

Denied by Destiny: Trapped in the Shadows of the Mate Bond 331-340

- Knox ~

This has to be one of the worst motels I have ever stayed in. I picked it because it was off the beaten track and near woods...which if I couldn't keep my wolf at bay meant I had somewhere for him to escape into. I was very much in human territory right now. As it stands, I've been able to keep him locked away, I've been able to stay in control. But in order to do that, sleep has been reduced to a bare minimum.

I was running on an empty battery for a reason, if he was able to take control before I woke up in the morning, all hell would break loose. The motel room is pretty basic, yet they would notice the carnage of a wolf shifting in here...I think.

I had left the Dark Phantom pack three days ago, living on a diet of cheap take-out foods and whiskey...again a useful substance to keep him under lock and key.

I feel nothing, numb. I'm alone again and that is how it should be. But in my dreams, I can't escape the reminder of her intoxicating scent and her red hair under the touch of my fingers. I go to bed thinking of her only to wake up with remorse of what I have done. But it is for the best.

Using the shower in this motel for the last time, I throw the same clothes on that I've been wearing for the past three days. I didn't pack, I just needed to get out of there. Closing the motel door, I walk across the car park towards the reception to check out and settle my bill. Breakfast is a cereal bar and a can of pop from the vending machine before hitting back on the road and returning to the Dark Phantom pack...one last time.

With an intake of air, to settle my nerves, I place my helmet on and fire up my motorcycle...before escaping this hell hole of a motel. Even as I exit the car park, the sign flickers with broken lights before one of them drops to the ground completely. The morning sunlight shows the true state of this place, I must have been beyond desperate to stay here.

It's nothing to the own personal hell I have been mentally living for the past three days though, not even close.

My wolf stirs beneath the veil, his excitement pushes through to me as he realises where we are going. To the point that I reduce my speed, to give me that little bit longer to keep him under control.

As the pack gates come into view, dread enters into my gut...that sickness feeling of not knowing what I was returning to. Slowing my speed, I'm surprised to find the gates closed and extra guards on. Each other time I have had free movement in and out.

I pull up to the gates slowly and, the guards, with caution make their way over to me. Their eyes flittering between mind-links until I realise I have my helmet on and they can't recognise me. As soon as I remove my helmet, they give me a nod of acknowledgement before going back into a mind-link.

"The borders are on lock down. The Alpha will need to approve your entry." One of them calls out to me.

"Approve my entry? I was only here three days ago?"

"I know, but a lot has happened in three days. He won't be long, I've informed him you are here." A guard confirms before moving back towards his post.

A lot has happened? My first thoughts are of the red fiery bombshell.

It doesn't take long for a blacked out SUV to arrive on the other side of the gate, both Alpha Hector and Beta Riley exiting the vehicle. I climb off my bike, placing my helmet down and making my way over to them.

"Alpha Hector, Beta Riley...is everything okay? The guard said the pack is on lock down?"

"Not the pack, but the borders are. There's been unusual activity a few miles out, I'm just being cautious. So...you're back?" Alpha Hector reports back before changing his tone slightly.

"Only to hand in my report. Did Alpha Kaia not inform you..."

"Oh, my mate informed me." He cuts me off with a slightly harsher tone than usual.

"Right before I found my daughter alone in the meadows." His eyes flash a demonic black, as his jaw tenses and the aura around him darkens. I watch him carefully, one wrong word...one wrong action and this great wolf, the notorious Dark Phantom alpha will be lunging for me.

"She was in the meadows for hours Knox..." He takes a step towards me, his voice lowering so that only I can hear. I'm sure I'm not though...even the beta and the guards would still be able to listen if they wanted to.

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

"We launched a search party for her, she was frozen...almost hypothermic. There's been a miscommunication between the two of you, between what you both want...that happens in relationships. But don't ever leave the woman you care for alone unprotected in the cold. She collapsed when Lobo and I found her."

"...I.."

"I don't want excuses, just don't ever do it again. Otherwise, I will have something to say. Do you understand?"

"Yes Alpha." He holds my eye contact, the intensity of his wolf looking through making mine pipe up at the threat. Until his wolf retreats from his eyes, giving the human side full control again.

