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"Yes you do...you asked pack members why my daughter wasn't at the pack run." He quirks an eyebrow at me, a small hint of a smirk forming in the corner of his mouth.

"I just thought it odd, that as a member of the alpha family..." I start but he holds a hand out to me, cutting me off mid sentence. Mid explanation.

"Is there something going on with you two?"

Shit...

"How do you mean?"

"I think you know what I mean." His head lowers and his eyes almost pierce into my soul. Shit, he had seen more than he was letting on.

"I felt guilty..." I start to explain but he knows instantly what I am about to say is full of bullshit.

"No.."

"No?"

"No...don't lie to me Knox. It's vital that you don't lie to me."

What does he want me to say, that I've entered some kind of friends with benefits agreement with his own daughter, I don't think so.

"I returned her soaked in her own blood...I just wanted to make sure she was safe, that she was healed at least." I hold his glare, not preparing to back down.

"You feel protective of her, you feel possessive?"

His words blindsided me, I didn't expect him to ask me that.

"Possessive?"

"You don't want other males touching her, being anywhere near her."

"Yes, Alpha I know what possessive means. I don't know, I haven't really given it any thought." Fuck I have, it's all I have been thinking about at the borders. How the Doctor

had his hands firmly around her waist, even now, knowing he would have placed the medicine on her wounds.

"She's special to me." Hector pulls me from the thoughts that were making me angry.

"All daughters are to their fathers."

"No...you'd be surprised. Trust me, I have first hand experience of how twisted some fathers can be." He sighs out, placing the glass on the desk before standing up and looking out of the window behind his desk. "Yours?"

"Kaia's actually. The children don't know this but he was a monster." He turns back to face me, remaining by the window but now turning his back on her ethereal glow of the moon.

"Really, how so?"

"If I tell you, you need to promise me that word will not reach them. Especially Josephina, she would struggle..being close to their Auntie Alora."

"You have my word."

"Kaia's father kept the existence of Alora a secret. He sent Alora away to be adopted, but informed their mother that she had died in childbirth." The sadness that enters onto his face, the crease upon his forehead informs me that he speaks the truth. I'm stunned, stunned by the sick news, that someone could do such a thing to their own child.

"Why?" I swallow hard, and I thought my childhood was hard.

"You've heard the tale of the white wolf?"

"Yes."

Of course, it's one of the many fairy tales taught to us as children. Along with the tooth fairy and Santa Claus.

"And you noticed my mate's wolf's colour at the pack run."

"Yes, she was white. But I don't believe in fairy tales Alpha."

"Neither did I. Beckett knew what Kaia was, and didn't want Alora to be a positive impact in her life.."

"So he sent her away." So not only was Josie's grandfather guilty of such a cruel act, but that he did so based on a silly childhood story.

"He sent her away, lied to his mate, his daughter and his pack...all in the name of power. My children are special to me Knox, they share the bloodline of the white wolf.."

"I.." I'm not really sure what he expects me to say.

"I would do anything to protect them, especially my daughter. She has been cheated by the moon goddess, just as was her mother but for other reasons." "How so?"

"Josephina doesn't have a wolf."

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- Josie -

I knew I was the daughter of a white wolf.

Mum didn't once attempt to cover up her special features to us as children, she would let us sit on her white wolf when we were small, cover her with gooey mud during the rain and play hide and seek in the snow.

The pack never made a thing of her being a different colour, a massive contrast to their browns, blacks and on occasions...some are sandy brown.

I only have happy memories from my childhood and not having a wolf doesn't change that.

But when my brother's wolves came in during our teenage years, I started to ask questions. Where was my wolf, when would I get mine like my brothers?

By the time I finally reached 18...none of us were shocked that my wolf didn't appear. There was that hope... that she had been delayed but I knew better. There was no build up like my brother's experienced...no strange voice in my head, no random shifting at the most inconvenient moments.

Mum had gently sat me down to tell me at 13 that there was only ever one white wolf in existence at one time. That hers came to her just as her ancestors did, because her mother had died before she came of age. No previous daughter of the white wolf got to turn of age with their mother still alive.

I couldn't imagine Mum not in my life, she is my world and if having no wolf is the price to pay then I'd do it every time. I'd pick her every time, without fail.

