

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

Chapter 41



Chapter 0041 Chapter 0041 Than POV

My eyes couldn't believe what they were seeing, complete betrayal. She was nothing more than a traitor.

Not only has she gone straight to the enemy pack, but she's entwined herself within the pack, with them... with him.

There was no mistaking it, the small curve of her tummy when she turned on her side.

She was with child, the ***h was pregnant, and by him.

If she thinks being pregnant would deter me, then she is wrong. If anything, it has given me a new fire to bring them both down.

I cleared my men out immediately...she needs to know the truth and she needs to know it now.

to break them apart, I need to make her vulnerable...alone.

I need to b He keeps

She

*****g shielding her, if she knew he was only using her, she would run, like she did from me. But this time I'll be waiting. I'll be ready. from

I drove myself alone back to the Amber Desert pack, Zane making the right choice in not joining me and driving some of the warriors back. The rest followed in other cars. I didn't wait for them, my foot was pushed down on the gas pedal for the entire journey, not even stopping for red lights. My mood was

dark, my aura suffocating even me. Not even having the window fully down helped to clear the atmosphere that was making it difficult to drive. What I really needed was an outlet for my anger. I wanted to shift and run, killing animals in my wolf form, but I didn't have the time. We were up against it more than ever. I speed through the pack gates, mind-linking the guards to let me through. I didn't want to stop.

The car skids to a halt, knocking over a large plant pot outside the alpha house as I leave it too late to hit on the break pedal.

cal

Exiting the

I push the car door open and head to my house, not even bothering to close the car door behind me. I won't be staying long. into the alpha house, finding Alora in my office, sitting at my desk, on my computer. 2

Storm

Her eyes light up when she sees that I have returned ahead of schedule. Any other day I would appreciate her response to my early arrival, but not today. "Than?" She eyes me with hesitation when I do not mirror her happy expression.

"I need a photo of him and you together?"

"Hello Alora...I missed you Alora.." She starts to giggle to herself, finding my odd behaviour amusing. Even shaking her head as she returns to the

computer. "Alora...I really don't have time for this. Do you have a photo or not?"

0041

"A

photo of who exactly?"

"Of you and Hector." I shout, my hands shaking from frustration. I place them by my side, f***ng them into balls to try and control the trembling.

Her amusement stops instantly, her face taking on a look of hurt as she struggles to look me in the eye. "You know I don't.."

Really?

"No Than, you made me burn them, remember."

Yes I remember, I remember very well that I made her burn any memory of them spending any time together. But I know Alora...

"You don't have one photo of him? Not even something hidden away...for safe keeping, just in case." My chest burns at the thought of her maybe thinking they had a future together. That she had a future without me.

"In case of what? Has something happened, is he alright?" She stands up, her concern for him even now eating away at me.

My temper is worsening, my wolf wanting to shift and attack him. My wolf would quite happily travel the length of distance between our packs just to have the chance to end him.

To take the threat

t away once and for all."

She says I am hers, that she is mine..but as her forehead furrows and her mouth frowns, I'm finding it hard to believe her.

1 storm

out my office in the hunt for a photograph. I did make her destroy everything but she must have kept something, something I can use...anything.

I made sure nobody touched her belongings, but she had a few boxes still from when she moved in from her parent's house.

"Than...what's going on?" Alora chases after me up the stairs towards our bedroom. But I change rooms last minute, she wouldn't have anything on display. It must be in with her boxes that we always kept in a guest room. myself, my mood is red....my eyes seeing only red. I've never felt anger like this before, not even when I found out about Hector and Alora.

I can't help

!

I don't even know who is more angry at her being pregnant, my wolf or me.

At first Hector wants my mate, now he has my wife... and has impregnated her.

I start ripping at cardboard boxes, completely making them unusable. Once I am finished with them, they will be shreds of cardboard.

I'm manic in my search that I toss Alora's items to the ground, items that I couldn't bring myself to look at whilst she was in a coma, things from our childhood.

Movie tickets, pressed flowers of the wild bouquets I used to pick for her, silly love letters, even a pack of

+25 NOS

love hearts she has kept from a Valentine's Day we spent together. I'm showing it no love, no treasured value, as Alora tries to prevent my hands from searching more boxes. Then it falls to my feet.

A black diary from when she was 16, before she drank the wolfsbane.

Ebony Woods Author

Chapter 42



Chapter 0042 Alora POV

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an... Than...what are you doing? Stop...." My hands are moving too slowly to catch my childhood memories, the things I kept from my parent's house....precious memories from my childhood years I spent loving Than. He s just ripping through box after box, the contents that I can't keep up with being tossed to the floor. My wolf is coming forward, she's trying to warn me but she's still not fully recovered. Why was he in such a blind rage?

Then a thud hits the ground.

My heart skips a beat, panic rises into my chest and restricts my breathing as my old black diary drops to the ground.

He stops, his eyes focusing on the little black diary laying by his feet.

Who would have kept this?

Why box it up, it would only serve to cause Than pain.

I kept it

it the year everything started to go wrong.

