

The Unclaimed Human Luna

Chapter 61

Conner

He spent the next week in front of a computer in his suite, and had simply moved all of his and El's things there regardless of the look his father gave him. Brayden had now also moved into his suite at Conners' insistence. There was no need for one of them to remain in the eastern wing.

All four of them were now down in the west wing of the pack house, though both Adam and Cameron were currently attending to their Mates who were in heat, Adams mate Sage's two younger sisters were with another gypsy family while this was happening. This was normal so no issues on that one.

He'd seen that the gypsies had all settled into the pack as well, had opted to live together as they did within their old pack, three or four families to a house. His father was currently having proper homes that would house their needs being built for them.

He, on the other hand, was actually trying to track El's leaving of the country, which he was dead certain she had done. When she had actually left, and where she had landed as well. That would help with his knowing where to fly to himself to start his hunting for her.

He'd questioned his father about the day she'd left. He'd put a tracking device on not only her suitcase but her car as well, and had her check in with social media. He'd had a whole plan to keep track of her, it seems. The question was? When had that plan been changed by Sloan? When did that woman get her granddaughter out of the country?

His father had not seen anything out of the ordinary at all. She'd checked in and answered all his calls or Sloan had and he'd heard El in the background, before getting to speak to her. Though his father had not noticed it wasn't actually El. That it was likely a recording of her, only at some point, her grandmother knew exactly what to do.

It took him near on a week to find out that she'd left on a plane from Salt Lake City just hours after she'd left the car. It had a layover in New York and then a direct flight to Rome. It cost Sloan a small fortune as well. Not that the woman seemed to care about that.

So, everything his father had seen and heard was all a lie. Sloan had taken El's car all the way to California and it was now nowhere in particular. All the tracking devices had obviously been accounted for, and now disposed of. They all stopped working the day of the full moon and his confrontation with Sloan.

She'd known about them and simply destroyed them in all likelihood. This made him wonder just when she had intended on shutting El's life down and altering them to her being just gone from them. Who knew? The woman had planned everything out, it seemed.

El had landed in Rome and that was all the information he had. So that was where he was off to the minute his men were able to leave their Mates. Brayden was not going to let Conner go without him, she wasn't likely going to welcome him, and Brayden was going to try and contain her with his Gamma Charm, though if that would work on a fox he had no idea, but it was worth a shot. Adam and Cameron, he could leave here with their Mates to train and protect the pack as needed, but he had a feeling they would want to go and help.

He was downstairs talking to his father and Brittney about his planned trip to Italy, when Marlo and his friends walked by, saw Willah and Atlas snarled right at that girl. His father's hand landed right on his shoulder. "Relax Conner, they are aware of El being your Mate. The whole pack is aware of it. I informed them while you were away, didn't really need to with you living in her room after you got back."

Watched as Willah stared right at him wide-eyed and bowed ever so slightly, she knew what she had been going to do. To the future Luna, no less. She was still sporting her silver cuff, he noticed, but was no longer under house arrest. Something he would still want, he didn't want to see her walking around at all.

"She tried to harm El." He snapped and actually saw Willah move behind Marlo. The boy just looked at her but said nothing. He, too, was aware of what Willah and her friends had done, and didn't look impressed that she tried to hide behind him.

"It was dealt with and you yourself said El was fine, none the wiser. Try to let it go, son."

Glared at his father, "I should beat her for it." he snarled loud enough for the girl to hear even without her wolf.

"Focus on finding El, Conner. Let everything else go, I've had Brittney trying to recall where in Italy they stayed." He got out a map and laid it out for Conner. "There were a few places."

Brittney got up from her seat to come to the map. "We had several trips there while El was growing up."

"Wherever it is there is a body of water. A lake." He commented.

"Yes, she would go swimming nearly every day with her cousins," Brittney nodded.

He was looking at the map. There were many lakes, each of them small, but each of them was a potential place he was going to have to search out. And according to Google, there were 1500 of those. That was a lot of places to search for her fox den to be located.

He watched as Brittney touches several places on the map; Bari, Bologna, Naples, Rome, Milan. He looked at those places they ran all the way up the country, looked at her questioningly "We would fly into different airports. I'm sorry. I don't speak Italian, didn't really understand the place names or recall what they were."

He just nodded, was looking for places close to bodies of water, though only a few had them within an hour's drive of the places she had pointed out. Most of the lakes were up north. Her father's alma mater had two lakes east of it within an easy commute.

"Did you always find yourself in a singular place, Brittney, somewhere that you always stayed?"

"Yes, his mother's family has a home near Milan, it was never a long drive from there, maybe 2 hours into the mountains, it was a nice estate, had a large orchard. Lots of people lived there... Oh."

"Hmm. Not people a pack. Likely a fox pack."

Saw her sigh and rub her slightly distended belly, watched his father step closer to her when she frowned as she did so. Growing pains Conner could only imagine. To be expected for the woman, "I guess we'll start there then."

"Conner, you'll bring her back, right?"

"I will try." He nodded "If she doesn't want to." He sighed, he didn't really want to think about that. "You might have to come and convince her yourself."

"Son, Brit can't fly right now."

"Then, after the baby is born." He commented as his eyes moved back to the map before him. He looked at the bodies of water around Milan. There were many and all off into the mountains, but it was as good a place as any to start. "One more question, Brittney."

"Anything Conner." She nodded at him.

"Do you think she'd still want to go to her father's university?"

“Yes, it was where she wanted to go, stay on campus where he did, they talked about her staying in the very dorm building he stayed in and everything.”

“I’ll check there, though from what I can tell, Uni doesn’t start till September/October over there. So not for two more weeks.”

“Likely she would go early, to sort out and meet her dorm buddies, being an international student and all.”

He nodded, was in agreement with that, “I’ll book us all on a flight to Milan, Italy, and we’ll stay till we find her.” he looked at his father. “Could be a while.” Months or bloody years the girl’s scent was masked by that bloody soap she used, if she stopped using it he wouldn’t even know what she smelled like.

“I would expect nothing less of you, Conner, than to devote all your efforts into finding your Mate. The pack is fine, we have good allies and it’ll be here waiting for you when you come home with El. Though I would prefer you Mark and Mate her here inside our pack. I understand that could happen elsewhere.”

He just nodded, and left the office, to go and sort out flights. His Beta and Delta were not yet ready to leave, but that was likely only a matter of days now. Returned to his suite and sat down to find a flight, they could all get on together.

Booked them first class and one way, seeing as they had no idea how long they would be gone, not a short flight, 17 and a half hours and two lay overs, of 2 and a half hours each. He was not going to make his unit stay with him, they would have the option to return home. All of them, especially Adam and Cameron, now they had Mate’s. He knew they would miss them being so new, would likely want to be with them, go home for a week here or there.

Though if they wanted to go home and stay home with their Mates, he was not going to deny them that either, this mess was his doing and he was not about to go forcing them to be apart from their own Mates. If he had to stay and search on his own, then that was what he would do.

He was planning on staying and finding her, packed a large suitcase to take with him. As he noted, so did Brayden. He was un-mated and enjoyed the company of human girls, so was not likely to worry about coming back. He was certain to find girls over in Italy that would love him as much as they did here. Had a cheeky smile that drew all the women to him. Looked fun and friendly all the time to most women. His Gamma was never short of a woman, human or she-wolf. Though sometimes he just enjoyed talking to them and having a meal, other times he was itching to get them into bed, depended on the girl, Conner guessed.

They landed in Milan a week later, a week from the university year starting here in Italy. It was late in the afternoon and they hired a large four-wheel drive to get them around

the country, and headed for their hotel for the night. Would spend a few days here, looking around. There were 8 or 9 universities within a 2 hour radius that EI could attend if she was commuting back and forth. They would look at some of those this week.

He might get lucky, and just accidentally find her. Coming across her wouldn't that be nice? He was driving, both his Beta and Delta were already on the phone to their Mate's. Being this far away from them was likely causing that ache in their chest, something he now realised he'd had because EI had left the country pretty much the day after he'd gone off to help with the New Moon Pack.

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Chapter 62

EI POV

EI moved into her dorm room and met her room mates, three other girls her age. All were international students themselves, one from England, one from Germany and the other from New Zealand. They all had their own bedroom but shared everything else; living, kitchen and bathroom areas.

She was still technically considered human. Petal had not arrived on the full moon, she was still just a voice inside her mind for now. Though EI had been disappointed not to see what Petal looked like, she knew she was still with her. Had sighed up at her aunt when she'd woken up, passed out from the pain of trying to shift yet again, who'd just smiled at her reassuringly, "You're still a kitsune EI, just need more time is all."

Aunt Juliana had told her they lived very long lives and that Petal would come when she wanted to, either that or she needed Conner and his wolf to be present for her to shift. EI was kind of in denial about that. EI didn't want to think about that being what was needed to be honest. If that was the case, she may never get to see Petal.

She had decided on staying here to study, to get her degree and be within the pack here in Italy. Though this past week, since the full moon had passed, she had been feeling off herself, and that ache inside her chest was back, she felt tired and sometimes just exhausted. Why, she didn't know? Though that in itself, her tiredness had been noticed by her aunt.

Who'd stated, "I have a theory on it, EI. You're not going to like it though."

El had shut her down, and told her she didn't want to know what it was, she could deal with feeling tired. She could take vitamins and drink energy drinks to pep herself up. That she would deal with it, learn to live with it and move on with her life, was hoping that it would at some point just go away.

She was going to live her life as she chose to. She didn't like it when her aunt had a theory, it always just meant that she needed to be with Conner. Or go back there and reject him or accept him, but the thought of losing Petal if she rejected him filled her with sadness. So, at this point she was dealing with it.

Petal was quiet on the subject, had been now since the full moon, it appeared she was sleeping most of the time, but even El knew that she wasn't. Tried really hard not to think about anything other than her uni studies and getting to know her roommates. It wasn't the university of her choice, but as Aunt Julia stated, 'perhaps she could transfer to it the following semester or the next year'.

She wasn't alone here at the university of Bergamo, there were several other people from her pack here, not just those her age, but a couple of them were older and one of them was a permanent fixture, a professor that taught here, so that was good.

Not that her aunt was expecting any trouble, and neither was she. It had been well over a month now and there were no signs of anyone looking for her. Aunt Juliana stated that no one had come to the gates looking for her as of yet. So far so good.

Though today her chest hurt more than it normally would and Petal whined a couple of times inside of her mind, as she sat with her books at her desk in her dorm room, wondered how long it would take for that to go away. She had been told that being here and within another pack might resolve that with time.

She was really hoping that was actually what was going to happen. The only thing she missed about her old life was Cordi, talking to her every day. That was a real struggle right now, though even if she could talk to Cordi, she wasn't allowed to tell her what she was or where she was. The rules within the pack stated she must never tell her human friends about them.

She could have as many human friends as she liked but they were never to be told about who she really was. That really sucked, also not just being able to tell Cordi she was alright, was not a nice feeling not having her bestie on speed dial. Her aunt had not so much as even questioned her about Cordi, just stated no contact is best El. They could use Cordi to find out where you are.

Wondered what harm it could really do? If she did contact her, El looked her up on her social media and there were photos of her and Collin together, no real surprise there. Such a close couple, what she'd not expected to see was her wedding announcement right there as her background image. Stared at it and sighed, Cordi was getting married and she wasn't going to be there.

Sighed heavily, and got up from her desk. She knew it was going to happen, had actually wanted to be there, would have been there likely standing right next to her, smiling happily for her and Collin. Even knew they were going to have a big outdoor wedding during the night, under the full moon. That thought stopped her, and she, for the first time, thought about Cordi and Collin as though they weren't human. How much they were always itching to be together, never wanted to be apart, the interaction they'd had with Conner and Adam that day. The way Cordi had put herself between Collin and Conner and tried to calm things down, the way she'd told everyone to introduce themselves, that they had. Both from corporations, then Cordi telling her she just thought they were from big corporations. She knew what he was, she now realised. Her wedding under a full moon at night. That was likely a very shifter thing to do. She'd seen her mother's wedding photos, they'd been at night too.

Got up from her desk and headed downstairs, walked through the halls and off to find a public pay phone, waited inline for the use of one, and then dialled the very long set of numbers the operator gave her to call Cordi. Couldn't do it from her new mobile. She was not allowed to call anyone from back home from that. They could use it to track her, apparently.

It picked up after several rings "Hello."

"Cordi, it's El."

"Jeez El, where the hell are you? I've been worried sick." Came right down the line at her.

"I'm fine, my grandma got me out. You're getting married?"

"Wh...What?"

"I just checked your social media. Your wedding invite is up."

"Ah that! Mmm, well that is more for you than anyone else. My mum and dad say I'm too young. I have to wait at least a year." Heard the annoyance roll off of her. "I don't want to, but even Collin said it was fine. He was happy to make my parents happy, so bloody annoying I tell you."

"You are barely 18, Cordi, I get that, but for me why?"

"Because I knew you would see it and call me. I knew you were missing, have known for a while...Eliza, where are you?"

"I'm not to say, not even supposed to call you...But something occurred to me just now and I wanted to ask you a question, it's going to sound weird."

"Sometimes that happens." She chuckled "But you're alright, wherever you are. Sounds noisy where you are."

"I'm on campus today."

"On campus? Where? Which university did you choose? You said you had three offers."

"I did, it doesn't really matter, Cordi."

"To you. I lost my best friend, and she doesn't even trust me anymore, or not enough to tell me where you are? Not even the university. We don't keep secrets from each other, El."

"I'm sorry, that's what I was told to do." She sighed softly. "I'm not even supposed to call you now, like this." and El was pretty sure Cordi was keeping a secret from her.

"Well, I'm your best friend, El. Have I not always told you I'd help you, have helped you, when you needed me to."

"Yes." And that was true.

"I was kind of hoping you and Xavier were going to really hit it off and we could all just stay together as a group." Heard her friend sigh now "No such luck on that huh." There was a long pause "El, you should know, Conner is looking for you, and it's not just him, he's got all his friends out looking as well. I didn't see Adam, but when he came here, he was with some guy named Brayden."