That's not to say it was hard to navigate the big void of not having a wolf had created, especially when I live in a pack and am the only non shifter.

It took the pack time to also adjust, to understand why they couldn't feel me in the pack bond, why I can't be contacted through the mind-link.

But we made it work, they helped me to make it work.

As Jaxon and Jace threw themselves into their alpha training, I threw myself into weapons practice and working at the hospital. Maybe helping to heal pack members, deep down, makes me feel better about myself...makes me feel needed, that I have a valid place here. Dad ruled that the details of me not having a wolf should never exit the pack, that others might use it to their advantages. I would be a target for power hungry alphas or even rogues.

So he made me train, he made me learn to fight in my skin form and how to shoot firearms. He has taught me all I need to know the defend myself.

Uncle Orpheus, Auntie Rosa and Uncle Jude know, Dad and Mum trust them explicitly. Maya knows, because she is my best friend and also the entire members of Clear Waters pack...meaning George as well. They were Mum's pack and somehow just knew. When my family and pack were on pack runs, I was exercising in my cabin in the woods or working at the hospital. Doctor Abel taking me under his wing has helped me to plan out my future, to help empower me.

So I don't have a wolf...was it the end of the world. Lobo was my wolf. His sharp eyes scan out into the darkness, his ears perk up at the most minuscule of noises, he was as primal, just as lethal to any threat. For all intents and purposes; he was my wolf. The dull ache of my injuries wakes me, the medicine Doctor Abel had lathered on me having now worn off. Waking up with a pained groan I slowly sit up, tossing the bedcovers off me to inspect my wounds.

They weren't too bad...there was bruising still and the cuts had scabbed over. My herbal ointment worked quicker on werewolves because it compliments their wolf healing levels, something that I am also missing not having a wolf.

I reach for a my fluffy jumper, pulling it over my head before climbing out of the bed. It was early, too early...Jaxon will be leading the warrior training by now.

Deciding to head downstairs, I take my time...using the banister to support until Dad walks out of his office and not to worry him, I stand up...swallowing the bite of the pain travelling up my legs.

He isn't alone, that leather and sandalwood smell reaches me before he follows Dad out of his office. The scent tickling at my nose and I find myself

Leaning into it, my body receptive to it...until I notice Dad is still watching me. A tired but wired looking Knox passes Dad, his eyes not even looking at me. Does he not even notice me at the bottom of the stairs. He must do, his body is rigid, his face tense. He exits, I watch his back as he leave the front door, my foot taking another step down just as Dad's hand places on my shoulder.

"He's late for training."

Late for training? Was he not at least concerned for me, he didn't check on me at all yesterday.

Not once did I blame him, but I expected him to at least ask if I was okay. To have returned for dinner last night. Some small sign that he at least cared about my welfare.

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- Knox ~

"Only Josephina's true mate can protect her." The words of Alpha Hector still ring in my ears. They were repeating like a drum designed to shake me to the core. And they haven't failed.

She doesn't have a wolf....the daughter of the two most highly influential, powerful alphas..doesn't have a wolf.

How was that even possible.

I've seen both Jaxon and Jace in their wolf forms, so how can Red have been denied by the moon goddess... How can she have been missed? Has the Moon Goddess not even seen her, she's impossible to miss. Any hope of getting sleep last night disappeared as soon as he told me. I couldn't leave his office, I needed to know more and by the time it came for

training...sleep was the last thing on my mind.

Even as she stood at the bottom of the stairs, her legs bruised and grazed as she tried to hide the

pain...it killed me to think of what could have happened.

How lucky she had been to escape the motorbike crash alive.

How I had unknowingly put her in a life-threatening situation.

I knew there was something, something they were hiding...but I never imagined for one moment it would be that. How could it be...she has a scent, an allure about her...I can feel that pull to her that is becoming increasingly difficult to avoid.

But if she hasn't got a wolf, she hasn't got a mate.

Hector had confided in me, more than he has with his own sons.

Kaia's father had declared her twin, Alora, a still-born and lied about her existence. Even lied to Kaia, claiming her own mother had died in childbirth,

when in fact he had killed her with his own bare hands and covered it up.

When Kaia was almost of age, almost old enough to take on the pack herself as the rightful heir...the pack challenged him...called him out on his lies. He killed them, killed them all.

