

Her Brother, Her Mate Chapter 26

The chalky tattered face of the rogue vampire looks bruised around its menacing red eyes and blood is covering and dripping from its mouth. It has no hair, and I think it's a man solely based on the small bump on its neck, hinting of an adam's apple.

He pounced on the young fairy, bringing her down to the ground and tearing into her neck before she had a chance to react.

I'm on the move before I even think about my actions. I ran towards the vamp, shifting as I leaped in the air. I can feel Parker running behind me, shifting at the same time as I do.

"Everyone, gather on the beach. Warriors who are not yet adults, shift and protect those who can't fight." I send out a mass mind link to everyone, including my dad and Elena, before I cut everyone else out and just talk to them. "Dad, Elena, rogue vamp at Oleta River State Park."

"Be careful! We're on our way," My dad linked back, and I could hear the panic in his tone.

I lunge for the vamp, but he senses me before I can land and rolls to the right. I saw the movement and changed my project in the air to come down on the side of a tree behind him, then push off with my back paws to backflip and land on his back. Parker snarls, and tries to lunge for his neck, but the vampire is faster than him and snaps his blood-soaked fangs just inches from Parker's snout.

That pisses me off. I pushed into a pressure point on his side with my front paw, and when he arches his back, I bring my canines down on the back of his neck so I have total control of his head movements.

"Get off me you filthy mutt," it hissed venomously. Not a chance.

He tries to overpower me, and almost does, but Parker took advantage of his distraction and caught the vampire's left leg in his snout, ripping it off in a quick jerk and throwing it off to the side. The vampire howls and screams out in agonizing pain, but Parker continues to rip his limbs off so he is nothing but a torso and head. Inky and rotten blood is pouring out of him, but he still tries to break free from the hold I have on his neck.

I'm about to tear his head off when another rogue vampire comes barreling out of the trees, knocking Parker to the ground. Parker pushes against its hold with his paws, but he's at a disadvantage being on his back underneath the rogue leech.

I quickly rip the head off the vampire in my hold, then go to save Parker when Casey and Daryl come from either side of Parker and overpower the vampire from their sides.

I shift back, then snap a tree branch off from a nearby oak. I strut straight for the vampire in Daryl and Casey's hold. They are in wolf form, and have him by the arms, stretching him out wide so he can't reach either one of them with his teeth.

"Why are you here?" I sneered menacingly at the vampire.

When the vampire speaks, it's the high pitched voice of a woman, and not a man like a thought. Her sunken red eyes, hairless head and sickly appearance look exactly like the other one, but I can now see this one is smaller.

"YOU MONGREL!" she screeches, "YOU ARE KILLING HIM!"

"He killed one of ours first. Why are you here? Where did you come from?" I asked again.

She just hisses at me then screams. Parker got up and shifted back. He scratches down his bare chest and arms, but no bites, thank the goddess. He is plunging a split palm branch into the other rogue vampire's chest, right through his heart. The woman is now hysterical seeing her friend dead and in pieces around us.

"Where did you come from?" I asked her one last time, barely 6 inches from her face. She snaps at me at lightning speed, but I'm barely faster, stepping out of the way and plunging the oak branch into her mouth and through the back of her head.

This isn't enough to kill her. She splutters out rotten blood, trying to scream from the pain.

"We need to keep her restrained," I tell Daryl and Casey. "We need her alive for now to find her coven. Parker, we need to do a sweep of the area before

anyone leaves the beach. There could be more. My parents are on their way, but it takes a while to get here from the pack house. Go organize a group of 6 to run the island for now. The triplets are over 18 and capable, and I saw Brad and Steven. Laura Moore should be there too. Have Hillary take charge of the warriors under 18 and have them guard the beach. Do two patrols of 3 for the sweep, but make sure Mitch and Mark aren't in charge of the groups. I'd put Matt and Laura as the heads, then I'd put Mitch and Steven under Laura and Mark and Brad under Matt. Mitch doesn't listen to his brother and works better under a woman.

"In the back of Casey's Jeep, there should be a duffle bag with medical supplies. Send Simone and Courtney to get it and help anyone injured. This girl," I said, crouching down and checking the fairy's pulse, "is gone but Melody and her friends might need medical attention."

"Can you guys handle that one?" he asks, glaring at the rogue vamp still pulled tight between Daryl and Casey.

"Oh, we got this," I said confidently, "Go. There may be more, or there may be others injured in the trees."

"Yes ma'am," he called back, running for the beach a*s naked.

I walked back to the oak tree, and broke off 4 more smaller branches, then walked back to the woman thrashing between my friends. Her eyes tighten, and her lack of eyebrows makes them look haunted and hollow. The icky black, rancid blood is still gurgling from her mouth and I can tell the presence of living wood in her body is weakening her substantially.