"Well, he can look, I'm not in America anymore." and she wasn't, was on the other side of the world. "Cordi, can I ask you that weird question now?" She had been watching the people around her. It was relatively quiet and no one was in earshot of her.

"Yes, of course."

"Are you and Collin, well...like Conner and his dad?" It was the only way she could put it without saying werewolves out in public and sounding completely crazy.

"In what way?" came back the answer, not even a hesitation really.

"Well...it's a bit hard to ask out loud, people might think I'm nuts."

"Then the answer you're looking for is likely going to be yes."

"Oh." It was all she could get out for several seconds "but I've known you all my life."

"You have. I wasn't always, not till the full moon after my 18th birthday. Collin, as you know, is a few months older than me, and he was with us for my 18th birthday. We had that big full moon party right after my birthday, remember, at his home."

"I remember, it was massive, like a huge rave."

"That it was, he was pretty certain I was his Mate. If you know what we are El. Who told you?"

"My aunt."

"How does she know about other kinds?"

"I'm not so..." turned and looked around herself, then whispered "human myself." Then muttered "It's all a bit weird Cordi."

"Oh, you are just full of surprises, aren't you!" Cordi laughed. "What are you then? I never. Collin and Xavier never picked anything up and we would normally have done so."

It was really good to talk to her best friend, hear her laugh and know she had not changed one iota from the person she'd grown up with "I miss you Cordi, talking to you all the time." Felt an ache inside her chest grow at the thought of her friend. "It hurts sometimes Cordi how much I miss you and Collin, Xavier even."

"We grew up with you, you're attached to us. Kind of like your family, a home away from home. El, there is something you need to know."

"No, I don't." she muttered.

"El, Conner is your Mate. You need to talk to him."

"You knew, didn't you?" El asked as she leaned on the wall and rubbed that ache inside her chest, talking about the man hurt more than ignoring all thoughts about him.

"I didn't right away, but he told Collin and Xavier, the day he took you back to his home. He didn't like the way Xavier was trying to lay claim to you."

"What?"

"Called you, his girlfriend. Conner and his wolf didn't like that El, that was all I needed to here. But he actually voiced it to them. He hadn't come across you on the full moon though. So not actually scented you out. But he knew."

"He was an a*****e."

"Hmm, I got that from you. But El, things work very differently in his world."

"Oh yeah I understand, my aunt stated they don't like us humans." She muttered "I get why he doesn't want me." Rubbed really hard between her breasts to try and make that pain that was growing go away.

"El, he does want you, is not looking for you just to reject you. Came here to Collins home, threatened war to get you back, if we didn't hand you over to him. Not that he was at all concerned about me or Collin. His eyes were on Xavier, whatever happened El, to you. He thought you had been claimed by another."

"Not my problem."

"It is El, he's an Alpha Wolf. They don't just give up on their Lunas. Do you know what a Luna is?"

"Yes, my Aunt is that, but also the one that runs the place, holds both titles."

She heard a low whistle "Hi Collin." She sighed, should have known he was right there with Cordi, likely they were laying in bed together. Knew it was the wee hours of the morning over there. But her questions had been pressing and she also knew that Cordi wouldn't care what time it was, would always pick up El's phone calls.

"Hey El, good to hear you're okay." He chuckled "So your aunt is the Alpha and the Luna?"

"Yes." She answered him.

"Hmm, that makes for some interesting thoughts. What are you, El?"

"I'm not allowed to answer that."

"Actually, yes you are, just not to a human. We're not human's El, Werewolves and we've all gone to the same school all our lives. You're not scared of me or anyone in my family now, are you?"

"No." she shook her head, and she wasn't. "So I've grown up with all of you, how many are you?"

"Half our primary school and high school would be werewolves El. Likely why your father chose the school. If you're not human, are a shifter, he likely wanted you to be with your own kind. Have some sort of attachment to this world."

"He should have just told me." She muttered "Or grandma should have. Maybe I would have understood being in Utah better."

“On that note, El.” It was Cordi “Conner, he told me the two of you are Mated to each other. Are you?”

“I don’t know.” She shrugged that off. Didn’t want to think about it, her Aunt thought that they were.

“Does your chest hurt when you think about him?” Collin asked.

“I have to go guys, I have class in a few minutes.” She stated “It was really good talking to you.

“El, it’s important.”

“No, it’s not.” She snapped and hung up, it wasn’t that pain was going to go away and resolve itself. It wasn’t like he was the only one that made her chest hurt, it hurt when she missed Cordi now too, she realised. That girl was like her sister, and she loved her, hell even liked Collin.

She had spent heaps of time out at his family estate after her dad died, felt closer to him there and they’d all gone camping together out in the woods so she could feel closer to him, had done a lot of things with them to feel closer to her dad. They had been her support system, now they were halfway around the world from her, and she couldn’t even tell them where she was.

Conner had gone right to them, expecting her to be there with them, though that she knew was always going to be their logical conclusion, even her grandma had told her they would likely head for her friends in California. That was what she wanted them to do, be confused about not only where she’d gone, but when she had actually left the country, there were plenty of airports between Logan and Santa Ana, for them to hunt through to try and find out just when she had left.

Also helped that it had been her grandma that had booked her flights with a Seattle travel agent, not just online. El had just been grateful that her grandma had all her travel details, passport numbers and what not. Apparently, she’d always had a record of those. Now El understood why, she had been keeping track of her, due to what she was she supposed.

Sighed heavily to herself and headed back up to her dorm room. She didn’t have class today, nothing until tomorrow morning. She had attended orientation yesterday along with her new roommates and only one of them had class today. She’d spent the morning getting her books for classes, and this afternoon was going to wander about and find all her classrooms so she didn’t get lost on the days going to class.

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Chapter 63

Conner POV

He had separated his whole unit through four different universities over the past four days. Each of them were just standing around looking for her at their respective locations, were also listening for her or any mention of her name. But so far nothing had turned up. They had spent nearly a week in the same location, needed to be there every day for a week at each place, they had no idea what she'd opted to study, knew that she had wanted to study a Bachelor or Arts.

Showed him just how very little he actually knew about her, other than she liked outdoor activities and water sports, he had no idea what she liked to read or music she listened to. He'd had no access to her phone. It had been finger print locked, not that he had tried to pry into her world.

Adam had called Marlo. That boy had spent more time with her than anyone and though it appeared they'd had a falling out, he still knew she was interested in doing an Art degree, but even that encompassed a whole variety of other things, could mean anything from actual art, painting and drawing to the written word, literature and poetry, or music even.

Marlo had stated she really actually liked art itself, though he'd never seen her draw or paint anything in the time they had known each other, only that she wanted to study the Italian language as one of her minors, had been excited to go to her father's university and study there like he did. She never really went into exactly what she wanted to study, but that she had really enjoyed the walking tour of their university's art exhibitions.

So, it was likely that she actually wanted to study art itself, other than that he didn't know. He'd texted Cordi more than once to ask her questions that might help him track her down as well. Though he had only gotten back basic information of an art degree, liked to sketch animals, like her father did. Liked hiking, camping, all manner of water sports. Things her own father had liked. Nothing he hadn't really found out from Marlo.

He had the distinct impression Cordi was keeping things from him, but that was no real surprise. She was El's friend, not his. She also was not of the same pack and Mated to an Alpha Wolf herself, he thought she'd been sensible from his position. He liked her loyalty to El, though that in itself could well be hindering him right this minute.

He'd text her daily about whether El had shown up there? Or if she had called Cordi, to which she'd simply stated No, or sorry not yet. He did actually believe her on that one.

She would know he wasn't going to reject her friend. If he was, he wouldn't be out trying to hunt her down. Would just go on with his life. He'd not actually been face to face with her on a full moon.

Therefore, if he didn't want her, he could just move on and do as he pleased, though whether that would hurt her if he did, he had no idea at all. Could well do, thought it would to be honest they were mated to each other, and he had no intention of doing that, she wouldn't understand it or know what it was. Did not want to cause her any pain at all, just wanted her back.

Spent most nights in his room staring at the ceiling praying to Selena herself to let him not only find her but have her be willing to sit down and talk to him, to not reject him. They were never on good terms except for in the bedroom. Sighed not a real good start to their relationship and he knew it, there was the real possibility that she would just issue her rejection of him and walk away from him. It was not what he wanted, not what Atlas wanted, and he didn't know exactly what would happen if she did that.

Was trying not to think about it for the most part, was trying to stay positive and was willing to apologise to her, bloody get down on his knees and beg for forgiveness if that was necessary. Every day that was passing without her was horrid. He didn't sleep well, he was anxious that someone out there would know what she was and try to hurt her.

That she might come across some fox that she really liked and decide to let them claim her and then she really would be lost to him. He was certain she was still his, still attached to him. That ache inside his chest had started up once again, it was worse here in the past four days. Got the impression from Atlas it was because they were close to her but still unable to find her.

It had been a long four days, but he had to go down to her father's Alma Mater to check for her there. It was where she had wanted to go and he knew that, so he and his unit were headed down there to Bologna. It was only just over a two-hour drive away, they would all be there staking that place out. They all agreed it was likely she'd still want that, to go there, that she could well be hidden in plain sight.

Though the more they drove away from Milan the more his chest hurt, Adam was currently driving, and Conner was aimlessly staring out the window. They pulled up and he got out, only to frown at his Beta. He'd not been paying attention to where they were going, though he knew this was not the right place.

"Adam?"

"Trust us on this, Conner. Your chest rubbing got worse the further from Milan we got. She's not in Bologna. You were not watching where we were going, I turned us around and your chest rubbing got less."

Conner sighed "You think she's here somewhere still."

"Maybe this is just closer. We've only looked at four uni's and with only one of us at each of them, we could have missed her. You know yourself how delicate she smells."

He did at that, "Alright, so we're presuming she's here somewhere." He nodded; the man was not wrong. His chest was hurting less than it had been an hour ago.

"We'll all go to them one university at a time, spread out and look for her, roam around look for others that have her family eyes, and that soft scent of those soaps." Brayden commented, "other shifters will look right at us, know what we are, we aren't hiding our scent."

"Alright." Conner nodded; it was a good plan. The only plan they had if she was on campus, that was, they could just be near her pack for all they knew. He had tried to find out if she was registered to the university he'd been at, only to be asked who he was. He'd told them the truth her stepbrother, and that his stepsister was missing, that he knew she wanted to study in Italy, so was just searching for her. That had not gotten him very far.

He had no evidence of her being his stepsister, had no missing person's report to produce for the girl either, wondered if he should do that? But then had decided against it. There were wolf packs all over Europe and he didn't want any of them getting wind of her being his Mate and being missing, though they had no enemies here, that didn't mean she would be safe here from them.

He was not about to go advertising she was missing. It was not a good thing for any wolf to do, though she would just appear human to all others, unless they here in Europe knew that foxes hid their scent with that soap. Sighed heavily and they spread out after getting a map of the university Adam had brought them too.

There were several open areas for students to sit and chat between classes. He prowled through the hallways and pretended to fit in, smiled at many other students, even though he didn't want to, had a few girls giggle and smile right back at him. He asked a few if they had happened to see his sister, had a picture of her. Showed it to them, most just shook their heads.

His unit wasn't having much luck either, couldn't go into the female dorms, wasn't allowed, so they kind of sat around and just watched everyone walking in and out, saw one man with those silver-grey eyes, they were unmistakeable, didn't approach him though, didn't want to scare him off. But mind-linked to his whole unit to let them know what he'd seen and which direction he was headed.

The man or boy had been walking with a bunch of others, and he'd had that fresh linen scent attached to him. He hadn't looked directly at Conner, had been simply walking and talking, laughing with his friends, had his arm around a human girl's waist, likely his girlfriend. Didn't seem to smell Conner out though he was a fair way away. The only reason Conner had seen those eyes was because he was purposefully looking at

everyone's eyes, using Atlas's wolfen sight, he was likely far enough away that the fox hadn't seen him.

The man hadn't so much as missed a step or paused in his conversation with his friends, hadn't looked up or around, so it was unlikely he'd smelled Conner at all. Which was a good thing, they could stealthily stalk him and if he got in a car and left, track that boy right to where his home pack was.

They were all keeping eyes on him throughout the course of the day. He lived here on campus, from what they could tell, gone into a dorm and not come out after a late dinner and some making out with his human girlfriend, she smelled human to Conner, to all of them. His entire unit also agreed with Conner that those eyes and the smell of fresh linen that he gave off meant he was likely to be a fox shifter.

Adam told him that as far as Kade could tell, he smelled exactly like Sloan did. Atlas was of the same opinion himself. Though they couldn't stand around all night, campus security would be looking at them, likely ask for ID at some point. Though Brayden strolled on into that dorm and tracked the man right to his room. On the top floor, he shared with two others from what Brayden could tell and they were all in there just chatting away.

Though he didn't pick any of it up, it was all in Italian, he came back and shook his head. "I'd say settled in for the night." Conner had wanted to go but everyone thought it was better for him to stay down here, out of sight. They might know what he looked like, it was possible El might have told them, or Sloan had, so it was better that neither he nor Adam went. Seeing as it had been them two the last time looking for her.

They spent a week tracking that fox. He never once headed out of the city, was on campus five days a week, and only left it to hang out with his friends. They kept themselves well away from him, in the hope he wouldn't scent them out. Started looking for them in return. He went out clubbing with his friends, went out to have dinner with his friends on the weekend but didn't head off anywhere, didn't return to his pack for the weekend. Went back to the dorm.

They all thought that was odd. Most shifters liked to be with their own kind, especially if they were Alpha-blooded and this fox had the same eyes, so he was likely of the same descent as her, perhaps a cousin or an uncle maybe. He'd seen that both El's father and grandmother had the same distinctive eyes, so it was likely a bloodline trait. Specific to El's ancestors, so he at this point was their best option to track her down.

Though if he was not the next in line for leadership of the pack, he could well be just out here living up the life of a carefree fox, without concerns of having to go back, perhaps there was no need of him going back. He could well be way off and not even close to being in line for the position of Alpha.