With no parents, no close friends outside of Than's circle that I could talk to, to get advice from. I needed to share my thoughts and fears somewhere.

It's a race between the two of us, me reaching down to get it to try and destroy it somehow and Than bending down to find what was inside.

please no.

"Than please...don't do this..."

He's quicker, the alpha male, built for speed and stamina.

I'm pulling at his arms, trying to reach for the diary in his hand, desperate for him to give it to me.

"Alora...stop." His voice sounding bored of my attempts to recover the diary.

He knows, as do I, that all my attempts at reaching and jumping are in vain. His hand has placed the diary so high up it is completely out of my reach.

He opens it, flicking through the pages until he finds the one thing I wish I had now burnt all those years

ago

But I couldn't seem to bring myself to do it.

It was small, printed instantly on one of those cameras that produce the photo as soon as it is taken. The camera was a birthday present from Than, ironic I used his gift to capture a happy memory that would bring him so much pain.

As soon as he sees it, his hazel eyes flash to that of his wolf's and a growl rumbles from his chest. 1/3 Chapter 0042

I'm preparing for him to shout at me, for his jealousy to take over...but it doesn't. He simply places the diary on the dresser side, not reading one page of it, and places the instant snap photograph in his back trouser pocket.

"You said you destroyed all traces of him..." His voice is controlled but there is a bitterness to it that makes me feel I am 16 all over again.

"I did...or I thought I did."

"Cut the crap!" A loud bang resonates the guest room, my body flinches, as his fist slams onto the dresser. The diary being knocked to the floor. content.

"Give me the photo and I'll destroy it." I place my hand out, my palm faced upwards ready to receive it.

"No need...it wil

.it will serve me a great purpose."

"Purpose? What purpose..."

"You lied to me."

No.....

You

I just...you don't understand Than. I meant to destroy it but I never got around to it."

mean you hoped the wolfsbane would make it go away. That you wouldn't need to destroy it because you didn't plan to survive."

Any reply I had I waiting has disappeared at his comment. No words are readily available for me, it's as if I am speechless.

His eyes are cold, this is the first time since I have woken up that he is voicing any sense of anger or hurt for what I did. He's been nothing but kind and understanding in my recovery...patient with me. Even the mate bond is well guarded on his side, not as carefree as it used to be. I know now he has been carefully selecting what emotions he has been releasing out to me.

"It was just one thing...one tiny thing to keep. Is that so wrong...I gave him up.."

"For me?" He cuts me off, his voice shaking with anger.

"You gave him up for me? You are MINE. You've always been mine."

"I know. I am, I am yours. Than please..." I reach for him, my desperation making my own voice crack. My hands snake around his torso, clinging onto him.

He was all I ever wanted, but the moon goddess also sent me another.

Than was days away from turning 18, our mate bond not confirmed. We had such a close bond growing up, how could we not be fated mates.

But another claimed I was his, claimed I belonged to him.

Someone who has never lied to me.

Chapter 43



Chapter 0043 Kaia POV

Nothing

says you're in too deep than taking a basket of food over to a family's home that had been through an unthinkable ordeal.

But I couldn't help it, my mind had been on Rosa constantly and I needed to check in on her, to make sure she was doing okay.

I had made some fresh bread with Aubrey and wrapped up a choice of cheese and fruit from the alpha house kitchen. Aubrey said it was no bother and that Hector wouldn't mind.

It was just something, a reason to visit rather than say..how are you doing after you were sexually attacked by your mate, that is now dead.

on.

It is Rosa's mum that answers the door to me, her hair unkept from lack of time to herself and her clothes were creased. She must be in overtime keeping by Rosa's side...even at night I imagine the nightmares continue to haunt. He may be dead but the memory will leave "Miss Kaia, this is very kind..."

"It's

nothing, I just wanted to check on Rosa." 1

I am ushered into their home, taking a step into their private family space where I find Rosa laying on the sofa staring blankly at the television.

"I've

I've brought some freshly made bread, and a variety of cheese." I speak to her mother, but raising my voice for Rosa to hear.

"Thank you, she doesn't have an appetite at the moment." She whispers into my ear.

All

I can

do is no nod in con

confirmation as I am walked into the kitchen, where I am offered a hot drink.

I watch her from the doorway of the kitchen, every movement her mother makes in the kitchen earns a flinch from Rosa...as if she is frightened of even the smallest of noises. I feel like an intruder and start to regret my decision in coming here, I should have left the basket by the front door.

leer

When the front door opens and closes, my heart breaks for Rosa when I hear a slight sigh leave her mouth.

"Are you getting up today?" Riley clicks his fingers in front of his sister's eyes, trying to phase her out of her zombie like state.

"Rosa... Rosa can you hear me?" Riley repeats, his frustration at his sister's state getting the better of him. He was hurting too, but nowhere near as much as her.

"I'm fine, just tired." She grunts, slowly and reluctantly moving into a sitting up position.

"Riley, we have a visitor." Their mum walks past me, placing a tray of hot drinks on the coffee table by the sofas.

"Miss Kaia was kind enough to bring some bread and cheese..."

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"I'm not hungry!"

"I know dear but if you try, it might make you feel..."

