

The Unclaimed Human Luna

Chapter 71

Conner POV

He was showered and in clean clothes, had been provided with a pair of black linen pants and a loose-fitting white linen shirt, not something he would normally wear at all, but was actually really comfortable. El herself was wearing those green Harem pants he really liked with a simple white singlet top. He was watching her brush her hair and caught her eyes on him in the mirror.

Smiled right at her, got up and walked over to her, slid his hand around her waist and used his other to tilt her chin up to look at him "I'm never going to make it downstairs with you in these pants." He told her "We should take them off you."

"Conner, they are just pants and they are not coming off."

"But they are turning me on to no end. I like them better than jeans on you, or shorts even." He told her honestly.

Watched her roll her eyes "Go away."

"Baby, you wound me." He murmured but still smiled. "Do you know what my favourite colour is?"

"No." she answered him simply. She likely didn't know anything about him.

"Green." He commented "I love green and here you are wearing it."

"I've worn these before." She pushed at him to move him away from her to continue to brush her hair.

"I know," he nodded and leaned on the dresser to watch her, "I've seen you wear many things, though these pants and that green cashmere sweater you have are my favourites."

Saw her stare at him, smiled right at her. She wasn't actively trying to run away from him, still felt a little distant, but this was new to her, and accepting him he thought must have been a very difficult decision for her. "I'm going to buy you lots of things to wear, they will likely all be varying shades of green."

Saw her raise an eyebrow and then shake her head and pull her hair up into a ponytail. She was quiet mostly at this moment, and he wondered if that was a bad thing. He knew she was quiet when unhappy.

"Petal, is an amazing sight, El. I thought you were going to be a fox, due to all your father's research on them and his drawings and books on foxes, a silver one at that."

Saw her look right at him now, with a frown "What do you know of my father?"

"I have retrieved many of his things for you to have around you. Apparently, your mother had everything of your father's put into storage for you. I went through it in the hope it would give me some clues as to where you were."

"His things aren't gone?" she asked quietly "I thought mum had just gotten rid of everything." He could hear some emotion in her voice.

"Not gone, in storage for you. You were a cute baby, born with those amazing eyes of yours." He reached out and pulled her towards him gently, slid his arms around her. "Everything of his is there from what I could tell." Felt her lean into him, he hugged her "I brought lots of your photos back to the pack. I have set it all up for you when you want to come back."

"Conner."

"We can discuss it later," He murmured. He knew she wanted to be here, fit in here with her own kind, wasn't locked in or forced to be here. Had chosen to be here. "I know we have stuff to talk about, let's not do it tonight or at least not right this minute." He rested his cheek on the top of her head "We have plenty of time for talking and sorting of things out. Let's just have dinner with your kin and maybe call your mother. She is stressed out and it's not good for her, in her condition."

Saw El pull back from him and stare at him now, realised she likely had no idea "Oh, um...your about to get a brother or sister, so am I for that matter."

"What?" she was staring at him now in complete shock. "No," she shook her head, "she would have told me, surely."

"I only found out the day I left to go away. You left when? How long after that?"

"Um, the day after that, I think."

"I was the first they told, likely waiting to see if it was going to be alright."

"How far along was she?"

“Three weeks, I believe.” Could see her doing the math now. “El, Alpha pups are not like human children, they come within 4 to 6 months, and her being human, it will take a bit of a toll on her, be difficult. The rate they grow and the birth.” He sighed “Could be more than difficult as well.”

“Is she alright?”

“I’m sure father would let me know if she wasn’t, but she will have to suffer growing pains. They are not so nice to deal with, your kind and she-wolves would be equipped to handle it, but your mother is human, is not, so it will hurt a lot. And with you missing, she is currently under more stress than she needs to be.”

He saw her biting her l*p. “I didn’t know.”

He nodded. “She’d like to hear from you. If I call her, will you talk to her? Cordi will also want you to call her.”

“Cordi?”

“Hmm, I have been everywhere looking for you. Went right to Cordi, thought you would go there, was ready to rip Xavier’s head off if he’d touched you.”

Watched her shake her head. “Call your dad I guess, I will likely have to call grandma at some point.”

“Probably a good idea, she doesn’t like me or my dad so much.”

“Well, who’s fault is that?” she muttered.

“Ours.” He nodded “Though I don’t even know where my phone is, likely out there in the forest somewhere, wherever Atlas ripped my close off himself. Would have been in my pocket.”

“Oh, what about Adam or one of your friends?”

“They will all have their phones on them.” he nodded “Come on let’s go down and find them, get some food into us. I’m starving hungry.”

Watched her just nod, and took her hand and walked her downstairs and outside, to find them all sitting around, frowned at Brayden as he sat with a woman in his lap, completely l*p locked with her in front of everyone. Looked at Adam for an explanation.

“Brayden, the Alpha is here.” He stated in his Beta’s voice.

He saw Brayden pull himself from the woman. She was a pretty brunette and was sporting silver filigree down her left neck. Conner's eyes moved to Brayden and so was he. Blinked at that.

"Sorry Alpha," Brayden cleared his throat and stood up, the girl stood next to him. She fit neatly into his arm "This is Emily, my Mate. Emily, this is Alpha Conner Heir to the Wandering Moon Pack. Where we will be living. El you know, is the future Luna to our pack."

He saw the girl bow her head slightly "Alpha. Cousin."