I tear each piece of wood in my hands so they all have a point, then jam a branch into each of her limbs. She cries out, her screams piercing our ears, but by the time I get the last branch in her right thigh, all her strength is gone. She will not be able to overpower a toddler now. Not with the wood lodged in her. Casey and Daryl shift back, and Daryl leaves to go help his mate organize the people left on the beach. There were about 40 beings there, and not all of them were wolves. Melody and her friends are arguing with Hillary, hysterical to come back here and check on their fallen friend.

Casey has a firm grip on the vampire in his human form, and she doesn't seem to be fighting him at all.

“f**k, Carli. That was sick. You almost gave me a heart attack when she snapped at you. What were you doing in her face like that?”

I shrug, “She pissed me off. If it wasn’t for you and Daryl she would have killed Parker.”

“That doesn’t mean you can get in her face like that,” he scoffs in disbelief.

“She almost killed him,” I told Casey, “I couldn’t punch her, so I did the next best thing.”

“How the f**k is shoving a tree branch through her skull the next best thing to punching someone?” he laughs.

I crouched back down next to the fallen fairy girl. She looks young. Most fairies do, so there is no telling how old this girl is. The dead vampire tore out her throat completely. Cherry red blood is pooling around her and I suddenly realize I’m standing in it.

“Do you have blankets or towels in the back of your car? I don’t want her friends to see all this gruesomeness when they break free and come over here,” I asked Casey.

“There’s a stack in the backseat,” he tells me.

I walked over and grabbed the stack, then laid 3 down over her, hiding the worst of the damage.

“Is it clear?” I mind linked Parker.

“The island is. I’m taking Laura’s group to do one more sweep while Matt’s group guards the bridge. I had Simone call the guys working the gates and they have their people coming to sweep the mainland while we wait for reinforcements.”

“Okay thanks.” I told him, cutting off the link.

“I’m going to have Hillary let her friends over now. Parker said the island’s clear and he’s double checking now,” I told Casey. He nods.

Melody and her friends cry hysterically over their friend. Her name was Emily, and she was just a year younger than me. Melody has already notified her

queen, and the fae are sending their guard to help in finding the source of the rogue vampires.

Casey and I move the vampire to the far end of the parking lot, waiting for my dad to arrive. After Parker and Laura's group finish the final sweep of the island, he runs over to join us, an oversized t-shirt in hand.

"I hope you're not thinking about asking me to put that on when you're still running around butt naked yourself," I raised an eyebrow at him. Casey laughs softly behind the subdued vampire.

"Carli, come on. I don't like my mate running around naked for everyone to see," he whines at me.

"Fine, you find some shorts to wear, I'll put on the shirt," I smiled sweetly at him, making him growl in frustration.

"Backpack in my back seat," Casey calls over to Parker, "I keep several in there."

I glare at the traitor and Parker smiles thankfully at him. "Thanks, man," he says before jogging off in the direction of Casey's Jeep.

"So," Casey smirks at me, "Wanna talk about how your brother is your mate?"

"Don't start," I laughed, "Wanna talk about how my cousin is your mate?"

"I'd love to," he smiled brightly, "That was the best present you have ever brought me."

We get a mind link letting us know that a convoy from our pack is here and coming down the bridge, and 2 seconds later headlights are blinding us as they pass. Parker runs back over, throwing the t-shirt at me and a pair of shorts to Casey. I quickly pull it on, then wait for my parents to exit their SUV and come over.

When the doors open on the last vehicle, I take a step forward, ready to brief my dad, but it's not my dad that gets out of the car. It's Parker's, pulling Luna Mary about behind him.

Her Brother, Her Mate Chapter 27

"f**k," I sneered, not wanting to deal with these 2 fuckheads right now. My mom looks pissed, and I can almost see her palm twitching as she takes in my appearance. Parker moves to my side and pulls me against him. I know he is trying to offer me support, but it makes me feel weak sheltering in his arms, so I push him off. He huffs in frustration, but doesn't try to do it again.

"I don't want to look weak in front of them," I whispered to him.

"I don't think anyone would dare accuse you of being weak," he tells me, offering a small smile.

I glare at my mom as she glares at me, tucked under Alpha Jared's arm like the parasite she is. Alpha Jared opens his mouth to say something, but is cut off when my dad and Elena come barreling at me from the first SUV in the line-up.

They both pull me in their arms, inspecting me for injuries, then hugging me tightly between them.

"We were so worried!" Elena grabs my face, tilting it every way to check for damage. "What happened?"

"Did it get you? Its teeth didn't pierce your skin, did they? We brought antivenom just in case. Did you check everywhere? Do you feel okay?" my dad asked, frantically looking me up and down.