He'd been doing research on fox shifters, and it was his understanding that they would have multiple births, and many children at that. An Alpha and Luna fox could have a full litter twice over and a fox litter was completely different to a wolf litter.

Wolf litters were considered to be 5 or 6 pups over as many years unless they had twins or the occasional triplet. Fox litters could consist of 2 to 4 kits in one birth, and they would often have up to 4 or five births at that. So, one Alpha fox could have as many as sixteen to twenty kits running around out there and only the first born would take over.

His whole unit had nearly keeled over laughing at that information. Cameron had shoved him around and murmured, well guess you got your hands full when you get her back. They all thought it was hilarious, him with 16 to 20 children running around and all young at the same time. From what they were reading, likely a litter every year or two every year, which in reality meant he could have all those pups or kits, hell a mixture of them all running around under the age of five.

Wondered if that was why that witch and her sisters had laughed at him that day in the New Moon Pack, she'd seen something that had tickled her fancy and relayed it to her sisters. They all thought, whatever it was, it was funny. His own unit thought it was funny themselves just thinking about it.

Conner had just stopped at the information and stared at it himself. Atlas had seemed to come to a pause as well, it didn't seem either of them knew how to absorb that bit of information. She was only young and pups or kits were not something they were considering at this time, so that was something they could discuss later on if he could get her to come home with him.

Though that thought was now in his brain, as well as Atlas's, and not thinking about it was hard, when they were in their bed alone at night trying to sleep, they didn't even know what her fox looked like, what colour she was, what type of fox she was, though he and Atlas were both thinking she was going to be some variation of a silver fox, due to all the things that her father had studied, and silver foxes were high on his list, it was likely they thought that El's fox was going to be black with white markings.

Atlas liked that thought, wondered how tiny she was going to be, wondered if he would tower over her? Foxes were generally smaller than wolves in their shifted forms. Atlas liked the idea of her fox being able to stretch out or curl up between his legs. He didn't really care what size she was, only that she would be his to protect. That he was going to, her Fox would know he loved her and would protect her.

Got a text from Cordi "I spoke to El, she's okay. Didn't say where, but knows what you are now, what I and Collin are. Has been initiated into a pack is Collin's guess. So, it won't be such a shock to her when she sees you again. Is on campus, that was all I got."

"Did you ask where?"

“Of course, wouldn’t say, also told us she wasn’t allowed to tell us what she was.”

“She’s a fox.” He typed back.

“Wow, that’s pretty cool. Is with her aunt was all we could glean.”

“Anything on the aunt at all?” he needed all the information he could get.

“Her aunt is the Alpha and Luna to her pack, that’s it. No name, no location. But is definitely in Italy. We both picked up the background chatter.”

“Thanks Cordi.” He sent back. “Phone number.”

“We already tired that. Public pay phone.”

He sighed, smart girl, but that whole Alpha Luna thing, that could only mean one thing in his book. Her aunt was the rightful heir to the pack and had mated to someone of lesser rank than herself, so she kept both titles. Which likely means Sloan could take over if something happened to her sister if she didn’t have an Heir.

Still didn’t help his search though. But at least he knew she was alright. She had called Cordi not texted, she’d stated she’d spoken to her. She was alright, that was something, so his severing of her had been her aunt bringing her into the pack, not her being Mated off to someone else. Her Grandmother had worded herself in a particular manner, likely trying to get him to let go of EI, give up. Didn’t know him very well.

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Chapter 64

EI POV

EI, thankfully, had picked up some of the language while with her family, and even here on campus she was learning more of it every day. Her use of it as a child was good as well, gave her a basis of knowledge and she was actually picking it up quickly. She didn’t understand lots of it, but was better now and though she was taking an intensive Italian course every day to help her with the language, she was tired and exhausted most nights when she got back to her dorm.

Crashed out easily in her bed, declined dinner twice that week and even her roommate Hillary told her she looked exhausted at one point. Told her perhaps she was over doing it. El nodded and murmured “probably, but I need to pick the language up more, I still miss things in class and its annoying having to rely on my cousins to help me out all the time.”

That and she had to attend class and then go home and re-listen to them in English on a podcast, was doing each class twice, wanted to be there for the class to help with her learning of the language. But then had to re-listen to it with the English translation afterwards, so she could understand it properly.

Get all her studies done and do her tutorials and plan out her assignments as well. She wasn't the only one in her classes that had to do this, so at least she had others she could talk to as well about not understanding, or the frustration of it all. It didn't help that she was becoming tired a lot lately, and just wanted to crash out the moment she was back in her dorm.

El did not have the inclination to go out that first weekend and party with her roommates, who were all itching to get off campus and go see the night life. She'd declined with a shake of her head and a groan of “I really need to study up on my language skills,” and had actually managed to find herself a group of like-minded students that were all going to get together in the library and practice their Italian. Something she needed to do herself.

Her aunt called her and asked how she was doing? If she felt comfortable and was happy with her roommates. How was she feeling? El answered all her questions with “the study was hard going but she was working on it, her roommates in her dorm were all nice. They all spoke English as a first language, which was good for her. She had found a good study group to help with her Italian. As for how she was feeling, she liked it here at the Uni.”

Got a huff and asked again how are you feeling?

El knew what her aunt meant and sighed ‘I'm tired a lot.’ Finally giving her what she wanted to hear, ‘I'm dealing with it. It will be fine, like you said. It might just go away on its own.’

Aunt Juliana had said not much on that and just told her to come home for the weekend. To which she had declined, and stated no I have study groups all weekend, but had promised to be home for the full moon, just in case Petal came. Though Petal didn't say anything to her on that subject, she was still quiet on the shifting for the first time. Everyone suspected why.

But Petal did not push ‘the go find Conner’ at her, which if she was mated to him and his wolf surely, she would do. Or at least that was what she thought anyway, so perhaps it wasn't true. But even Cordi was of the opinion that Conner was her Mate. That

accounted for her always asking her about him after she'd been taken back to Utah that first time.

Those weird questions of, how does Conner feel about that? Go and ask Conner. I'd bet he'd be willing to help! El had stopped answering them after a while, they'd just been annoying to her, dismissed them and changed the subject. Not that Cordi had done so, likely because she knew what Conner was to her.

She sighed to herself, she didn't even know what she was going to do about him, if he did find her? She had no idea what would happen, likely not much. She was out in the human world and she knew they had rules to follow now. So did her pack, likely the rules were the same. Don't speak of it to the humans. They knew nothing about shifters. Believed none of it was real and they had to keep it that way for their own protection.

So even if he found her at her Uni, what could he really do? Nothing, couldn't just walk up to her and start yelling at her about leaving the pack and running off to another, or physically drag her away either. They had to behave like humans themselves when in the human world. So, she had that for some sort of protection. She was just over an hour from her pack and if she managed to get away from him and go there, he couldn't enter the pack. She knew that much.

So, she would be safe from him there as well, though was she actually afraid of him? Did she need to be safe from him? El sighed as she really thought about that, he'd never once physically hurt her. Hell, all he'd ever done was climb into her bed and have his way with her, chase her around and bring her back, find her when she'd run off.

Not even Atlas, who had to be his wolf, had harmed her, chased her around for a while but not hurt her, cut her off a few times and pushed her deeper into the woods. Then Conner had just appeared and she, for the first time ever, had been glad to see him, just latched onto him and hugged him. Wondered herself now if that had been his wolf's intention, to make her be happy to see Conner, he'd not turned her away either that day, had stood there and just held her in his arms. Had kissed her out there in the woods and then told her to take what she wanted from him. Which she had. No, she did not think that he was out to harm her. Seduce her at every turn, yes. So, no, she was not afraid of him, she did know that to be the truth.

All alone in her dorm room lying there by herself in the middle of the night, she did miss the s*x, as much as she'd thought it was wrong at the time. Something that had been sick and twisted, and had brought out a raw animalistic side to her, that she just didn't understand at the time.

She now knew that was solely because she hadn't known what she was, and how could she when not even her own father or grandma had bothered to tell her that she was half a mythical creature with the possibility of changing into something else at some point in life. Though her aunt Juliana had told her they'd brought her here to Italy many times to

sense out if she would shift, none had thought she would. Likely why they'd never bothered to tell her, was human and had those rules.

Now she could mostly understand why it was the way it was with Conner, why she couldn't ever say no to him. Why he would just turn up in her room, he was made for her, his body and her body were perfect for each other, according to the moon goddess. Even thinking that made her recall how many times that man had g*****d the word Goddess during s*x. Guess it was like humans crying out for God at the height of pleasure.

Closed her eyes and sighed, hated being alone in this bed sometimes. Especially when she had that urge to sort herself out, opted not to yet again, just tossed and turned in her bed and tried not to think about it. Shook it off, it wasn't like being back inside his pack when she had an itch to scratch, and he would just turn up and sort her out, and he'd always seem to know when she needed that. Likely a part of their connection to each other, she thought.

Really tried not to think about that at all, only brought to her mind's eye Conner and the way he would touch her, the way he would look down at her, with those dark blue eyes so full of desire and wanton need, the pleasure she would hear in his voice at just touching her, practically squirmed in her bed as an image of him between her thighs filled her mind and the way he g*****d so deeply and told her how good she smelled, before he would just devour her.

El sighed and again pushed the thought aside, had to or she was going to need to sort herself out, didn't want her roommates coming home to the sounds of herself doing that. She wondered if all men were like that, so very vocal during s*x. Conner was always vocal, right from the first time he'd touched her.

She didn't think so, Xavier had never been like that when they had dry humped each other, had just smiled at her a lot. But that was it, asked her if she enjoyed herself, chuckled softly when she'd laughed and said yes. Though she couldn't recall what it felt like with him, she didn't want to if she was honest with herself.

As much as she had been desperate to get the hell away from Conner, a part of her missed the physical side of knowing him, knew it had to be that Mate Bond thing, he'd never really had anything to do with her other than physically. Though he had chased her around the woods himself that one time. Told her that was just fun for him, he had been happy to sit on the ground next to her. She'd seen him smiling that day. He'd been happy that day. She realised now, being out in the woods with her had made him happy.

Knew now pack members could talk to each other with that mind-link ability, so no-one else knew they were talking as well, wondered if that day out in the woods when he'd told her he could pleasure her for hours, if his sudden change of mind had been that, someone talking to him via the mind-link. Was he needed elsewhere? He'd gone off in

the other direction after pointing her in the direction back to the packhouse; she now knew it was called. He'd beaten her there too, been with his friends, or his Alpha Unit, she now knew.

Lay there in her bed and wondered about all the strange things he'd asked her to do, that day after Atlas had chased her all over the pack, the day he'd told her to never say she was leaving ever again, had been taken by his wolf in human form that day. He'd asked her to pick a fight with him, knew now, that was because they'd had s*x and more than once and her smell would be all over him, he'd been looking for an excuse as to why it was all over him that day, so no one would know about them.

She also knew why he'd told her not to tell anyone she'd seen Atlas. It was his wolf, and anyone hearing her state that his wolf was chasing her about, could well understand the meaning of it.

She was also human and wasn't allowed to see him at that time. Conner's wolf or Conner had allowed his wolf to break the rules, she wasn't exactly clear on who's doing it was. But she'd had that process explained to her by her Aunt, it took a couple of months to do that, see a shifted creature.

She thought about the last interaction she had with his wolf. How playful he had been, like a puppy even. He was not a small wolf and she'd not really known what to do with him, and had just stood still in the hope that he would go away.

But could now look back on it and see it for what it was. His wolf Atlas was trying to get her to like him, she supposed, interact with him and not be afraid of him. Atlas, she smiled to herself, liked her, tracked her all over the place, was always out in the woods when she was. Though that last time, he'd shot off down into the ravine of the woods and been in one hell of a fight, she'd heard it.

Then she had come across that other wolf, large and imposing as well. It had stared at her and then just ran off to go in the direction of the fight, wondered now who it had been? Was it his father or had it been one of his friends? They were always together. Wondered if they had seen Atlas with her for that matter?

The future leaders of the pack, likely she thought, it was Adam, Brayden or Cameron. One of them were always with him. Much the same as their fathers were always with Logan. Much the same as her Aunt Juliana and her unit, she had three men around her, not including her Mate.

They were all kitsune's as well. Nothing was ever going to harm her aunt. They all had 5 tails each and her aunt had 9. From what her aunt had told her one life for each tail, had asked her how many tails her grandma had. Had gotten laughed at, "Ask her to show you next time you see her." had been the response.

They got one tail for every hundred years of life, up to 9 tails, though most were not born with one, usually 3 to 5. That is what her aunt had told her. She was hoping, with El's lineage, she would have 5 to start with. But just getting Petal would be a blessing and, no matter what, even if she only had one tail, she would be loved by all.

El rolled over in her bed and stared out the window. It would have been much easier if they had just told her the truth right from the get go. Probably would have been curious enough about what was going on, that she'd have opted to stay just to see it all for herself. Too late now, she thought to herself, knew that they had laws, but surely, seeing as Logan had insisted on her being there, he should have seen the sense in just telling her. Likely, it would have solved the biggest problem of her trying to run away at every opportunity.

Got up an hour later. There was no sleep going to be had for her. As tired as she was, she walked downstairs and called Cordi from that pay phone. "Hi Cordi, how's it going?"

"Good, how are you doing?"

"Curious about something?"

"Ask if I don't know Collin will."

"Are you two ever apart?" she shook her head.

"No, we're Mated to each other, will never want to be apart from each other." Cordi chuckled, "I moved into his place just after you went missing. He didn't like me being at mum and dad's anymore. Worried I'd go missing."

"How'd that go down?"

"Ah, what can they do? I'm 18 and going to marry him. They yelled for a bit, but had no say in it really."

"I guess not."

"Your questions, El?"

"Did my dad know what Collin and his family were? He was always out there in the woods."

"It is likely," Collin answered her, "Though that would have been between my dad and yours. Though I do know he was allowed on the pack's territory at will. So, I would have to say, yes. He was also no threat to us."

"He wasn't a threat to anyone." El sighed, didn't really like thinking about anyone wanting to hurt him, he had been shot by some hunter out there in the woods just near

there in fact. "Collin, does your dad know what happened to my dad, other than what I was told. Was it perhaps something else?"