"Good, now that is settled. Come on in, let's hear this report." He nods to the guards to open the gate. His demeanour switching from a monstrous protective father and alpha, to a calmer political figure.

"Jump in the car, one of my men will bring your bike down." I follow his orders, throwing my keys towards one of the guards to handle my motorcycle.

As I enter the car, Beta Riley turns the music down, turning to me from the front as Alpha Hector sits at the wheel.

"Our cameras noticed movement a few miles out, at first we thought it could be wild animals but then it happened again last night. We've put the borders on lock down and increased the numbers on post. The warriors are on standby, but we do not want to panic the pack members." "Of course. Any ideas of who it could be?"

"Not yet, we are studying the footage but if you can take a look."

""Happy to."

He responds with a grateful nod before twisting back round to the front, Alpha Hector's eyes watching me from the rear-view mirror. His words a wake-up call to how I behaved. He was right, I shouldn't have walked out on her, I shouldn't have left her in the meadows alone. I knew she doesn't have a wolf, yet I left her in a vulnerable state. I just assumed she would have followed a few minutes behind, which is why I was keen to get out.

The idea of her remaining where I left her for hours hits me in my gut, guilt rising its ugly head within me. My wolf already punishing me by making me feel every emotion for the two of us.

"Are you okay Knox, you look pale?" Alpha Hector turns with a smirk after pulling the car outside his house.

"I think so." I murmur out, full well knowing he was enjoying watching me squirm.

He can't help the chuckle that escapes him as he exits the car and as I follow, places his arm around my shoulder.

"These women are sent to try us Knox, stand your ground but remember I'll be the first to dig your grave if you hurt her again." He whispers into my ear, a playful threat yet I know deep down it holds some truth to it.

"Right...understood." I'm flustered by my own actions, cursing myself internally for acting like a fucking dick and then distancing myself for three days. I should have stayed.

Re-entering the alpha house, its welcoming scent reminds me again of that homely feeling I used to feel as a young child. I've never been to a place that reminds me of my own home like this one does. The colours, the smells... it often takes me right back to being 10 years old.

Hearing my motorcycle pull up outside as I close the front door, I follow the Alpha and Beta towards the office, when I glimpse red hair in the near distance.

She walks down the stairs, Jaxon by her side, both stopping as I walk past them both.

"Knox, where have you been man?" Jaxon walks over to me placing a hand out for me to shake. As I do, he pulls me closer to him and pats my back. So, their father knew but not Jaxon.

"I needed to sort some bits out." My eyes roam the length of her. She was clearly about to go training in a matching sports bra and very short shorts...a loose zip up hoodie hanging off her shoulders. She looked even hotter if that was possible.

"How did that work out for you?" She quirks an eyebrow at me before giving me shade, walking past and flipping her hair over her shoulder...heading out the front door. Lobo by her side.

Fuck, who ever said absence makes the heart grow fonder...were fucking right.

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

~Knox~

"Where did you go?" Jaxon grunts, looking over his phone as his question pulls my attention away from the front door.

"Uh, just a trash motel. I just needed to reflect before finalising the report." I respond biting down on my wolf's need to go after her, he'll have to wait, even if I grant him that time with her.

I can't trust him right now, he's completely thrown me with his need to be around her. I thought I had suppressed him for the past three days but one look at her and I can feel him pushing against my restraint again. Horny bastard. "Report?" Jacob looks up from his phone, his face taking on a surprised look.

"Yes, I'm leaving Jaxon."

"Already? Why?"

"I have to get back and prepare for my next intake." I knew this would hit him hard, he still had concerns about his wolf's self control. I suppose I act as his safety net and being here he's been able to relax a bit more.

"But without Jace..." He is cut off as Alpha Kaia walks down the stairs towards the office area.

Her face lights up as soon as she sees me, another person that hasn't been told what I did then.

"Knox, we missed you. Where have you been?" She walks over to me, placing a kiss upon my cheek in a warm greeting.

"Just as a motel..."

"A motel? Let me guess take out...a man's dream I'm sure but you need proper food. Go make yourself something to eat for breakfast."

"Thank you Alpha, I will. But first Alpha Hector has asked me to attend a meeting."