"Emily, nice to meet you, may I enquire as to what you are?"

"A fox shifter. A red fox is my Scarlet."

"Lovely, I'm sure." He nodded "Welcome to the Wandering Moon Pack." Saw her smile, looked right at Brayden and smiled at him. The man had never once worried about getting a Mate and here she was within El's new pack. If she had never run away from him, Brayden may have always been mate-less. "Congratulation's Brayden."

"Thank you, Alpha. My mother is going to go crazy." He laughed softly and sat back down. "Has been waiting on this for years."

They were asked to come and sit by Juliana, who told El she'd called Sloan and told her of the 'goings on', had stated "When El is ready to go home, I will go there and have words with those wolves myself." Conner had looked at Juliana and she'd smiled right at him "Might not be so pleasant. She will want to know when you leave here."

He'd just nodded and said nothing, he had no idea if El even wanted to go back at this point, couldn't make her, didn't want to try and make her either. Wanted her to go of her own accord, let her make that choice. He could well be here for a long while, not that he'd told anyone that yet.

Asked to borrow Adam's phone to call home, checked the time difference. It was 8pm here so 1pm there, when he sank down in the living area with El next to him, also his entire unit, Emily, plus Juliana and her Mate Angelo. He hit Alpha Logan. A little weird, his phone just said father. It didn't take long for his father to pick up.

"Adam, what is wrong?"

Conner shook his head. "Father, there is nothing wrong, I lost my phone is all."

"i***t boy, how could you do that?"

Huffed in annoyance, "I'm good father. How are you doing?" He shook his head.

“Sorry, just stressful here son. Have you found Eliza yet?”

“Yes, she is here with all of us. Including her Aunt Juliana. You are on speaker phone. Please mind your manners.”

There was silence for a good ten seconds. The man wouldn't like him telling him what to do, but he needed him to understand his word usage was important. His father could be extremely overbearing, and he knew that man would be itching to yell at El for running away. He was going to let him try, when they got back and watch Petal present herself to the man, and have him back the hell down and away from her. He was actually going to enjoy watching El and Petal put that man right in his place.

He'd tried more than once over the years and just got a beating from him, mostly, tossed in the cells a few times. Let him try it now. Life would be interesting inside the pack once El made the decision to go back and live there.

“Of course, Conner. Please introduce me to those in the room.”

“Alpha Logan, in the room is Alpha Luna Juliana and her Mate, Alpha Angelo. Eliza herself, my unit, plus Emily, a new member to the Wandering Moon Pack, Brayden's new Mate, a fox shifter.”

“An Alpha Luna?”

“I am, we are a twin reigning pack Logan, I believe you have had dealings with my twin sister, Sloan.” Saw that woman smile, did love announcing that he thought. Smiled himself.

“I have. Interesting woman indeed.”

Heard Juliana laugh now. “You have no idea Logan,” her eyes moved to Conner. “Go ahead Conner, your reason for calling.”

“Father is Brittney with you. El would like to talk to her, make sure she is okay. I have informed her of the news of your and Brittney's joy.”

Heard him sigh now “Actually no, she's in the pack hospital.”

“Logan?” it was El and she sounded scared, he realised, wondered if he'd scared her with the information he had provided for her about her mother. He had just wanted to explain things to her.

“El, it's good to hear your voice. Your mother is tired and under some considerable stress, is in the hospital under the careful watch of doctor Jeanie, and has had false labour twice in the past two days.”

"Is it my fault?"

"No, El, it is not. Has Conner explained anything to you about who we are?"

"Yes, I know you're all wolf shifters."

"Good, that should make things much easier when you come home to us. Your mother is still human, and it is difficult to carry an Alpha pup for her. She asks for you many times a day, though currently is under light sedation."

Saw Brayden get up and knew it was because El was feeling upset. Watched Juliana put her hand out to stop him and then simply reach out to touch her own niece, Brayden frowned at her, "I got this." she murmured. Likely had some sort of calming ability herself.

"El, I understand you and I don't exactly get along, but I think, no I know, your mother would love to see you. Have you here, I think it would help her a little."

"Father stop. El needs to make her own decisions, do not put guilt on her. Call back when you can put her through to her mother." He clicked the line closed and looked at El. "I'm sorry, seems nothing changes with that man."

Heard Juliana chuckle "You and your father don't always see eye to eye, do you?"

Conner handed the phone back to Adam. "No, not all the time." He looked at El, "I am not going to make you go back if you don't want to. I will stay here with you till you want to."

"Conner?" his whole unit gasped at him.

His hand was in El's. He squeezed it reassuringly, looked to them. "You all, I will send back, but I will stay here with El." He knew they all understood what that meant, he may never return.

They were his unit and if he never went back, they were of no use to the pack at all, other than being the best fighters of the pack. There would be no need of them. Not until his father's new heir was old enough to reign and they'd be twenty years older or more, likely to be passed over for their own children. Not a nice thing. But he had to give El what she needed. She'd not gotten any of that from his father.

If she had, it was likely that she would have come to study here in Italy and would have been encouraged to come to visit her mother, and things would have been very different from how they are now. She likely would have stayed for short visits and been able to come and go as she pleased, not feel confined or like a prisoner.

He'd have found out what she was at some point, likely she'd have come for a summer vacation and then he would have known she was his mate just later in life. She would still have been his, but she would have gotten to do all the things she wanted. His father had just screwed things up royally around her. Though he'd not been any better, himself, but would be from now on.

