

He's there right now, if I leave now...I should be able to find him. But it means leaving my first training session for Jaxon to supervise.

No, Jace said he needs space, maybe I should give that to him. But we are a team, we are a trio...always having each other's backs. I've never felt so torn.

Knowing Jace, he's long gone from the car's location already. Knowing I would rush there and I've worked too damn hard to let Jaxon shut this training session down before it has commenced. "Ready?" Jaxon's voice calls out to me from the clearing towards the meadow, Knox by his side and a group of warriors falling in line behind him.

With one last look at my phone, I pocket it, knowing Jace will be long gone from that location. That he wasn't calling for help, he was calling to let me know he was safe and to give him space. Sticking by my decision, I turn with a large grin upon my face. Steadying that call within me to check on my brother, my best friend... the 3rd of me, to show Jaxon what a bad ass weapons teacher I can actually be. "Born ready!"

...

The training session goes better than I had hoped for. The warriors do me proud as they hit on average 70% of the targets.

Jaxon can't deny how using weapons as part of the defence of the borders is something that we should seriously consider. Even as I glance over to his withdrawn stance...pissed off would be a better way to describe him. He wanted this session to go badly, he wanted to be proven right. Well, not today.

"It seems to have gone well." Knox winks as he walks over to the table, placing a gun down on it.

"Yeah, well tell his highness that. I think he wanted me to fail." I roll my eyes, my head gesturing to my arsehole of a brother.

"I'm sure..."

"Don't defend him Knox... Hey, you know when you offered to take me out on your bike. Did you mean it?"

"Yeah, why?"

"I..I'll tell you later." I notice Jaxon finally not standing with his arms crossed and his jaw tense, as he starts to walk over to me. "What did you think?" I chime out.

"It seemed to go well..."

"I told you.."

"But..."

Unbelievable...

"Jaxon, you can't deny the fact that weapons will add extra security to the borders. Look at last night."

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"Last night was well in control. The only person that seems to worry about the defence of the borders is you..."

"That's not fair." I grit my teeth.

"Last night was the first time there has been action at the borders for years Josie. Your unnecessary need for weapons just doesn't fit into our community." "Jaxon..." I scream out in frustration, letting him get the better of me.

He takes a threatening step towards me, perhaps I'll always be the one to challenge him, perhaps that's the role of a sibling.

I won't back down.

"Steady..." Knox's voice rumbles as he takes a side step closer to me, his arm shooting out as it hangs between Jaxon and I.

He is met with a flash of teeth from Jaxon, whose eyes remain on me.

"Control yourself Jaxon." Knox continues to whisper in a hoarse tone, his body angling more towards me. Jaxon wouldn't dare, he wouldn't dare to use his command on me again. Surely? "Josie, when will you finally hear me... When I am alpha, I will not permit guns to be used on the borders."

"Like you say Jaxon, when you are Alpha." My pointed look is of a challenging kind as I stare firmly into his eyes. I don't care who he thinks he is, we shared a womb...I'll happily bring him back down to earth. "There will be no place for guns on my pack lands Josie, which means if you are hell bent on living with guns...maybe there won't be a place for you in the future of this pack."

Bastard. He's got me by my imaginary balls now.

"Well, who knows what the future holds. If Jace refuses to return, maybe you are staring at the future alpha of the Clear Waters pack already."

"You know that isn't possible Josie. Now quit this before I really do lose my temper and take your title from you from where you stand." He threatens, his face leaning in closer to me, before he turns and storms off.

I shake off his anger, his hate at being disobeyed. Reaching for the guns I start placing them away in the holdall bags to take back to the armoury. Cursing under my breath, venting out the anger he has caused within me.

Knox helps me, in a mutual silence as my blood continues to boil at Jaxon's words. I'm stewing on his words too much, he would never do that to me, but just like Dad...his patience only goes so far. Luckily I've never pushed Dad past the point of no return, unlike my brothers.

"So where did you need to go?" Knox's calm voice pulls me out from my thoughts.

"Hmm?"

"On the bike, where did you need me to take you?"

"Oh, I...erm, I have a location on my car. I was wondering if you could drop me off to collect it?" I keep packing the bags, bending down as I preparing to pack the table away and put it back in the cabin. Full well knowing Knox is watching me, perhaps that's why my body is taking a little longer today to get back up. Annoyingly every time I dress now, my mind pictures his face as he looks me up and down. I can't even pick my clothes now without wanting a reaction from him.