"Ah, yes okay...see you inside." She smiles before heading into her shared alpha office.

"Jaxon, Knox..." Alpha Hector calls out to us both just as Alpha Kaia walks in to the office. With one last glance at the front door I turn, heading towards the office, swallowing down the guilt at Alpha Kaia's warmth towards me. If she knew the truth I think she'd toss me out by my ear.

"We'll talk about this later." Jaxon states, his eyes holding a fresh level of panic within them, before we both head into the office.

Once inside, Beta Riley closes the door behind us, a tray of coffees and pastries already prepared. Meaning this was likely going to be a long meeting.

"I've asked Knox here to join us to get his thoughts on the situation." Alpha Hector starts before reaching behind his desk to the window curtain rail, pulling down a projector blind that I didn't even know existed.

As soon as the blind is down the lights in the room are turned off and the windows are automatically covered with blinds. An unsettling sense of dread washing over the room.

"This was captured on one of our cameras last night...it's at the north east border." Alpha Hector's eyes find mine in the dark before he presses play on the video footage. I take a step closer towards the screen before leaning in slightly to ensure I do not miss any small detail.

Watching the footage everything seems perfectly normal until in the top right corner of the video...movement behind a tree.

At first it looks like some kind of nocturnal animal...a squirrel or something just playing around a tree until the camera focuses in more and it is unmistakable...the tail of a much larger animal...a wolf.

"Was anyone patrolling the area that night, in wolf form?" I ask out, my eyes fixed on the footage.

"No...keep watching." Alpha Hector responds, his shoulders tensing as he must be rewatching this footage for the hundredth time. Even so, it still gives him the chills. It would me, if I had a pack full of people to protect.

I reach behind and bring a chair closer to me before sitting down on it, continuing to not take my eyes off the screen. The tail disappears back into the treeline, only for a few seconds later my heart to drop into the pit of my stomach. Five wolves step out.

They aren't wild, it's obvious. They aren't playing in the woods, they haven't stumbled across the area by accident...they were sent to gather information. Key security information on the Dark Phantom pack. But for what purpose.

The biggest give away is how they all look up to the camera. Their eyes glowing in the dark as they look up at the camera, my own wolf coming forward to stare back at them. An eerie sight as they hold the stare of the camera as if knowing we would be watching them. These are a threat, these have been sent on a clear reconnaissance mission.

"Rogues?" Beta Riley mutters out but all the alphas watch my head as I shake it side to side.

"No...they were sent and with a purpose. You were right to put the borders on lock down. Any movement during the day?"

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

"Not yet, I've sent trackers out and the warriors have been pushed out a few miles out past our

borders. What do you think?" Alpha Hector pauses the footage, placing the lights back on.

"What enemies do you have?" I'm fully aware I'm my question is blatant but they have no time to waste.

"None!" Jaxon responds too quickly, my eyes darting to him.

"Sure there are packs that might be jealous of our size but none that would attack us, what would be the reason."

He was right, what would be the reason. Jaxon and Jace always told me with great pride how their borders have never been attacked. How boring it sometimes was living in a pack where nothing

happens. But I know from experience that things aren't always as they seem.

I turn to Alpha Hector who is holding his mate's eyes, both locked in a one to one mind-link.

When they cut their mind-link, I raise an eyebrow at Alpha Hector, he was hiding something. They both were.

"You can't be mated to the white wolf without gaining enemies Knox. But these enemies have

remained hidden for 19 years." Hector sighs out, and for the first time since meeting him I'm seeing his true age behind his powerful frame. The weight on his shoulders that he's been carrying for goddess knows how many years.

"Then I would say these enemies have finally come up for air and you need to be ready."

"Enemies, what kind of enemies?" Jaxon demands, his arms folding at his chests as he takes

step closer to his father. A father that has protected him and his siblings all their lives.

"People from our past. A past we wanted to keep from you kids..."

"I have a brother out in the middle of nowhere who isn't checking in...why the fuck didn't you tell us there was a direct threat on us." Jaxon's fury is rightfully justified, but he needs to understand the love of a parent. Something I only learned in my adult years after looking back on my past.