"I don't know El. I could ask him if you like, though he'd want to know what you were, in order to make sure you are not a threat to the pack."

"I'm not a threat, Collin, Petal's not even here yet."

"Petal?" Cordi practically yelled excitedly down the line.

"Yes, that's her name, hey yours must have a name?"

Heard Cordi laugh now "Poppy. I can just see the two of them hanging out, you know, strolling around together. Being friends just like you and me."

"Poppy, that is so cute, so you." El chuckled "and wouldn't that be nice." El smiled, even felt a little happiness roll off of Petal at the thought of it. "I think Petal would like that, I'm still getting used to it."

"How long since you had her?"

"Um, two moons is how I think you would say it, not arrived though. Just can talk to me."

"What does she look like?"

"I don't know, I can't see her."

"Bummer." Cordi sighed, "you should see Poppy, kind of red like a Poppy, with bright green eyes."

"She's tiny and cute." Collin chuckled. "My wolf Rush towers over her, she can stand right under him and fits perfectly there, he loves it."

"Makes him feel big and strong." Cordi chuckled. "You'll tell me when you see her right."

"I will."

"I bet she's cute like a flower petal."

"I don't know, I've seen my aunt, not so little."

"Well, get someone out there to take a picture for me too, huh."

"I don't know if that would be allowed, Cordi, I'm not even supposed to talk to you like this."

“Honestly, El, if they care about you. Your well-being.” It was Collin. “They will want to put you and Conner in a room together to sort out your stuff or..” he trailed off.

“Reject each other.” She muttered.

“Yes.” She heard him sigh, “I don’t think he wants that, just so you know.”

“No one knows what Conner wants.” She sighed, she certainly didn’t.

“What about you, El? Would you be willing to give him a chance?” Cordi asked her.

“I don’t know, to be honest. He wasn’t exactly nice to me, you know this.”

“I do. But things are different now, and he was different with you after you ran away the first time and he brought you back right.”

“I guess.”

“Maybe just see, you don’t have to say yes right away, you also don’t have to say no right away either. Perhaps what you need is to date him, get to know him, and he you. Perhaps El, the two of you will get along.”

“Or perhaps, Cordi, he will do what he always did, seduce me and leave me.”

“He might have had extenuating circumstances, El.” Collin sighed, “like trying not to let anyone know what you were to him.”

“Oh, I’m well aware he didn’t want anyone knowing we were sleeping together. He made that plainly clear.”

“It will be different now. He will be different, I assure you.”

“I doubt it, Collin.” she muttered, and she did. “I should go, it’s really late here.”

“Just think about it, El. It is really nice having a Mate. I promise once all the issues are worked out and Conner apologises, lots, you’ll like it, being mated to him.” Cordi hurriedly told her before she hung up.

El sighed, she didn’t know if that’s what would happen. Would he apologise? He didn’t really seem the type to do that. Seemed more the type to just take what he wanted when he wanted.

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Read Chapter 65

Chapter 65

Conner POV

Conner woke up to his phone dinging with a text message in the middle of the night. It was from Cordi "Conner, El just called again. Still couldn't get her to tell us where she is."

He already knew what she was a fox, so that didn't bother him too much, "How is she doing?"

"She didn't really say, but at this hour for you, I'm guessing doesn't sleep well."

"Hmm, I know that feeling." He acknowledged he didn't sleep well either.

"She had questions about her dad's death. Collin is going to ask his father now...if you and El can make it work, I need you to do me a solid Conner, no if's, and's, or butt's."

"What happened to her dad? I don't know anything about that, is it suspicious?"

"He was actually killed just outside the pack's border, shot by a hunter. It was an accident, as far as I know."

Conner blinked at that, "Was it an accident, or was it pack related?"

"I don't know! I wasn't part of them back then. But El, now that she knows about shifters, wants answers to that very question. She has likely seen something or heard about something from her aunt, that makes her curious. Asked me if we were like you and your dad? Collin will find out about her dad, and we'll tell her, when she calls again."

Conner sighed just great, what if her dad had been killed by other wolves, possibly in the crossfire, though shot. That was odd. Not many used guns in their world, only a few. His pack didn't, though the hunters did. Was that a coincidence or not?

"I'd like to know the answer to that myself now?" he typed back.

"Alright, that solid I need from you Conner."

He stared at Cordi's text for a long moment. He didn't like making promises that he couldn't keep. He was also not currently the Alpha of the pack, and might never be at

the rate he was going due to their pack's rules about being Marked and Mated before being allowed to take over. "I don't know if I would be able to keep any promises, Cordi. I'm not the Alpha in Charge. Perhaps you should take whatever it is to my father, Logan."

"No, I want it from you. It will also be better if El knows it was you who made the deal with us."

He shook his head. "Lay it on me Cordi." He sent back, if it was going to help El, he'd push for it. He also didn't think the current Luna would let her Mate say no, not if it meant getting her daughter back or helping her daughter in anyway.

"I want an alliance with your pack, so El and I can still hang out, come and visit each other, so to speak."

He smiled at that, she was so very bold, not even the Luna to her pack, mated to the second heir of the pack, so not likely to ever be the Luna, yet here she was trying to make a deal to ally their packs together. "Bold aren't you." he text back.

"Yes, I've been Els' best friend since we were five, I'm a shifter, she's a shifter or will be once she gets her shift, so it's only natural that we'd be allied to each other. Alpha Cole actually knew El's father for many years, and knows El. I don't think he'll have an issue with it."

"You can say that, Cordi, but without a discussion between the two current Alphas, I can't make that deal. I would say yes, to keep El happy. And let the two of you hang out, but that is a current reigning Alpha's choice. I'm the Heir Cordi."

"But, would you do it?"

"I would." He replied simply. He knew how important it was for El to have those choices, to be able to go and see her friends, though not unless she was Marked and Mated by him officially. Xavier was still inside that pack, and he'd heard that man state he'd just bury his fangs into her. He got the impression that if she turned up there and he asked her to be his chosen and she said yes, it would take that man less than a second to do just that.

"Good, we'll talk to Alpha Cole, and he's got your father's number, right?"

"I gave your Alpha's number to my father, likely the number that displayed your Alpha would have logged it."

"Excellent."

"Cordi, just so you know. I'm not putting El anywhere near Xavier unless she lets me claim her fully first."

“Lol, jealous much!!!”

Glared at that text but she wasn't wrong, “It's just not going to happen, he's unmarked, as is EI, I will not put that Beta near my Mate. Not when I know he wants her for himself.”

“Hmm, I wonder Conner. How many unmarked males are in her new pack, eyeing her off???”

His eyes widened at that, he'd not actually thought of that, didn't want to think of that at all, “Enough Cordi.” He texted her and then shivered, goddess he was more like his father than he realised sometimes.

“LMAO.”

“I'll bloody strangle you one day, you know that right.”

“Hahaha. You'd have to get past EI, first.”

He smiled and shook his head. “I can see why she likes you. Even I bloody like you.”

“Ha, everyone likes me. I'm lovable.”

He snorted with amusement himself, “Good night Cordi, thank you though, for letting me know you talked to EI.”

“Anytime.”

He'd not pressed the shifting question, though he had seen her statement, once she shifts, which could only mean she hadn't yet. He was actually a little bit happy about that, wanted to be there for her first shift, to help her through it. She hadn't known anything about shifters as far as he could tell, and now was going to shift, it seemed, likely had said something to Cordi about that herself.

‘Find her before she shifts.’ Atlas huffed.

‘Might actually need you there to shift.’ Conner sighed, they'd not even known she was a shifter or that she was going to get a beast until they'd seen that amber flash in her eyes. ‘Likely being Mated to us has helped her get her fox. Is half human, Atlas, might not have ever gotten one, unless Mated to another shifter.’

‘She'll be sad, missing us.’ Atlas huffed again. ‘I miss our Mate.’

‘I know, me too.’ He agreed with his wolf. He did miss her, that attitude and her resting b***h face, that he was so used to seeing, smiled to himself. ‘She's always going to be a handful, you know.’

‘Tough and strong.’ Atlas agreed. ‘Alpha-blooded, hot-headed like us.’

He chuckled at his wolf, she was hot-headed and had no qualms about putting people in their place or trying to. That Alpha fox in her trying to assert itself. ‘Well at least we’ll know when she’s unhappy, go all quiet and lock herself away.’ That was something they did know about her.

‘We’ll cuddle her lots; snuggle up and roll around with her, I could chase her, we’ll make her happy.’

‘We will certainly try.’ Conner told Atlas, not that she had ever really smiled at him, but he’d seen her smile at Marlo, seen her smile right at his dad, though that had been an act. Wondered if everything he’d seen that was her being happy was in fact an act, on her part. Just to try and look like she was fitting in, so that his dad would grant her the freedom she had longed for.

It was entirely possible, though she had looked to have made friends with Marlo and his social group only to have something happen and turn it sour, she’d not really been friends with them after that, had stayed away, locked herself up in her room again.

Looked at the time. It was nearly four in the morning, so nearly 8pm back home, he texted Marlo. “What happened to make you and El fall out of friendship?”

It took several minutes for him to reply, “I don’t know.”

Conner didn’t believe that “What happened the day your girlfriend decided to try and take a piece of the future Luna?” he worded it in a way that would make the boy answer him.

“I don’t know Conner, I was with the boys when Willah made that decision. I was not involved.”

“Before that then, what set Willah off?”

“Ask Willah, Conner.”

“If you don’t answer me, Marlo, I’m going to beat you senseless when I get back, or just let Atlas have at you, until he gets the answers, he thinks you’re lying about.”

“I’m not lying Conner, come home and Alpha order me if you like. I was with the boys that day. Whatever went on between Willah and El, I don’t know about it.”

Left it at that, no one willingly offered themselves up to be alpha ordered, hurt to blazes from what he’d heard, to feel that much aura pouring over you, even if you were willing to have it done to you, it still made one bow down before the Alpha.

Sighed and stared out the window, was not likely going to be able to go back to sleep, only slept in fitful states at the best of times. "Where are you El?" he murmured into the quiet of his room. Just needed one break was all. One thing to help him track her down, to get to her, to talk to her. Just one lead that led him back to her pack.

The one they had currently wasn't going anywhere, was happy out here in the human world with his human girlfriend and he didn't want to step up to him and ask him what pack he was from or where it was. Where El was, for that matter? He could well make sure they never see her, call her, and tell her he was there looking for her. Call their Alpha her aunt and then he could have an Alpha Fox coming for him, though that didn't particularly scare him.

He was an Alpha Wolf, their species was stronger than the fox species, but he didn't want to take on anyone in her family, he just wanted to talk to her. He also knew that Brittney was not having any luck with Sloan, and got daily updates on that from his father. Sloan either didn't take Brittney's calls at all or answered to tell her to stop calling. El was apparently no longer Brittney's concern.

Brittney wasn't doing so good on that front. She might be human but had obviously been Mated to a fox shifter and had a half human half kit of a child, would be as attached to her daughter as much as any she-wolf would be, he supposed.

Likely wasn't doing her pregnancy any good either. It was already going to be difficult on her, now with the stress of El missing, or being removed and sent elsewhere by her own Grandmother. That was only going to apply more stress than she would naturally be under, her body trying to adjust to a rapidly growing Alpha pup inside of her.

Growing pains and then the delivery was going to be tough as well. It could drag out for hours or be extremely fast and painful. No one knew if Brittney was going to be able to handle it. He was hoping she would. It might be a nice way for all of them to bond. El didn't much like his father and he had nothing to do with her mother. Though that was on him and his human hatred.

Which he no longer had at all, thought he'd been mated to a human, hadn't wanted it but then just couldn't bloody stop himself from wanting her, had yet to even scent her out officially, hell, he didn't even know what she really smelled like, he realised. Everyone just smelled the soap she used. That made him curious. If she stopped using it, would he be able to recognise her at all if she walked by him and he didn't actually see her? Probably not.

Neither he nor Atlas actually knew what her real true scent was, but he'd still practically drowned in her scent of arousal. That was odd. To them she just smelled like Jasmine and Vanilla, the same scent as her brand of bodywashes, shampoo and conditioner. Perhaps it was similar to her scent, or was it her scent, but something in those products just hindered him scenting her as a shifter. He didn't know.

If she suddenly changed to different scented products, he likely wouldn't know it was her unless he was actually looking right at her. That thought bothered him a lot, it was entirely possible her aunt would have her do that, to keep her hidden just from him.

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Chapter 66

EI POV

EI spent a lot of time with her study group, in the library, out in a grassed area, or in a corner of a common room. They were all getting along well. She'd made some nice friends this last week. There were nearly two dozen of them all studying together now. She was preparing to go home for the full moon. Her cousins had already left.

One of them, Deena, was feeling her fox was going to come, her fox was all hopped up and excited inside her mind. Her parents had also been excited and called her to come early, so they could spend the day with her.

EI, on the other hand, had one class she needed to attend this morning that she didn't want to miss. There was a quiz to be done. She was going to miss all the afternoon classes, but they would be all on podcast for her later that night.

So, it wasn't really a big deal to miss one or two of the afternoon classes, and she would be leaving tomorrow early in the morning to get back before her first class at 10 am. Not much she could do about it, couldn't risk Petal shifting for the first time here at the university. Though Petal hadn't said anything that led her to think she would shift this time either.

She'd had her for near on 60 days now and nothing at all. Though she was more restless today than on other days, and that ache in her chest was being a b***h to be dealt with. She was currently just breathing through it. It had been more than painful on the last full moon. Aunt Juliana put it down to Petal struggling to be free and out of her. Wanting to come forth but was not able to, something was blocking her. Which caused pain for them both.

Right this minute EI had to agree with her, as she closed her eyes and tried to relax and talk Petal into settling inside her mind. She was not her usually chatty self either, and right this minute EI wondered if it had been a good idea to opt to drive herself back to

the pack? Walked herself down the stairs of her dorm room and out to the designated spot where everyone had opted to meet up this morning.