He was trying to show her that he not only cared about her as his Mate, but that he wanted her to have choices and be able to do the things she wanted in life. That he wasn't going to be like his father, that she could have the freedom she so desired.

"I will stay with El and Conner, Emily and I can be here. It is her home." Brayden stated, "If Juliana, you will have me here in your Den?"

"I will." She nodded "Though I will not initiate you, you have an important job back in your pack."

"Thank you." he nodded.

Conner's eyes moved to Adam and Cameron. "You have Mates now back home."

Saw them both nod slowly. "We'll give it a few days still." Adam told him, "Our Mate's I'm certain, will understand a few extra days here."

"Book your flights though, and let your Mates know you'll be home soon, right away Adam." Conner nodded. He didn't want them separated from their Mate's any longer than was necessary. He knew how that felt; not good.

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Chapter 72

El POV

She was listening to Conner talk to his unit. They all had Mate's back home, wondered just how long they had been apart from them? Wondered if they'd had Mate's while she'd been there? Or was it new to them and they were apart from them because of her? And Conner's need to hunt her down and claim her as his Mate?

She knew he was next in line to lead his pack, he was the Heir to the pack and he'd just stated he wasn't going back, was going to stay here with her. They'd not even talked about it; he'd told her they could discuss it later. Didn't need to, it seemed, he'd already made the choice to just stay here, with her.

She had woken up today and wondered who was going to give up their life for the other. It seemed he was going to give up everything he had, his whole life, a life where he had known who and what he was since birth, twenty-two years.

For her who'd barely even had an introduction into her world, only known about this life of hers for all of two months. Known about other worldly creatures and shifters, only had Petal because he was here for her. Stared right at him, wondered how he could just do that? Did he not care for his pack? Looked at his unit and could actually see they didn't look happy about it.

No, she didn't think he didn't care about his pack, she'd heard Atlas go off and fight that other wolf, wondered which one of them it was that she had come across as she'd fled that day, looked from one to the other "Which of you was it that day in the woods I saw?" she asked.

Saw all of them looking right at her. "It was me." Adam told her "His name is Kade."

"Thank you for helping Atlas that day."

"Was my pleasure, El." He nodded.

They were not just his unit, they were his friends, they were always together, smiling and laughing, did everything together, from eating meals to even being at Uni together, in their summer break. "Conner, can I have a word with you in private?" she asked and saw him nod and stand up.

"Use my office, El." Aunt Juliana stated, "No getting naked in there though, that's only for me and Angelo to do in there."

Heard half the room laugh, including Angelo, and when she looked at him, he just smiled and winked at her. Those two she knew had been together near on 400 years and still they got naked in that office of hers. Shook it off, had to remember they had very long lives and were tied to each other via their Mate Bond.

If that stayed like what she and Conner had, for all of those years, she could well imagine they were still having s*x a lot. It had been insanely intense and so much pleasure, not just for her but for Petal as well. No wonder their kind was always looking for their Mate, that one special person that was made for them.

"What's wrong, El?" he asked as he followed her into the room and then closed the door.

"You can't just give up everything in your life to be here."

"I'm not El. I'm willing to give up everything for you. Not to be here, but to be wherever you are."

"Why? I don't understand you. You barely even know me."

Saw him smiling down at her. "I love you. I want, we want. Atlas and I, we want to be with you always, and we know you don't want to go back to Utah. Understand how you felt there, we want you to have your freedom, this place." His hand swept the room. "this is your choice, where you feel at home, with your own kind. Father." He sighed and shook his head, "Is a right pain in the a*s, overbearing and domineering. It's his way or the highway." Watched him sit down and rub a hand over his face, and look right up at her "I am a lot like him, I realise, I don't want to be like that. But he raised me to be like him. I learned something from you, El, watching you in the pack. That if you, a human, had the guts to stand up to him, then so can I."

"That doesn't help me, Conner."

"Do you know El, all my life that man has told me what to do, and when to do it? What to study, and told me to just fall in line or I'd never get the pack. He threatened to give it to you at one point, he was mad that you'd run away, that it was me who made you do that. Screamed at me, and told me he was going to beat me senseless if I didn't bring you back. Do you know what I did, El?"

"Hunt me down and bring me back."

"Yes, fell in line like he expected me to do. Unlike you who dared to defy him," smiled right up at her "wore that bruise he gave you with pride, threatened to call the police on him, let him know you thought he was an abusive husband. Then had the balls to lie right to his face in order to get out, more than once." He laughed a little. "I love that about you. The only time we, Atlas and I, stood up to him was over him scaring you with his wolf Hale on the surface, tried damned hard to take a piece of him. Atlas was furious with him and wanted to put real fear into him on your behalf. I picked the fight with him, but it was Atlas that tried to tear strips off him. We were learning from you, I now realise."

"Conner, this is not helping me understand your decision, it is your pack. Do you not want it?"

"I would love to be the Alpha to the Wandering Moon Pack El, but I am not going to force you to go there, be there. Going back is a choice for you to make, not for me to ask you to do. Certainly not for father to demand of you, or try and guilt you into it either. I want you to be happy. So, I will be here with you if this is where you are happy."

"And your pack?"

"I guess our little brother or sister will get it when they are old enough and have found their Mate."

"What?"