"Better? Ha, seriously Mum?"

"Rosa!" Riley growls at his sister's sarcastic tone at their Mum.

"I just want to be left alone..." She stands up before her body is blocked by Riley, who makes it apparent leaving wasn't an option right now.

This was hard to watch. They were broken.

"Perhaps I could have a moment alone with Rosa?" I push on the mind-link to both Riley and their mum, her voice replying in my head.

"If you think it could help." Contentt belongs to N0ve/IDrâ/ma.O(r)g!

They both leave the room, heading outside the house. I walk further into the sitting room and pick up my hot drink, slowly sipping on the herbal tea. For a while we just sit in silence, both watching the television until sense she is no longer uncomfortable by my presence. "They are just worried Rosa, so am I. You've been through a lot." "They don't understand, no one understands."

Well actually I do...

Her head whips to me, her eyes piercing into mine.

"Mine is slightly different though. I'm older, I could already feel the mate bond. In the end I couldn't fight it. You mustn't blame yourself Rosa. You did nothing wrong. I know people say that they can't imagine it, that they don't understand what you are going through, but I do, and I hope if you need to talk...no matter how hard you might think it is, I can listen. That I do understand. That I'm here if you need me."

She allows my words to sink in at first before picking up her drink and taking a sip herself.

"What happened afterwards?"

"I ran. I left his pack and came here."

"He let you go?"

"He didn't really have a choice. I don't think he even knows what he did really. The mate bond can be strong, hard to fight. It doesn't feel like it now but I promise one day you'll find someone who won't take advantage of you. Someone who you'll want to put your trust in to again." Because that's how I

was feeling with Hector, I was trusting again. I was starting to forgive the mate bond, the moon goddess...because she brought me here instead.

Chapter 44



Chapter 0044 Kaia POV

I remain alone with Rosa for another hour, her asking me questions, me asking her to do simple tasks daily. Like take a shower, eat at least one big meal a day, to take a walk. Things that seem like a huge task right now but soon will become a natural part of her daily life, of her recovery. Soon she'll be doing these things without realising it. She has the love and support of her family, she's going to be okay, I have faith in that.

Riley insisted on escorting me back to the alpha house. There really was no need, with the sudden unexplained departure of the Amber Desert warriors, the Dark Phantom's high risk level had been reduced and in a day or two people would be expected to be able to leave the pack grounds as they please. But I think he felt duty bound to escort the lone female guest of the alpha back to the alpha house. If anything, I think, to avoid being disciplined by the alpha for letting me walk alone. "I don't know what you did, but she's already seems to be halfway back to her old self." Riley rubs his hands over his eyes. He was tired and worried for his little sister. "It will take time, but she'll get there. As long as you and your parents remain patient with her. She lashes out at home because it is her safe place." do you know that?"

How do I know that?

I can't really answer his question, I just shrug because I haven't had a safe place for a while now. And that is something I was grateful that Rosa had.

"How are you finding the pack?"

"Everyone is

"Our

is very welcoming. I must admit I had expected a different atmosphere." I like Riley, he's mature for his age and quite a matter of fact person. Doesn't sugar coat things, I like that. reputation, or should I say our alpha's reputation precedes us..." You could say something like that."

are

He walks

you staying?"

s behind me as a pack member walks past us, letting me walk ahead of him on the narrow path before rejoining my side. The traits of a gentleman.

"I don't really know, I came here looking for someone.

I

"The Alpha?"

"No, someone I haven't seen for a long time. He is quite distinguishable, he has a scar to the side of his left eye."

"I remember him, he had black greying hair...middle aged. I can't remember his name but he stayed maybe a night or two."

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Jackpot! This was the information I needed.

It must be Father, it has to be. But why didn't he stay long.

"Do you know why he came here?" I try to encourage my voice to sound calm, almost unbothered by the information Riley was offering.

"No, sorry I don't. Alpha is part of a group alliance with other packs so he might have offered accommodation as a favour to another alpha contact. It wouldn't be the first time."

Hhmm maybe, Father's not the type to build connections with alliances, but who knows.

A lot could have changed in the last 4 years.

We continue making small talk about the pack as we walk towards the direction of the alpha house. As we enter into the front driveway, a delivery van is parked outside, a man in uniform sitting on the back of the lorry smoking a cigarette. He looks annoyed, like he has been waiting for sometime.

As soon as he sees us approach, he puts the cigarette out and hands some parcels to Riley to sign.

"I'll take these to the alpha's office." Riley says as the delivery man drives away.

He walks into the alpha house after me, our directions changing as I walk into the kitchen and Riley into Hector's office.

Moments later he finds me in the kitchen, my head in the fridge seeing what leftovers were available for snacking on. I was finding it increasingly difficult to conceal my expanding bump and increasing appetite, I was always hungry.

"Thank you for coming to see Rosa today."

"Any time, I'm here if she needs me."

"Thanks Kaia. Can you let the Alpha know that I placed parcels on his desk. There was one for you, I've left it on yours."

Hopefully that was finally some maternity clothes I had ordered. I was in desperate need of them now, these waistbands were digging into my skin.