"Because it isn't you they are after." Alpha Kaia growls her eyes turning a brilliant shade of blue. The blue rim that circles her pupil, bleeds out completely covering her usually green eyes. Her wolf was forward, on guard...and her aura was magnificent.

"You need to get a hold of your brother and get him back here right now." She commands, standing as she directs her aura at her son.

"I can't he wont listen to me."

"Then maybe he will listen to your sister." She stands up, heading towards the door before an almighty roar exits from the notorious Dark Phantom alpha.

"No, she is to know nothing." "Hector?"

"No Kaia, this stays with us only."

An odd atmosphere settles over the office for the rest of the meeting. Kaia clearly angry at her mate and Jaxon fuming for being kept in the dark for all of his childhood. There's not much more I can offer, they've done everything I would have done but I can go back to my place and do some more research.

As the meeting comes to a close, all leave except for myself and Alpha Hector.

"I can go back to my place and see if I can find out anything...call in some favours.."

"No need, it will be either of two threats." His honesty silences me for a moment.

"Two threats? You've never mentioned one let, alone two." I can't help my mind as it thinks of Josie with those silver bullets in her gun and running towards the borders. "One threat I can't imagine he would do this, not now...but the other, we've always remained ready."

"I'm intrigued..." I comment trying to press for more information but with a deep sigh from the now troubled alpha, I know I won't be getting anything right now.

"Another time Knox...are you staying for the pack run tonight?"

"I wasn't going to...I was going to head out after giving you the report. You think a pack run would be wise?"

"I refuse to let my people live in fear. Email me the report, I'll read it through later but stay...at least for the pack run and head out tomorrow.

You shouldn't leave on any other terms but friendly. Besides you owe somebody an apology." He wasn't wrong there, but I think it's a slim chance of me having a private conversation with Red right now. "Judging by the shade she gave me earlier...I'm the last person she wants to hear from."

"My daughter feels everything the hardest...she always has. But in doing so she has the greatest capacity for forgiveness...just give her some time. For someone who doesn't have a wolf, she is the most connected to nature out of all of us."

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

- Josie -

Just concentrate on work, by the time you get home he will have gone. He will have grabbed his clothes, his belongings and exited your life forever.

I didn't expect him to be at the bottom of my stairs this morning, thankfully I wore one of my new outfits...something I bought to make me feel better. Not that it did...but sweet justice; I knew I looked cute in it and it was the perfect time to see him again. I returned home to change after training for about twenty minutes, listening intently to avoid running into him again. I've spent the last few days crying over a male that didn't want me so why should I even bother to see him.

Why would he even want to see me anyway, he fled like a thief in the night...I'm surprised he is even back.

I've worked extra shifts, putting all my energy into work. It takes my mind off the pain, rejection and growing anger within me. Anger at him...but mainly anger at myself for letting things get this far, for falling for him. For allowing myself to be vulnerable. Doctor Abel has been more attentive than usual, which really is saying something. He's not left me on my own at all and constantly checks my body temperature.

I've assured him that I feel much better and the almost hypothermia is a thing of the past. But once a doctor, always a doctor.

Busying myself with restocking the medical cabinets on the ward, I hear footsteps in the distance... Dad's voice laughing. Doctor Abel hears him also and makes a point of walking down the corridor to greet him.

"Alpha, Knox...what can we do for you?" I freeze as I reach up to place clean laundered linen on a shelf. Oh goddess, what was he doing here.

Don't give him the time of day Josie, don't look into those dark brown broody eyes. Stay strong.

That was the plan, until I forgot just how delicious that scent of his is. Especially in this sterile smelling environment, that leather and sandalwood aroma completely overpowers my senses.

"I'm here to play peacemaker between you and the Head of Emergency."

"Oh...I.."

"It will be fine Abel, let's get this sorted once and for all. It shouldn't take long." Dad leaves Doctor Abel with little choice to reject his proposal, his eyes landing on me, giving a wink. I smile back at Dad before my smile drops as soon as I find Knox looking at me. "Page me if you need me.." Doctor Abel turns, placing a hand on my arm.

"Between restocking and restocking..I think I have it covered." I laugh out to him, I can't help my eyes landing back on Knox, whose murderous glare is on the doctor's hand on my arm. He's got a nerve to even dare try and get jealous of other males around me. "I'm sure Josie has it covered." Dad gestures for Doctor Abel to follow him but as they both exit the ward I'm a little surprised to find Knox isn't following them.