Hector wasn't lacking in the details of finding the forgotten skeletons himself when Kaia and he

explored the Clear Waters pack together. A pack now back to its former glory of being run by the White Wolf, but managed by her twin sister.

A momentous historical tale, kept a secret.

My head was spinning, training being the perfect outlet for the frustration building up inside of me. A part of me wanted to close the distance between us as she stood at the bottom of the stairs, for my hands to grip onto her waist and pull her into me.

Was she cold...she had a fluffy jumper on...without her wolf, does she feel the cold more. Become tired...it's all making so much sense now. How her parents didn't want her working past lunch time at the hospital having been up all night by my bed side. How Jaxon refuses to let her train with the warriors now and even wants to abolish the use of weapons as defence.

My mind flickers back to her at the bottom of the stairs. I hadn't visited her all day, yet she remained up all night with me when Jaxon's wolf attacked me and what did I do? I turned my back on her...

Fuck.

This is more than I signed up for. I was here to observe and report back. Check their defences, check their training...not start a secret affair with the alpha's daughter and get in over my head. Except for the pack and their inner circle, I was the only other to now know.

Does that mean he trusts me, even though I returned her covered in blood. He worries for her safety yet sends her out with silver bullets...to me it just doesn't make sense. I've seen the true horror silver bullets can cause, I've seen a pack destroyed in a matter of minutes by the metallic heartless dart.

Training was over before I felt it had even started. I needed more, I needed a few rounds in the boxing ring to exorcise this growing feel of dread within

me. That was clawing at my throat at the very thought of her. No wolf, she had no wolf yet acted like she was indestructible.

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- Josie -

I could only manage to sit on a stool on the kitchen island, my legs ached even more as soon as I tried to sit at the kitchen table...the bending down pulling at my wounds.

I was in my own world, my mind lost in my own thoughts as my hands hugged the mug of coffee, keeping me warm. It was cold today, colder than usual and like always, I felt it more than the others.

I didn't notice Jaxon and Knox return from training until Mum walked in, also noticing their arrival.

"How was training?" Mum breezes in, dressed in a white milk-maid style dress and a denim jacket. Her go to flip flops clicking with her steps.

"Fine." Jaxon grunts as I hear him pot cereal into a bowl.

"Just fine?" Mum's tongue clicks in annoyance.

"What do you want me to say Mum? That I'm doing two people's work..." I roll my eyes at Jaxon's curt reply, he fails to forget that he would be the sole alpha of this pack one day and would have a beta..not another alpha by his side. Maybe Jace was right to leave, maybe he did it to finally force Jaxon to step up and take on full responsibility of the pack, by himself.

"No different to how your father runs the pack." She turns, her eyebrow raising and her arms crossing in front her chest.

"He has you."

"Not at the beginning he didn't, when he built this pack from scratch. So quit your moaning." She quite rightfully reprimands him for his attitude. Yes Jace leaving has put a spanner in the works but it would have happened sooner or later. "Did someone mention me?" Dad walks into the kitchen from his office, his hands wrapping around Mum as he starts nibbling at her ear from behind. He makes no attempt to hide how much Mum's scent still affects him to this day.

"Just saying what an impressive alpha you are..." Mum leans her neck to the side to reveal her mark to him, which he kisses. Their love like something out of a fairytale. Something I have always envied, ever more since knowing it would never happen to me. "Oh really."

"Ew gross." Jaxon mutters, earning a death stare from Dad.

I remain where I sit, my back straight as I try to act unbothered by his presence, unbothered by the fact that I could feel his eyes on my back.

He turned his back on me early this morning as he walked out the front door, without a word...even an acknowledgement from the eyes...time he felt the coldness of my back.

"Good morning Alpha family." Doctor Abel lets himself in, chiming his morning greeting to us all.

"Morning Doctor Abel" Mum sings back out, matching Doctor Abel's enthusiast greeting as he enters.

"Please Alpha, like I tell Josie, when I'm not at the hospital it's just Abel."

"My females are respectful Abel, the same can't be said about my males." Dad shoots Jaxon a warning look before continuing his conversation with Doctor Abel. "What can we do for you?"

"I'm here to redress Josie's wounds."

"Oh there's no need Doctor Abel, I can do that myself. I was actually almost on my way in."