"I'm completely fine. Parker had scratches, but they healed already. The only injury was the fatal one Emily sustained to her neck. She's fae. Her queen is sending her soldiers to retrieve her body and help with the investigation," I told them.

"Courtney?" Uncle Nathan went around the parking lot, looking at me expectantly.

"Over here dad!" She came out from the other side of the SUVs with Simone. Uncle Nathan's eyes tighten when Courtney runs to Casey and not him. She is turning him around, checking his body for bites until he stops her, cupping her face, and tells her he's alright.

"Looks like you got your gamma, Uncle Nathan," I smirked at his sour face.

“If you guys are done, can someone tell me what exactly happened here?” Alpha Jared scowls at us.

I huffed in annoyance. “Where is Beta Anthony? Shouldn’t he be here first before-”

“Over here,” Beta Anthony runs over to us from the bridge connecting the island to the mainland. “Sorry, the fairy soldiers are here and they let me know they found the car the vampires must have come here in. They said they could smell 3 different scents in the car, and one of them wasn’t rotten. It was a normal vampire scent. There was a 3rd vampire that wasn’t rogue with them.”

“Did they say if they caught them?” I asked.

“No, whoever it was got away. Do you have vampires here at the party?” he asks. I turned to Casey and Simone.

“No, not yet. I think a couple were set to come later, but the Miami Coven is having a party to honor the graduating seniors, so they were going to come much later,” Simone tells us.

“Will someone please, for the love of the goddess, tell me what happened?” Alpha Jared yells above us, making all of us, even Beta Anthony, send him dirty looks.

“A group of fairy girls were going through the forest, enchanting the trees to glow. A rogue vamp came out of nowhere and-”

Alpha Jared cuts me off, “Parker. I would like you to tell me what happened. The one in charge should do the explaining.”

My dad growls softly, and so does Parker, “That would be Carli then. She took control of the whole situation, gave all the orders, subdued the vampires and took care of the fairy girl that lost her life. All I did was follow her command and run around the island a few times.”

Alpha Jared’s nose flares, but he says nothing else, just looks at me to continue.

“Like I was saying, a vampire started chasing them so they ran back towards the party. The male rogue attacked Emily just as she was coming out of the

trees. He ripped her throat out and it looked like she died instantly. I shifted and pushed him to the ground and held him there while Parker dismembered him.

“Before we could kill the first one, this woman rogue came out of the trees and tackled Parker to the ground. He would have been killed if not for Casey and Daryl. They attacked from the sides and restrained her while I tore off the male’s head. Parker staked the male in the heart to be sure he was dead and I staked her to subdue, but not kill. We need her to find their coven so she’s staying alive,” I told him firmly, feeling his need to get rid of her, even though that wouldn’t be the best decision for solving our crisis.

“Carli organized medical attention for those who might need it, made teams to sweep the island and took command of everything. She was amazing,” Parker boasts proudly, rubbing my back in support.

“Hmph,” my mom huffs, looking anything but proud. Elena, on the other hand, is glowing as she stares at me. The pride in her eyes is stifling, but I love it.

“Who did this little number to our friend over here?” Uncle Nathan asked, looking up at Casey suspiciously. Casey looks back at him nervously, making Courtney giggle.

“That would be me,” I smiled at him, “She pissed me off.”

“Remind me to never piss you off. Is that going through her head? Is she still alive?” he asks, looking around her to the back of her hairless head to see the other end of the branch protruding from the other side. He whistles at the sight, like he’s amazed by my work.

“She’s alive. Just weak. I got her arteries and the branches were still living, so living wood is flowing through her veins, making her super weak,” I told him.

“Nice job. I can see this pack might actually have a luna who’s worth something some time soon,” he looks smugly over to me.

Alpha Jared growls at his insult and hurt flashes on my mom’s face, but the rest of us, even Beta Anthony, smiled slightly, trying to hold back our laughter.

My dad, Beta Anthony, Parker and I ran across the bridge to talk with the fae soldiers. Elena stayed with Casey and Simone to get a list of the party guests, focusing mainly on the vampires who might have come. Alpha Jared and my

mom started walking around and asking if everyone was alright. Of course, they took the easiest job. My mom seems to sincerely be comforting Melody and her friends though, so there's that. She's not completely useless.

Parker and I stripped and escorted my dad and the Beta in wolf form, just in case the 3rd vampire showed up. I wonder who it could be and why they were here in the first place. Rogue vampires don't usually attack in populated areas like that. Melody and her friends were in the woods, but the party was still only about 50 yards away. It doesn't really make sense to me.

"What are you thinking about?" Parker mind linked to me, rubbing up against me.