I don't want to be anywhere near him right now, never mind actually being alone with him. I excuse myself, carrying a box out of the ward and towards my preparation room...just for an excuse to get away.

Alone again, I place my hands down on my work top...letting that inner stress of his return settle back down. Determined to push myself through the rest of my shift without thinking of him...I find that even more difficult when he clears his throat behind me. My resolve starts to crumble as his scent enters my safe place...my little cupboard in the wall.

I slowly turn, placing my hands firmly behind me and trapping them between the edge of the worktop and my lower back...because I want to touch him. I want to run my hands through his hair, touch his muscular arms...taste those lips... "Can I help you with something?" My voice is a little more shrill than usual.

"We need to talk..." It isn't lost on me that he is wearing the same clothes he left in. I wonder where he went...

"Talk?" I scoff out, the time for talking was in the meadow. He said all he needed to say.

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

"Okay, well I'm working right now..." It's hard to keep my voice sounding unfazed by his closeness to me as he takes a step into my room.

"Josie..." Just the way my name sounds on his lips makes my lower core tremble. Soon he'll be calling another female in the same way...I can do this...I can get past this first meeting. They always say the first meeting since breaking up is the worse...then it gets easier. But I really can't see why I would ever see him again, unless he comes to Jaxon's Alpha ceremony, whenever that will be. But I've got months to prepare for that, Dad is nowhere near ready to hand over the pack to Jaxon yet.

"Don't you think the time for talking has passed us now. You said all you needed to say..." I keep my voice to a pleasant tone, I really didn't want to argue anymore.

"You caught me off guard, I wasn't expecting..."

"In my experience that's when the truth comes out, when you are at your most vulnerable."

"I wasn't vulnerable." He seethes through gritted teeth, the change in him taking me off guard.

"I didn't say you were vulnerable, I meant the situation...with you not having a chance to prepare your answers." He didn't like to show a weakness, I found that early on with Knox. Dad was right, why did I not realise what a complicated person he is. "What time do you finish?"

"Depends..."

"Depends on what?"

"Depends when Doctor Abel's meeting is over and if I need to stay behind to help him catch up." I shrug because it's the truth and nothing I can do about it. I had already had time off and was already behind.

"You've been here all day." His forehead furrows slightly, as concern edges upon his face.

"I imagine by the time I'm finished you'll be at the pack run tonight, so might be best for us to talk in the morning."

"Okay, tomorrow then. But look Josie, I know I hurt you, I'm sorry I shouldn't have walked away. If I could go back and do it differently, I would."

"You would?" A vague level of hope ignites within me, did he have a chance to rethink us. Was he going to take back all that he said...

"Not that, I stand by what I said...I can't do commitment. But I wouldn't have left you in the meadow, your father said you were there all night?" No...no chance of that, I really am a fool.

Pity, there is pity in his eyes. I don't know what is worse the fact he has yet again been told something private or that he feels sorry for me.

"You need to leave." I order out, my hand pressing against his chest as I push him away from me and slam the door in his face.

Still reeling from Knox and the nerve he has for coming to my work place only to piss me off even more, I avoided everyone in the alpha house at all costs before the pack run.

Skipping dinner I headed straight to my cabin in the meadows, but managed to pass through the back door to collect Lobo and my gun from the vault on my way through.

I needed this. My body was exhausted but my mind was pent up with frustration again. Three days I had worked on my mental health only for him to be back to unravel all my efforts within a few hours. And the thing that makes me even more mad...he doesn't even realise, doesn't even care.

Placing my exercise playlist on through the stereo sound system, I start stretching out before giving my body the work out it needs.

An hour in, I pause for water when I can hear howls in the distance... the pack run has started.

Putting my drink back down I turn the volume dial of my stereo player up...a new song almost vibrating through the wooden walls. I didn't need a reminder right now of what every other pack member was doing, without me.

Even now, it never gets any easier but knowing they aren't allowed to come this way means I can ride out the pack event, yet again, in solace.

