

## DENIED BY DESTINY: TRAPPED IN THE SHADOWS OF THE MATE BOND

### Chapter 32



#### Chapter 0032 Hector POV

"It was my mate." Rosa sobs out, her breathing becoming erratic again. She's going to need some kind of draft to calm her down.

"She needs a doctor!" Kaia demands, my head whipping around to her.

I start mind-linking the Head Doctor, ordering for him to attend my home immediately, when Kaia abruptly grabs my arm and I could have sworn...no..I'm imagining it. "A female doctor!" She adds.

It didn't take long for the head doctor to respond to my order through the mind-link to come immediately to the alpha house, and bring a female colleague with him. As soon as they arrived and took one look at Rosa they changed their approach.

Kaia

was

right,

Rosa responded better to a female physician.

I even suggested that Kaia acted as a chaperone, helping to take Rosa upstairs:

As

We were watching Kaia help take Rosa upstairs, all us males quiet, waiting for the door to close. Rosa was resting her head on Kaia's shoulders, her sobs still prominent but becoming less frequent. As soon as Rosa was out of ear shot and the door was closed, Riley starts to dart for the front door. Abruptly pushing his friends aside that are trying to prevent him from leaving. "Killing him now will seem like we are attacking which will start the war the Amber Desert Alpha wants, you can't fall into their trap..." I calmly state to Riley as he almost reaches the hallway. "And what about my sister? She's 16..16 Alpha...some dirty f\*\*\*r has had his hands all over her."

Riley was struggling to maintain his growing anger, he needed an outlet and killing the b\*\*\*rd that attacked Rosa is exactly what he needs. His own hands were shaking, his wolf needing out. Riley I'm I stop t when I hear "She's for your Mum?"

footsteps coming down the staircase and we all turn to find a rather pale looking Kaia rejoining us. She softly says to Riley.

She's composed but my wolf is picking up on her heartache for the girl upstairs. "Mum...oh goddess....how do I tell her?" Riley covers his face with his hands.

"You don't, ask your parents here. Get them here first. She's now asking for you. She's very distraught. She's been given a draft to calm her down and help her rest...even if you just sit with her?" "Riley, gather your parents here. I'll handle the rest. I'll know if you disobey me..." I make it very clear before Riley parts that he is to get his parents and that's it.

As soon as Riley leaves the house I order the men to stand guard on the borders, ensuring Ezra quietly

+25

puts the pack on security high alert.

Alone with the Head Doctor and Kaia, I walk Kaia out of the room and back towards the staircase.

"Is it what I suspect?" I keep my voice to low.

"The doctor hasn't finished her check." Kaia shakes her head, suddenly resisting to meet my eyes with hers.

"Kaia..."

"I'm not sure, she's still shaking and refusing to answer questions, but judging by her bruising on her upper thighs, then yes I would say you could expect the worse." F\*\*\*\*\*K.

Then

make sure she takes this..." My Head Doctor comes out handing Kaia a tablet.

"What is it?"

It

"It will destroy any of his sperm..."

Kaia looks down at the pill for a moment, her eyes going wide as she seems to debate something internally. (1

"Hey, are you okay?" My hand very easily lands on her shoulder.

"Yes.." I don't believe her, she is deathly pale and keeps touching her upper stomach.

"I'll make sure Rosa gets the pill." She nods to the doctor before heading back up the stairs.

I watch her until she reaches the very top, worried she might faint at any second and tumble down the stairs, but she doesn't.

"Alpha?" Riley now gains my full attention as I turn around to find him, and his parents standing at the opened front door but not stepping over the threshold. in...She's upstairs with a doctor and my guest Kaia, we are waiting for an update."

Come

"What has happened?" Riley's mother asks, her eyes whirling around the hallway...I imagine panicking her worst fear about to be confirms.

"It would seem she has been attacked, we are just waiting to interpret whether he was able to penetrate..."

can't

t continue, the haunting scream of her mother who drops to the floor, cutting off my own voice. Her hands pull at her hair as she grabs on to her mate's legs. "Who, who dared to touch my daughter?" Riley's father demands.

"We aren't sure, but we think one of the Amber Desert warriors..." Riley adds.

"I'll kill

him.

"Let's wait f Riley's father might have come out of retirement recently but he still has his speed. He moves super fast from the hallway and pushes the doctor up against my book cabinet in the living room. Chapter 0032

for my colleague to finish before we make any rash decisions..." My Head Doctor calls out from the living room as he closes his medicinal bag.