"You've had a text from Jace?" His forehead creases.

"He called actually?"

"What, when?" He's by my side as I pick up the table and carry it to the cabin. Once the table is secure, I close the cabin door, locking it and returning to the guns. "Just before training started."

"Okay, well I'm free for the rest of the day..."

"Great, I'll take these back to the armoury, I can meet you at home.."

"No need, I can walk with you."

"I'm a big girl Knox..." I turn to him.

"It's just a bag Josie. In no way does it mean that I don't think you aren't able to carry them yourself."

"Right, because I had to carry them down here myself to set up."

Not that I would admit it but if I had my car I would have driven them down, carrying them was too much for me this morning. But he doesn't need to know that.

"Just a bag Josie." His hand brushes past my arm as he leans down to pick up one of the bags. I gasp as the hairs on my arms stand up from his touch, craving more of those tingles. Even my arm hairs, now actively trying to seek them out.

With ease he throws one of the heavy holdalls, bursting at the seam with firearms, over his shoulder before reaching down for the other. The material of his T-shirt stretching tightly with his bicep. I can't help but lick my lips at the sight of him, as I ashamedly gawp at him.

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Knox-

I've always thought she looked hot in her leather biker's jacket but as she walks towards me, I can't help but stare as the afternoon sun makes her red hair glow like a fire. That, mixed with her incredible body and beautify...wrapped in leather...I was going to have to keep my thoughts clean on this journey. She was like nothing I had seen before and I wasn't done with her when she left my room in the early hours of the morning. I don't think I could ever have enough of her.

Whatever agreement we have entered into, I'm going to take whatever she gives me and think of the repercussions later. She knows I can't give her long term, and she didn't seem to want it either.

I place the spare rider's helmet on her, ensuring it is done tightly. It isn't lost on me that I was taking the most powerful alphas' daughter out without their permission.

Red made it very clear she didn't want them to know just yet. That Jace has put his trust in calling her only, and when the time comes that he might actually need help...he would be less likely to call her again if he knew she had informed their parents of his potential whereabouts. Begrudgingly I agreed.

With her helmet on safely, she climbs on to the back of my motorbike, the engine already alive and its vibrations humming throughout my body.

Red has already shown me the location of where her car is situated, a two hour drive away. I agree with her, it is very unlikely Jace will be anywhere near the car's location now. He most likely even had someone else drop the car off on his behalf.

The ride is easy, peaceful...even with the hot female behind me gripping on to my waist, her groin tucked neatly into my lower back.

At first I take the corners slow until she gestures for me with her hands to speed up, putting the motorbike into full throttle.

I purposely take the scenic route, you just can't get to enjoy a motorbike on a concrete highway. The sharp corners excite me as I feel her grip tighter, her nails digging into skin but I know she can handle this, she was a vixen born to push her own boundaries.

I have no sense of time when on my motorbike, I pay no attention to anything but the feel of the wind, the friction of pushing through it and the thrill of beating other riders.

I start to take caution as the weather turns, the beautiful clear skies above the Dark Phantom pack lands a distant memory as the sky turn murky, grey in colour as clouds move in and rain starts to hammer down on our helmets.

I start to slow the bike down, the sheer volume of rainfall creating a mist-like screen in front of me. It doesn't help that a lorry is in front of us, one I need to overtake.

The water springing up from its wheels bouncing off my eye screen on my helmet, making it almost impossible to see. Needing to overtake I rev up the engine more, putting the motorbike into full speed to pass the lorry knowing as soon as I do, my vision would be clearer.

As soon as I overtake the lorry, I keep the bike on the same speed, preparing to slow it back down when I notice the small crack in the road too late. The motorbike swerves and I try to counterbalance my weight, but the tarmac and the wheels are too slippery and the sudden change in the bike's motion makes Josie fall off behind me.

I reach for her, flinging my back onto the wet road as we skid...the motorbike on its side moving ahead of us at a fast speed. She's on her side, her panic filled scream all I can hear. I can't hear the incoming lorry behind us or the sound of my leather jacket being torn open as it grates against the tarmac under me.