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

Half way through my next exercise routine, Lobo starts acting oddly. He's usually asleep by now, but his chest is rumbling against the floorboards as he lays down on his stomach.

Rolling my eyes I move back to my stereo, turning down the music thinking perhaps he was groaning at me for keeping him awake.

As soon as I turn the music way down... he jumps up, his ears pinned for a noise he must hear outside. Then it occurs to me...he can hear the pack run.

"They are on their run Lobo, just ignore them." I cheerfully reassure him as I ruffle the top of his head. But he doesn't listen to me, he starts growling at the door...a front paw tapping at it for me to open it.

They know not to come out this far, Mum and Dad remind them every pack run.

I turn the music off... my blood running cold as the hairs on the back of my neck stand up.

I reach for my gun, placing the safety catch off...taking a deep breath in to centre my core. Most likely one of the guards has left patrol early and was using the meadows as a cut through. But without access to the pack-link, I was going to have to exit the cabin to find out for definite.

I wait, expecting Lobo's growing frantic state to calm...when it doesn't and he becomes more restless. Reaching for the door handle, I pull the door open... Lobo brushing past my legs as he whizzes past me.

He sniffs the air, his eyes darting around into the black void of the night...before a menacing growl escapes him.

"What is it boy? What do you see?" I whisper as I crouch down by his side.

My ears are pinned for the sound of a movement...the entire pack having fallen into some weird eerie silence. Even the pack run...they aren't making any noise.

A twig snap up ahead almost has my soul jumping out of my body...Lobo running away from me into the darkness of the night.

I give chase, pulling my phone out to shine a torch into the black meadow. Yes the moon was out but she was half covered in a cloud, offering a strange red tinge to her glow. It must be a blood moon tonight.

I freeze when he barks again, swiftly followed by the sound of a male groaning in pain as I hear Lobo maul on something.

I turn my torch towards the trees to find Lobo mauling on a leg...I lift the torch up to find a man dressed in black...a gun in his possession.

If I didn't think my heart could sink any lower...I was wrong.

I shine the torch to the left where more figures come into the light, all dressed the same, all wearing black.

They had headsets on, all armed with a similar gun. I gasp out as a number of laser lights land on my chest as I look down. I look back up to find the closest one to me reaching for his ear.

I scan the meadow, count the number of them...far too many for me to take out alone but I've got enough bullets to do some damage to their numbers.

"First border out. They are here...operation clean up has begun." He says before winking and blowing a kiss at me. He was human, they all had to be. They were kitted out like humans...and didn't have that scent of being werewolves.

He said they had taken the first border out, which means some of our guards had been killed. Dad will have felt their deaths which explains the eerie silence when the pack run was a loud event. It won't be long until the fight comes here, but for now I am alone. A growl to his right makes me take a step back... Lobo still mauling one of the intruders.

"Will you shoot this fucking mutt!" He orders before the man in front of me turns his gun on Lobo, a chuckle escaping him.

Mutt? Who was he calling a mutt.

I don't wait, I lift my gun up...dropping my phone to the ground and take aim. I fire every bullet at the intruders screaming at Lobo to runaway.

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

- Knox ~

We were gathered outside the pack house, a blood moon shining down upon us tonight.

It wasn't as clear tonight due to cloud coverage and the red tinge not allowing the moon to shine as brightly, but we are werewolves. We are used to the moon's cycles.

Jace's absence was felt, I can hear soft murmurs amongst the excited crowd of pack members that they hoped he would have returned. That their young alpha wouldn't miss the pack run. Heading the run was a slimmed down alpha family. Only three stood, whereas before, four headed the pack run...in perfect unison.

Beta Alora stands to the side, her eyes scanning amongst the crowd before they turn to the direction that was also haunting me...the cabin.

She would be in there...she would be waiting this out alone.

Alpha Hector places his hands to the air, the general chat of the crowd reducing down before completely stopping.

He has the complete respect of his pack, they would follow him to the ends of the earth. Not all alpha's have this. Sure you can run a pack but this level of respect and loyalty is earned.

He, then his mate, then his son, shift...the air around them shimmering. Her great white fur still having the ability to catch my breath in the back of my throat.

I'd seen a lot in my life already...but to see the white wolf really was something. I don't think it will ever be a sight I will take for granted.