+25

Held

by the throat and struggling to breathe, my doctor struggles to remove the iron grip. He isn't a fighting man and wouldn't be able to defend himself from such an attack.

I move slowly but with authority as I let my alpha aura roll off me and into the room.

"Remove your hand..." I command, instantly earning a neck turn from Riley's father as he submits and does as I demand.

"You will wait until we know the full extent of what has happened to Rosa. Then I will walk out to the alpha and demand that the \*\*ard returns with me...then you will get what you want." Ebony Woods

### Chapter 33



### Hector POV

The role of alpha is to protect the members of your pack, even sometimes from themselves. But I couldn't protect Rosa...and it is as we feared.

The doctor confirmed that she had taken the pill which would avoid any pregnancy, especially having taken it quickly after the event. The poor girl.

She was home now, her father carrying her home, cradled in his arms as she continued to sob even in her sleep.

A life changed.

I knew what I needed to do, but I was waiting for Kaia to call it a night.

t want t her to be alone right now, something was wrong. She didn't touch her dinner and I know it wasn't just me, Aubrey commented on hearing her being sick in the bathroom.

I didn't She had

She

finally

gone to bed at midnight, struggling to keep her own eyes open as she watched some trash television show, I'm not sure what it was.

I was watching her.

I'm not involving Riley in this, he'll get the news in the morning and have the chance for revenge then.

But right now I need this to go smoothly, just alpha talking to alpha about a crime committed.

Not letting it escalate into the battle he so desperately wants. He won't be able to step over my borders and onto my lands.

He won't be able to reach her.

I'm keeping it to just me and Ezra, Alpha and Beta. A select few know what we are doing and are on standby readying to defend at any given second.

Rightly or wrongly, I've removed all females from border patrol tonight, just as an extra precaution. I'm not suggesting they can't defend themselves but...when the news gets out, in the eyes of their mates and father's, I've already put measures in place to protect them. As soon as we switched guards, it was reported to me that he had arrived. That he was standing, watching the switchover take place. B\*\*\*rd.

I find him, which doesn't take long, he was with a group of his warriors on the North East part of my pack lands.

I slowly walk over to him, my footsteps heavy and slow. Deliberate in my attempt to make him feel uneasy.

Ezra is on my right, walking with just as much purpose. Our strides of confidence not going unnoticed. Chapter 0033

+25

He takes a step into a small clearing, his beta initially on his right, switching to his left as we approach. "Alpha Hector, what a treat this evening." He smirks, hands held out as if he were welcoming an old friend. "Cut the b\*\*\*hit Than, I'm not here for pleasantries."

"Oh, what a shame... I had hoped you weren't alone..." His eyes look past me, as if expecting Kaia to walk out of the shadows behind me.

What a dick.

One of

of your men attacked an underage young female early yesterday morning." My eyes gaze upon his selection of men, seeing if any of them fit the description. "Rubbish, my men haven't stepped over the line."

"No, but one of my pack members did. He enticed her over, claiming to be her mate. I want him to be brought here now!" 1

"Hector, you can't be serious." As he folds his arms across his chest, I lose all patience with him. I didn't have time for this.

"said

I NOW!" I "I roar, my wolf lunging forward, almost on the cusp of taking full control.

His warriors immediately take a defence format, readying to shift and counter attack.

I take a deep breath in, I control my wolf... can't have him giving Than the excuse he wants to attack.

"He needs to admit to his crime. Unless your men have been ordered to resort to such...monstrous tactics?" I growl, taking a step closer to Than, my boots sticking to the gooey mud. It had been raining all day, not once giving us a moment of respite. "Tactics? No of course not." His jaw tenses, his lips making an expression of disgust at my proposal of his leadership.

"Are you sure, because it wouldn't be the first time someone from your pack has taken something that doesn't belong to them?"

He is instantly in my face, his chest

down at him. Something he hased out. My height advantage over him gives me the ability to look

hated.

"I'll tell you what, I'll do an exchange. The male for Kaia." His tongue runs across his top teeth, his wolf preparing to elongate his canines. Trying to be intimidating, trying and failing.

"No chance." I laugh at his pathetic attempt to

"She for him, and he is yours to do whatey even pretend she is worth the same value for an exchange.

you want. Come on Hector...you know you don't want her."

"Who says I don't want her?" A wickedly evil smile forms across my face.