Thanks

Riley."

catch up with you later."

He leaves me to my guilty gorging of Aubrey's amazing leftovers, my tummy finally fall again after eating continuously for a good 30 minutes.

Shamefully it wasn't even lunch time yet.

I carefully clean the kitchen trying to hide the fact that any food had been consumed, but who was I kidding. Aubrey will take one look at the fridge and know someone has swiped the leftovers.

Ready t

to bloat out in my new maternity clothes, I head into the office.

My own mouth frowns at the parcel left on my desk. This parcel was far too small to be apThis text is © clothing.

I reach over, picking up the brown padded envelope, tearing it open.

I fish out the contents as I place them on my desk in front of me.

A letter and a photograph.

It takes me a moment to understand what I am looking at..a picture of me and Hector, together.

His arm around my shoulders, me looking up at him in complete admiration.

But I don't remember ever wearing these clothes and I don't think Hector and I have ever actually had a photograph taken together.

Then it dawns on me.

This is Hector...but this is not me.

This is her.

Her with him.

Alora with Hector. (1

Ebony Woods

Chapter 45



Chapter 0045 Chapter

0045

Kaia POV

Alora with Hector.

I don't understand.

My

Was

eyes

can't believe what they are witnessing.

a fake photograph, orchestrated by Than thinking I would run back into his arms.

this a

It's possible, technology nowadays was advanced enough to forge a photograph and I wouldn't put anything past Than. His tactics are cruel, he'll do anything to keep her alive. But something inside of me doesn't believe so, that somehow I know this is a real photograph. My wolf already starting to whimper in my mind. she the the reason they are enemies...the reason that they hate one another.

Is

Their warriors remain ready to attack innocent bystanders at any moment, just waiting for the given command from their alpha.

Just

word

I could destroy a pack, destroy families. Is this why...because of some twisted love triangle.

Just one This can't be right. My

head is heavy...becoming foggy the more I think of the possibilities of what I don't know, of what they've been keeping from me. I've been plucked from a steady college life into this. Repeatedly tricked.

Why, because I resemble t know

don't

her...

anything about her but I'd say this was before her wolfsbane consumption. She's not the waif thin young woman laying on a hospital bed being kept alive by machines. She's vibrant, she's in her element. She's alive in more ways than one. She's the woman that Than fell in love with long before I entered the scene.

She's standing next to my second chance mate, having already secured the heart of my own mate.

They look happy...a ...and for a fleeting moment, very fleeting, I feel sorry for Than.

It passes quickly though, as anger starts to ignite within me. A spark that promises to burn savagely and without remorse.

How could he know her?

I can feel the walls of this office closing in on me, my own top's collar starting to strangle me at my neck. My face is burning hot, burning with anger.

I

Anger and jealousy start to dance together like old friends as I stare at the way he is holding her, Hector has never held me in such a way. Nor has Than.

This can't be true.

0045

0045

Chap hell does he even know her... 1

How the

How copyrighted © content.

+

1 very carefully place the photograph back down and replace it with the letter in my hands. It's definitely Than's handwriting, but this time his scribble is slightly unreadable in places. Almost as if his note was rushed.

"This is HIS truth. Come home to me."

My mind swirls with flashbacks of the first time I met Hector in the coffee shop. I thought fate was finally giving me a lucky break, giving me a new chance. But no. But no.

He has lied to me all this time. Making me a pack member, keeping me in the alpha house and not setting me up in my own home..... Always keeping me close by.

I feel like such an idiot, an overly trusting idiot...yet again.

For once I thought I was ahead of the game, that I was the one making the rules. I wasn't even in the same league as the 2 of them.

Just collateral damage.

The realisation hurts like a sharp knife being stabbed into my back, twisted and then plunged deeper. He's been playing me from the first day he laid eyes on me.

Using me.

My hand grips at my forehead as my mind continues to recall memories...he knew Than already.

He must have done if he knows her. Which means even at the banquet he was lying to me. Pretending he didn't know Than already.

My

mind flashes back to that night, a memory stirring. Than said something, he said she was awake.

I thought he was talking to me, telling me. But no, he was telling Hector.

I'm spiralling in their web of lies. I don't even know who to trust anymore. "The baby." My wolf's alarmed voice warns in my head. She was right, I thought I was safe here. I thought he didn't care that I was carrying his enemy's child...

the heir to the Amber Desert pack. That I would be protected, have time to consider my future once the baby was born. The heir would be safe here, that he would maybe help me approach Than one day...support me in telling Than. Butir But no, he was planning on using my y against Than

He's been keeping me only to betray me at the right moment. A moment that would bring the most personal reward to him.

I need to move, I've stayed too long. I've stupidly let my guard down. Never again, never again will I trust the mate bond that betrays me time and time again. It is imperative that I find Father. I know Father is in a coastal area. I just need to find out which exact one.

I hear his footsteps entering the front door. His laughter ringing out in the hallway as he and his beta, enjoy a personal conversation with one another. Just a new Than and Zane, both ready to betray me when the time calls. 1 They both step over the threshold into the office. Their footsteps stopping when they notice my back facing them.