I reach for her, her body just about in reaching distance. As soon as I have a firm grip on her wrist, I swivel her, turning her into me and gripping her solidly against my chest as we slide against the wet road...our bodies slowing down until we hit the side barrier.

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- Joise -

My mind has to remind my lungs how to breathe as my body is thrown off the back of the bike and onto the tarmac road. Pain vibrates through me as my body ricochets at high speed along the wet ground, my eyes watching the flashing lights of the lorry as it speeds

towards. I have no control of my body.

I can feel my jeans rip to shreds, that unknown pain of my skin tearing open as if it were only a layer of denim.

As soon as I am able to catch my breath, a scream escapes me, my eyes slamming shut as the lorry closes its distance on me.

I won't be able to avoid the giant wheels, the heavy undercarriage as it aims directly for me. This was it, I know I won't survive this.

I try to swing, move my body but we were travelling at such a speed that my body is unable to fight the friction pushing against me.

A hand reaches for me and yanks me with force in a new direction, my body slamming against a solid wall before I feel his other arm wrap around me.

Knox.

The tiny amount of air that my lungs had managed intake is gone again as we hit the highway barrier at the similar speed that we had been travelling on with the motorbike. If I wasn't placed safely within his arms at impact, I would have seriously damaged my head even with this helmet on.

In a daze I start to stand up, my legs like a new born deer as all ability to stand seems to fail me.

I hear him tell me to stay put, that he is going to retrieve the motorbike and we can get back on the road immediately.

As if it was easy to stand back up...I suppose it is for him.

Gripping on to the barrier, I use it to support me as I stand up, his frame walking away from me. My eyes struggle to focus on him as he heads towards his hike, which seems to have crashed into the same barrier but up ahead. He removes his helmet, his hair flicking out in the rain as he shakes off what has just happened. The lorry that nearly ran me over is long gone, traffic continues to whizz past, not paying us any mind.

The world keeps moving but my heart is hammering in my chest. That was a lucky escape.

Removing the helmet my head tilts upwards towards the wet sky as I take in a much needed deep breath of air.

I dare not look, I can feel the grazes on my thighs, my jeans now like shorts, as I continue to hold myself steady...just trying to breathe.

In the grand scheme of things I was able to walk away from the crash and that was a blessing.

When Knox places his motorbike back upright he turns heading back towards me when he stops, his horrified looking eyes scanning the length of me. "Red?" He picks up speed I, racing towards me.

"I'm fine, it's just a scratch." I wave my hand out, trying to brush it off as a mere scratch when I know it isn't. These are the type of wounds I would heal.

"Why aren't you healing?" At a speed to rival my brothers he is at my side, his hands cupping the back of my thighs as blood trickles down, causing the rain on the ground at my feet to turn red. "Fuck Red.."

"It's fine, let's get the car and I can heal at home."

His eyes narrow as they stare into mine, searching for information I am unwilling to give him. He isn't a pack member or a member of the family. It is forbidden.... "Can you walk?"

"Yes, I can walk.." I start to walk, pain radiating through my body as I grimace. Nausea rising in the back of my throat.

I take my time, his arm around my waist as I hobble to the motorbike, dread washing over me as I really don't want to go back on it. But I have no other choice.

The rain continues to beat down upon us, my helmet hearing each raindrop like a tin covered roof. I know I am gripping tighter onto him now, my hands firmly wrapped around his lower waist as he takes it slower, breaking as he comes off the next exit and follows the SatNav through the country lanes.

Slowing down for every corner, my heart beating against his upper back as my adrenaline starts to fade...pain increasing in my legs.

Thankfully we find the car, parked in a supermarket car park. There was no point looking around, Jace would be long gone, he had left the key on the driver's back wheel for a reason. He didn't want to see me right now.

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As soon as I enter my car, Jace's scent overwhelms me and tears start to brim in my eyes...I know it was more the pain, but he was my safety net and smelling him made me miss him even more right now. My hands stroke across the steering wheel, the leather cold under

my

touch.

"I'll follow closely behind." Knox crouches down by the open car door, his fingers like knots in his hands. He felt guilty, it wasn't his fault. None of this was his fault.

"There's really no need, feel free to go ahead."

"Not a chance Red, Alpha Hector is already going to kill me as it is."

"He doesn't need to know."