"We have a pack law that states one does not just inherit the pack, the Heir must find their Mate and be Marked and Mated before they can take over, and even then, the current reigning Alpha has to believe they are ready."

"Okay," she didn't really understand that, but she knew Juliana's oldest Sophia was waiting to take over, Juliana didn't think she was ready, and that woman was like 300 years old. So, who knew, she frowned right at him for a long time. "But you wanted me gone, that would mean you wouldn't take over."

"I know that." He nodded, "Was never likely going to be able to. Kind of just resigned myself to it. I'd also heard him state he was trying to get a child with your mother, that that child would be even stronger than I am."

"What? How is a half human or a full human child stronger than you, an alpha-blooded wolf?"

"If that child gets its shift, your mother and my father are Goddess Gifted, like you and I are. My mother and father were not, were chosen Mates apparently. I just found that out myself as well." Heard him sigh. "It will have stronger genes, I guess."

She actually heard Petal snort inside her mind 'Our Kits will be stronger than any in that pack.'

"Well, I think he would be a fool to do that. Petal agrees." Slipped her hand into his "Our Kits will be stronger than any our half sibling would ever produce. Petal wants you to know that."

Saw him smile at her. "Petal is thinking about Kits already."

"Mm," she nodded, "Though I'm not." Heard Petal snort, sounded amused to her.

"I think you're too young for that myself. Wait a few years on that, at least till you've finished your degree, and me too. The one I want, anyway."

"What do you mean the one you want?" She was confused by that, he was at Uni already.

"Father enrolled me and my unit, picked our double degrees and we had no say. None of us are actually studying what we want. It's not just you he runs over. It's everyone."

She shook her head, "Perhaps he needs a lesson in being respectful to others. I'll do it for you if you like," nearly laughed at the thought of him seeing Petal.

"I bet you would. I'd stand and watch you, El." He smiled right back at her.

"Conner, I actually came in here to ask you if Adam and Cameron were mated when I was there?"

"No, they found their Mate's in a gypsy pack that we went to defend. I had to go off to war, El, they went with me along with a hundred others from the pack. Why I wasn't there to stop you from leaving."

"And how long have you been here in Italy? How long have they been separated from their new Mates?" she frowned at him.

"A month now. They will go back El."

"You kept them from their Mate's for a month to search for me?" she was frowning again, that wasn't a very nice thing to do.

"No, they insisted on coming, once they knew what you were, Brayden was always coming, and I did offer for them to go home at any given time they wanted, to let them see and be with their Mates. I would not separate them from their mates on purpose."

Stared right at him for a long moment, she did like that he gave them the option to go home when they wanted. That was a nice thing, gave people choices unlike his father did. "Be honest with me Conner, is my mum going to die in childbirth?"

"There is that possibility, yes, but El."

"No, Conner. She is my mother. I have lost my father already. I didn't get to say goodbye to him." hated that knowledge in fact, coming home from school to find her mother and her grandma waiting for her to tell her the bad news, looked at him. "I can't risk that with my mother. I would never forgive myself."

"You're guiltig yourself into going back El."

"No, I'm going back because my being here is causing her more stress and that is putting her at risk even more. Perhaps if I go back and am there, she will be less stressed and the risk will lessen as well."

"After everything you and your grandmother did to get you out, you're just going to go back?"

"Do you not want me to?" she asked with a frown.

"Of course I do, El. I want us to be there together, to one day take over and lead the pack. I already got us our first alliance. Not that father knows, they want it with me, not with father. A little weird and they got witches in their pack. Giggled right at me, found something very funny about me. I have yet to learn what." Watched him shake his head. "They were the ones that said I would make a good allied pack Alpha. I also want to rid some of father's enemy packs, make them allied to us and no longer enemies. Met their heirs at Alpha college, got along with them, not even they want us to be enemies. I know I could make the Pack better with fewer threats to it. So, yes. I want us to go back and be there for not only us, but for the Pack as well. The things you and I could bring to it, as a powerhouse of a couple."

"Then why are you telling me not to go? That you are not going back either."

"Because I want you to go for the right reasons is all. If you want to stay and study here, then that is what I want for you. To have that choice."

"Thank you for thinking of me like that. I never thought you would be honest." She told him in all honesty. But then she didn't really know him at all. He said he was just like his father, and she had thought that herself, but he was more open to letting those around him choose what they wanted for themselves. Including her.

"I was stupid and fought like hell to push you away from me." He sighed and she saw him shake his head.

"May I ask why?"

"You won't like it." he sighed, took a moment and then looked right at her "Do you recall that guy in Logan that hit on you, and I intervened?"

"The one you called a man whore." She nodded.

"Yes," he nodded "His sister tried to claim I sexually assaulted her. I didn't. She is human El. I got hauled in and questioned and, not so nicely, she had my name dragged through the mud and, though I did prove my innocence and quickly so. She was in the packs nightclub in Logan, and I had turned her down multiple times. She was pissed off that I wouldn't touch her. So claimed I had assaulted her. The club is full of cameras and they proved I was innocent. But I no longer cared for humans at all after that. Kind of hated them to be honest. You, El, were human and I couldn't keep the hell away from you. I had two rules I lived by, and I broke both of them in just one night with you."

She sighed, could see why he didn't like humans. "the two rules?"