They try to engage with me, to make conversation. But all I can see is a live action version of the photograph play out. The picture ingrained into my memory now for a lifetime.

Did I wrong the moon goddess in a past life.

No one has ever looked at me the way Hector is looking at her. No one has ever held me close, as if letting me go could ever be an option. Like he couldn't breathe properly if I weren't in the same room as him.

Hector takes a step closer to me, his arm stretching out to wake me up from my self pity trance I am currently drowning in, my own wolf crying her own tears of never being good enough.

+

Chapter 46



Chapter 0046 Hector POV

Riley had mind-linked me to say he had walked Kaia back to the alpha house, that she had worked some kind of magic on Rosa today.

It's not magic, that's just Kaia. She's special... .and I'm just understanding how much. Only a Luna would take the time to visit pack members and Than is a bl**dy i**cile for letting her slip through his fingers. "Alpha, pack security has now been lowered a level and I think the plan to reopen the borders should go ahead." Ezra is walking back with me from a brief security meeting. With With the

!

Amber Desert warriors gone and no evidence of foul play, I wanted to discuss reducing the numbers on border patrol with my heads of departments before the immediate implementation of my orders. They all agreed that the timing seemed right and were happy for us to reopen the borders for free movement.

I am mindlessly chuckling with Ezra as we enter the house, my mood lighthearted as the threat of attack has now disappeared. Walking past the kitchen I can hear Aubrey huffing as she searches in the fridge for something. I would only need 1 guess to know where those leftovers are...and the culprit is standing in my office as we speak.

But something seems wrong, I can feel a strong level of anger bubbling through the pack link from Kaia.

My role as alpha meaning I can sense each pack members emotions at any given time. Kaia is usually calm, very good at concealing her emotions. But something has changed, something that my wolf is also now on alert for. Whatever has happened, it's enough to freeze her usually warm exterior, her body not even turning to greet Ezra who I know she is fond of. "Kaia?"

"All this time..." Her tone is as cold as her exterior.

"Excuse me?" She doesn't even sound like herself, my eyes glancing backwards to Ezra who seems just as perplexed.

"You've lied to me all this time..."

My chest tightens as she turns, a photo in her hand. A photo that captured a moment a lifetime ago.

My lighthearted mood flips, completely changing in the space of a few seconds.

"Who sent you that?" My immediate reaction is to reach for the photo and letter in her hand, checking both items..his scrawny handwriting... is HIS truth. Come home to me." It reads.

"This is!

+25

"Ezra,

leave us!" I command at my beta, who swiftly closes the office door behind him.

be

"Don't bother, nothing you can say will change my mind..." "Change your mind?"

"I'm leaving, I can't stay. Not any longer."

"Why because of this? A photograph taken years ago?"

"Because of what the photo represents. I want the truth...who is she to you?"

Her eyes are starting to bleed out into blue, her wolf trying to come forward. The blue rim that circulates her green eyes battling to take control. Her body is shaking, her anger overwhelming her.

"An old friend..." I curse myself the moment I say it. I know she won't believe that but I try anyway. 1

Even in this moment, where I can see the hurt in her eyes and it pains me to know I am the root cause for once and not him, she holds herself with strength.

She scoffs as she walks around her desk and types something into her laptop. She has shut down on me, I can tell. It's as if she's already miles away from the pack grounds.

It's like she's a

s a completely different person.

This isn't my Kaia.

She walks past me, not a word uttered and blind panic takes over me.

Would she really leave?

"Kaia wait..."

.." I move quicker than her, blocking her path to the door.

t wait and let me explain."

"Wait...just wait

"Explain what? I feel so st**id. Did you know, did you come looking for me?"

"No of course not. I didn't know who you were. I didn't even know a person like her existed but when I saw you, I knew instantly that he would have played you, that whatever you were to him was a lie."

"You've been lying to me. You're just like him." She raises her voice to me, as she clenches her hands in to fists.

"What...no Kaia..."

She takes the opportunity to move me aside, to brush past me and open the office door. I follow closely behind before she stops and turns to face me.

"I bet you couldn't believe your luck when a rogue ran into your coffee shop, right into your lap. A rogue from the enemy pack. Ha, no wonder you came that day... wanted to pick up the rogue yourself. Learn new things from Than's pack. You must have thought it was her, that Alora had escaped him... left him to run into your arms." She's hysterical and I'm starting to become concerned for the baby. The mother being in such a state can't be good for the the unborn child.

Both Aubrey and Ezra are standing by the kitchen, watching our guest act differently to who we thought

+25

she was. Contentt belongs to N0ve/IDrâ/ma.O(r)g!

"Kaía, listen to me...yes I couldn't believe my luck when it was you in the coffee shop, but I knew instantly it wasn't her. You are so different, you hold yourself differently...even yours eyes are different...of course you aren't her."

Chapter 0047

Chapter 47





Kaia POV

My hands are covering my ears. Every single word that comes out of his mouth is just lie after lie. "Kaia, you need to calm down. The baby..."