"Hmm..." He closes the door for me. I whince as I reach over for the seat belt, his hand tapping the back of my car as I watch him in the side mirror dart back towards me before changing his mind and moving to his bike.

He's very attentive. Every time we arrive at traffic lights he pulls up next to me and checks on me, he must be able to smell my wound still, smell the blood.

He's right, I should have healed by now.

The drive back is long, and I have to play music and keep the air conditioning on just to keep me fully alert. Thankfully the guards at the Dark Phantom's gate continue to recognise my car and don't expect me to wait, I really didn't want to explain the blood stained denim barely around my legs. I really didn't want my parents finding out about this.

But too late.

As I pull up to the house, Dad is on me, ripping my driver's door open, the engine still running. His eyes that of his wolf, my already weak body now frozen under his aura as he smells the air around me. He was angry at me for leaving without a word, but the anger that hums off him from the sight of my legs is like nothing I've ever witnessed before.

"Where were you?" I hear Mum ask Knox as he cuts his motorbike engine and removes his helmet, Doctor Abel walking by her side.

"We went to collect Josie's car." Knox responds.

"And you didn't think to tell me that you might have known where Jace could have been?" Dad growls at Knox, but his eyes remain on me, on my wounds. A whimper leaves me from his powerful aura before he but lowers it. Unlike my recent encounter with Jaxon, I don't dare fight Dad's aura.

"I asked him not to, I didn't want to scare Jace off. He called me, I didn't want him not to call me if he ever really does need help." I respond through gritted teeth, preparing to move but Dad's hand pushes my shoulder against the seat, preventing me from exiting. "Abel, here!" He roars, his eyes darting behind to Knox with a deathly stare.

"Holy crap, Josie, what happened?" Doctor Abel moves in, his usual calm tone turning slightly frantic.

"We came off the bike..." I start to explain but am cut off.

"You put my daughter in harm's way, I want you to pack your packs.." Dad venomously roars.

"No Dad, it's not his fault." Panic washes over me at the thought of Knox leaving, of being banished. I knew the time would come that he would need to leave but not yet, not from my doing. "Please, Dad, I made him take me...this isn't his fault. I'm the one to blame." I plead with Dad as Doctor Abel moves past Dad to crouch down by my side, his hands touching my wounds.

"We need to get you to the hospital huh?" His hands reach for me, as he assists me with stepping out of the vehicle. Mum gasps by Knox's side as the full extent of my injuries are on display. "You didn't think to call me?" Dad seethes through gritted teeth at Knox.

"I...I thought she would have healed...." Knox jumps off his bike and takes a step towards me, only to be blocked by Dad.

"Why isn't she healing?" Knox makes the mistake of growling at the notorious Dark Phantom Alpha. My heart beats too fast as Knox continues, now squaring up to Dad. Both males flashing their teeth at one another.

For once I was grateful to Jaxon for his interference. From out of nowhere he comes running over...pushing Knox at the shoulders and telling him to walk it off.

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As soon as I enter my car, Jace's scent overwhelms me and tears start to brim in my eyes...I know it was more the pain, but he was my safety net and smelling him made me miss him even more right now. My hands stroke across the steering wheel, the leather cold under

my

touch.

"I'll follow closely behind." Knox crouches down by the open car door, his fingers like knots in his hands. He felt guilty, it wasn't his fault. None of this was his fault.

"There's really no need, feel free to go ahead."

"Not a chance Red, Alpha Hector is already going to kill me as it is."

"He doesn't need to know."

"Hmm..." He closes the door for me. I whince as I reach over for the seat belt, his hand tapping the back of my car as I watch him in the side mirror dart back towards me before changing his mind and moving to his bike.

He's very attentive. Every time we arrive at traffic lights he pulls up next to me and checks on me, he must be able to smell my wound still, smell the blood.

He's right, I should have healed by now.

The drive back is long, and I have to play music and keep the air conditioning on just to keep me fully alert. Thankfully the guards at the Dark Phantom's gate continue to recognise my car and don't expect me to wait, I really didn't want to explain the blood stained denim barely around my legs. I really didn't want my parents finding out about this.

But too late.

As I pull up to the house, Dad is on me, ripping my driver's door open, the engine still running. His eyes that of his wolf, my already weak body now frozen under his aura as he smells the air around me. He was angry at me for leaving without a word, but the anger that hums off him from the sight of my legs is like nothing I've ever witnessed before.