"One, I don't have s*x with humans. Two, I don't do virgins." Looked right at her "Lasted all of what ten minutes before those rules were out the window with you." He smiled right at her. "Couldn't bloody stop myself it wasn't even a full moon or had scented you out. Atlas was insane after that one night. He was obsessed instantly. He humped your

bedroom door once.” He chuckled “I had no control over him where you were concerned. Mate the hell out of you without even knowing you were his actual Mate. Was just of the opinion that if you weren’t he was claiming you regardless.”

“Don’t know how that would have gone over with Petal.”

“You likely wouldn’t have gotten Petal if we weren’t your Mate. It was Atlas’s connection to her that likely roused her and brought her out. Not that either of us cared by then. You were human, and you were our human. That was all that mattered to either of us.”

“You were going to claim me, even though I was human?”

“Yes, I had every intention of doing so that full moon, asking you out as was the custom with humans.”

“I likely would have said No.”

“Hmm, I’d have swayed you and been damned persistent about it, everyone in that pack would have known what you were as well the moment I asked you out. And I was going to do it in front of everyone. Wanted you to know I meant it. That I didn’t want a secret relationship with you.”

“Is that what you thought it was? It’s not what I thought it was.”

“What was your opinion on it?” he asked right back.

“It was just s*x, weird and twisted is what it was to me, neither of us liked each other and yet when we were together it was crazy and insatiable. I didn’t understand it at all. Didn’t help you always just got up and left me there. Or that I’d never been with anyone before and you,” sighed, didn’t even want to think about that anymore.

“I’m sorry El. I truly am. As for my getting up and leaving, that first time, I had to go to training and needed to make sure no one smelled you on me, rushed off to shower before training, Sorry. The second time I was trying not to knot you, I will never do that again. Thought I was going to die, it hurt so bad.”

“Hurt me too. I didn’t even understand what happened, just knew it was wrong that you were suddenly gone. Why did you just leave?”

“I can’t knot a human could well harm you internally. Couldn’t do that, not unless you were marked by us, best to keep that until Marked and Mated.”

“Oh, I didn’t know that.”

“There’s likely still plenty you have to learn. You didn’t even know what knotting was, even when knotted to me, I don’t think you knew what it was.”

She shook her head. He was not wrong about that, bit her l*p, had actually liked it, “Did Atlas knot Petal in human form?”

Saw Conner smile “Yes he did and in wolf form.”

“Oh, that accounts for the pure pleasure she was feeling when just lying there kissing him.”

“You’re not so different on that you kissed me till my knot released.”

“I did.” She smiled “It’s an odd feeling but...I liked it.”

“Good, likely to happen a lot when you go into heat.”

“When I what?”

Heard him chuckle now, “We can discuss that a little later, we will both enjoy it.” his hand moved to her face, and he looked right at her “Tell me El, do you want to go back to Utah or stay here?”

“I want to be there for mother, so...we should go back.”

“After that, the baby is born. I will bring you back here to study if that is what you want. Regardless of what father wants.”

“Thank you.”

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Chapter 73

Conner POV

It was good talking to El. He’d never really done that before, getting to know each other was going to be something they both needed to do. He thought this was a nice start to that. It seemed she had concerns about him not going back to be the Heir to his own pack.

He'd not actually thought she would have that at all, was always so determined to get away, that he honestly thought she was just going to be glad, he would give it all up for her. Seems not. It was likely they both thought the other only cared about themselves, likely they both thought the other was a bit on the selfish side.

Now he could see that she not only had she accepted him, she also understood that he had a place in his pack, that was important. She didn't want him to give that up for her. That surprised him a lot, that she couldn't understand it at all.

She had grown up human and was likely to still have those tendencies where relationships were concerned, and didn't really understand that wolves mate for life. That it took all of an instant for them to make that decision and, once done, didn't want to ever be separated from each other. She still had the human mindset where relationships were concerned, where it could likely take years to get to that point. Date for a few years, get engaged for a few years, then get married.

Didn't really work that way for them, find your Mate, have them accept you Mark and Mate, never leave them. He'd once thought it was just really good s*x on both parts, and they had that even before their bond was fully realised, it was a thousand times better than that now.

This one human, not so human girl, had turned him completely upside down and he had loved her before he had even officially gotten to claim her. Damn near killed Atlas to feel her sever from them, and his own pain at the loss of her had seen him wallow in her bed for days. He was never leaving her.

She hadn't been in their world for very long but had basic knowledge from her cousins and her aunt, though he could tell they hadn't told her everything, all the little things that make up their world. She knew what a Mate was, what a Mate Bond was, but had no idea about knotting, that was interesting.

He did like that she told him she'd liked being knotted by him, so had Petal, they both actually had the same reaction to it, just lay there and kissed their mates till it was released. That, for him, had been the nicest part of knotting her, he'd felt genuinely connected to her in that moment.

He had no idea how telling her about Vivian would go down, but she wanted to know why he hated humans. Vivian was the reason he did. That woman had nearly ruined him and for what? not getting her own way. Made sure to explain that properly to her, so she understood that he had not done anything wrong.

Conner liked that she was concerned about Adam and Cameron being apart from their Mate's, likely understood that pain in her chest was in them right this minute, though her pain and his would have been worse because they were not together properly, half together and nearly broken apart completely. If he'd not found her and the months had dragged on, it could well have eventually just been severed.