There was no need to pack for an overnight stay, she had a room with everything she needed in it back in the pack. She just had to drive on out there. She had one of the pack cars here waiting for her. Al had made sure she had the keys. It was the car he usually drove, but with Deena's fox so hopped up he had laughed and stated "he didn't think it was a good idea for her to drive."

And watching Deena this morning at breakfast, El had to agree, the girl was bouncing around all over the place, her fox's excitement was mingling with Deena's and she looked super wired. He'd looked at El, "Anything like that for you."

She'd shaken her head. "No, I feel restless though." She'd commented and left out the pain she was having. That would be a concern she thought to her aunt. She didn't want any of them to be concerned about her. She had seen Al nod but say nothing else. Knew he would report it to their aunt. She was keeping tabs on El as much as Logan had, though here she had the freedom to come and go. So, she didn't mind the questions about Petal or how she was doing.

She'd waved them all off and now was here on her own, sank herself down on the grass with her study group, and smiled at the ones that were already here. She was carrying a cup of coffee, had bought one on her way here, passed a coffee cart, they were all over the place and the coffee was rich and deep, even though Petal didn't enjoy the smell of it, she had no objections to the actual taste or flavour of it, though did like it much better when a shot of vanilla or caramel was added to it. So El had taken to having a double shot of vanilla or caramel with her late when getting coffee, as this tended to make Petal happier.

Everyone was arriving and she found Bryant, one of the most recent members to the group, dropped down next to her. He smiled at her, and she nodded, inched slightly further away from him. He was kind of touchy-feely with all the girls. Though as of yet she'd managed to sit herself between others and keep him from touching her.

He seemed completely harmless to her, but clearly needed to have boundaries laid out for him, but they were all new to each other and no one seemed willing to put him in his place. His hand would land on an arm or a shoulder, touch a knee or leg when he was talking to you. She didn't want that. Had managed for the past two weeks to keep others between him and herself.

She also noted several of the other girls did the same thing, he didn't seem offended or even to notice that she had moved and put more space between them at all. Was merrily chatting away to several others in the group, though she did note that two of the girls looked right at her and bite down on a little laugh.

He was likely perfectly harmless to all here, just grew up where touching and talking was part of his family social circle, she suspected. He was always smiling and laughing, didn't even seem to think there was anything wrong with it either.

She sipped her coffee and chatted away with the others like she normally did, and they got down to study once everyone was there, practicing their Italian on each other, trying to hold down a group conversation that everyone was trying to follow on with. It was the best way to learn, seeing as this was how they found themselves all the time.

Many people in a discussion at once and trying to understand them, when she found his hand on her thigh just above the knee and looked right at him, as her hand brushed his off of her, he smiled right at her and then just asked her out. Right in front of everyone, her eyes widened. She'd not seen that one coming.

Heard Petal actually growl inside of her mind and understood instantly she did not want that, neither did El for that matter. But she didn't know how to respond to him here, in front of everyone. It was awkward, and many in the group were now just staring at her, and she realised they were waiting for her answer. She looked around the group as she struggled to know how to handle this, a public rejection of him could well see him dislike her and many of the new friends that she had just made as well.

Though it was the man strolling in the background that caught her attention, he was walking right towards her, and her heart was now hammering inside her chest, Adam. She scrambled up on to her feet as his eyes locked right on her, saw him smile and sucked in a breath. Where there was Adam, Conner couldn't be that far away.

"Eliza," she found a hand in hers and Bryant was right there, tried to back away from him only to have him frown at her "What's the matter?" he asked, pulling her a little towards him. She leaned over to her left and looked around him, to see where Adam was.

He was still walking towards her, saw everyone turn to look at him, he smirked right at her "Now, there you are El." He said, for all to hear him, seemed amused to her. "I've been looking for you."

Shook her head, as her eyes moved about the area to look for Conner, found herself looking right at Brayden coming from another path, yanked her hand from Bryant and turned to go the other way, to find Cameron right there not more than fifty yards away leaning on a tree watching her, she knew everyone was now looking at those coming towards them "El who are they?" Bryant touched her face and turned it to look at him, she didn't know how to explain that to him. "Are you in trouble?"

Felt and arm slid right around her waist, and she was pulled back away from Bryant, "You shouldn't touch things that don't belong to you." was grated out as her body was pulled back against another, knew that voice. Bit her lip and turned to look up and behind her. Where she found Conner's dark blue eyes moving right to hers.

Petal was up and looking right at him, could feel full curiosity rolling off of her, found his hand on her face, and sucked in a breath, shook her head a little "I missed you baby." He sighed softly as his hand ran up through her hair. Then his mouth was on hers and he was kissing her.

Gasped and tried to pull away, his grip was firm on her, he wasn't about to let go and she knew it, she was going to be in real trouble and fast at that, she could already feel herself starting to melt into him. He was not only kissing her, he was looking right into her eyes as he kissed her. It was so intense, she'd never felt anything like it in her life, and then his tongue was tangling with hers soft and slow and she knew it was too late, as her eyes fluttered closed.

She'd not kissed him in forever, felt even Petal sigh inside her mind as she kissed him back, couldn't bloody control herself where he was concerned, felt his lips leave hers sometime later and her eyes opened, to find him looking right down at her "Mine." He stated softly, smiled right at her "Its time to come home El." He murmured down at her.

Those words brought her from the hold he had over her. She didn't want to go back there, be stuck in that place once more. With no freedom at all. Tried to pull herself from him. "No." she shook her head. "I don't want..."

His hand was over her mouth in a second. "Don't say it, El, it will hurt us both. Please come home, come back to me, where you belong."

Shook her head, she belonged here. "Enough Conner, she's starting to freak out." Felt a hand on her and turned her eyes to see Brayden looking right at her. She watched him peel Conners hands from her body. "Shh, you're alright El. Everything is going to be fine." He told her gently, had a slight southern drawl to his voice, stared right at him as he pulled her gently from Conner and over to him.

"Relax El, breathe, I've got you." he told her as Conner relinquished her to him.

She did feel relaxed, she realised, stepped right into him, and felt him hug her even as she turned to look at Conner, he didn't look too happy about it. She was so confused, didn't understand it herself but felt really safe and calm standing here in Brayden's arms. Didn't want to leave them, not even with Conner staring at her.

She knew he had just laid claim to her, knew that word "Mine." Meant he was claiming her. She also knew that he couldn't actually do it until the full moon set, and that wasn't until later this afternoon. Just stood staring back at him as Brayden held her loosely in his arms, her head resting on his chest. She'd never felt so calm in all her life, even Petal was relaxed right this minute.

All that pain and restlessness she'd been feeling all morning was gone from her. "El, what is going on?" it was Bryant.

Her eyes moved towards him but she had no real idea herself what exactly was going on other than Conners laying his claim on her, that was, shook her head at him, but found herself hugged into Brayden. Didn't want to let that man go at all. Not even Petal wanted to let him go. She turned her eyes up to him and saw him smile down at her.

"You're alright, El."

Looked right up at him and wondered if she was supposed to be with him instead of Conner. She felt way more at home and comfortable in his arms than she did with Conner, but even looking at him, and he was a very handsome man, his smile was amazing, his touch didn't trigger that wanton need Conners did, watched it turn into a smirk as he realised she was looking at him trying to figure out if he was supposed to be the one for her and not Conner.

"It's not that El." He chuckled as she continued to stare at him and wonder if it was.

Right this minute she had no inclination at all to move away from him and go back to Conner, thought about kissing him and felt Petal snarl at her, turned and looked at Conner once more, and felt Petal relax again. She knew who her Mate was, it was going to be Conner even though she felt more comfortable with Brayden.

His eyes were on her, he didn't particularly look mad, but definitely annoyed, she thought, and bit her lip he'd laid claim to her and she was now in the arms of another and so very comfortable at that, he had to know it.

Watched him look at her group of study friends and excuse all of them, looked right at Bryant, "I'll only warn you once, El and I belong together, so don't ever think you can touch her again."

Saw Bryant's eyes move to hers and then he just turned and walked away, there was nothing she could do, Conner was going to be very possessive of her and she knew it, recalled the last time she'd seen him, the way he'd touched her, the way he'd looked at her and the last words he'd spoken to her. Before he'd left her bedroom, to go away.

Now here he was, and he'd found her, his whole unit was here and she had no hope of getting away from any of them, couldn't even out run Conner, let alone him plus all of them, "Don't think like that." Brayden drawled down at her.

"Wh...what?" she stammered up at him.

"Running away, don't think like that." He murmured down at her. "Conner, you might want to get El's things."

"I'm not leaving." she burst out and saw everyone look at her.

“We need to talk El.” Conner told her as he leaned down and picked up her things, then reached out to take her hand.

Shook her head and clutched at Brayden. “I got her Conner, probably best I keep hold of her right this minute.”

She did not understand what was going on, but saw Conner sigh and then motion for them to walk away. Brayden walked her away from her study group, his hand was in hers, though her eyes moved to Conner more than once. He was looking at her as well. She couldn’t be left alone with him, no matter what happened, that would be bad.

Turned her eyes away from him, goddess she just knew she was going to be naked before the day was over, that man was going to have his way with her, and she was going to let him. “We’ll go back to the hotel, sit and chat there, where it’s private.” She heard Conner state as he walked ahead of them to open a car door for her.

“Hop in El.” He told her and she felt Brayden move her to the door.

Climbed in and then moved all the way to the other side, put her hand on the door handle as she watched Conner put her things on the seat next to her, reached out and put her hand on her handbag and then opened the other door and bolted out the other side, and ran for it. It was all she could do.

Didn’t get very far at all, found a pair of arms around her. “Oh, it’s not wise to run from us, El. We like it.” Conners voice was soft in her ear, he sounded amused more than mad that she had run from him. “But if you want to run.” His arms tightened around her, “I’ll take you to the nearest forest and let you.” found his mouth on her neck “We would love that, to hunt you, Mate you and Claim you out in the woods under this full moon El.” His hand slid up her neck and he turned her face to look up at him “Do you want that?” his voice was so very rich, deep and husky and she knew he wanted it more than anything.

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Chapter 67

Conner POV

He was looking right at her, finally they had found her, it had been pure chance and he knew it, had been heading for the forest to let their wolves spend the day in the woods of the forest, and had seen a car leaving the university with a guy in it with silver-grey eyes driving.

He'd looked right at Conner, they'd been parked at a traffic light, and all the windows had been down, they much preferred fresh air to air conditioning. And the air out here near the forest was quite sweet. They had been going to follow that car only to hear the girl in the passenger side state. "Do you think El will be okay to drive back on her own later this morning? Won't get lost?"

"She'll be fine, I've set up the GPS for her and in English." The guy had chuckled.

Everyone in the car had turned and looked right at him. Conner had been driving and had taken the next opportunity to throw a u-turn and go right back to that University and then they were out and looking for her, spread out all over the campus trying to smell her, or hear her.

Adam had been the one to lay eyes on her and linked to all of them where in the campus she was, they'd come at her from four different directions, didn't want to give her the chance to run away from them.

He himself was standing behind her, Atlas was up inside his mind, he knew his Mate when he saw her, she was sitting cross-legged on the ground in what he could only think was a study group. He was just watching her, as was Adam from the other side of the grassed area. They were waiting for Brayden and Cameron to join them.

Had to contain himself as well as Atlas when that boy hit on her, asked her out right in front of him, not that she knew he was there, didn't have her fox couldn't scent him out yet. That was a blessing for him and his men. She still didn't have heightened senses and he could use that to his advantage.

Though the moment that boy asked her out they were all on the move, Adam was the first to be spotted by her, and watching her recognise him, amused him a little, scrambled quickly to her feet. Looked around her and realised he wasn't alone, knew she was actually looking for him, not his unit.

Strolled right up to her and nearly snarled as that boy put his hand on her face, dared to touch her like that soft and gentle. No one had the right to touch her like that but he and Atlas, he was right there behind her, nearly sighed as his arm slid around her tiny waist and pulled her back against him. Right where she belonged.

Saw those eyes turned to him and looked right down at her, touched her in the same manner in the same place as that boy, to rid her skin of his human scent, stared right down at her, his whole body was relaxed and that ache was gone from him. Slid his hand through her glossy black hair and just kissed her.

Couldn't stop himself from kissing her, had missed her like crazy, needed her. Looked right into those silver-grey eyes of hers as he kissed her, right in front of everyone. He didn't care who saw him k**s her, she was his and he was going to claim her, the full moon was mere hours away and finally she was in front of him.

Watched her eyes flutter shut, caught that glimpse of amber flash right before her eyes closed fully and deepened the k**s, felt her respond to him and near g*****d out loud, had forgotten how good it was to just k**s her, taste her and hold her to his body. Claimed her the minute she looked back up at him.

Told her it was time to come home, and felt pain touch him the moment the word No came out of her mouth, he clamped his hand over her mouth to stop that rejection he knew was coming, from being uttered by her. His word choice had been wrong, and he knew it. He hadn't given her a choice, had told her to come home. She needed a choice. Not to be told what to do.

Was going to fight him at every turn if he told her what to do and he knew it. Got to watch as Brayden took her from him, and see just how effective her Gamma was at containing her, she had no idea what he was and they all knew it, just from her reaction to him. Brayden was more than proud of himself, as she not only stood there with him but hugged herself to him.

Though the way she looked up at him made Conner frown, she didn't understand why she was suddenly attached to him and so very comfortable with him. He frowned when he realised she was thinking he was her Mate and not Conner. He saw those eyes of hers turn back to him and she did look a bit confused.

So not everything had been explained to her, put that boy right in his place and walked away with her, saw her grip onto Brayden as he tried to take her hand, sighed internally, and had to let Brayden keep hold of her. She wanted to run away and had been told not to think about it, though the amusement that came from his Gamma as they walked back towards the car surprised him. 'What?' he mind-linked to him.

'She's worried she's going to end up naked with you. Kind of happy but terrified at the same time.'

That did not surprise him. If there had been no one there just 10 minutes ago, he'd have peeled all her clothes off and claimed her right there on the grass. Wanted nothing more than to mate the hell out of her, mark her and claim her for himself.