With a howl to the moon, Alpha Hector commands his pack to follow his lead. They all shift before me, but not before removing their clothes and leaving them on the ground. They give chase, their excitement palpable as their paws hit the ground and they follow their Alphas into the night.

I remain, I've decided not to shift tonight.

Shifting with a pack was sacred...only meant for pack members. This was the first pack my wolf has felt that level of loyalty towards, since the demise of my own pack.

Each shift a wolf becomes more and more connected to a pack...I can't do that to him, only to leave an hour afterwards.

I move away from the alpha house and towards the training grounds where they were headed. Watching them, as a group, run as one.

They swing back around towards me, and I can feel the ground tremble slightly at my feet as each paw hits the ground in a synchronised display of perfect leadership.

The three alphas lead, side by side curving around the vast training field before heading into my direction.

Their sight tugs on my heart, that level of belonging again never truly leaving me...no matter how hard I deny it.

Suddenly...out of nowhere, with no warning, they stop. Skidding to a halt.

I can feel my own forehead crease at their strange sudden behaviour...then complete silence blankets across them. My wolf creeps forward, concern at their odd behaviour, something wasn't right. Alpha Hector shifts, the rest remaining in fur form...his hand lands on his chest, a pain radiating through him and onto his facial expression.

"Alpha?" I take a step closer towards him.

"Four of my guards are dead."

"Dead?"

"We are under attack!" He growls out, his eyes glowing a shade of reddish grey...as he moves into a pack mind-link. Each wolf's eyes glazing over, their alpha giving orders. And then I hear it...the worse sound in the world.

Gun shots.

Gun shots coming from the direction of the forest. **Denied by Destiny: Trapped in the Shadows of the Mate Bond**

Knox ~

Shifted back, the grand Dark Phantom Alpha wolf is on the intruder before his body hits the ground.

But there is no need, Red's shot is so precise that he was dead before he knew what happened.

But Alpha Hector continues to maul him all the same before rushing towards the dark tree lines with his warriors to take out the remaining threat to his people. How the hell did they break the borders.

His son is already ahead of him, as I hear screams from the alpha born catching up with his prey. The intruders wouldn't make it out alive, not if Jaxon's wolf was on the hunt.

I scan the bodies, each one a perfect shot before turning to find Red still pointing her gun out towards the treeline. She might as well save her bullets now, if she had any left.

Lobo barks at her side, his own snout covered in blood just like most of the warrior wolves will be when they return any second. I can hear them returning already, paws now shifted back into feet as they've taken out the threat.

My eyes look up at Josie's...my mouth forming to make a comment before I notice the fear within her eyes. She's in shock, all this training yet it's been with fake targets...she's never fired a gun at a life before. She's never killed before.

I take a step towards her as she remains frozen in shock. Then, I realise it isn't shock that has her body frozen... but pain. I don't understand until I look down to her chest to find her training vest covered in blood, and three holes in the fabric.

She moves, her hands lowering the gun down by her side...until her hand drops it... grip no longer an option for her as her legs start to give way.

I'm there in a flash, catching her just before she hits the ground, my body a barrier between the meadow ground and her as she lays in my arms.

I can smell the blood.

I can smell....the silver.

"No...no no..." My hands shake as I touch the holes within her vest... the bullets have gone through, embedded into her chest. My fingers burn as I touch where the bullets are wedged like a parasite.

"Josie?" My now bloody hands cup her face as she stares up at me, that spark within her eyes fading. Lobo barking by her side as he licks her face, littering her with kisses. She'll be okay, she has to be...the silver won't have damaged her any more than normal bullets, because she doesn't have a wolf. They won't be lethal to her.

I'm used to blood, I'm used to horror scenes...but having her blood on my hands, having it flow from her body is something I can't register properly, I'm in such a state of panic even my wolf is struggling to come forward.

I hear them, laughter as they enter back onto the clearing of the meadow, now in human form. No one has seen, they presume she is safe because she did the shooting. She was the one that raised the alarm to their location.

"Tell me what to do?" I croak out, my voice caught in the back of my throat as pure panic settles in. She was able to heal me, if she just tells me what to do but she can't her eyes just look up at me, tears streaming down her beautiful perfect face.