Adam and Cameron were always on the phone to their Mates, so they were still connected to each other, they had that ache but a phone call and talking to their Mates seemed to solve that or at least ease it off to near nothing. Which was a good thing. He had tried to make them go home twice over the past month here in Italy.

Adam had stared at him then just stated point blankly "Like you could find her on your own."

Cameron had snorted with amusement, "I'd like to see him corner her, if she's a fox, ain't gonna be able to do that on his own."

Brayden had been of the opinion he was the only one that was going to be able to help Conner, "she's gonna run from you all, I'm going to lay my Gamma hands on her, and she'll be putty, lead me right to where I need to be."

No one had really understood that comment. Conner thought about that now as they walked back into the living area, and looked at his Gamma, the man had a Mate on his lap, 'lead me right to where I need to be.' saw Brayden smiled right at him, that bastard knew this was going to happen, or perhaps not him and El, but definitely El leading him to his Mate.

"Your bloody father, right?"

"Yep, got foresight, told me a human girl would lead me to my Mate who was overseas in an unknown pack."

"So, you knew she was going to run away."

"No. I just figured, with your ways and not wanting humans in the pack, at some point you'd put El on a plane to get her out of the pack. I had every intention of offering my services to bring her here." He shrugged "It was all just a matter of time."

"Could have bloody told me." Conner muttered.

"Why? You needed a lesson or two in manners and respect and not telling me what El was. Well, that was your own stupid fault now, wasn't it?"

Conner sighed, couldn't even argue with the man, he was right on all accounts. He sat next to El and realised everyone was looking at him. "El, would you like to tell them what you want to do?" he looked at her. This was her decision, she should be the one to tell them.

"I want to go home and check on mother. Is human, and having an Alpha pup."

"El honey, she will be fine, already handled having an Alpha Kit, you my dear." It was Juliana.

"I came early and was small."

"You came on time and all Kits are small when born, even Alpha Kits." Juliana told her, "Thankfully, considering how many we have at a time."

"Don't remind me of that." He watched her shake her head. "I'm not ready for that."

Conner wondered if Juliana was trying to talk her into staying there. He didn't know her at all, only that she had known what he was, watched and waited to see what would happen when Atlas Mark her niece. Likely knew that EI would make her own decision even after being Marked and Mated. Anyone could reject their mate even after Marking and Mating. He knew that firsthand from his parents.

"We'll be waiting on that until after degrees have been completed and we're older." Conner assured her "I'm not about to rush that."

"Won't be up to you son. Petal will make that decision for all of you."

"What?" both he and EI stated at the same time.

"Kitsune's are not like wolves, not even like foxes. It will be Petal who decides when and how often she wants Kits. You'll get no say in it."

"I am on the pill." EI told her. That got his attention. He'd not thought she would be, was a little glad of it to be honest, but he'd been her first. So why would she be? shook it off, it didn't matter, she was being careful, a good thing because he'd not been. Not once even considered it. Though he'd not been going to her room with the intent of having s*x either, so hadn't taken any protection with him.

Only that one time before he'd gone off to help the New Moon Pack had he gone to her room to be with her, and not knowing the outcome of a battle like that, he'd not even thought about it, just wanted to be with her, as close as he could be.

Heard Juliana laugh "Oh and you think that will help you, do you? Might have before you had Petal, wont now."

More information about Kitsune's that he had no idea about, was going to have to learn about them, "Perhaps Juliana you could help with some information on Kitsune's, we wolves know very little about your kind."

"That's how we like it. Sloan will come to your pack, likely often, and she is going to want to meet Petal in person. I haven't told her what she looks like. I stubbornly refused." She chuckled "If my twin won't come home, I won't give her information." Shook her head.

"I need to call her." El sighed "After all the trouble she went to, getting me here. Now I'm going back."

"Ha, you think you were trouble. No, you weren't. Sloan was bored the whole time. Logan is really self-absorbed. Didn't pick up on the recording noise, some do, some don't. I think she was hoping for some sort of fight or threats. Conner here, however knew it wasn't you right away."

Watched El look right at him, he shrugged "Atlas left me when you were severed from us, didn't come back at the sound of your voice, and he would have, I'm certain of it. That beast of mine knows things about you or what you're doing. It's just weird."

"What I'm doing?"

"Mm, we can talk about that later." Shook his head, was not going to embarrass her like that, that was a private thing between them.

"Sloan didn't know what you were to El. At the time, Conner. Likely wouldn't have taken El if she had. El here told no one about you. Kept that to herself."

"Cordi knew. I told her everything." El commented.

That explained a lot, why Cordi stepped in and made introductions to stop that fight that was brewing in her back yard when he went to retrieve her. Likely hadn't known what he was till that very moment though, and then bam realised why he was the way he was. "I like Cordi." He commented. "Wants an alliance with the pack so you and she can still hang out."

"Oh, can I do that?"

"Of course you can. If there is an Alliance she'll be able to visit the pack and we can go there."

"I can go there?"

"We, can go there."

Heard both Adam and Brayden laugh and glared at them "Enough you two."

"You sound like your father when you say that." She muttered "Enough, Eliza."

"Enough Conner." His whole unit burst out.

Made him shake his head. "Yeah, I get that a lot myself. I'll try and curb that, but 22 years of hearing it, might just come out of me at times."

"It's getting late, you all can make your plans to go back tomorrow, book flights and be home within a few days." Juliana interrupted them all.