"This baby i content.

is his. Your enemy's...what were you going to do..trade me and the baby in for her?" Oh goddess I didn't actually believe he was capable of such a thing until I see the reaction in his face. He tries to disguise it but in that brief moment, he couldn't even deceive his own reaction.

Yes

s that was his plan all along. To befriend me, get me to trust him..only to trade me and the baby in for her.

"Do you love her?"

"It's complicated..." He closes his eyes, a deep sigh escaping his lungs. Like it pains him to talk about her. "Complicated?"

"She was meant to be mine but he already had her."

"So I'm right, she is also your mate?"

Yes."

I don't even realise we have an audience until I hear Aubrey gasp at Hector's admission. So they were mates, which is why...like Than... he couldn't feel the bond between us. Doomed to always be second best.

I can't stay, I can't live another lie. I'd rather be alone as a rogue and face parenthood alone in the darkness than live a lie.

"Kaia..."

"Do you love her?"

He takes a moment to consider my question before answering.

"It would be a foolish man to not love his own mate."

What did that mean? He's gone back to being an enigma. If it's not a lie then it's a puzzle.

"Just be honest with me. Me..all of this, was it so you could trade me in for her?"

"Kaia.."

"Just answer me?" My wolf pushes forward, screaming at her own lungs. I push her back, she shouldn't be draining her strength, it will harm the baby.

"Yes. I

But that was before I got to know you..." "What so now you know me you don't want her back?" Chapter 0047

"Its not like that...she's trapped there...she wants to leave but just doesn't know how." His hands run through his dark brown hair, leaving it messy as he pulls at the ends. "Hector, he won't ever let her go, not willingly anyway."

"What does that mean?"

I can see his concern for her in his eyes. If he only knew how ill she was, how she was close to death's door and I was her miracle recovery... that in handing me back he would be sacrificing me but saving her, even if he didn't get to be with her. He would still do it. He has admitted that he still loves her, how could he not.

I feel as if the sky is falling in on me.

If I wasn't pregnant I would accept my fate, I would tell him that the wolfsbane his precious mate consumed has ravaged her o***ns, leaving her kidneys useless.

That he would have to live the rest of his life knowing he signed my fate. That he tarnished their mate connection with my death for her survival.

But I can't, I won't.

This is my baby and I will protect it with my life to keep it away from this twisted love triangle they are in.

If Than found out he would keep me alive until I gave birth, then claim the child as the heir, letting her raise my child as the mother.

I need to be free, free of Than, free of Alora...and free of Hector.

trigger warning

I don't even know what I am saying anymore, my mouth is just saying whatever it wants to. I've given up filtering my words, given up hiding my pain and anger through the pack bond. He can feel everything I am feeling. He's trying to calm me down, repeatedly saying my anger isn't good for the baby.

That's when I feel it, feel my world start to end too soon.

I can feel a

I

"Sho

la cramp in my lower abdomen, feel the cramp start to increase into a burning sensation. H clutch at my stomach, my eyes looking at Hector whose fear for me is reflected in his own eyes. ..blood." I can just hear Aubrey gasp as she runs towards me. e's pregnant..."

I feel like I am underwater, my hearing has become muffled and my eyes start to feel heavy. My legs start to give way and for a moment, I swear I feel as if I am falling.

"Kaia." I

hear him shout for me as his body moves at such a fast pace he catches me before I hit the floor face first.

His arms wrap around me before he hoists me up and cradles into his chest.

"Ezra, drive us to the hospital." Hector growls as he rushes me out of the alpha house and into his car. Chapter 0047

The last noise I can make out is the slamming of the car doors and the roaring of the car engine coming to life. I must be imagining Hector's voice as he whispers into my ear... "Just hold on Kaia..."

Chapter 48



Hector POV

She is ever so light in my arms.

"Ezra, step on it!" I roar, as she lays in my arms, in my chest passed out.

The horror I see when I look down, blood...she's very pale...not her usual golden sun-kissed skin colour.

I can feel my own alpha aura suffocate the atmosphere in the car.

The pressure from the aura on Ezra is making him drive even faster. He bypasses the pack roads, driving across the training fields to get to the hospital in record time.

The car skids to a halt outside the hospital front doors, the head doctor and medical staff already waiting with a gurney. Ezra must have mind-linked ahead, in my panic I was just concentrating on getting her here.

I don't wait for them to lay her on the gurney, I keep her in my arms, knowing time was against us. The head doctor shouting behind me which corridors to take as they all tried to keep up with me and Ezra.

All I could do was run, that was all I could do to help her. I felt useless.

As soon as we enter an operating theatre, I lay her down on the bed, the team getting to work straight away as I am ushered out.

But something inside me is telling me not to leave her. My wolf has grown more attached than I had realised. She has become a constant in our daily pack life recently. Her smile across my desk keeping me calm when dealing with external pack issues. Her beautiful face lighting up any room she walks into.

"I'll do what I can Alpha. How many weeks pregnant is she?"

I don't actually know, how come I never asked her..

"I'm not entirely sure."

"Are you the father Alpha?"

"No...no I'm not the father..." My wolf pushes forward, growling threateningly at my own doctor, Ezra's hand landing on my shoulder in an attempt to calm my wolf down.