"You aren't working today?" Dad doesn't make any attempt to hide his surprise at my plans for the day.

"You need to rest." His pointed look threatens to keep me on this stool all day.

"Rest? I'll die of boredom."

"Better than dying from an infection."

"Dad..." I moan out at his embarrassingly, over protectiveness attitude.

"We are past the stage of possible infection, but I think the Alpha is right Josie, another day just to give the skin a better chance to heal over more." He agrees with father, of course he does. He places a jar of my special remedy on the kitchen island top, his hands reaching out to lift my leg out when Lobo darts over...growling and almost biting the doctor's hand off.

"Lobo." I shout at him for reacting in such a way. Sure he was protective but this was taking it too far.

"I'd like to keep my hand...call me if you need help doing it." Doctor Abel eyes Lobo with warning as he backs away.

"I'm sure one of us can help if she can't do it herself Doctor." Dad smirks as he moves away from Mum and pulls a chair out of the kitchen table, joining Jaxon and Knox.

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My eyes glance over to Jaxon who was shaking his head whilst Knox was as stiff as I had been, his eyes darting between Lobo and Doctor Abel. His hands gripping onto the edge of the table.

"I can do it myself, thanks for dropping it over Doctor and I'll be back at work tomorrow." I smile

out, Lobo continuing to embarasingly guard me from the good doctor. His growling continuing until the doctor leaves for the front door.

"Lobo...you can be so embarrassing at times." I bend down as much as I can, stroking my fingers through the top of his head.

"I'd say he's called it..." Jaxon's comment shoots at me from behind.

"Called what?"

"Oh come on Josie...really?" I spin on the stool to watch Jaxon roll his eyes as he stands up, carrying his now empty bowl to the kitchen sink.

""What?"

"So naïve." Jaxon moves past me, placing a kiss on the top of my head before pulling out his phone and heading for the stairs.

"What?" I turn to Dad, who chuckles...before his eyes lock on Mum who raises an eyebrow at him and swiftly leaves the kitchen. Dad following...yes Jaxon was right, gross.

I become very aware that the busy kitchen of only a few seconds ago, has now fallen silent with only myself, Lobo and...Knox.

With a sigh, I reach for the jar of remedy, my back once again turned on him as I attempt to stretch one of my legs out...my teeth biting down on my bottom lip to stifle the pained moan that tries to escape me. Acidic bile shoots to the back of my throat as my leg remains locked half way out because I can't bear the thought of moving it further.

My eyes slam shut as I try to move it again before I feel the tingle sensations of another's hand now on my leg.

My eyes open to watch him as he opens the lid off the jar, scoops out some of the ointment with his hand before it's cooling properties start to take effect as he smooths it into one of the wounds.

Lobo remains silent at the base of my stool, not once making any noise of Knox touching me, yet when Doctor Abel, a trained professional, tried to...he went ballistic.

Knox takes his time, his fingers moving over each graze, each bruise before he spins me slightly and commences on the second leg. I watch dumbfounded, my throat now dry as he moves in-between my thighs, his hand running up my arms as he adds the remedy onto some of the cuts

on my shoulders and upper back.

They were nothing in comparison to my legs, that had taken the brunt of the fall... if he hadn't of grabbed me, my injuries would have been a hundred times worse...or I would have slipped under the wheels of the lorry and died. Once he has finished he closes the lid, a coldness falling upon me again as he moves to the sink...washing his hands and drying them. I expected him to leave me here, to walk out but he doesn't.

To my surprise, he moves back towards me, a predatory look within his eyes.

His warmth radiating off him at his closeness just as he places a hand on my lower back and another cups under my thighs.

He lifts me with ease in his arms, carrying me to the living room sofa but not before whistling at Lobo to

follow us. His deep brooding brown eyes are intense now as they look deeply into mine. I can feel my own electronically charged body from his touch, tremble.

"I'm sorry I've done this to you." His words are soft, full of remorse before his lips gently lock on mine for a mere second...not long enough.

He places me down on the sofa, reaching for a blanket as he wraps it around my body...clicking his fingers at Lobo to jump up and lay next to me.

He strokes the top of Lobo's head before scratching at his ears, my pup like putty in his hands.

"Do you have training to lead today?"