"Should I be worried about El going into heat in that time?" Conner asked Juliana. She'd said Kitsune's weren't like wolves, so he'd better check that, didn't want her doing that mid-flight or when travelling.

"No, I should think not, she is only young may not want Kits for a century or so."

"What?" it was all of them.

"Like I said, Kitsune are not the same as Wolves, you two could reign a pack for years, hundreds of years, before producing an Heir. That will be up to Petal. Don't ask her, don't push her. She'll likely just give you nothing for decades. Finicky creatures, mischievous and can be a handful. Though curiosity is their most common thing. Leads to wandering about a lot."

His eyes moved right to El, he didn't want that, her wandering about for years. "Petal won't go anywhere without her Mate. Usually, we do settle down once we find our Mate. Don't usually do that so easily. Sloan is five hundred and still unmated. Most kitsune take a few hundred years to find their Mates, you son, where bloody lucky is all."

"I am lucky." He smiled at El, turned to his unit. "We'll sort out going back first thing, all of us." Saw actual relief on their faces. He was headed up to bed when Adam mind-linked him 'Your dad's calling.'

Saw his Beta coming and took the phone. "Thanks Adam."

"Just keep it for the night."

He nodded and answered the phone, "Father, is Brittney with you?"

"Yes, is El there?"

"Of course she is, I'll put her on." He stated as he pushed their bedroom door open, handed her the phone, walked into the room, and closed the door behind them. Saw her look relieved when she heard her mother's voice. He sank down on the bed and let her talk to her mother.

From what he could tell, Brittney was tired and, even with drugs on board, still had pains. There was no video call between them, and he wondered just how tired and drained she looked. Likely a lot, and she didn't want her daughter to see it, or his father had not thought it was wise.

Heard her tell her that she was at her aunt's estate, and that she had been there the whole time, perfectly safe. Even apologised to her for leaving the way she did, but then

followed it up with “If you’d just told me the truth I likely wouldn’t have run off. If you hadn’t kept me locked in, I might have felt more comfortable.

They were shots at his father, and he knew it. He relaxed down on the bed and watched her prowling about the room, annoyed with his father and likely her own mother, but trying to contain it as she spoke with them. His father asked her what she was and she looked at Conner. He hadn’t told the man they all thought she was a fox. Mind linked right to her ‘Don’t tell him, let him find out the next time he’s an a*s to you.’ smiled right at her when she just nodded.

Heard his father state all Alpha Wolf “As part of this Pack Eliza, you will tell me.”

Got the response of “I’m not part of your Pack, Logan. Never was.” Shot right back at him.

Conner nearly laughed, but managed to hold his amusement in. She would never be afraid of him or his father, and the day his father found out what she was, he was going to back the hell off of her. He was actually a little excited for that to happen.

There was silence on the line for a long moment and then it was Brittney who just sighed “Honey, are you going to let Conner bring you home?”

“Yes, but only to check on you. Then I am coming right back here to finish my studies.” She told them and he wondered if she meant that or not. He didn’t actually think that she did. He’d told her he would bring her back here if she wanted that. Wondered if he should buy an apartment or villa here? So if that was the case, they had somewhere to live.

He probably should do that anyway, it was likely she would want to come back here. They could holiday here once a year or so, smiled at that thought, that would definitely make her happy. Shame he didn’t have his phone. He could be looking at real estate right now.

Mind-linked to Cameron, ‘Cameron could you look up some real estate near here or near Bergamo, a villa for holidays or living here for El and I, while El studies.’

‘So, she’s not going to stay in the pack then?’ came right back to him.

‘I don’t know, I’m planning for all options. Would do it myself but my phone is out in the woods somewhere.’

‘Alright, better make it big enough for all of us then.’

‘Cameron, you and the boys can stay in the pack, you don’t have to.’

‘Shut it Conner, we’re your unit. She is our future Luna, her Gamma is going to go wherever she is, has a fox for a Mate, will be happy here. Adam has a young Gypsy wolf for a Mate who would be itching to travel along with her little sisters, so he’s definitely in. I am not staying in that pack by myself. I’ll find a Manor or Estate.’ He stated, ‘just deal with it.’ and cut the link.

He smiled to himself, if she wanted to come back here, she was going to find herself surrounded by all of them. Cameron was likely right as well, Brayden would want to be near his job, and his Mate was from here so that was not going to be an issue. Adam’s little Mate and her two young sisters would all have that Gypsy need to roam about, so he didn’t think that was going to be a problem. Cameron just stated he wasn’t going to be the only one left behind. So, he and his whole unit would be moving here for a few years if that is what EI wanted.

Smiled to himself, they would all have the opportunity to learn the language and get the degrees they wanted to have, without his fathers’ demand on them all. Could well be good for all of them. To get out on their own. How his father would take that was another matter.

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Chapter 74

EI POV

It had been a long flight back to Utah and though she slept well on the flights, Petal was more than annoyed by the confined space of the plane, even travelling first class didn’t suit her. She didn’t like being inside such a confined space. Also, she didn’t like not being allowed free reign to be with her Mate. Even though Conner was right next to them, and she could talk to Atlas anytime she wanted to. Apparently, it wasn’t to her liking at all.

She’d seen Conner hold his head more than once over the three days it had taken them to wait for their flights home. He was clearly not coping so well with Petal’s constant chatter inside his own mind. She was open to Atlas all the time, constantly talking to him. Atlas didn’t seem to mind it at all, though she could tell it was giving Conner a headache.