He turned his head at the sound of the car door opening and blinked as he watched her run from him, from all of them, heard his whole unit burst out laughing, her natural instinct was always to run away from him, but really all it did was excite him to see her run. Atlas was up inside his mind all excited at the prospect of chasing her.

Gave her a good 30 second head start, his beast was itching inside his mind to be released to go after her, he had to remind him they were in the human world. She also wasn't that fast or could run forever either.

Smiled as he walked around the car and watched her try to get away, knew his whole unit were watching him, heard Atlas growl and knew he was done waiting, again his unit were laughing, running her down was easy and chasing her was going to be his favourite thing in the entire world and he knew it.

Had her whole body pressed up against him and couldn't help but tell her what he wanted, he even offered to let her out in the woods so he could hunt her and claim her when the moon set. Turned him on to no end to think about it. Goddess, he wanted her to say yes, he would chase her all afternoon and all evening till that moon set and then he would have her.

He looked right down at her, as she stared up at him, she knew he meant it, could feel her heart rate triple nearly at the thought of it. Then she shook her head in a no fashion, her eyes flickered between silver-grey and amber and Atlas moved forward to look right down at her, to see his mate, to try and bring her to the surface for him, even though they knew she had not shifted yet, and likely couldn't actually come forward like he wanted her to. He wanted to see her for himself.

"What's her name?" Conner asked softly, "Atlas would like to know. I would like to know El." He asked when the amber was gone and it was just El looking up at him. Atlas moved back as his Mate did. He'd been hoping she would look right up at him.

'Shy.'

'Can't scent you yet is all.' Conner reminded him.

Turned her around to face him when she didn't answer him, and slid his arms around her "I really did miss you El." He told her "Was devastated you were gone." Leaned his forehead down to touch hers and just stood there with her in the middle of the university car park, uncaring of who saw them.

"Conner, I live here now." She murmured softly.

"I know, with your aunt." He sighed and tilted her chin up to make her look up at him "We really need to talk. A proper conversation El. About you and me, what I am, what you are."

Saw her just staring up at him. "What if I promise to keep my hands to myself, my word is good El." He assured her. "Or I could drive you back to your aunt's and we could talk there, if you would feel more comfortable."

Watched her actually think about that, could actually see her brain ticking on that. She knew that he couldn't go into that place without permission. If he took her there, he couldn't get to her once she went through the gates. She'd learned a lot in the past few months, it seemed, and knew her aunt was also the Alpha and Luna to her pack. Would be well protected, likely to start a war he couldn't win. There were only four of them, if he tried to force his way in. Though they would be stronger, the odds were not good. He was not going to do that to his unit.

"How are you handling the news?" he asked when she still didn't speak to him, "I was completely taken for six, that you were one of us."

"How do you know?" she finally spoke to him, blinking in surprise at his words.

"Sloan, she snarled right at me."

"Did you see her?" full curiosity in her voice now, sounded as though she hadn't seen her grandma either. Was curious as to what she looked like.

"No, over the phone, but I got the message loud and clear, as did my father. We can't talk here, El, out in the open like this."

"I don't, we can't."

"I know." He sighed "I'm an a*****e, you however completely shocked me. I didn't know how to handle it, my sudden obsession with you and Atlas well" he shook his head. "Obsessed more than I was. I also had some issues I needed to resolve. They are, just so you know, resolved. Please, El, just come and talk to me. I will not make you do anything you don't want to."

She was just staring up at him, released her from his arms and took her hand to lead her back to his car, to see his entire unit leaning on his car just watching him. They were all smirking at him, shook his head, knew they had heard every word he'd said. Adam was practically laughing at him, he'd told that man. The Mate Bond was just really good s*x for both sides. It wasn't love.

That man was going to be on him about that, the way he was, the words he spoke to her, the way they all saw him k**s her, not something he'd ever professed to want to do. Actually, he had no interest in any of it until El had showed up in his pack. Then, couldn't bloody stop himself from doing all those things to her. Wanted to touch and k**s her all over, craved it. Wanted to please her, to sate her needs, not just his own.

Helped her into the car. "El, where do you want to go?" he asked. "My hotel or your aunt's?"

"My aunts, I have to be in the pack when the moon sets."

“Alright.” He tossed the keys to Cameron. He was the closest. “Where is that EI?”

“Maybe I should go on my own.” She looked at him.

He slipped in next to her and closed the door. “It might be better for your fox if Atlas and I are there.”

Saw her raise an eyebrow at him, then just go to move further away from him, Brayden climbed right in the other side as Cameron and Adam got in the front. Smiled right at her “We’ll take you. I’d like to meet your aunt. I’m also certain it will prevent a war if I’m willing to give you choices as to what you want.”

“What if I want to stay here?” she asked quietly.

He looked down at her. “Let’s just see how the full moon goes, and we can discuss everything else later, after okay.”

“I’m not supposed to say where it is.”

“I understand that, but I am going to claim you, EI. The minute the moon sets. Atlas and I, we are going to claim you for all to hear and see. I want your family to know this.”

Watched her sigh and really think about it, “Can I text her and get permission?”

“Of course, you can.” He nodded, “Probably a good idea, four wolves and all going to a den.”

Saw her do that and heard her phone chime less than a minute later ‘Yes, EI. Bring that boy right to me so I can have a stern word with him.’ came back the reply.

“Pisogne on lake Iseo, or near there. I’ll know it when we get there.”

They were off a few minutes later once it was punched into the GPS. He shifted himself in the seat so she could lean into him. She looked as tired as he felt, and he knew she could likely sleep. It was over and an hour drive, Cameron told him. “Why don’t you get some sleep while we drive?”

“I don’t sleep much nowadays.”

“Me either.” He nodded. “That’s because we’re apart. You’ll sleep better with me here.”

He saw her stare at him, didn’t believe him and he knew it. But she was out 10 minutes later, curled right into him.

“Big bloody softy.” He heard Adam chuckle.

“Seems it.” he nodded, but he too wanted to sleep, had only ever actually slept in a bed with her once, had slept so damned well, had been full of energy the next day, and been in a good mood as well.

She was still asleep when they got to their destination, it wasn't hard to find there were several people standing around, a woman he knew instantly was going to be her aunt had those silver-grey eyes and a full unit with her. Their gate was open and he knew she would be able to feel EI by that pack tether, flagged them down and looked at her through the window he wound down.

Saw her sigh and shake her head at the girl curled into him, looked right at him “Conner, I can presume.”

“Yes, Brayden my Gamma,” he motioned to Brayden. “And that’s Adam and Cameron my Beta and Delta.”

“How many of you are Marked and Mated?”

“Adam and Cameron only. I will be there when your niece accepts me.”

“Good luck with that son.” She muttered and looked over his unit, walked around and took pictures of them all, then got in her car along with her unit. They followed her through the gates and got a look at the pack symbol, stared right at it.

‘Is that what I think it is?’ Adam shot down the mind-link at him.

‘I can only think yes, it is.’

‘Sweet Goddess Conner. Do not piss that Alpha off.’

‘Agreed.’ He muttered, right back. None of them would survive it, and she wouldn’t even need her unit to take them down. Her verses them was all it would be.

He’d seen the number of tails on that gate, 9 of them, not to mention the duel colour of that Kitsune, likely this was just one of the reigning Alpha’s, his brain was ticking like crazy. Every interaction with Sloan, that snarl, how she’d laughed and stated she wasn’t afraid of him. No wonder she wasn’t afraid, she was not only going to be a sibling. He’d seen the clear resemblance. Sloan was this woman’s twin; she was the other half of the reigning Alpha to this pack.

They pulled the car up out the front of the Den, a lovely stone manor, and he asked Adam to open his door for him as he shifted EI to his lap and climbed out with her in his arms, she was sound asleep and likely needed it, so did he, for that matter, had managed a short nap in the car, he’d been woken 10 minutes prior to arrival.

Looked at her aunt, “I didn’t catch your name, Alpha.”

“Juliana, come, I will show you where you can settle her, likely needs that sleep she is getting with you right there.”

“She’s not the only one.” He sighed.

“Hm,” was all she said, “Your unit can wait in the living area. Follow me, son.”

He followed her up the stairs to a room that was all El. He could see plenty of pictures of her with her father and Sloan, even one with her and Juliana and Sloan. “Your twin.”

“Yes son.” She nodded. “Don’t do anything stupid, you won’t survive me, and if you do. Sloan will come for you personally. You definitely won’t survive her. Get some rest, Conner. I’ll wake the two of you an hour before the moon sets, keep your clothes on or you’ll lose something precious to you.”

Looked right at her with a raised eyebrow and she waved a hand right at his pants. “You wouldn’t be the first I’ve turned into a eunuch.” Smiled right at him and then just left the room, closing the door behind her.

Shook his head, but didn’t doubt it either, seemed fully amused by her own words, slipped his shoes off and just climbed right onto the bed next to El, slid his arms around her and sighed, knew it wouldn’t take long for sleep to claim him. Atlas was already settling inside his mind, happy to sleep next to her.

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Chapter 68

El POV

El woke to find herself in a dark room. Her Aunt Juliana’s voice was coming to her through the mind-link, ‘El honey, wake up and come downstairs. The moon will set in one hour.’

‘Alright.’ She murmured right back. Yawned and looked about her. The last thing she recalled was being in a car with Conner and his unit. They were bringing her back to her aunt here to the Willows Moon Pack. Tried to sit herself up only to find an arm locked around her waist, and a leg draped over her knees.

Turned and looked over her shoulder, found brilliant blue eyes looking right at her, knew that had to be Conners Wolf "Atlas?" she queried quietly.

Got growled at all softly as his body tightened around her "Mine." He growled right at her before receding and Conner was looking right at her. "Sorry he's a little possessive, and his need to claim you is high."

"I need to get up," she told him. "Why are you in my bed?"

Felt his leg move from hers and then his arm from around her so she could get up. "You were sleeping so well, I didn't want to wake you. Your aunt told me you needed it and, well, honestly, so did I, so she said I could sleep here, with you, would wake us before the moon set."

"My aunt, really?" she muttered.

"Yes. Do you really think I'd be allowed in your bed if she didn't agree to it?"

"No." El muttered and got out of the bed, reached over and turned the light on, looked over herself, at least she was still dressed. That would be a first with him in her bed. He had actually kept his hands to himself.

"There were rules, to my being in here, number 1 was I keep my clothes on." He chuckled, "She threatened to make me a Eunuch if I didn't."

Turned and looked right at him, "Good."

"El, we do need to talk, I know that." He sighed.

She side-stepped the hand that tried to grab onto her and headed for the door, "My aunt said to come downstairs."

"Alright, but in an hour, you're going to have to deal with me. You know that right."

He was walking behind her and she knew it, ignored him and hurried down to the ground floor, knew that her aunt would be outside setting up or dinner would already be on. Headed for the outdoor area to find her aunt. Though she could feel Petal wanting to turn and look at him a lot, she knew her kitsune was curious about him, could feel it. She was more than curious, had looked right at Atlas when he'd growled at her.

Refused to do so for the moment, didn't really understand why her aunt let him sleep in her bed with her. She knew what he'd done, even called him an a*****e herself. She walked out the back to find dinner under way, saw her aunt looked right at her "Ah there you are honey, come sit and eat, you've been asleep all day you must be hungry."

She actually was a little headed on over there. She could see Adam, Brayden and Cameron all sitting eating, watched as Conner strolled over to sit with them, was at another table completely opposite her. "Did you sleep well, El?"

Glared at her aunt now, and got chuckled at, then mind-linked to her 'you looked so comfortable in his arms, how could I say no El. And I know you were very tired. Not so much anymore, huh?'

'That doesn't mean anything at all.' She murmured back down the mind-link.

'Hmm, you say that honey, but I checked on both of you while you slept. Like the dead, the pair of you, speaks volumes.'

'No, it doesn't. It just means I am home and comfortable.'

'You were out long before you got home.' Her aunt chuckled. 'Curled up into him in the car before you got here.'

She moved her eyes to Conner across from her. He was leaned back in his chair just watching her, smiled right at her, blinked at that, he never smiled at her. Looked at his friends they were sitting seemingly happily chatting away with other members of her pack, while eating the dinner provided to them.

"They are a pretty friendly lot." She heard Al tell her.

"I've not had issues with any of them three." She murmured and saw Conner frown right at her, almost as if he'd heard what she said, from way over there 'can he hear me.' She asked Al down the mind-link.

'Yes, all of them would be able to, shifters have excellent hearing, once they shift.'

Looked right at her cousin now 'so anything I've said even quietly.'

'Yep, anyone within earshot would have picked it up.'

Thought about that, the way Cordi had jumped all over her in her house and told her some people had good hearing. Clamped her hand right over her mouth and shushed her. She'd not understood that, looked right at Conner and wondered just how much he'd heard that day. 'He hasn't tried to mind-link to me not once.'

'He can't, you're not part of his pack. Till you are he will not be able to, or until you two are Marked and Mated, that will connect both of you.'

'Ever?'

'Yes, if you don't go home with him, stay here he'll never be able to. Though, by the look of him El, he's making himself very comfortable, I don't think you're going to be able to get rid of him.'

'Is just my stepbrother.'

'Hmm, not even Akon believes that, with the way he carried you today, and that Grandma let him sleep in your room. Likely everyone that saw that will think he is your Mate. Alphas don't just go carrying anyone around El.'

'You saw that?'

'I did.' Al chuckled 'Lots here did. He slept as long as you did. His unit, however, wandered about and looked around with a few of us. They seem nice, friendly, very respectful.'

'Don't want to get their butts kicked by Aunt Juliana.'

'That is likely a part of it, though mostly I think they were just simply curious, not many get an invite into a Kitsune pack. Or a fox pack for that matter. We like our Dens to be kept private. This is likely the first time they have ever been inside one. We run similar to them but are more laid back.'

'Don't get locked in or forced to stay here.'

'No, we do not, though I think that was just your stepdad being overly protective to keep his Mate happy.'

"Everyone keeps telling me that, but no one cared what I wanted," she muttered, allowed.

Saw all of them from his pack look right at her now, and heard her aunt sigh "El, don't antagonise on purpose."

"What? It is true, I was made to go there, forced to be there, dragged back there. No one cared what I wanted."