"He was just asking Alpha." Ezra's voice enters my head.

"Let's not kill our best doctor before he has had a chance to help Kaia."

He was right, I needed to cool down. But why was my wolf so angry at the question.

Was it because he was insulted that he would think we would impregnate a female that wasn't our mate... or was it jealousy...jealousy of Than for taking another from me. Getting there first, yet again.

It is hours later and I finally am given the approval to visit Kaia. I've been waiting, pacing the corridors for too long, slowly going insane.

I respected my head doctor. I was alpha yet in this hospital he was the alpha. He had made that very clear when he accepted the senior position. But today even I was challenging his medical patience. As I enter the room I find her unconscious on the bed, machines beeping around her.

I've walked into a room like this before.

A flashback comes to me that I haven't experienced in a long time.

"She's going to be fine. The machines are just a precautionary measure...she doesn't need them.." The doctor informs me as he follows me into the room.

There is a nurse sitting in the corner typing away, most likely instructed by the doctor to keep a bedside vigil.

I move to the end of the bed, her body tucked under a blanket, her hands placed out to her side. An overwhelming need to touch her hands take over me, and for once I give into my wolf's desire.

Deja vu hits me...I remember visiting Alora in a hospital bed before I was swiftly escorted off the pack grounds by Medea.

She wouldn't even let me wait, give me time to process what had happened. What my own mate had done to herself.

The beeping of machines breaks me out of my thoughts, and I take a seat next to Kaia.

Watching her pulse on the monitor, my chest feeling restrictively tight from the sight before me.

I should have told her the truth, I will tell her the truth.

No matter how hard it is for me to think about that time, before I became Alpha of the Dark Phantom pack. I need to tell her exactly what happened.

"She should be awake in a few more hours..." The doctor checks her chart before making new notes on it.

My eyes glance to the chart, there was only one and now that I think about it there are no wires attached to her stomach. Her tummy is safely secured under the blanket. "Is the baby okay?" copyrighted © content.

"Unfortunately she lost too much blood, the baby didn't survive."

"What?"

Chapter 49



Hector POV

Unfortunately, she lost too much blood, the baby didn't survive."

What?

"Alpha, I..."

"You don't understand, she can't have lost the baby... this will destroy her."

"We tried our best but there was nothing we could do. Can I get in touch with anyone, is there anyone she needs to tell?"

shake my head, stunned by the dreadful news.

"No, I'll handle it." I can hear my own voice is monotone, I can't believe this is happened.

"I'll give you a moment alone with her." He gestures his head to the nurse sitting in the corner to leave with him, giving me some privacy with Kaia. She looks so peaceful on the bed, as soon as she wakes up her inner peace that she was starting to find again will be destroyed.

How can I tell her?

How can such

harrowing news be told.

I hear my wolf

in my head, wanting to take the impending heartache away from her.

If we could bear it for her then we would. I'd willingly take the pain away from her in a heartbeat.

But she is strong, she will get through this and I will help her along the way.

"Alpha?" I can feel someone rocking my shoulder, my body aching as I start to come to.

"Hmm?" I sit up right, rubbing the back of my neck. I must have fallen asleep, my head leaning forward, resting on Kaia's bed. My hand still holding hers.

"Alpha, why don't you let me sit with Kaia. You've not had a break. Why don't you go home and sleep." Aubrey's voice speaks out to me in the dark hospital room. "What time is it?"

"It is midnight. You need food and some rest."

"I can't leave her..."

"Till

stay and as soon as she shows signs of waking up, I'll mind-link you." Aubrey offers.

I don't want to leave Kaia, but Aubrey was right. I need to rest and refresh myself for when she wakes up. I need to be a strong pillar for her to rest on.

A solemn and slow walk back to the alpha house for me, once I step inside I find myself tired but not at

A

+25 BC

all hungry.

The hallway has clearly been cleaned thoroughly with bleach, the strong smell still lingering in the air.

Aubrey has left a plate of food on the kitchen worktop for me, but I can't manage to stomach anything right now.

Only whiskey would help me in a time like this.

I head into my office, turning the light on but reduce the strength into a midnight soft glow. I pour myself glass of whiskey from my side

a

table, necking it back immediately as I start pouring another.

My eyes turning blurry from the t the tiredness starting to kick in.

A few glasses should do it and I should be asleep in no time.

I can't help but walk over to Kaia's d desk, my hand stretching out to pick up the photograph and note.

My mind journeys back to when the photograph had been taken.

Thad

visited the Amber Desert pack, against my better j judgement.

Medea was as welcoming as ever, she ruled the pack like an iron luna, causing issues with other packs through her unfriendly and aggressive communicative tones. Phantom pack didn't fully exist then, it was just a thought in my mind...something that was owed to me, something I needed to achieve for myself. copyrighted © content.

The

T

had

Dark

I been away learning to be a

to be a successful business owner, that was my plan. To make my name in the human business world, connecting behind the scenes the human and werewolf communities. I had lost the dream of being an Alpha a long time ago. Even though my body was built for it.

The dream was taken away from me...