Why do you want her anyway. If Alora is awake...you

+25



have what you always wanted?"

t chance Hector, you give her back or I attack." won't be attacking, not unless you want the packs I'm in alliance with to storm your pack. You won't be having her Than, not if she doesn't want to return. And you will bring the pr\*\*\*k to me, and I will be u will bring the p\*\*\*k to me, and I will be SBONUS

Chapter 0033

allowed to punish him in whatever way I see fit." I order.

He glares at me, his face now slightly moved away from mine but still holding that tensed jaw that looks painful each time he swallows.

He must know that if he doesn't offer the male up, that I will kill all his men. He must know this. I would treat them all as guilty parts of Rosa's fate.

"Find out which warrior and fetch him to me.." He barks his order.

"Alpha?" His Beta Zane looks at his alpha in astonishment.

"Do as I say!"

Ebony Woods

Chapter 34



0034

Chapter Kaia POV

I was struggling to sleep, my mind was completely on what had happened to Rosa and I found it hard to escape the memories of her haunting cries as the doctor checked her.

She was covered in bruises, whoever he was, he hadn't been gentle. Not what a mate should be at all. This poor girl will be a shadow of herself for a long time.

I held onto her throughout, I had only just met the girl but something hit home with me about what she had been through.

I kept hearing her cries throughout the rest of the day as echoes replaying in my ears. Nausea completely taking over me plenty of times.

Mates can be cruel.

I didn't tell her what the pill was for, I just told her to take it.

Was that wrong?

Did I abuse her trust in me?

She was too young to deal with that, she has her entire life ahead of her. If this was her mate, she deserved so much better, and in time she'll realise that mates are meant to be a gift, not a curse.

I found it hard not to relate it to my own current predicament. But I didn't have the love of a solid family behind me like Rosa, I was pregnant and alone.

I was starting to show now, my belly had massively grown in one day and I was now starting to find the waistband of my clothes getting too tight.

Everyone would soon know, soon start whispering that I was mate-less but pregnant. That I would be burden to this pack.

Stigma always sticks.

With my own memories coming back in vivid flashbacks every time I close my eyes, sleep doesn't come easily to me.

Unable to rest, I open the bedroom window hoping the night air will cool my hot flushes down; caused by the flashbacks.

As I push open the window, I see two figures walking in the distance, my eyes recognising them immediately.

Where was the pack's Alpha and Beta walking to in the middle of the night?

"Follow them." My wolf demands as she yawns, sounding half hearted in expecting me to carry out her request.

"No, we can't get attached to these people. Rosa today was already relying on me too much...I can't, we can't stay much longer. We need to start distancing ourselves, not get more involved." Chapter 0034

But I fear I was already there.

I cared for this Rosa girl, her own experience resonating with me. I cared for her brother and her parents who will need help in finding her spark again.

I know I care for Hector, I haven't admitted it to myself, but how could I not? I seemed to have a one sided mate bond with him, and the way he handled today, was the complete opposite of Than. He was a leader, he remained strong when others would use their fists. If things were different...if we had met another time, I would push forward with the connection, fight for him.

But I can't stay.

I can't raise a pack heir within an enemy pack, I'm not a cruel person...I just couldn't do that to the child or the child's father.

Better for us to find Father or hide in the human world for some time. I have money, I could do that.

I ignore my wolf and don't follow, but I do keep an eye out the bedroom window, and am surprised to find not 2 but 3 males returning from the shadows. One being held tightly by the wrists by Beta Ezra..

He makes an effort to escape but is swiftly held at the throat by Hector, who stops and I wonder why until I see the car arriving and pulling up next to them.

The car's arrival leaving muddy car tyre marks in the grass. It hadn't stopped raining all day and all night so far.

They all enter the car, which is driven by the head warrior who was at the security meeting I attended. This must be the male that attacked Rosa, her mate. But if he was an Amber Desert pack member...why has Than given him up?

Than doesn't do anything out of the goodness of his own heart.

I know that now more than ever.

He was stubborn, arrogant and always thinking of the next step.

It suddenly occurs to me...what did Hector promise him in return. What have they agreed to...

I could feel the icy coldness of panic hitting my chest and spreading down my spine. The closing of the bedroom window doing nothing to remove the chill that now

focates me.

I have never felt so vulnerable in arriving at this pack than I do at this

What did Hector promise Than in return, he must have given his w "ery, moment in time.

means I have no choice, I have to leave before I am taken.

Chapter 35



Chapter 0035 Kaia POV

My stomach was in complete knots.

What do I do...leave now but it is the middle of the night? I don't even know where Father is, I was waiting for the confirmed new sighting.