"Actually, El, I told father to let you go to Italy, before he even brought you into the pack. Told him it wasn't wise to make you move there. He didn't listen to me."

Glared right at him, he just hadn't wanted her there. "In fact, I told him after that incident when he bruised you, he should not have taken your choice away from you. I was on your side to go to Italy the whole time."

"You just wanted me gone." She snapped at him.

“What I actually wanted, was for you to live your life in the human world as you should have, didn’t know what you were to me. Thought you were better off in the human world.”

“Good then let me be here.”

Saw him frown right at her. “I am letting you be here. I asked you where you wanted to go, to talk, gave you that choice, even brought you here to your pack, so you could feel safe and protected from me.”

“When are you leaving then?”

“After the moon sets and I can claim you officially.”

“I don’t have to let you. From my understanding, it’s my choice to say yes or no.”

“It is.” He nodded. “Doesn’t mean I have to accept it either. A catch twenty-two kind of situation.” He smiled right at her.

“So, if I say no, you’re what, just going to hang about till I change my mind.”

“It is highly likely.” He smiled right at her, watched him lean forward and prop his elbows on the table. “Atlas and I are already Mated to you. It happened out in the woods when you told us you would leave. Do you recall what happened that day?”

“Yes,” She muttered.

“Atlas mated himself to you that day. I did it before that, damned near knotted you. The second time we were together, stopping that was the most painful thing I have ever felt.”

“That doesn’t mean I did it back.”

Heard him laugh softly “Oh El, baby, yes you did, that night in your bed, when you got all aggressive and screamed at me, you baby. Mate the hell out of us. It was also the first time we saw a flash of Amber in your eyes. Brought out your shifter, I’m guessing.”

Was glaring right at him.

“You had me, El, the first time I touched you, freaked me the hell out, that is why I reacted the way I did.”

“Oh, you mean go kissing another girl just a few hours later, right in front of me.” She yelled right at him, “To make sure I understood I was nothing to you.” she stood up as pain touched her chest once more.

"It was very wrong of me, El. I'm sorry I did that. I was very confused, and I honestly didn't know how to handle it. I was very different with you, I've never been like that with anyone before."

"I don't care, it was cruel and hurtful. You deliberately hurt me, and more than once." Turned and stalked away from them all. Off into the darkness of the night, out into the orchard.

I heard him call after her and ran the hell away from him, deeper into the orchard only to feel the moon set and have pain sear through her body, so bad she stumbled and fell to her knees, gasped in pain and clutched at her chest just like the last two times, it hurt so much practically scream at Petal to rip out of her only to hear her actually whine in pain herself. Curled up into a ball of pain on the ground, knew it would render her unconscious at some point like the last two times.

"El?" it was Conner, he was looking down at her. "What's wrong?" placed a hand on her face and the other was in her hair, stroking her hair.

She could barely look up at him, "It hurts us." She sobbed and it did, couldn't shift but needed to, "We can't do it." Saw his eyes glow that brilliant blue of his wolf and found Atlas looking down at her, felt Petal look right up at him and whine loudly in her mind.

Then he growled all loud and aggressively "Mine." And she was just picked up by him, saw his fangs elongate and then his head dropped to her neck and a scream ripped out of her as she felt him bite her, felt it burn so hot on her neck, tried to hit him and lash out only to be crushed right into his body as he bit down even harder.

Felt the pain ebb away from her and opened her eyes to see Atlas looking down at her "Claim me back." His gravelly voice told her 'it won't hurt anymore after that.'

She just stared up at him, it only hurt slightly now, the pain was mild considering what it had been, but it was growing. She realised as she stared up at him, she couldn't mark him back, didn't have a shifter to do so.

"Accept us, Eliza, be our Mate. She will come when you do." He told her.

She could feel the pain already starting to build, heard Petal whine again, squeezed her eyes tightly shut against the pain, she didn't know what to do. They didn't exactly get along, didn't know if Petal wanted him. She was curious about him, but even now, with the moon set, she didn't come forth to claim him. What if he wasn't the one, what if she chose him and it hurt them even more?

"Please El, choose us." There was no gravel to his voice anymore.

Her eyes opened to see Conner's dark blue eyes looking down at her, felt his hand on her face. "We will never hurt you again, I don't want anyone else, El. I only want you. Accept us and she will be able to come forth."

Felt his mouth touch hers softly, kissed her slow at first, teased her lips apart with his tongue and then kissed her deeply, could actually feel the pain disappearing as she kissed him back. The more she kissed him, the better she felt. Till her arms were wound around his neck and she was pulling him down to her, sighed his name softly as his mouth left hers, his forehead touched hers, and those eyes looked right into hers.

"Mine." She whispered as she stared up at him.

"Always yours." He smiled gently at her "What's her name, El? Let Atlas call her out."

Felt Petal look right at him, her Mate saw those brilliant blue eyes of his wolf appear and then she was just gone shoved away from him, up and running away from him. El didn't really understand what was happening, she could feel it was her body running away, but didn't seem to have any control over it whatsoever, could hear Petal laughing now as she ran away and realised it was Petal in control of her body, it was Petal who was running away from them.

'Petal don't run,' she gasped, knew that was a bad idea.

'He will have to catch me first, if he wants me.'

'Petal, we can't outrun them! Are you crazy? Do you know what he will do if he thinks you're leaving him? Stop running.'

'Never.' She laughed. And ran right into the woods away from her own Mate, the one they had just claimed for themselves, had felt all their pain go away with a single k**s of acceptance. She didn't understand why Petal was now running away from them at all. She'd never been able to come and take control before, now she could, and she just ran away, she didn't understand it at all.

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Chapter 69

Conner POV

Conner could understand El's concerns and reservations about him, he had not treated her well, admitted to it, here, in front of all her family, owned up to his mistakes. They were so good together when in close contact, but apart she still had that desire to reject him. It was her true nature, to be alone and in control of her life.

She didn't want anyone telling her what to do, not even him. He wasn't even going to try, he'd likely never bloody win and the nature of hers to leave him, would surface each and every time. He may have found her, but obtaining her and keeping her for a lifetime, was another thing altogether. He could not only see the hurt but hear it, everyone could.

Could even feel Brayden's anger rolling off of him, as he listened to her, he was getting everything for the first time, all the things Conner had done to try and push her away. Things he'd done to make her want to leave him and it had worked. She had not only wanted to leave him, she had left him, was still trying to leave him, right this minute.

He watched her get up from the table and leave him. The moon was due to set any minute and she didn't want to be anywhere near him, didn't want to scent him out. That much was clear, they were Mated to each other. He'd laid it all out clear as a bell, that not only had Atlas mated her, he had, before Atlas had even, that she had mated him right back.

She understood it, he was certain, even if she left him, they would be forever bound to each other. He was not going to accept a rejection. He couldn't even now with her screaming at him. He knew he loved her. Atlas loved her, they had likely loved her while she was still human, he'd just been in complete denial about it.

Got punched right in the face by Brayden with all that man's wolf strength behind it, as she stalked away from the table. He took the hit, didn't even glare at the man, had known it was coming for a long time, just shoved him out of the way to go after her. His eyes moved to her aunt, who was just watching him. No alpha liked to be punched by one below them, she was staring right at him, curiously he thought, waiting to see what he was going to do.

Well, what he was going to do was go and claim his Mate, get her to understand he loved her, would do anything for her. If she wanted to stay here? Then it was likely, here he would stay as well. He was not leaving without her. He would send his whole unit back and just be here with her till she either came around to him or was done studying and came home with him.

Knew it was going to have to be on her terms, he called out to her as she headed into an orchard and watched her just start to run away from him, sighed and shook his head, always with that need to run away from him. He went after her, and felt the moon set and saw her stumble and crash down onto the ground, shot forward at full wolfen speed. She was clutching at her chest in pain, he could see it, feel it even.

Her scent hit him, still smelled like Jasmine and Vanilla but then had the scent of pine needles overlaid it, goddess she smelt like a forest, smelt so freaking perfect to him, turned her over to look at her to try and find out what was wrong with her.

They could see the flickering of her eyes from silver-grey to amber, it was constantly in motion 'Can't shift, is trying to but can't.' it was Atlas telling him when she didn't answer them, he was trying to comfort her, stroked her hair hoping his touch, her Goddess Gifted Mates touch would ease her pain. Finally, told them she couldn't shift.

Felt Atlas surge forward and claim her officially with her scent around him, they truly knew what she was to them, then his fangs were just buried in El's neck, heard her scream in pain and try to fight them and their claiming of her.

Atlas was of the opinion he needed to Mark her to ease her pain, to bring her shifter all the way out of her. It was only a theory, and it could go very badly if she still rejected them afterwards. They were also now no longer alone. His wolf may have his fangs buried in his Mate's neck but his eyes were on the very large black kitsune that was staring him down right now.

They both knew it was Juliana, the Alpha Kitsune of this pack and El's own aunt. She was standing just a few feet away watching a wolf claim her niece by force. She could not only hear the girl screaming, but see her fighting against it.

He felt Atlas pull her even harder into him, he was not letting go, bit down harder on her, poured more of his venom into her. El was his and he was not caring of the outcome, of the war that could likely be started. He thought he could fix her, save her from the pain she was in, and release her beast. That was all that mattered to Atlas right this minute.

Then she was just settled in his arms, lay there calm, no longer in any pain, got to watch as Atlas's eyes moved from the Kitsune to his Mate. One he was never going to relinquish, not even back to her aunt, was willing and ready to fight for her, likely going to die for her if things didn't go right.

Watched her eyes open and look up at him, glowed like twin moons up at him, so very bright under the light of the full moon as it shone down upon them, spoke right to her, told her to claim him back, that if she did it wouldn't hurt anymore.

Heard his wolf tell her exactly what he believed would happen if she accepted them, that her shifter would come. Could feel pain welling in her once more 'Atlas let me, it's not you she's confused about.' Conner told his beast, and he was given back control. Her eyes were shut against the pain that was once more building inside of her. Conner's eyes moved to that Kitsune, it was no longer standing, just sitting watching. She knew in all likelihood that El couldn't shift without being claimed, and would have seen the pain in her before. Likely they had talked about a lot of things, accounted for why he'd been allowed to stay in her room with her all day. To sleep next to her she already suspected they were mated to each other. Knew her niece needed him to get her shifter.

Turned his eyes back to El, he wasn't going to lose her any more than Atlas was, "Please El, choose us." He told her softly, wanted that more than anything in his entire life right now, let her hear that in his voice, touched her face gently and saw her look up at him. Promised to never hurt her ever again, he told her he only wanted her, and he did. So did his wolf.

They would never take another if she rejected them, would remain mate-less as their punishment for hurting their mate, for as long as their Goddess deemed fit to let them live. Or till she found it in her to forgive them no matter how many hundreds of years it took.

Leaned down and kissed her softly, lovingly he hoped, and finally, she slid her arms around him and kissed him back, looked down at her, heard her sigh his name and then just whisper "Mine." Up at him and felt not only relief but joy flood both he and his wolf. She was willing to claim them back, give them a chance to show her they really did love her and want her.

"Always yours." He told her gently, he was hers, had been from the first moment he'd stepped into her bedroom and nearly drowned in the scent of her arousal, had only been in there to see if she was in there, not to have his way with her, but couldn't stop himself, even knowing she was human hadn't stopped him. He had wanted her like no other, looking down at her now, as she stared up at him. He knew he still wanted her like no other.

Asked her what her shifters name was, to let Atlas call her out and saw those Amber eyes of her beast look right up at him, smiled to see her on the surface properly. Let Atlas push forward to look down at her. He loved those amber eyes already. He reached out to touch her face for himself only to have her suddenly shove him away from her, quite violently. Then she was rolling over away from him and was up and gone, running away from him and his beast, a lot faster than El had ever moved before.

It was not El running from them, he felt Atlas tilt his head slightly as she ran away from them and just laugh, and shoot off after her to chase her. He'd loved chasing El, now he was going to chase his own Mate, he still didn't know her name. They were marked by him but not them by her. They could actually hear a laugh coming from the woods.

She was fast and his wolf was loving it, hunting her out in the woods under the full moon to Mate her and he was going to. She was playing with him already. Had been released by El's claiming of him, gifted by the goddess to come forward finally. Her first instinct was to run away from them, but the laughing they were hearing was all her beast. It was high pitched and had this little chuffing noise to it.

Atlas was tracking her through the woods, gaining on her, his excitement to Mate, his Mate was building with every second of his hunt of her, hadn't even seen her yet, was hunting his Mate in human form and didn't even care. Loved that body as much as he would her shifters.

Ducked off to the side and shot forward with all he had to get in front of her and then was in front of her, blocking her way. There was so much happiness on her face and those amber eyes were filled with mischief, she didn't stop running at him, if it was possible, increased her pace and just when he thought she was going to smash right into them, slid right between his spread legs and was up gone from him once more.

Heard Atlas laugh as he turned and looked at her, she was grinning wildly at him, saw his own Mate wink right at him and then was gone, running off through the trees once more, saw Atlas stand and track her. Then just rip right out of him and go after her in full wolf form. He was faster and more agile in wolf form and his Mate wanted to play with him. He was going to show her just how playful he could be.

How big and strong he was, how he could turn on a dime and race through the woods, hunt her for as long as she wanted to be hunted, knew that the first time out in the woods was so very exciting and freeing. But not only was this her first time out in the woods, this was her first time with her Mate. She was not only having fun, she was really happy he was chasing her as well.

Chased her for hours through the woods till he had her cornered in a ravine, she had come to a skidding halt and his wolf stood watching her as she looked for a way out, saw her turn and look right at him. Atlas shifted back to their human form but stayed in full control and stalked her once more. Watched her look for a place to escape, there wasn't one. He'd been tracking her and watching her learning how she moved, how she turned and slid, all the ways she dodged him to get away from him. Was prepared for all of it, to snag her and have his way with her right here in this ravine. She was not getting past him this time. He was more than ready to Mate his Mate.