"No, I planned to be at the hospital today." I respond, shaken by his change in behaviour compared to this morning. He nods, his eyes continuing to look at me with an unreadable expression. Did he really think he was to blame...because he wasn't.

"Knox.."

"Rest. I've got somewhere to be."

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- Josie -

A few days passed and I was back at the hospital, my thighs showing hardly any sign now that they were only torn open a few days ago. I have to say it myself, my herbal remedies are bloody awesome. Tonight it was the pack's turn to host the annual party that extended to all packs part of the same alliance.

Usually keen to stay at the hospital for as long as possible, I couldn't wait to finish my shift today so that I could get home to help with the set up. Auntie Alora would be attending the party and I couldn't wait to see her. Every Dark Phantom pack member was welcome at the party, whereas it was only the alphas, lunas and betas that attended from other packs. Meaning... for once... it was a pack party that George couldn't invite himself to.

I didn't have to walk on eggshells, worry about his overly wandering hands...I could just forget about any potential drama tonight. I could just enjoy spending quality time with Auntie Alora...no drama.

As I walked along the path leading home, I could already see her car outside.

Picking up speed, I burst the front door open with sheer excitement, the back of the door hitting against the wall.

"Auntie Alora?" I call out... Dad's, Jaxon's, Knox's and Riley's heads all turning around at my energetic entrance.

"She's in the garden..." Dad calls out but having scanned the hallway to see her not there, I was already making my way to the garden just as Dad confirmed what I already knew.

Exiting back out the front door, I walk around the side of the house to enter the garden's side gate.

She was Mum's mirror image...except for a few slight noticeable differences. Just like Jace and Jaxon, I always knew how to tell them apart. Hearing me enter the garden she turns, a full beam erupting on her face as she stands next to Mum. "Josie." She calls out, opening her arms as I run towards her. Her hands wrap tightly around me, as

I get lost in her supportive embrace that I have missed.

"Mum said you had been hurt?" She states with concern as she pats the back of my hair.

"It's nothing, I'm fine now. When did you get here?" I brush off her concern as I pull out of her hold, I was fine now and didn't want to keep thinking of it.

"Not long ago...I didn't come alone." She cups at my face and for a brief moment dread washes over me that she was referring to George, but thankfully Ezra walks out of the back door with a few mugs in his hands.

"Ezra." I squeal out, also rushing up to him. He just about places the drinks down on the garden table before I fling my arms around him.

"Good to see you too champ." He holds my embrace. I love Ezra. He was Dad's beta until Auntie Alora took on the daily running of the Clear Waters pack, and he has been there ever since.

He and Auntie Alora make a dream team when it comes to running the pack, giving Mum the time to spend with us when we were little.

"What's been going on?" His eyes narrow with playful interrogation.

"Oh you know, fell off a motorbike at full speed....but you know, shit happens."

"It certainly does. You've got a motorbike to go with your leathers?"

"I wish...no, Knox took me out to get my car back."

"Why where was your car?" His forehead furrows in confusion as he passes Mum and Auntie Alora a mug each. He offers his to me but I refuse, I can make a drink later. "Jace took it when he left." I continue.

"Left?" Auntie Alora walks over, picking up her drink from Ezra's hands, turning back to Mum with a quizzical look.

"Yes, it seems Jace is having some time for himself." Mum gives me a pinned look. Oops, perhaps she hadn't got that far into the catchup chat just yet.

"Where is he?" Ezra asks.

"We don't know." Mum sighs out.

"That's very unlike Jace." I don't miss the way Auntie Alora's eyes flicker to Ezra's with concern.

"Don't worry, he'll be back soon. He's just having some time to himself before he takes over the Clear Waters pack."

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The official pack gathering was a hit as it always is. Long tables dressed in white table cloths sat under paper lanterns and glowing fairy lights as our back garden had been transformed into something from a set of a romantic movie scene.

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The moon, she blessed our gathering with a strong ethereal shine that naturally put everybody in a good mood.

I was dressed in a full length burgundy one shoulder gown that had a gold disc embellished on one hip with an opened circle...revealing a flash of my hip bone.

Yes I knew what I was doing. There were plenty of alphas and betas here tonight, I knew it would drive Knox wild with jealousy to see other eyes on me. Maybe I was playing with fire, but this bitch was a fiery goddess herself...I control the fire.