"Where were you?" I hear Mum ask Knox as he cuts his motorbike engine and removes his helmet, Doctor Abel walking by her side.

"We went to collect Josie's car." Knox responds.

"And you didn't think to tell me that you might have known where Jace could have been?" Dad growls at Knox, but his eyes remain on me, on my wounds. A whimper leaves me from his powerful aura before he but lowers it. Unlike my recent encounter with Jaxon, I don't dare fight Dad's aura.

"I asked him not to, I didn't want to scare Jace off. He called me, I didn't want him not to call me if he ever really does need help." I respond through gritted teeth, preparing to move but Dad's hand pushes my shoulder against the seat, preventing me from exiting. "Abel, here!" He roars, his eyes darting behind to Knox with a deathly stare.

"Holy crap, Josie, what happened?" Doctor Abel moves in, his usual calm tone turning slightly frantic.

"We came off the bike..." I start to explain but am cut off.

"You put my daughter in harm's way, I want you to pack your packs.." Dad venomously roars.

"No Dad, it's not his fault." Panic washes over me at the thought of Knox leaving, of being banished. I knew the time would come that he would need to leave but not yet, not from my doing. "Please, Dad, I made him take me...this isn't his fault. I'm the one to blame." I plead with Dad as Doctor Abel moves past Dad to crouch down by my side, his hands touching my wounds.

"We need to get you to the hospital huh?" His hands reach for me, as he assists me with stepping out of the vehicle. Mum gasps by Knox's side as the full extent of my injuries are on display. "You didn't think to call me?" Dad seethes through gritted teeth at Knox.

"I...I thought she would have healed...." Knox jumps off his bike and takes a step towards me, only to be blocked by Dad.

"Why isn't she healing?" Knox makes the mistake of growling at the notorious Dark Phantom Alpha. My heart beats too fast as Knox continues, now squaring up to Dad. Both males flashing their teeth at one another.

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"I will do."

"So what's your background?"

This is why I preferred the alpha house, less questions about my own past. I get it, I was the visitor, the one everyone wants to get the dirt on.

"I was a bit of a drifter until I started the program...you?" I vaguely respond.

"Born and raised here." He proudly smiles out as he reaches across the table for the salt and pepper.

I would be wasting my time in trying to find information out from Riley. Not only was he the pack's beta but being born and raised here, his loyalty to the alpha family would be unwavering. As it should be. "How long are you here for?" Riley asks just as one of the guards I was shadowing tonight gives me the sign that he was going back to his post.

"Not long, the new intake will start soon and I'll have to be back for that." I stand up, picking up my tray and placing it on the cleaning trolley.

"Well if I can do anything to help whilst you're here..." Beta Riley offers out before I leave.

"Will do." I call back to him before exiting.

By 2am I decide to call it a night, unlike the guard I was shadowing...I had been up all day and now most of the night. If I had any chance of getting up at 6am for training, I needed to call it a night.

Making my way upstairs in the alpha home, I pause at the top of the stairs...suddenly increasingly conflicted.

"Check on her." My wolf demands in my mind, his need all day to see her driving me to the point of almost insanity.

It's also one of the reasons I have kept away, knowing how damn desperate he has been to see her. He's growing too attached, he's never been like this with a female.

He's always too keen to throw them away after spending just one night with them. Boring, he finds them boring, not her though. There is something about Red, something in her taste, in her scent that makes him want more. "No." I fight back, my body unmoving as he tries to push forward.

"Go check on her." He growls threateningly.

"She's fine."

"You don't know that."

"There would have been a pack wide panic if their beloved princess was in crisis...so drop it."

"No, not until I see for myself that she is healed."

There was no point arguing him, not when he was like this. Unnegotiable, stubborn...basically a prick. He'll have me pacing the floor in the guest room until training if I don't check on her.

He won't let me get any sleep.

My hands grip into tiny balls down by my side as I move towards her room, my eyes roaming the dark ill lit hallway.

A soft light glowing through the bottom gap of her door. Opening her door gently, I push it ajar to find the soft glow of the bedside lamp highlighting her red loose hair mixed with a pile of pillows and bedding.

Her room was exactly as I thought it would be...unorganised and chaotic. Her burgundy bed spread should clash against the soft toned walls and beige carpet but she seems to make it work somehow. Gentle...but sexy hot. I take a step in, closing that gap just a little more.