Growled right at her all needy and wanton, saw her amber eyes move right to him, and watched her head tilt, and watched her actually smell him. She was still smiling at him, had enjoyed running from him and being chased by him. Then she growled right back at him and shot forward, was on him wrapped around him and her mouth was on his all hard and rough, kissing the hell out of his beast.

Atlas was already ripping at her clothes, tearing them right off of her in his need to have her. A full battle for dominance ensued between him and her. Two Alpha's trying to assert control over each other, till he had her held down to mate her furiously, took his Mate with all he had, saw those teeth of hers try to take a piece of him, leaned right down into that bite of hers as he knotted himself to her, and felt her fangs sink right into his flesh, her venom burn into them, searing hot at first and then that Mate Bond connection finally fully establish between the two of them.

They had yet to see her shifter and even with her Marking them and claiming them for herself, he couldn't see her, should have been able to, but couldn't, just darkness and a pair of glowing amber eyes was all he could see in his mind.

But Atlas knew her now “Petal.” He growled all softly as he looked down at her. “My little flower.”

“Atlas.” She laughed back up at him, “My whole world.” Pulled his mouth right back down to hers, lay there under him and kissed him the entire time she was knotted to him. Then she sighed as it released and she pushed him over to look down at him. Then simply got up and stepped away from him. “Stay beast.” She told him, when he moved to get up. Her voice was a little higher pitched like her laughing, though still held that gravel of a shifter to it.

Watched her walk away from him and then just look up at the moon, close her eyes and sigh softly, liked being under the light of the full moon. It was blissful to her. Then, before his eyes started to shift, she stood before him in her fully shifted form, a Kitsune, not a fox. A beautiful two-toned Kitsune, of Black and Brilliant Orange, a Melanistic Kitsune. Her face was black but her ears were brilliant orange, her four long slender legs were all black, as was her chest, but her underbelly was that brilliant orange and down her back was a mixture of brindled orange and black and then those 9 tails of hers as she stood there before them, in all her magnificent glory, waved and swirled them about were a variety of orange and black, each one different to the next, but each one held a white tip to their tail.

She was the most beautiful creature he had ever seen. He’d never seen anything like it before, had been expecting a silver fox breed or silver kitsune due to her father’s collection of artworks. The pack gate symbol of a black and white kitsune with 9 tails, seemed to be that black and white was their lineage.

Felt Atlas shift to his wolf and walk on over to her. She was smaller than him in stature, had those long legs but her body was still smaller than his, touched his nose right to hers and slid his muzzle along hers till his whole head was sliding down her body, knew his beast was going to try and mate hers.

Didn’t exactly know how that was going to go, got hit with all her tails and Atlas shook his head, and growled a little at her. She growled right back at him, turned and looked right at him, wound herself under him and through his legs, allowed those tails of hers to curl around him as she did so, ran her head along him and then just walked herself under him, her head rubbed against his chest and she looked up at him as those tails of hers, part and curl around his body.

Was ready, it seemed, to be mated by his wolf.

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Chapter 70

EI POV

She could finally see Petal in her mind's eye, all curled up sound asleep, all her tails spread out about her, so beautiful in all her orange and black glory, that orange was so brilliant in colour that in the darkness of her mind it practically glowed, it was so bright.

She'd had no control all night long, Petal had run off into the woods with Atlas chasing her all over the place, only to pretty much attack him in her need to Mate him. EI was worried she was going to get injured or hurt by his beast. She could see him through Petal's eyes fighting to gain control of her.

Heard Conner's voice inside her mind 'He won't hurt her. They are just battling for dominance, are both Alpha's and both want control of the situation. This is actually normal of two very dominant Alpha beasts.'

She'd not even known he could talk to her, wondered when that had happened. 'How can it be normal?' she asked him. She was worried.

"Put your trust in her. Does she seem afraid to you?"

"No." EI answered after thinking about it and realised that Petal didn't hold any fear of Atlas, was all aggression, mostly in her fight to be the dominant one. Was finally pinned down by Atlas and then he just Mate the hell out of Petal, and though Petal was snarling and growling up at him as he held her down to Mate her relentlessly. Her Kitsune was enjoying every second of it, waves of pleasure were rolling through Petal.

Immense pleasure ripped through Petal and then her fangs were buried into Atlas. Marking him and claiming him completely. Then her whole body just relaxed and she heard the two of them speak to each other for the first time, smiled when he called her his little flower. Thought it was cute.

EI could actually feel how happy her Kitsune was, couldn't help but feel that joy fill her and even laughed herself when Petal called him her whole world. Whether Atlas knew she was mostly finding his name funny, due to the word Atlas referred to a map of the world and that's why she had stated 'my whole world.' It amused her to no end.

Then to have her shift for the first time, look right up to the moon and close her eyes as they stood under it for the first time, together as one, whole with no pain, knew her shift was about to happen, was happy about it. Then she was just morphed into her Kitsune, who stood staring at her very naked mate lying on the ground.

Heard her own Kitsune laugh inside her mind as she bit her l*p at the sight of a very naked Conner, all stretched out. The bloody man was always so handsome, even just lying there all covered in dirt and grass, he still looked good. Bit her l*p a little at the sight of him. 'Yours to have when you want El.' Petal told her 'He will never say no, he will never stray. He will give us good strong kits.'

Watched on as Atlas shifted to his wolf form and rubbed himself all over her Kitsune, could feel Petal already wanting to Mate him once more, put herself right underneath him so he could. He looked down at her as she looked up at him and took her once more, his wolf as insatiable as his human counterpart, it seemed.

Those two Mate on and off all night long, and she had no control over it.

She woke up to find Conner's body curled around hers out in the forest. She didn't even know where they were. Wondered if Petal would, though she was sleeping soundly, tried to wake her and got nothing from her, she just rolled over curled up and all those tails flopped down over her to cover her like a big furry blanket, they were longer than her own body, by at least a foot.

Felt a hand slide up her arm and to her face, turned and found Conner looking right at her, smiled gently at her "Morning El." He murmured softly and his mouth touched hers gently.

She sighed softly as she rolled over to face him, his touch felt amazing on her skin, tiny little sparks were trailing where his fingers trailed over her skin softly and slowly. Felt her eyes flutter close as her hand slid over his arm and her fingers lit up with those sparks "Conner?" she m****d and felt herself rolled onto her back, his mouth slid down her neck.

"El, it's our turn now." His voice was deep and rich, full of desire, could hear it in every word, cried out as his teeth nipped right at the crook of her neck, felt heat bloom between her thighs and heard him g***n, wrapped her legs around him "Please Conner." She m****d as she felt his hard c**k slid against her and pleasure ripped right through her.

His mouth was on hers a second later as he took her, pushed himself slowly but firmly inside of her, felt her whole body arch up and her head tilt right back, her mouth left his as a cry of pleasure ripped from her, all those sparks on her skin were now inside her body as well, gripped onto him as he started to move with her.

Everything felt so amazing, it was nothing like they had been before, so much more pleasurable. He was kissing her as he took her, kept it slow and gentle till she was gasping, crying out his name, gripping on to him, cried out for more, thrust hard up at him "Please Conner." She begged him, was so bloody close to cumming, but he was holding it from her, and she knew it. Teasing her by holding it at bay.

Found his hand on her face, she looked right at him as he looked at her, saw his smile as he slowed it down even more, nearly hit him. He was enjoying watching her need him, want him and crave him. "Do you want all of me, El?" he asked.

"Yes." She nodded and she did, ached for this man to take her completely, knew how much more he had to give to her. Pulled his mouth down to hers, "All of you Conner, I want it all." She kissed him, his tongue ravaged her mouth as he took her, giving her just what she wanted all of him hard and fast like she knew he could. Cried out for him as finally her o****m crashed over her. He didn't stop and she knew he wouldn't, clung on to him and took all of him lost to the feeling of being with him.

Heard her own scream of his name echo through the ravine around them as he slammed home sometime later, a deep g***n came from him, his body heavy on hers felt so very full as he held her to his body, an arm tightly around her waist, his breathing ragged in her neck "Goddess El," he sighed "You're so perfect."

Sighed herself, felt completely sated and exhausted at the same time, but then frowned as she couldn't move, "We're knotted to each other El." He looked down at her "Will take a few minutes to release. Best you stay still." His dark blue eyes looked down at her and he smiled, touched her face. Leaned down and kissed her slowly, wound her arms around him and just kissed him back till he slipped from her body.

Found herself pulled right into him, one hand in her hair and the other on her back "I will never leave you El." He murmured softly.

She just sighed softly, as she let her eyes close. She was his Mate and he hers. They were not just Mated to each other anymore, but Marked and Mated. She didn't know how that was going to work at all. She still wanted to be here in Italy and she knew he had a home back there in Utah. Could they even work that out? Who was going to give up their life for the other?.

"Sleep El, we can find our way back later." He murmured softly. "Let's sleep in the woods together." She heard him yawn and smiled to herself. She'd always liked sleeping in the woods, her father had instilled that into her. Allowed sleep to claim her.

She woke later to her aunt Juliana's voice inside her head. It sounded fully amused to her, the sun was low in the sky. She noticed, evening was here 'El, honey. Are you and Conner coming back anytime soon?'

Looked at him, he was sleeping still, 'He's asleep.' She murmured. Looked around her 'I don't even know where we are.'

'Still in the pack, El, head west. You feel like you're in the eastern ravine to me.'

'Alright.'

‘So, I take it Petal is out and you’re now Marked and Mated to Conner completely.’

‘Yes.’

‘Good, seems his beast knew just what to do to release Petal. Now bring her here to me so I can see her.’

‘She’s amazing, so beautiful.’

‘Takes after her human then.’ Her aunt chuckled, ‘Now wake that handsome Mate of yours and head on back, I’ll leave pants and a dress on the edge of the forest, I’m guessing your beasts are sleeping it off.’

‘Petal is asleep.’

‘Alright, if you can wake them, might be a quicker walk. I’d like to see Petal and her Wolfen Mate in their true forms.’

‘Alright.’

El sat herself up and looked at Conner. His eyes flickered as she moved away from him, felt his hand curl around her wrist and then his eyes were open and he was looking right up at her, “where are you going?” he asked without letting go.

“Aunt Juliana has requested we go back.” She murmured and turned slightly away from him.

Heard him chuckle “I like you all naked, there’s nothing to be ashamed of. Your body is beautiful, perfect El.” He seemed to know why she’d turned away from him.

“We have no clothes.”

“Nope,” he shook his head “You’ll get used to being naked all the time, it’s not only nothing to be ashamed of, but you’ll see it a lot, if you’d grown up here, nudity would be nothing but normal to you. You get so used to it you don’t even notice it most of the time.”

She looked right at him and raised an eyebrow “So you don’t look at naked girls in your pack then?”

“No not really.” He shook his head, “When I was younger and curious, but after a while it’s just the normal.” She watched him get up. “To be honest with you.” he reached down and helped her up “I eyed you off the day you arrived, more than I had any she-wolf in my pack in years, and you had clothes on.”

Glared at him “I don’t want to hear that.”

“What? That I thought you had a nice round a*s perfect for grabbing on to.”

Narrowed her eyes on him. “Let’s just go back.”

“Mm, you can walk in front of me, and I can watch that a*s I love so much.” He smiled right at her, “It’s the only a*s I will ever look at now. Hell, the only a*s I have looked at since walking into that room of yours.”

El rolled her eyes at him and walked off, only to feel his hand smack her right on her a*s, whipped her head around to stare at him, got growled at by him and her eyes widened “You can’t possibly.”

“Yes, I can.” He laughed and snapped his hands out to grab her. She dodged him and saw him grin right at her “Run El, I want to chase you.”

She felt Petal lift her head inside her mind. ‘Let’s run,’ she stood up and stretched, then just ripped out of her and ran away from him. They heard him laughing and then were being hunted by him and his wolf. Ran all the way back to the open plains of the centre of their pack, her Kitsune running flat out with his wolf running just behind her.

They could see Aunt Juliana standing by the grand Manor in a black flowing dress with her Mate and Conner’s unit not that far away, saw them all stand to attention and stare right at her Kitsune. They looked more than shocked by her appearance.

Petal stopped and stood right before her Aunt, bowed her head to her Alpha, watched her raise a hand and open her fingers and turn her hand in a fanning gesture, and Petal’s tails were all up and fanned out and around for her Alpha to see them.

She saw her aunt smile and walk along her and slide her hand over Petal’s head and down her back. “Absolutely amazing Petal. Taro knew you were in there, Sloan is going to be so proud of you.” she walked all the way around her and then back to her head and knelt down before her, to slide both hands over her face. “You really do look like a pretty petal. A once in a lifetime blossom, rare and beautiful.”

Watched as she stood and turned to look at Atlas, she folded her arms and shook her head. “You risked a lot, young wolf, marking my niece as you did. I could have killed you for it. Lucky for you, I’m wise and have seen a lot in my 500 years and know many things. Sloan would have slaughtered you on the spot.” Looked from one to the other, “Shift and go shower, then come down for dinner. You must be starving.”

Petal shifted her as a dress was brought for her, she slipped it on as Conner pulled pants on as well. “She needed us to complete the bonding process to gain her Kitsune.” Conner told her aunt “Atlas knew this, we knew this. He was willing to die for her to be pain free and gain her beast.”

“A good wolf he is.” Her aunt nodded “Go clean up.”

She found Conners' hand in hers as they walked towards the Manor. She watched as his unit bowed their heads "Luna." They all addressed her. Her eyes fell on Brayden and he smiled right at her. "Ask Conner why you feel that way around me. It will continue to feel like that."

Her eyes moved to Conner as he walked her by them. His friends were congratulating him on finally getting her. "He's a Gamma, it's his job to make you feel safe and calm. He has a unique ability gifted to him from the goddess herself. He can calm all the females in a pack, but you, as his Luna, are his main priority. If something happens to me, it will be Brayden that comes to you to protect you and save you."

Felt Petal snort, 'We're much stronger than any of them. We'll protect our Mate and our pack.'

She knew that herself, had heard her aunt tell her about why other shifters didn't pick fights with Kitsune's and she had nine tails already, so nine lives to be given. "Petal will protect you." El told him and saw him smile down at her.

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