I could feel his eyes roaming over me, as he mingled with the other guests. He was quite the networker, I had heard a few conversations amongst the alphas of Kit Knoxbridge's training program, and how he kept himself away from pack environments, so why was he here. He seemed to be the main topic of conversation this evening.

"May I?"

"Of course." I accept Ezra's hand as music starts to play and guests join the small dance floor.

Resting my head on Ezra's shoulder, my eyes search the crowd as other alphas watch me...but his eyes the only ones I lock on to. He looked divine tonight, a navy blue suit and a metallic silver tie that gleamed with the moon's glow.

As Ezra spins me, my eyes continue to hold Knox's... Ezra's eyes following mine.

"Ah the alpha trainer." He teases, as a smirk erupts upon his lips.

"Stop it." I hush him, my eyes breaking away from Knox's as I have been caught red handed. Ezra won't say anything, he's a gentleman...he's the type that takes your secrets with him to the grave.

"What have I missed?" His eyes search mine for information.

"Nothing, you know me...no time for romance." My eyes sink down, my head looking to our feet as we continue to dance.

"There's always time for romance...especially for one as beautiful as you." His finger lifts my chin up, forcing me to meet his eyes.

As the music picks up speed again he spins me, too fast and I lose my footing only for a new hand to wrap around my lower back...my body being pulled into another's.

His scent overwhelms my senses and even with my eyes closed from becoming dizzy, I know instantly who it is. His signature scent.

He moves me with such precision that I'm yet again in awe of his talents. An Alpha trainer, now a dancer as well.

My face heats up from the eyes that watch us from the crowd, whispers of how well we dance together...but all I can do is look at those brown eyes. Those brown broody eyes.

I try not to react to his closeness, to his scent that wants to pull me in closer. Trap me under the spell it casts upon me.

Even as his hand moves from my lower back and grips tightly on my exposed hip.

I swallow hard as his fingers dance themselves across my hip bone...I'm hypnotised under his magic.

When the song finishes, our dance comes to

A natural close and as I feel other males come towards me, I can't imagine dancing with any of them...I only ever want all my dances to be with him.

"Excuse me." I say as I step away, hastily moving towards the back door of the house. Needing space between us.

What games was he playing with me. Tormenting me with his hot and cold attitude.

I was confused, his mixed emotions confusing me. We agreed sex only...so why was he dancing with me. Carrying me to the sofa.

Isn't this what I wanted though, to play with fire...to torment him just as much as he torments me.

I need air, even though I'm moving inside...being outside suddenly felt too claustrophobic. I move past the kitchen and towards the living room, craving privacy as my breathing starts to become heavy. Entering my own living room, I halt to a stop as two figures kiss in the shadows. I go to leave, to give them privacy when they notice my arrival, both breaking free...a gasp escaping me. Auntie Alora and Ezra.

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- Josie -

"Oh...I'm sorry...I didn't mean..." Kicking myself for intruding on their privacy I start to back away.

"No, Josie wait...it's not..."

"You don't need to explain, I'm...I'll..." Both of their faces are horrified as I continue to back away into the hallway, only to stop as I hit a solid chest.

Flustered and not exactly sure what I walked in on, I retreat...Auntie Alora has never once mentioned having feelings for Ezra. But then again, they would be ideal for each other.

So why hide it. Why kiss in secret corners, in the shadows....why hide.

"Josie." He growls from the top of the stairs as I race towards my bedroom.

"I just need some space." I call back before closing my door, only for Knox to push the door back with his hand.

"Space from what?"

My eyes needed to digest what they had just seen, but the reason of me even escaping back into the house still lingered, I needed space from him. From us, whatever this thing is.

"It doesn't matter. I'll be down in a bit, I need to dance with a few of the alphas anyway." I walk further into my room, leaving him by the door.

"Need to dance with a few of the alphas?" He huffs.

"Yes, out of courtesy. I always do." Surely he understands my role as the daughter of the alphas. He himself has been networking all evening.

"You aren't dancing with anyone else but me this evening." My door makes a bang sound as he slams it shut before eating up the space between us.

"Excuse me?" I quirk an eyebrow at him, a scoff leaving my throat before I can prevent it.

"You heard me."

"Who the fuck do you think you are?"

"I'm the guy that you're..."