Panic was

s continuing to creep in on me, and the lack of sleep was doing things to my usually calm-under-stress mindset.

The house is dead quiet, so much so that I hear the moment Hector walks back in and presses the ice dispenser on the fridge.

I won't wait for him to hand me over to Than to find out, I'd rather he told me to my face and gave me enough notice to prepare myself. Gave me the respect of at least looking into my eyes when he tells me. I head downstairs, where the ticking grandfather clock at the bottom of the staircase confirms the current time as 2.30am.

The solemn sight of the notorious Dark Phantom alpha isn't what I was expecting at all. A glass of whiskey in hand, he was half bent over the kitchen island work top, his free hand rubbing at his temple. "What are you doing up?" He turns when I enter the kitchen, the floor boards creaking under my steps.

"I couldn't sleep...who was that man?"

A large sigh escapes him as he stands up and turns completely to face me. His lower back resting against the kitchen unit, his legs crossed at the front.

A

How was it possible for him to own a room with only him and me in it.

If the situation wasn't so dire I'd reflect more internally on how handsome he looks, how he looks like a model in a whiskey campaign.

"He was the one that attacked Rosa."

So, he has traded me in.

"Where is he now?"

"In the cells..."

"What, and Than just gave him up to you?" He doesn't miss the sarcasm in my voice, his body straitening, no longer at ease as his eyes furrow at my unusual tone.

Well...yes."

I don't believe him, Than would have wanted something in return.

"I was going to follow you..."

"Well...I'm glad that you didn't."

+25 BO!

+25

Why am I I'm on

I here? I'm too involved...

the right hand side of Rosa, helping to hold her up with her mother on her left.

I could feel her legs were wobbly, like a newborn fawn, as I over compensate to take more of her weight.

I

This was the complete opposite of me distancing myself.

We were heading into the cells. Rosa had only now built up the courage to face him the afternoon after.

we

enter a cell I which is heavily guarded, even though the suspect is chained to a metal chair in the middle of the cell. Riley, Rosa's father, Hector and Ezra are already in the cell, their eyes zoned in on Rosa Her sobs start even from

the sight of him; for two reasons. For how he looks, he's been beaten already, cuts adorn his face and bruising becoming more prominent by the minute. He can hardly keep one of his eyes open. The second reason, and this is where I feel her pain... she can feel some kind of energy between them. She's too young to feel the full gravitational pull of the mate bond, but she feels something. Albeit small. An innocent attraction on her part that he has completely taken advantage of. "Name?" Hector's voice is cold as he starts the proceedings of I'm assuming this male's trial. "Fuck you!" He spits out at Hector's shoes, blood in his saliva.

"Rosa...is this the male that attacked you yesterday morning?" Hector's amused eyes look down at his shoes, before looking back up and turning grey to a burnt orange. His alpha aura now swirling around the cell. "Yes...yes that's him." "Why did you attack her?" Hector continues to coldly ask, his eyes now looking deadly. "She's my mate, I only took what was mine."

He

e has no remorse whatsoever, not even knowing the true extent of his actions. Can he not see what he has done to this girl, how distraught she still is. feel I my inner hatred of this male tipping out of my mouth. I'm going past the point of not getting involved.

can

"She's too young to feel the mate

bond!" I roar out at him which gives the reverse desired effect from the male. He was smirking at me, he knew who I was. That was a member of his pack.

"It wouldn't have happened if you weren't here..." He looks at me with disgust, trying to pass the blame for what he did, but is cut off.

"Rosa, you will reject him and then, once he accepts your rejection and returns it...you will leave the cells. Do you understand?" Hector talks over the

male who was trying to get a reaction out of me. Walking in front of me and blocking me from the male's hateful gaze. I have no doubt that if he was able to break free of the chains, he would attack me.

Why, what reason has he to hate me? They have what they want, their true Luna.

## Chapter 36



### Kaia POV

"Rosa..." Riley tries to get his sister to focus on the task in hand, before his eyes glaze over into a mind-link. Whatever words of encouragement he gives seem to work as her head starts to nod slowly in agreement.

She stands by herself, leaving mine and her mother's steady embrace as she moves closer to the chained up male before her.

She was the bravest young woman I had ever met. She will be fine with the love and support of her family and pack, she will be fine.

I'm not entirely sure what is happening until Rosa rejects the mate bond, his own name forced from his lips as something is plunged into his side.

Rosa doesn't see it, but I do, Riley does it very discreetly.

As she makes her rejection, he fights against Riley's hold, a protective brother enforcing his own revenge on the what should be protective mate of his little sister.