"That 3rd vampire they were talking about. If they weren't rogue, what were they doing with 2 rogues? And what were they doing here? It doesn't make sense."

"It doesn't. Rogue vampires feed on other vampires. Maybe the 3rd one escaped from them? Maybe they were using the normal one for food."

"Then why come out here and attack where there are lots of werewolf warriors and other supernaturals?" I asked.

"I don't know. We need to find that 3rd vampire and find out. We have the woman. We can integrate her back at the guard center and figure it out there," Parker tells me, brushing his tail against me and nudging me playfully. Big puppy indeed.

Her Brother, Her Mate Chapter 28

It's been 2 days since the rogue vampire attack. 2 days of sweeping the city, looking for any clue as to who the 3rd vampire might be. Simone and Casey listed every vampire they knew, even the ones that weren't formally invited, but every single one of them was accounted for at the coven the night of the attack. Lady Delilah, the vampire who rules over all the other vampires in the city, offered the young vampires the use of her personal sires, ancient humans who she formed blood bonds with, and all you can drink from her blood bank, so almost every young vampire in Miami was there.

The rogue woman we caught was allowed to recover enough so they could start interrogating her properly today. Her throat needed time to heal, and her

pain was already beyond what she could handle, so torturing her would have done no good.

She is chained up with silver in the basement cells of our Guard Center, and finally able to talk. All she has done since her throat recovered enough to speak is hiss and scream, crying out for her mate who we apparently killed. Rogue vampires, because they feed on their own kind, who are essentially undead, don't heal properly, so she still looks mangled and scared from what I did to her.

Once they turn rogue, feeding on the dead blood of their own kind, the last living essence inside of them dies, making them infertile and cursed to the night. Regular vampires can consume regular food and drinks, and they can survive by only feeding on human blood once a month. Rogues need a constant supply of living blood to maintain their life, which is what makes them turn volatile and deadly. They turn animalistic, relying on their natural instincts to survive.

Beta Anthony and Alpha Jared are the ones in charge of interrogating her, which only irks me a little bit. I was told I had no business in the guard center. Prick. I still tagged along with my dad this morning to check out how she looked. It's eerie how haunted and desolate she looks.

I've been helping my dad and Elena investigate outside of our pack in the supernatural community. Out of all the ranked wolves, the Childes are the friendliest and closest to other supernatural races. Alpha Jared is a snob, and won't talk to other races unless it's with top-ranked officials, and Beta Anthony's father, the previous Beta, was well known for despising vampires.

Luna Grace, Parker's grandmother, was working on bettering relations between us and other races, but my mom chose not to continue her work. Elena is great friends with Lady Delilah and on friendly terms with Queen Aisling, the fairy reigning over the Western world's fae. Elena's awesome, so of course they like her.

We haven't uncovered anything useful. I spoke with Melody and her friends, but they didn't see the first vampire until he was right up on them. They didn't see the second one at all, let alone a 3rd vampire.

I'm sitting in the backseat of my dad's sedan, texting Parker to tell him we didn't find anything. We haven't had much opportunity to talk face-to-face, but I'm not complaining because texting him is a thrill in itself. I've never been a

big texter. I send messages to the point when needed and that's it. There's a thrill that comes over me, though, every time I hear my phone go off and I see it's him. Butterflies flutter inside me and I'm giggling and smiling way more than I ever have in my life.

Good morning texts are my favorite. The past two mornings, Parker has sent me cheesy gifs and memes until I respond, and then tells me 'good morning beautiful'. It's so cheesy and slightly cringy, but I love it.

"What are you smiling about back there?" Elena asked me, smirking as she watched me type out a text.

"Nothing," I smiled up at her and I could tell by her look she knew I was texting Parker, "Are we heading back now?"

"Might as well," my dad tells me. "We're not making any headway. Maybe Anthony has some good news for us. He was able to actually get her to talk today."

"Do you think there are more rogue vamps out there?" I asked him.

"It's hard to say. Most of the attacks from before were a single vampire attacking the victims. They all look alike, so the few witnesses we had all gave us the same description. These could be the only 2 rogues, or there could be an entire coven."

When we get to the packhouse, Uncle Nathan and Courtney are out front with Casey. My uncle has been tagging along with the two of them everywhere they go. By the looks of it, they're just getting back from fishing. Casey is carrying 2 foam coolers from his parent's company. They put the fish in the coolers after they clean them for their clients. Uncle Nathan has his arm around a disgruntled Courtney, who is glaring up at him, and Casey is following obediently behind.

"Looks like we're frying fish tonight," Elena laughs.

"We can grill them instead. The lanai is usually empty on Mondays," dad tells her.

"What do you want to do, Carli?" she asked me.