"Fucking...exactly. You don't own me, you don't control me." My voice is low, as not to attract the attention of the guests outside but it still has a bite in it, a sting.

A suffocating, dangerous aura emits out of him, something I didn't know he was even capable of.

Its darkness swirls around my bedroom, like a hand gripping at my throat as I feel him release it on to me.

"Don't you know what they see, what their eyes see and what their minds think? You're dancing with me and me alone.." He orders through gritted teeth.

"In what world do you bark orders at me." I gasp out, my lungs struggling to hold onto air but I don't care. Who does he think he is...

"In a world where we have entered an agreement." He's hot, burning hot. I can feel his increasing body temperature radiate off him. My hand even moves to touch his forehead to check this burst of temper, was something wrong with his wolf. "Knox, what is going on with you?" I calmly ask, even though the air around me was oppressive, I took no real notice. Concern for his odd behaviour overshadowed that anger within me.

With a deep breath in, I feel his aura rein in...feel it's grip loosen.

"Do you want me to say it Josie." His fingers run through his hair, before pulling at the ends. He looks like a man on the verge of a mental breakdown.

"Say what?" What is going on with him, he looks torn, broken. I can feel my own body moving towards him, that pull to him I have always felt only intensifying as I see him in pain, see him conflicted. "That you are mine?"

I pause, my hands that were rising to touch him again halt, mid air.

I can feel my heart beating uncontrollably, my chest tightening at the very thought that he might feel something more for me. That it hadn't been one sided, that this could actually be something more than just sex.

"Yes, I want you to say it." I whisper out, as my hands finally make contact on his skin...my hands cupping at his face as I pull him to look at me head on.

His eyes are burning with undeniable lust, undeniable emotions that perhaps we are more to one another than we've pretended. Than I've also pretended. His hands grip onto my hips, thrusting me closer towards him. Those same hands then raise up the curves of my body before gripping around my neck. "You are mine." His words are an animalistic growl, a belonging sensation erupting within me that I didn't know I needed, that I had craved all along.

His lips crash into mine with a force that threatens to topple me.

As he kisses me, he slowly back-steps me to the bed, the back of my leg coming in contact with the bed frame. My body reacts to his, every part of me moving insync with his, craving more of his touch.

He turns me, pushing my upper body down onto the bed as I feel his hands wrestle with the fabric of my dress and lift it up over my hips. He moves my underwear aside before I feel him penetrating me with a hunger, with a demanding force...that fire I had created within him this evening.

This was different, this was an animalistic urge he needed to fulfil.

"You are mine Josie... mine." He continues to thrust into me, claiming me as his. The sheer thrill igniting within me as I pull the bed sheets around my mouth to muffle the sound of my screams as his hands grip at my hips, his lower core ploughing into me.

Denied by Destiny: Trapped in the Shadows of the Mate Bond

Standing from a distance, watching her dance with alpha after alpha was fucking killing me. If the scent of her juices wasn't still soaked all over my dick, I would be losing it right now.

Our passionate tryst wasn't too long ago that it was also keeping my wolf calm just beneath the surface, if that was a possible thing.

Alpha Hector and Alpha Kaia had provided me with the best opportunity to promote my programe during this event, even without knowing it. Alphas and Betas desperate to hear more of what the program involved, had been introducing themselves to me all night.

I'd be fully booked for the next 6-12 months. I hadn't considered beta training, but having been offered funding already by a few pack alphas tonight...it's something I will consider going forward.

She looked breathtaking, she was breathtaking. Her red hair glimmered under the warm glow of the fairly lights. Each time she finished talking or dancing...her body would shiver slightly.

Whether that's from another male touching her or she could feel the chill in the evening air.... So slight that it would be missed by others...but now that I know the truth, I'm seeing her in a different light. Not once has she complained, not once has she gone back inside to put a jacket on.

Even now I can see the goosebumps litter across her bare arms and shoulder that I was only biting into only a few hours ago.

A smirk and a glance my way lets me know she can tell I am watching her, that she might not have a wolf but she has the instincts of a hot blooded female...knowing when she is being craved.

If watching her dance with alphas and betas didn't drive my inner wolf to the edge of insanity...then watching Doctor Abel dance with her certainly did. There's something about him, something that just doesn't feel right.