The male squirms, even looking pained by the rejection. His mouth refusing to open, refusing to accept and reject in return.



"Rosa, close your eyes." Hector's cold firm voice echoes through the room, his alpha command rolling off him and on to her.

I feel like an intruder, witnessing not only a secretive event of the pack but also a private family situation that should be done behind closed doors.

A forced rejection.

Again, I'm getting in too deep here.

Following her alpha's command, Rosa closes her eyes.

When the male grunts in pain as the curved knife is twisted, causing enough pain for him to commit to his own rejection, she whimpers until her mother whispers in her ear to accept it.

My heart breaks as a high-pitched scream leaves Rosa, she collapses to the floor, her mother catching her in time.

Her skin turns grey and as I look back up at him, his skin mirrors a similar colour. Both of them rejecting the choice of the Moon Goddess.

It makes you question whether the Moon Goddess knows what she is doing sometimes. Whether she actually has a plan or we are now alone.

I am heartbroken for her, she is only 16.

Too young to experience the pain of the curse of the mate bond. But was I any older when Than tricked me?

I was 16 when I joined college and he approached me, was he just as guilty as this male sitting before us.

Both of them are in pain, even the male... his breathing heavy as he sucks in air. Perhaps it has just dawned on him what he has done, what a mistake he has made. 1

Is this what it is like to reject the mate bond? This level of pain, and Rosa can't even feel the full bond... goddess help me.

With the mate bond severed between the pair, Rosa is taken out by her mother and father, her sobs quieter this time. Content protected by Riley remains, as does Hector and Ezra. My eyes refuse to leave the Amber Desert male in front of me, whose eyes are transfixed on mine.

I'm certain if we still had the pack link together he would be cursing at me through the mind-link. Without those chains he would be clawing at me, thinking I was the enemy to his pack. Thinking he was doing his alpha a favour.

Hector remains close to me, his eyes following Rosa and her parent's leave the room. Once they do, he takes in the male like a predator sizing up it's prey. It doesn't take long for Hector to realise who has the male's undivided attention...I do.

"Kaia...perhaps you should join them!" Hector's words manage to tear my glaring eyes away and on to him. "You need to leave." He says with a cold authority which I respect, I understand now what was happening. The mate bond was severed so that when this pathetic excuse for a male was killed, dear sweet Rosa wouldn't feel his death, wouldn't be punished again by the mate bond.

In time she can have a new life, she can hopefully find a second mate.

This Amber Desert male won't return to his alpha, he won't leave these cells alive.

Leaving the cells, I walk slowly back to the alpha house. My eyes keeping to the borders in the distance. He was out there, he was waiting for me.

As much as I want to honour Hector's agreement with Than for the sake of Rosa. I can't return, I won't. If he finds out I am with his child, I won't even be returned to my house like before.

I'll be in a prison, even worse, locked away in the alpha house, my every movement monitored. I can't live like that again.

Than wouldn't even accept my rejection if I tried. He knows that keeping me locked in the mate bond serves his purpose.

### Chapter 37



### Hector POV

"You want to handle him?" I open a 3 way mind-link between Ezra, Riley and myself.

"You will allow it?" Riley's seems surprised by my offer.

True it is an alpha's duty but this piece of shit attacked his sister, I would let him rip the shit to pieces of he chooses. But it won't make him feel any better, he'll just have eliminated the risk, not the memory. "She's your sister. He was meant to protect her, I think it is a fitting punishment. But I understand if you don't want to. It won't make the memory or hatred disappear...just the person."

He had already lost a lot of blood from the dagger's tip being dipped in wolfsbane. His wound wasn't healing and he'll be dead by sunset even without further punishment.

It doesn't take Riley long to give his punishment. He pulls the dagger out of the male's side and plunges it into his neck.

I probably would have just snapped his neck with my bare hands, but each to their own.

Returning back home I take a detour and check with some of the guards that have been on border patrol all day.

They were getting ready for the night time shift switch over, checking my watch, it was already 7pm. I didn't sleep last night and was now starting to feel it. I was tired and bored of Than's pi\*\*\*-take in trying to goad me into a reaction.

I was pushing my wolf out, he was trying to highlight the point that we stood in between Kaia and the prisoner earlier. When he was glaring at her, too long and too menacingly for my liking. But she was handling it and I didn't doubt that it affected her. She was strong. As I keep telling my wolf, he just has a soft spot for single mothers. Nothing else....so why did I want to pull the shit's windpipe out from the way he was staring at her?