“Hmm. Swimming sounds fun after running around in the heat. I think Parker wanted to see me tonight though.”

“Invite him,” Elena smiled back at me.

“Or you could not,” my dad grumbles as he parks and we all get out of the car.

When we walk into the packhouse, Beta Anthony catches sight of us and runs over.

“I was just about to mind link you,” he says breathlessly, “We had a problem with the rogue.”

“What happened?” my dad asked him, putting his hand out in front of me and Elena as if to protect us from some invisible threat.

“She is demanding to only speak with Carli. She is saying she won’t talk to anyone but Gamma Childes’s daughter.”

“Me?” I ask in confusion. Was she out to get me because of her mate? Why would she ask for me specifically?

My dad and I leave Elena at the packhouse so she can help Uncle Nathan with the fish and we head over to the guard center.

“Why is she asking for me?” I asked Beta Anthony.

“I’m not sure. We tried to get her to speak about the other vampire with her, but the only thing out of her mouth was hissing for us to bring her the Gamma’s daughter. She didn’t break no matter what we tried.” He opens the heavy door leading to the basement and lets me pass through. “I got rid of most of the mess from the interrogation, but there is still blood. Be careful where you step.”

I can smell the stench of rotten blood and burned flesh as we rounded the corner from the stairs. 2 guards are stationed outside of the cell the vamp is being held in and Alpha Jared is sitting in a chair off to the side, cleaning the tarry blood from under his nails.

“I brought them,” Beta Anthony calls over to Alpha Jared, making him look up, grimacing when his eyes land on me and my dad. I don’t let his sour look faze

me, and I doubt my dad does either. They have been on particularly bad terms the last 2 days, but it seems Alpha Jared is the one holding onto negative feelings. My dad treats him with the same annoyed indifference as he always has.

“She just asked for her. No need to bring the gamma too,” Alpha Jared grumbles.

“I was not allowing my daughter down here without me,” my dad stated coldly.

Alpha Jared huffs but doesn't argue further. The atmosphere is now awkward thanks to his pissy attitude, and Beta Anthony is shifting uncomfortably with the tension.

This is ridiculous. We need to get some kind of useful information out of this monster and Alpha Jared is more focused on the fact my real dad accompanied me down here.

“Am I going in there or are we just going to glare at each other out here?” I asked, looking between them.

“I'll go in with you,” my dad says, breaking eye contact with Alpha Jared.

“As Alpha, I think it's my place to go with her. You wait with Tony,” Alpha Jared orders my dad, who sneers but doesn't argue with the petty man.

Inside the cell, the woman is strung up by her wrist, which looked mangled and burned from the silver cuffs. She had scorch marks all over her bare body and whip marks on her back oozing black, tarry blood. Wooden stakes are still lodged in each of her feet, probably to prevent her from moving them too much, since they are not shackled like her hands. My uncle showed us how animalistic these creatures could be when provoked. Precautions like that should be taken.

I wait a few seconds to see if Alpha Jared was going to take the lead, but he just goes back to cleaning the blood from his nails. I rolled my eyes, walked over to the table in the corner with all our instruments for torture, picked up the electric cattle rod, then strode over to our prisoner. She is currently in an agonized slumber; her face strained in a horrified expression as she sleeps.

I clicked on the cattle rod, then poked her side, forcing her to wake. She wakes with a tortured scream.

“Good morning, sunshine,” I smile at her sinister, loathful glare as she pants and wreaths in pain. “You asked for me?”

Her Brother, Her Mate Chapter 29

“You asked for me?” I said mockingly.

“You!?” she hisses, “You are the one? The gamma’s daughter?”

“The one and only,” I stated, twirling the cattle rod around in my hand.

“You killed him. You killed my love,” her screechy, hissy voice carries so much venom it makes me smile in amusement.

“I certainly had a hand in it, yes. Or a snout....around his head.”

Her ear-piercing scream makes Alpha Jared cringe, holding his head, but I fight the urge to react, standing before her defiantly, with a cocky smile on my face.

“Jeez, it’s nothing to lose your head over,” I muttered, angering her further, making her flail around in the shackles. Her chalky skin hisses with the movement but she doesn’t react to that pain.

“Your blood will be mine. I will relish the agony being slowly drained gives you,” she hisses.

“Kinky. So, should I continue where those men left off or would you like to go ahead and tell me who the 3rd vampire was that was with you?”

“I will tell you nothing. I just wanted to lay eyes on the one I would obliterate to take revenge for the death of our lord. For the death of my love. Your father destroyed our Northern coven. The least I can do is destroy his daughter.”

“What?” I asked, confused. My father destroyed her Northern coven? What northern coven? Did she mean Alpha Jared? No, she asked for the gamma’s daughter. My dad hasn’t been up to Canada in years, so she can’t mean him.