I can't put my finger on it. I'm not doubting Josie's medical skills but letting her perform in an operation, untrained. I have little time for people that would use a situation to get ahead and I think that's exactly what he did.

I can't watch...I can watch torture, I can watch an alpha deny his wolf a shift....but to watch him whisper in her ear, her head fling back in a giggle as he holds her in his arms...I need to walk away. Before I do something I am going to regret...like rip the heart out of the much loved doctor.

As the party comes to a close, I remain near the bar... whiskey now being a firm favourite of mine. As the alphas, lunas and betas start to leave, a few come over to shake my

hand...words are shared of them getting in touch with me once I am back at my base. All under the watchful eye of Alpha Hector who sits next to me, sharing from the same bottle of whiskey.

"You've picked up a lot of business from tonight?" His eyes roam the plentiful guests that he has been entertaining all evening. Guests that wish to remain holding favour with the Dark Phantom Alpha. "Should see me fully booked for the next year, saves me touting for business. I might even set up a beta program." I nod in response, my eyes also roaming the crowd of people, many starting to leave. "Really?"

"A few seemed quite interested, I don't know...something for me to look into." I down the last few drops of my whiskey before pouring another, topping Alpha Hector's glass at the same time.

I can see her in my peripheral vision...she's hard to miss. Still laughing with Doctor Abel as he also makes Alpha Kaia laugh. I've never been a jealous man, I've never cared enough for a female...but shit, the possessiveness I felt earlier was only building up again.

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My entire body tenses as he kisses the back of her hand before walking in my direction. The tensing of my body isn't missed I'm sure by the Alpha sitting next to me, a smirk erupting on his face as his tumbler glass lifts to his lips.

"Good night Alpha." Doctor Abel places his hand out for Alpha Hector to shake. He was a confident man, even for his age which can't be older than me. I'd place him in his mid to late twenties. "You're off?"

"I've got an early start."

"Yes I suppose it is getting rather late." Alpha Hector clasps his hand within the doctor's, shaking it respectfully.

"Well thank you for the invite."

"Of course."

I watch in silence as the doctor walks away, my hands cupping my glass tightly, a firm scowl fixed on my face as I watch him walk into the shadows of the night.

"You don't like him very much do you?" I'm trying to decipher whether his question had a level of humour to it.

"I don't know him well enough to like or dislike him." I'm careful with what I say. I might not be a supporter but he is a pack member and I must remain respectful to the Alpha family that have shown me a lot of kindness in letting me stay here. Even though I was here to do a job for them, their hospitality had exceeded my expectations.

Who was I to question the alpha's selection of medical staff and who they decide to trust.

"Oh come now Knox, this is a safe place."

Humour, I was right there was a tone of humour laced within his question. Even now, he's watching my eyes carefully as I can't help but glance over to his daughter. The object of my desire.

"No, I don't like him." A low growl emits from me, my wolf also adding in his two cents.

"Why not?" He presses.

"I don't trust him...I think he has ulterior motives."

"Such as?"

"Such as preferential treatment of coworkers..trying to get in favour by putting others at risk."

"Oh I see. And it has nothing to do with the coworker being my daughter?" He follows my line of vision, just as Jaxon places his jacket over her shoulders. I'm glad I'm not the only one to have noticed how cold she was. I have so many questions... "Perhaps." I rumble into my glass, the smooth burning liquer making it easier to speak my mind.

"Trust is earned, not given away freely." I've had to learn the hard way and I would do anything to stop another feel the pain I felt. Feel the betrayal I felt, even at such a young age.

A silence falls upon Alpha Hector and I. He looking at his family, me...contemplating the past that still haunts me even now. He moves, stepping off the bar stool...his back straightening to a great Alpha height.

"He has earned his trust. I trust him, and that should be good enough." Hector declares before placing the bottle of whiskey behind the back of the bar.

His hand lands on my shoulder with a firm squeeze, something my Father would have done to soothe my spiralling thoughts.

He stands up, no further comment...no accusatory words fired in my direction for thinking differently to him. For questioning who he trusts. For thinking badly of one of his pack members.

He walks over to Jaxon and his females, before placing his arms around them. It's been a long time since I've thought of my family, of my pack. Memories placed so far back into my mind that they feel like from a different lifetime.