I'm tired, it's been a hectic two days. Hell, it's been a hectic...how long has Kaia been here now.

I shake my head, shaking my thoughts away as I enter the alpha house looking forward to a long hot shower when I stumble across a sight I didn't expect. Kaia sitting at the bottom of the staircase, her rucksack by her legs.

"What's going on?" I had a feeling my wish for dinner, shower and an early night were off the cards.

She doesn't answer me at first, her chin rested in her palm as she looks at me, giving me no clue in what she is thinking.

"Kaia?" I take a step closer, removing my phone from my pocket and placing it on the sideboard in the hallway.

"You traded me in for the male. I understand don't worry, I'm not mad."

The words that leave her lips aren't what I was expecting and I take a second to make sure I heard her correctly.

"What are you talking about?" Content protected by

"Hector please, Than doesn't do anything for free. He won't have just given up a pack member for punishment...for death. He wanted me didn't he?" "Yes." I answer truthfully.

"And you agreed."

"No." Again, I answer truthfully.

"Really?"

"Kaia, I'm not lying." I laugh at how preposterous her accusation is.

I regret my reaction instantly when she stands up and grabs her bag in her hands, heading for the door.

I don't want her to leave and I have a feeling she isn't bluffing.

I grab her elbow as she walks past me, changing my tone into one of seriousness.

"Yes, he said he wanted to trade but I told him no deal. That you weren't worth the same value, I believe those were actually my exact words." "You did?"

"Of course I did."

Something odd takes over me as my hand continues to grip onto her elbow. She must have showered before preparing to leave, a slight scent of coconut and lime exudes from her, a new shower gel perhaps. Her green eyes watch me, checking for a telltale sign of a lie, of a fib. Her green eyes are winning the battle against her blue rim that circle her pupil, her wolf kept well underneath the surface.

Perhaps Than would of traded her, perhaps I still will. But today I didn't, she was worth 100 of those pricks if not more. 2

The desire to step forward and touch her lips overwhelm me, to stroke her face. To remove that annoying long strand of dark brown hair that is sitting on her collarbone.

"Hector, it's okay if you did, it would take a strong person to deny Than. I know how stubborn he can be." Then it's a good thing she was no longer with him, but now with me.

"You are mine to protect..." Her eyes flash at my comment, her cheeks turning a cute shade of pink. "As a pack member, as long as you are within my pack...." I start to correct myself.

"..I mean as your Alpha, it is my job to protect you." I think that's what I meant.

## Chapter 38



Than POV

Utter horseshit.

I could feel the moment my pack member died. The one I just gave away.

What else could I have done, Hector had me over a barrel and he knew it.

As an alpha I was entrusted to feel each birth and each death, a hard part of being an alpha sometimes... but it was part of the balance.

I've been told it feels different for every alpha, but for me it feels like a candle has been blown out, the soft glow of life now a small cold void. However, it

doesn't last long before a new pack birth enters the void, the circle of shifter life. Content © exclusive by

I could of killed him myself for fucking things over.

My plan has been delayed now.

The now dead male having taken matters into his own hands.

I have no doubt that she was his mate, but if I didn't hand him over my reputation would be smeared as the alpha that condones attacks on underage females.

Hector would make sure every alpha and especially the lunas would be told. The lunas being the ones that whisper into their alpha mate's ears...sealing the deal each night in between their bedsheets of how the alphas should treat other alphas.

If you want to make a lasting impression, impress the lunas.

Thankfully my Alora wasn't like that. She thought for herself and had a heart of gold. Which is why I need to push forward. I can't lose her. (1

Mother was one of those lunas, playing the game just as much as the alphas. If not more. I'll never forget the day she last saw Hector, trying to throw him out by the scruff of his neck. She wasn't pleased with Father for getting involved. He always had a way of reining her back in. But Hector had a way of irritating Mother.

Where I've been watching my sleeping mate, Hector has been busy making alliances with the other packs for a while now, cementing his reputation in the alpha circles. Flirting with the lunas to gain their trust. It's not just the Dark Phantom pack I'm up against now...it's all his shitty contacts that seem to idolise him. Especially that Alpha Júde.

Hector is playing his hand very well in all of this, refusing to do a trade, which didn't surprise me at all. He'll wait for the most opportune moment for him before he suggests a trade. I know what he wants, but he's not having her.

I need to be more underhanded, I need to start being more like him... ruthless. That's how he has carved this reputation out as a ruthless alpha...using underhanded tactics.