I can hear her deep sleeping breaths, her peaceful moans as she slightly stirs at my midnight intrusion.

As she moves, a thigh escapes from underneath the bedding, her bruised and grazed skin making bile rise to the back of my throat. She hadn't healed at all.

I can smell a new aroma, something different to her usual burnt oranges and spice scent...her signature scent of autumn.

Herbs...her skin glistens slightly under the layer of her own ointment that has been placed across her skin. Did she do it herself, or did another's hand touch her there.

I swallow the monstrous growl that my wolf wants to make, he was a doctor, of course he needs to touch her there.

My hand strokes a few stray red strands of hair from out of her face before I reach for the bedding and place her leg back under it.

"Satisfied?" I groan internally to my wolf who has now backed away, now that I gave him what he wanted.

I leave her, which surprisingly is harder than I thought it would be, even with my wolf back in the recesses of my mind.

Very gently I pull her door to a close, a sigh escaping me as I turn to head in the direction of my room.

When I realise I am not alone. The grey ash eyes of the Dark Phantom Alpha glaring at me from the shadows.

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His eyes continue to glare at me in the dark, the whites of his eyes almost fluorescent yet they aren't as predatory as before. Aren't promising me death like when I returned his daughter covered in blood. Now there's concern edged in the corners as they narrow before his voice whispers out from the darkness.

"Come with me."

"Where are we going?" Hesitation kicks in, how much did he exactly witness. Was I walking to my own death, like a lamb for slaughter. It was easier to dispose of body in the middle of the night, I would know. "We need to talk, in private." He grunts out, his back turning on me and I have no choice but to follow his lead.

I follow him, my intrigue heightened as we walk back downstairs, towards the deathly quiet location of his office. Even I can see how odd it must seem that I entered her bedroom in the dead of night. I had no place to be in there, I was the alpha trainer, a mentor to his sons...what business have I got being near the pack princess.

He moves to his desk, switching a small lamp on before moving to a sideboard and picking out two small glasses. He reaches for a bottle of whiskey, before pouring us a glass each...moving to hold one out for me to take.

I wasn't much of a drinker, I suppose I didn't really have the need to reflect back on the day. I'm usually too exhausted from remaining active that sleep falls upon me very easily. Or it used to. I learnt a long time ago that alcohol has a way of bringing nightmares to your dreams.

I don't need the warm burning sensation of whiskey...well not usually but I can't deny I knock it back a bit too easily. It's been a hellish day and as Alpha Hector pours me a second glass...I take it gladly.

"So, how do you find my pack?" He asks before slowly sipping on his own whiskey glass as he moves to sit behind his desk.

"Like a fortress." It's the truth, I've never seen a pack like it. Not one sign of an error.

""You've visited every part of it?"

"Not every part."

"Oh?"

"The armoury...." I respond, sitting back on the small couch, my hands gently rocking the whiskey glass. He's not directly getting to the point which means I'll be here a while, best make myself comfortable. Doesn't look like I'll be getting any sleep before training in a few hours.

"Not even pack members can visit there, let alone outsiders."

"Why not?"

"You know why not." He gives me a look, yes of course I know why.

"Yes, I'm surprised you let your own daughter have access to weapons...with a weapon vault in the very basement of this house."

"Josephina needs to protect herself." I choose to black out the image of her asking me to call her by her real name as I was deep within her. The hint of a flush entering onto my cheeks at the memory.

"With silver bullets? You think silver bullets are the best way to keep her safe?" I can't stifle the scoff that escapes me, his eyes glowing with a slight fire at my words.

He sits back, his crossed hands lifting to his mouth as he scans me carefully. Taking his time, maybe taking his time for my sarcasm to calm down.

"You've been questioning my pack members." A low rumble emits from his chest, his eyes watching me for my response.

"I'm not sure what you mean?" I move in my seat, not because his stare affects me but because I'm trying to act like I have no idea what he is talking about. I didn't know he knew that, I thought my questions had been careful. I suppose it highlights the strength of the pack that the pack members reported it to their alpha.

I make a mental note to be mindful of what I say in front of the pack members from now on. Ironically the one person that I've been trying to find information on, seemingly the only person to keep our situation a secret. The only one not to run to the alpha.