Gamma’s daughter....I’m not the only gamma’s daughter here. It’s not me she wants, but Courtney.

“What brought you down here from the North?” I probed, nonchalantly walking back to the table with the different instruments. I picked up a pair of pliers and the blow torch.

“I tell you nothing,” she hisses again.

I nodded, lighting the blow torch and running it across the long pliers.

“What are you doing?” Alpha Jared tightens his eyes at my actions.

“Interrogating,” I mutter, focused on the pliers so I don’t burn myself.

“She said she wasn’t going to say anything else. You are not yet an adult and you’re a woman. You can’t torture prisoners.”

I huffed, turning to face him with the pliers and blowtorch still in my hands, “I know what I’m doing.”

He glares back, “Irrelevant. It’s not your place.”

“Okay, here.” I handed him the tools in my hand. “I’ll just stand back here for moral support. Go get her, sport,” I muttered sarcastically.

He takes the instruments to the table and sets them down, then picks back up the silver-laced whip. Of course, he picks the instrument that gives him the most distance from the prisoner. Wouldn’t want more blood to get under his nails.

Alpha Jared stands behind the hissing woman, then rains down 3 lashes on her back, causing her to shriek and cry out in agony. When he stops, he comes around to stand in front of her.

“What Northern coven are you from?” he asks in a hard voice.

“I tell you nothing,” she hisses once again. He shrugs, nodding at her in a cocky, arrogant way, then goes back behind her, raining 4 more lashes on her exposed skin. The smell of rotten blood and burning flesh fills the room and I fight the urge to gag. Rogue vampire blood is the most repulsive stench I have ever smelled. It’s like decaying corpses, infection and hot garbage all in one.

Once again, Alpha Jared comes back to face her panting, deranged face.

“Are there others like you here in Miami?”

“I tell you nothing!” she shouts.

He goes back and whips her again. This time, she thrashes so violently, she almost swings her body hard enough to knock him off his feet. He huffs in exasperation, then sets his whip on the table and picks up a cloth to wipe his hands.

“We’re done here,” he states, urging me to walk out the door.

“We didn’t get her to say anything, though,” I argued.

“Tony and I were in here for hours and it’s the same thing. I’m not going to waste my time any longer. We’re surrendering her to Queen Aisling’s soldiers in a few hours. Any further torture and she will be impossible to transfer.”

“She asked for me, though. If you let me, I could get her to talk,” I gripped at him, not wanting to give up.

“I told you that it is not your place,” he commanded in a hard voice, giving me no room to argue.

I grumble a curse he chooses to ignore, then look back at the woman one last time. Her red, bruised eyes are fixed on me, like she’s studying my profile, committing it to memory. I can faintly detect a smirk as she watches me leave, but her mouth is still so mangled it’s hard to tell.

When we’re out of the cell, I turn and start yelling at Alpha Jared.

“Why am I not allowed to interrogate her? You’re letting her go when she has made it clear that I’m her target!”

“She said she was after the gamma’s daughter who destroyed her Northern coven. We are almost as far south as you can get and neither I nor Thomas have been to the north in years. She was just talking nonsense. You couldn’t get anything more than we did,” he tells me coldly.

“I’m not the gamma’s daughter she was referring to! She was talking about my cousin. I guarantee she has a grudge against Gamma Nathan and wants to kill Courtney to avenge ‘her lord’ or whatever she said. She not only thinks I’m Courtney, she knows I killed her mate and am the reason she was captured. Don’t you think that gives me the right to get as much information out of her as I can?”

“She is after Courtney?” my dad asked in confusion.

I nodded, “She said something about her northern coven being destroyed.”

“Nathan took out a rogue coven several months ago,” he informs us. “Let’s get back to the packhouse and we can ask him about it.”

“I have plans,” Alpha Jared tells us.

“Good. You aren’t invited,” I glared at him. He huffs in minor annoyance but just shakes his head and walks off.

“Am I invited?” Beta Anthony asks, trying to lighten the mood.

“Sure. You can join us for dinner. We’re grilling,” dad tells him.

When we got back to the packhouse, I texted Parker and let him know I was home. He was knocking at my door half a minute later.

“Were you waiting for me?” I laughed, letting him in.

“Maybe,” he smirks, giving me a brief hug and kissing my cheek. The feeling from his touch, and his soft lips on my cheek send heat and faint sparks across my skin, and I cling tighter to him unintentionally.

“You smell off. Where were you?” he asks, sniffing me.

“Down in the basement of the guard building. That rogue vamp was asking for me,” I told him.

“For you? Why?”