She's remaining at the Dark Phantom pack, staying with him because she feels safe.

Little does she know that he can't be trusted. You'll never be able to trust him.

I need to entice her to me, to meet me at the borders. Alone, without him.

Somehow, I need to get a message to her, but we are being watched just as we are watching them.

I need to show her that she can't trust him, that he is only keeping her to get at me.

Looking out at the Dark Phantom pack grounds ahead of me, an idea comes to my mind.

"Zane, you're in charge." I order at Zane through the mind-link, giving my beta full authority in my absence.

"Yes Alpha, Where are you going?"

"To the local city, I'll be back by midnight."

I drive my car to the nearest city, knowing exactly what I needed and what I wanted to do. The only way to get something into the pack for Kaia, is to send it in the mail. A courier. The only problem with being in a city is it is full of non shifters.

Full of humans...who are odd beings.



They moan about the stresses of modern day life but then crave and encourage it with late openings and 24 hour retail outlets.

I manage to reach a courier building before closure, getting my note written and sent to Kaia for the attention of the alpha house.

I am confident my plan will work, he has eyes on every vehicle in and out of his gates but not the goods delivered.

Finally I am starting to act like him.

I just need to get a note to her, an innocent note that's all. I'll play on her heart strings of how she can prevent an attack, avoid unnecessary deaths if she just comes out and talks to me. She's not easy to manipulate, my alpha command always struggling to control her. But she won't want their deaths on her conscious. Not the Kaia I know.

#### Chapter 39



#### Kaia POV

I was in the office with Hector, a not as talkative office buddy as usual. Hector seemed deep in thought, my eyes catching him looking at me when my face was turned. Then he would move quickly enough so that I never catch him in the act, but I could see in peripheral vision that he was watching me...what was he thinking.

He claims he didn't give me up in a trade and I believe him. No one could feign that level of sincerity as he did last night.

I was checking my private email account in the office. I do not give out my email account often, I use it as a storage facility and can't run the risk of it

being hacked. Even Than never knew my email address, I always made sure he text me at college. But he spent every moment of the day with me at college, so he hardly ever texted either. (1 Only a select few know my email address, one of which had emailed me with an update.

The picture attached to the email was what I had been waiting for. A picture of Father captured by a CCTV camera. He didn't look as sharply dressed as I remember but it was definitely him. The picture was grainy but there was no mistaking his salt and pepper hair colour, I actually didn't look a lot like Father. Getting my colouring from Mother, or so he always said.

An instant message request window pops up on my screen, from my contact. He was online and somehow knew I was too.

"The CCTV picture is in a coastal area. Can you get there?"

I suppose I came here looking for information for Father and haven't moved on as I didn't know where he was...this new lead should be the reason I move on now. "Soon..." I reply, after rubbing at my eyes.

I only had a small window to type in, not the space for an entire essay of what really has been going on.

"Where are you?"

I type out that I am at the Dark Phantom pack but something prevents me from pressing send. I can see he is typing again on the live chat window, but stops.

Do I want him to know where I am, that I am still here...

"Everything okay?" Hector pulls me out of my thoughts.

"Me?" I look to him, my fingers still poised on the keyboard waiting to send my reply.

"You've been sighing and rubbing your eyes. You look stressed."

"I'm fine." I wave my hand, trying to brush off his concern.

"Kaia?"

"Hector I'm fine..."Belongs © to .

He doesn't believe me, he was already standing up and heading my way.

Shoot, I was pressing on the mouse trying to close out of the instant message window, I didn't want Hector to see the CCTV picture.

Thankfully, Aubrey was walking into the office, surprising me when she hands me an envelope.

I take it with apprehension. Nobody has ever sent me a letter here...nobody knows I am here except for...

"I'll open it."

I was too slow, Hector pulls the letter from out of my grasp and rips it open.

His eyes grow increasingly more irritated the more he reads and it only confirms to me who the sender is. "It's from Than. He wants you to meet him at the pack border."

He's got some nerve. What is he playing at.

I manage to rip the letter from out of Hector's hands, my eyes casting upon it quickly before it is torn up.

What Hector failed to declare was that Than promised to withdraw his warriors if I go out to meet with him. Just to hear him out.

That I could save a lot of innocent lives just by seeing him.

Bastard.

"Don't fall for his tricks Kaia."

"Oh believe me I won't, not again. But I think I would like to meet with him."

The letter requested that I come alone, but I'm not stupid.

"It said to come alone but..."