Her eyes roll into the back of her head and I lift her up more, refusing for her to give in.

"Tell me what to do?" I yell at her, her eyes returning back into focus as her family and pack finally notice something isn't quite right.

"Tell me what to do?" I shout at them only to receive gasps in return.

"Josie?" Both Hector and Kaia scream out, both running towards her, Jaxon by their side.

ection of the meadow.

I'm not a pack member, I don't wait for orders....my body acts for me. I don't even question my need to get to her.

I'm racing, racing towards the cabin and the meadow, my ears concentrated on that one location...growling coming from a lesser wolf...a dog.

I push my body the hardest I have ever had to, my desperation to get to them. I am overtaken in my human form by the speed of the Dark Phantom wolves.

Fur after fur whizzing past me, until I reach the meadow and find a group of males running towards the shadows.

The wolves don't wait, their sharp fangs preparing to sink into skin.

The meadow ground is already littered with dead bodies, as she stands...her gun in her hand as she goes to take out another...a stand off as they both point guns at one another.

I push my body again, preparing to take the figure dressed in black out just as they both open fire. But she gets him...gets him directly in the forehead as the others are chased into the trees.

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

As soon as they reach her, Kaia gives a blood curdling scream as Hector rips the sport's vest open to reveal the bullet wounds.

"I'm...I'm sorry.." Josie gasps out as if it was a choice to talk or breathe.

"No...Josie, stay with us." He commands before touching the bullet wounds only to flinch back in pain.

"Silver."

"What?" Kaia cries out as she places gentle kisses on her daughter's head, stroking her hair.

"She needs the hospital...NOW." He roars out and I don't wait. He was right, if we can get these bullets out...

"Stay with me Red." I whisper into her ear as I pick her up in my arms and start racing towards the hospital.

The entire pack follows us as we run to the direction of the hospital, their wolves' howls a warning to the medical staff and also a prayer to the moon goddess.

I don't stop, I keep going...her father, mother and brother running next to me as I feel her slip away in my arms.

"No Josie, stay with me." I growl out, commanding her to not leave me alone in this world. To go where I can't follow.

The scene at the hospital was like something out of a natural disaster movie. They weren't ready, they weren't even here. They were on the pack run with their alphas. The only person ready and waiting was Doctor Abel. "Place her on here, quick." He wheels the gurney to me, and I reluctantly place her down on it, as he gets to work.

"What happened?" He hands touch her chest, only to flinch also at the metallic poison lodged within her.

"Silver bullets, she was ambushed."

"Silver?" He turns to me, his face one of complete horror.

"You save her, you save my daughter at all costs...do you understand me?" Kaia grabs Doctor Abel by his collar, only for Jaxon to pull her off him.

"She needs to go into theatre." Doctor Abel lifts the sides of the gurney up before moving to the bottom in preparation to push it.

"I'll help." Kaia declares reaching for the clothes that Beta Riley has brought for them all.

"Alpha, I must protest." The doctor looks at Kaia in disbelief.

"This is my daughter, this isn't my first operation..."

"Alpha?" He turns to Alpha Hector, looking for support but he doesn't get what he wanted.

"My mate is experienced, and she can be a live mind-link back to me." Hector places a hand on his mates face, a special word shared between them through their mate bond.

"Fine. But as soon as those theatre doors are closed, I'm the one in charge....good, let's move." Doctor Abel states, which Kaia nods in agreement.

I remain next to her, running along the side of the gurney until the theatre doors are before me. A hand lands on my shoulder, pulling me back...his calming voice landing by my ear. "This is where we hand her over to the professionals..this is where we pray."

The doors close, just as Kaia turns to look at her mate. Then they are gone, she is gone.

I didn't get a chance to tell her...to tell her what a fool I had been. How I shouldn't have left, how I should have stayed..fought with her, fought for her.

Not have allowed my past to catch up with my future.

I need her to live, I need her to survive this...

My eyes look down at my hands, her blood staining my palms but I don't care...I need the stains as a reminder of what has just happened. Because this didn't seem real, I can't have this be my reality. "Damn you, pick up.." Jaxon growls at his phone, his fingers shaking as he redials a contact. I'm assuming Jace.