I couldn't believe my wolf when I saw Alora again, the first time in many years...she had been a child the last time I saw her.

couldn't ignore the gravitational pull of the bond, her scent was so potent I could pinpoint her exact location in the alpha house just by the smell alone....sweet mango.

I followed the scent, pushing past Medea and her pathetic attempts to play nice with me, as she had been ordered to do so.

But she and I would never see eye to eye. Too much has passed between us.

I didn't need to follow the scent, I knew exactly where she would be. In Than's room, where else would she be. When our eyes locked it was like being lost and then coming home.

Yes!

I have never stopped planning, stopped working to help free Alora. But I couldn't deny that somehow, Kaia has also found a place in my heart. Her own scent not as strong, but her own scent of coconut and lime, just as memorable. Slowly imprinting itself into me. I put the whiskey down, was the alcohol making me confused? Was I actually in love with Kaia...

I look at Than's rushed handwriting on his note to Kaia The nerve to think she would return to him.

I

+25

I throw the glass of whiskey across the room hitting the fireplace.

Glass shattering everywhere into the remaining dim embers of a fire Aubrey must have lit thinking I would have returned earlier this evening.

He has done this, he has caused her to lose the baby. His selfish plan in trying to force her from me has ended in the miscarriage of his own child. Of his pack's own heir.

Chapter 50



Chapter 0050 Chapter

0050

Kaia POV

It's my wolf's whining that brings me out of my unconscious state. Even before I have opened my eyes I can feel her upset, feel her grief.

It's as if she is curled up in a corner crying into herself.

Beep...

My eyes flash open to the sound of beeping machines around me.

As I take in my surroundings I realise I am on a hospital bed, my body hooked up to tubes and wires... whatever for.

AST

Then I remember...

"Kaia...Kaia, go back to sleep." Aubrey is by my side, trying to push me back down as I try to sit up. She wins, I am the weakest I have ever been since being a child. woman

A

I do not know moves in the far corner of the room, at first startling me, as she stands up and swiftly moves out of the room.

"What time is it?"

3am, let me inform the Alpha..."

"No, that's not necessary." "But Kaia..."

"Aubrey, I

I said no." It was the middle of the night, waking someone up through a mind-link is unpleasant enough. It makes you wake with a fright, makes you a little bit disorientated at first. Then my mind flashes back to the photograph, to our argument. I do not want to be anywhere near him at the moment anyhow, not after now knowing what he was planning to do with me. The woman walks back in and I notice her uniform, a blue nurses outfit. Judging by his entrance after her, she had gone to fetch the head doctor. "Miss Kaia, how do you feel?" I can see a pity already in his eyes.

I turn to the nurse and then to Aubrey, both are unable to look me in the eyes. Both have their heads looking down to the ground.

"What is it, what's wrong?" My hands protectively wrap around my stomach. I don't like the look on their faces, the look on the doctor's face. We should call the Alpha?" He looks to Aubrey but I cut off their communication to one another. There's no need." My voice instinctively turns cold, my mind is shutting down on me.

I can sense it.

Why else would my wolf be so distressed.

+25

I know it, yet hearing his words confirming it will be what really kills me. I can already feel the empty void within me, my heart beating a beat slower. "Miss Kala, Kaia, when you arrived into my care you had already lost a lot of blood. We did all we could but I'm afraid we were unable to save your baby."

My high pitched wail is like nothing that has left my mouth before, I think it is actually piercing straight out of my chest.

Through the the ribs and skin, bypassing my throat.

Is this what heartbreak feels

True

is like.

heartbreak. I've had it before but not on this level, this is another world level.

I'm a complete failure in life. I couldn't secure the heart of my mate, even my second chance mate. Their hearts already claimed even before I knew of their

existence. NOW Now I have lost my baby. Even my own mother was able to carry me until she died in child birth.

I've failed my little bubba.

The tears that cascade down my face are burning. My chest hurts from the sobs that continue to echo from me.

My hands cover my eyes, I don't want to see them, I just want to be alone.

"Is there anything I can give you, any pain relief?" The doctor asks.

Pain relief? How can you numb this kind of pain.

"No, I just want to be alone."

I hear Aubrey walk the doctor out, their silence deafening. They were mind-linking one another, my eyes were closed and covered but I could just sense it.

"I didn't know you were pregnant, why didn't you say?" Aubrey's hand is placed upon my leg as she sits back down next to me on the visitor chair.

"I was running from my ex husband, I didn't want word to get back to him. He doesn't know, and I want to keep it that way...wanted to keep it that way." My chest burns stronger with already having to correct myself into the past tense.

"Alpha Than of the Amber Desert pack...he's your ex, he's the father right?"

"He was, he was my baby's father...now I have nothing."

My mind grows tired, grows effortless. I lay back entering almost a vegetative like state. Even breathing becomes difficult, I have to remind myself to breathe. Not that I want to.

The machines continue to beep around me. How easy would it be to pull one of these wires out and just let the abyss take me.

That's what I need right now, I need to feel nothing. I need this overwhelming pain to vanish. I need to feel nothing, to forget.

ck."