"He is a thick shit if he thinks for one minute I would let you go out there alone. Give me 10 minutes to rally some warriors."

"Thank you Hector." I wasn't afraid to meet with Than, he could speak whatever lies he wants...I know the truth.

But, having Hector with me gave me a sense of security that I hadn't had for a long time. Not even when I was married to Than.

He may not be my baby's father but Hector has shown me more kindness and acceptance in the short space of me being here, than my ex ever did

There will be no chance of me returning to the Amber Desert pack. He can promise to back off for me listening to his speech, but I won't do what he wants.

Chapter 40



Chapter 0040 Chapter

0040

Kaia POV

The walk is longer than I expected. Or maybe it's just knowing who is at the end of the hike.

When Hector said he would prepare warriors I thought maybe no more than 5...20 is a little excessive.

Hector doesn't know that Than needs me to be alive, needs me to be safe. He just needs me to be safe in the Amber Desert pack, safely tucked away. "Are you sure about this?" Hector asks as we walk side by side to one another.

they

his warriors."

"Yes...he has offered to withdraw his "Hhmm I'll believe that when I see it."

"Meto Me too, too, but it's the first step to getting them away from your borders, giving your pack members their freedom back. This can't go on for much longer." The Dark Phantom pack members had been very understanding of Hector's orders and curfew restrictions. But soon will start to complain, start to take matters into their own hands if their alpha doesn't take action. And that is what frightens me, I don't want another example of what happened to Rosa. I would never forgive myself.

I can smell him before I see him.

The sickly feeling of regret hitting me as I can feel the small buzz of the mate bond trying to pull me to him. Why did I come, he'll try and use it to his advantage like he always does. It's funny, I hadn't missed the feeling of the bond from Than, Hector's already taking preference in my opinion. 1

I stop in the middle of a clearing, trees surrounding us that block most of the mid day sun, providing natural coverage that would be ideal for concealing oneself.

Footsteps crunching down on leaves signals his movements towards me. Hector pulling me back slightly next to him, beta Ezra on my other side.

He comes into the clearing, his hair grown out since the last time I saw him. His red hair growing from the buzz cut and into the longer locks similar to what I used to enjoy running my fingers through. That was then, this is now.

I'm under no illusion that this would have been a mistake, that he would explain and I would run back into his arms.

Our

love for each other being like it was before I joined his pack. Our love conquering all.

My love has turned to hatred and pity for the alpha male before me. My skin crawls when I think of the plans we made, the way he used to whisper into my ear. All lies, all fake.

I use that feeling of hate in finding the strength to address him, to confront him.

"You said you would withdraw your warriors if I came and heard you out." did.

"Will you keep your word?"

+25

He looks at me with a look of amusement before a smirk forms across his face...he had no intention of keeping his word. He's looking at me like I was that gullible teenager again. "Kaia, enough of this. You are my wife and will return. You are in breach of our marriage contract."

"I would like to see a copy of that contract Than, because you have been in breach of it from the moment I signed it."

Whatever communication we have between us stops as Than growls at me for my return outburst. Only for Hector to pull me behind Ezra and take a step forward, growling back at the Amber Desert alpha. Belongs © to .

"Go back to the house, he has no intention of honouring his word and retreating..." Hector's voice enters my mind.

It still feels odd to have another male's voice in my head.

For so long I only knew Father and a select few in my birth pack. Father was always so protective of me having lost Mother at my own birth.

Then when the pack was attacked and I was sent away, I lost the link to Father's pack, whatever was left of it, when I joined the Amber Desert pack.

Than never really used the mind-link on me once I joined his pack. Now I know why... he would have seen it as some kind of twisted deception to her. So much now was making sense of what Than did or didn't do. "What will you do." I ask him, hesitant to leave.

"Give him the fight he so badly wants."

I

I can't help myself, I take a step forward turning on my side to try and gain Hector's attention.

I don't want his pack going to war, not for me, not because of me.

"I can't have blood on my hands..."

"It won't be, it'll be on his."

Just when I think the worse possible outcome was about to commence, a whistle whips my head towards Than, but all I see is his back. He is walking away... his warriors following, pulling back. What the hell...

I look to Hector who seems just as bewildered by Than's sudden movement. Maybe he was honouring his word after all. "Alpha?"

"Ezra.."

"Push 1 of every 2 guards out of our borders...I want to make sure they are leaving for definite. But make sure our borders are still protected!" "Yes

alpha." Ezra moves quickly to give his beta command, the men behind us pushing forward with Ezra leading them.