“I think she wanted to see Courtney. She kept asking for the gamma’s daughter, but didn’t specify me exactly.” I tell Parker about my suspicions about Uncle Nathan taking out her coven in the north, and he agrees that’s probably what it is about.

“Your dad is such a prick,” I mutter, stripping so I can take a shower. Parker follows me to the bathroom, and though I can feel his eyes on me, he doesn’t comment about me stripping in front of him. I turned on the shower, then turned to face him as I waited for the water to heat up. “He wouldn’t let me do anything besides ask her a few questions.”

He shrugs, leaning back against the bathroom counter. “You know as well as I do that he doesn’t think women should be warriors. My grandma was one, and I think he resented her for putting her work over him. He thinks she-wolves should stay home and be devoted to their mate.”

“Do you feel that way,” I tightened my eyes as I stared at him.

He smiles and shakes his head, “I think it’s sexy knowing you can kick my a*s. I want you to be able to handle yourself in any situation.”

“Good,” I smirked at him.

I showered quickly, trying to ignore the fact that Parker was watching me as we continued to chat. Nudity is something I’ve always been comfortable with, but for some reason I’m feeling self-conscious as Parker’s eyes trail over my body. He doesn’t say anything inappropriate, or try to touch me, but I can see the desire in his eyes when I glance over, and it’s making my own start to build. Washing my body, my skin feels strangely sensitized and I have to concentrate extra hard to not react to the sensation.

“Did you hear me?” Parker’s voice broke my concentration.

“Huh?” I glanced over at him, cutting the water off and wrapping a towel around my body.

“I asked what you’re doing tonight?”

“Oh,” I bite my lip and look up at him as I exit the shower. “We’re grilling fish my uncle caught with Casey and Courtney.” I step in front of him and offer him a shy smile as he pushes a wet tendril out of my face. “Want to come?”

Her Brother, Her Mate Chapter 30

Parker POV

The giant flamingo float Beta Anthony’s tween daughter brought down is currently Carli’s oasis in the large pool as she floats around, soaking up the sun. I’m sitting off to the side of the pool on a lounge chair, beer in hand, watching my smoking hot mate stretch out on the ridiculous blown-up bird. Her perfect, rounded a*s is up in the air as she lays on her belly, twirling her fingers through the water as she laughs at something her cousin is saying.

“It’s so cringy seeing you look at her like that,” Casey grimaces beside me.

I wanted to laugh at his statement. “I’m just glad I don’t have to worry about you looking at her like that anymore.”

He smirks, “f**k you.”

“Are you the one who contributed to that dirty mouth she has now?” I side eyed him.

He laughs, “That would have to be the other way around, fucker. Carli isn’t the most impressionable person. She does what she wants.”

That she does. Carli squeals when Beta Anthony’s son, Trevor, cannonballs right next to her, then flips the float so she falls into the water. The little fart had been persistently harassing Carli since he came down. He’s closer to her age than I am, so it’s starting to get on my nerves, but I’m trying not to make Carli more wary of me by acting possessive and telling him to f**k off.

Courtney laughs, pulling her wet hair off her shoulders and wringing it out.

“When are you going to mark her?” I asked Casey.

He laughs, taking a long swig from his beer. He isn’t even trying to conceal it from the adults, “I’m working on it. I didn’t want to rush it. She’s....not experienced and I want it to be special for her. Plus, her dad has been a big pain in the-”

“In the what?” Gamma Nathan took a seat in a plastic lawn chair behind us.

“Uhh....” Casey panics. I shook my head, smiling, then turned my attention back to Carli. She’s dunking Trevor under the water, and he’s not putting up much of a fight. Every time he comes up for air, his eyes are red from keeping them open under water and he’s got this devious smile on his face. This little s**t.

I stood, leaving Casey to deal with his future father-in-law on his own, then dove into the pool, coming up right behind my mate.

“Ready to apologize yet?” Carli asks Trevor, her hands still on the top of his head.

“I don’t think I’ve learned my lesson yet,” he grins.

Before she can dunk him again, I grab her by the waist and pull her to me. She squeals and screams as I toss her several feet away from the young beta. I glare at him while she's still under, hinting he needs to back off.

"Parker!" Carli sputters as she breaks the surface.

I dive under the water so she can't see me, swim between her legs, then come back up with her on my shoulders. Her squeals and giggles make me laugh and I throw us both back, pulling both of us back under. She grabs hold of me underwater, locking her legs around my waist, grabs my n****s and twists, causing me to yell when we surface.

"Stop trying to drown me," she growls, but I can feel the playfulness behind her words. I grip her butt and she settles her hands on my shoulders.

"Drown you in my love," I smiled, wiggling my eyebrows.

She blushes and slaps my chest, "So cheesy."

The closeness, having her in my arms, sends my senses into overdrive and the pull to mate her comes over me. I don't know if she's ready to fully accept me yet, so I try to bury the desire and focus on the fact her father is glaring at us....well, me....from the grill where he is talking with Beta Anthony. Elena seems to have accepted me as Carli's mate, but Gamma Thomas is still not my biggest fan.

"I think your boobs are bigger than mine," Carli says, fondling my chest. She's not helping me in my fight to overcome my desires.

"If you don't quit fondling me, I'm going to start fondling you back."

"That sounds fun," she bites her lip seductively. Oh, f**k. She'd had a few cups of Elena's spiked punch and she was getting tipsy. I'm glad I pulled her away from Trevor. His teenage hormones wouldn't be able to handle Carli's drunk tendencies.

"No more drinks for you," I told her.

She frowns, pushing the corners of my eyes up and down, "Don't tell me how to live my life."

I roll my eyes, making her giggle since she is still playing with them. “I would never,” I mutter.

“I think you would,” she teases, trailing her fingers down to my lips. I playfully nip at them, making her laugh in surprise.

“Okay, kids. Food is done.” Carli’s dad calls out, giving me a hard look, indicating to stop flirting with his daughter. I smiled back, not fazed at all. He can’t tell her what to do any more than I can, and she’s the one clinging onto me right now.

I carry Carli out of the pool, and she clings onto my neck, pushing her chest against mine as I support her.

“You smell good,” she sighs, burying her nose in my neck. Tingles and shivers run down my skin as her nose skims over my marking spot and her sweet coconuty scent washes over me. I smile, knowing she’s starting to pick up more on the mate bond. Just a few more days.

“You smell better,” I smirked.

“Will you both knock it off,” her dad grumbles. I set Carli down on a chair at the large outdoor table. Before I can sit, she pulls the chair next to hers as close as possible, then smiles up at me innocently. Her dad huffs but doesn’t say anything as everyone else laughs.

“So, you’re really mates?” Jessica Reynolds asks, taking the chair between her mate and Elena.

I smiled over at her politely, putting my hand around Carli’s chair. “Yep, we are.”

I figured we would get some looks of disgust or confusion, and Jessica didn’t disappoint. She watched both of us grow up, so I’m sure it must be weird for her.

“When does Carli turn 18 again?” Beta Anthony asks.

“Saturday,” Elena tells him, taking another sip from her red solo cup, full of the strong drink that is responsible for Carli’s forward behavior.

“I bet you have big plans for your birthday,” Courtney says, giggling and giving Carli a sly look.

“Do I have big plans for my birthday?” she turns to me and asks.

The smile that splits my face almost hurts, but I can’t help myself but be overjoyed hearing her ask me that. “If you want there to be. No one can tell you how to live your life, remember.”

“WE have big plans for her birthday,” Gamma Thomas glares at me. “She’s graduating too. I thought we could go out for a big dinner.”

“We can make big plans for after my dad’s big plans,” Carli whispers loudly to me, causing Casey, Courtney and even Trevor to snicker while most of the adults, besides Carli’s dad and Jessica, look amused. Amber, the Beta’s daughter, looks at everyone confused, not sure what we’re all talking about.

Carli reaches across the table and takes Elena’s almost full cup. I take it from her before she can take a drink and hand her a water bottle instead. She pouts but, thankfully, doesn’t argue with me. Elena smirks and takes her drink back from my hands.

The grilled snapper and veggie kabobs are delicious. Elena is a great cook. Her pasta salad and marbled cookie brownies are to die for. Carli is moaning appreciatively as she bites into her second brownie, making me adjust uncomfortably in my chair.

Gamma Thomas, Gamma Nathan and Beta Anthony start talking about work, discussing the rogue vampire attacks and its relation to Blue Cliff Pack. Elena is offering her opinions and theories, but Jessica decides to take Amber back upstairs to get ready for bed. Her and Trevor have school in the morning. Trevor left as soon as the meal was done to hang out with his friends. He really should stay and listen, learning from the current ranked wolves since he will one day be my Beta, but if his dad isn’t going to tell him to stay, I don’t think it’s my place.

Honestly, I’m not paying much attention anyway. Carli took it upon herself to start tracing mindless patterns on the exposed flesh below my swim trunks on my thighs, and it’s taking my full concentration to fight off the burning need that’s building inside me.

“Wanna come up to my room tonight?” Carli asks me quietly, her green eyes illuminating through her thick lashes.

I would love nothing more, but taking advantage of her drunken behavior isn't right. I want her to choose me when she's sober, thinking clearly, and not just reacting to the effects the growing mate bond has on her. An idea came to me.

“How about we go for a run first?” I asked. In wolf form, she should sober up almost instantly.

She smiles widely, “Let's go!”