She was used to it, thankfully. The only thing that stopped Petal from talking was if she was asleep or mating her Mate. The pair of them were still aggressive in that manner, left some definite aches to her body.

She knew when Conner had really had enough of Petals' chatter, usually just grabbed hold of El and pinned her to the nearest wall or bed and let Atlas out to call Petal out for mating. He was currently holding his head, his whole unit thought it was funny, he'd g*****d more than once on the plane. "El please just tell her to be quiet for two minutes."

"Nope, it's who she is. You have to get used to it." She had smiled right at him and watched him look annoyed for more than a minute and then just order a drink from the stewardess, Petal was more chatty on the plane than normal. Annoyed chatty at that.

He'd barely gotten a wink's sleep at all on the flight home. She just accepted Petals' constant chatter, it was like background noise to her. Guessed it was like that for Petal when they were all talking or while she'd been at Uni. Petal would have had to put up with all their incessant human chatter.

They landed in Salt Lake City after two layovers and there had been cars waiting for them, organised by his father, she supposed.

She saw him climb right in the back and was out like a light. Petal had fallen asleep just as they'd landed and he was exhausted. She knew it was only a few hours to the pack, part of her was concerned to be going back there. Not once had she heard Conner tell his father that they were marked and mated. So that man was not likely expecting it.

It didn't particularly bother her that he'd not done it, she got the very distinct impression he'd not done it on purpose, to annoy his father. Always told her to give it to him when he was being an a*s. She'd barely had a minute to herself since being Marked and Mated by him. Certainly, didn't get to sleep by herself, and didn't get sleep till he'd had his way with her. Not that she was complaining at all. Could now see why Cordi and Collin were always going at it, or always together, even with him not trying to seduce her. His touch felt amazing on her skin, even sitting here in the car, his hand was in hers while he slept, that skin contact had this little constant zing to it, felt nice. He had barely let her go, was always holding her hand and she wondered if he thought she was going to run off, and keeping hold of her was his way of making sure she didn't.

She also wondered if it was normal to stare at one's Mate? She found herself just watching him sleep a lot. It was the safest time to do so. If he found her eyes on him, he got that knowing smile and asked her if she wanted to go to the bedroom. She'd said yes, a few times and he'd smirked right at her, always smiled at her, when he looked at her.

Not once had he so much as walked away from her, left her to wake up alone, and he didn't seem to care who saw them together. Like he had back in his home pack, he'd

never wanted anyone to know they were sleeping together. Now he didn't seem to care who knew at all.

They'd not even argued once in the past few days, not even with his annoyance at Petal. He seemed to just want her to have whatever she wanted, always asked her if she wanted to do this or that, what she thought or was thinking about. He had no intentions of telling her what to do. It seemed he was very different to his father.

Was likely going to make a good Alpha to his pack, had been treated his whole life by his father, much the same way Logan had treated her, in the short time she had been there. From what she could tell, his whole unit had had their lives mapped out by their Alpha, right down to what they studied. Seems the only freedom they got was when they were away from the pack itself.

His father apparently was very demanding of all inside the pack, expected everyone to do as they were told. She'd asked him a few questions about others in the pack, like if his father chose what everyone studied. The answer she'd not liked.

All ranked members, children, were given specific studies to attend. The lesser ranked he didn't impose anything on at all. But he expected his ranked and their children to have studies that benefited the pack and so allocated them to areas that were, in his opinion, better for the pack. It appeared this was why he'd tried to do that to her.

She was the Luna's daughter and expected to fall in line like all the rest of his pack, even though he'd not initiated her or even told her what they were. Treated her like a ranked member's child.

Logan was hard on his pack at all times. Expected the best of them all the time and wouldn't stand for anything less. Wondered how those new Gypsy Wolves were doing, they had all picked Conner to be their Alpha, had chosen a pack from what they sensed of Conner, were likely in for a shock with Logan and his strict rules.

From what she'd heard from Adam and his unit, they were all happy to have her as his Mate, it seemed. Adam liked the way she stood up to Logan right from the moment she got there. Showed him and the others that she had some real courage and strength. They liked that. She wasn't so sure about that. Mostly she had just been trying to get the hell out. They'd told her that she was determined and stubborn and willing to challenge what she didn't like. All good qualities in a Luna, and all of them knew if Conner ever did anything stupid again she'd be quick to pull him into line. They couldn't wait to get her into training and teach her how to fight.

Not particularly something she wanted to do, but apparently, she would need it. Wolves were not like foxes or kitsune, they warred with each other over various things, and rogue wolves often attack packs to try and steal young women or freshly turned she-wolves for whatever selfish reasons they had. Nothing nice from what she'd heard. Had been horrified and told them she didn't want to hear anymore at one point.

Those two talked about their Mate's a lot. Both Adam and Cameron were itching to get back. Their car had actually left the airport before hers and Conners. They'd gone off together in a car of their own, she'd heard Brayden chuckle about them getting speeding tickets for racing off home. She'd never met Gypsy wolves, hell had never really met wolves before, or at least officially.

Felt her phone vibrate, had switched it to silent so Conner could sleep all the way home, it was Cordi 'Hey girl, how's Conner treating you?'

This was her first text every time, since she'd found out that she and Conner were marked and mated.

'Good, he's sleeping finally.'

'LOL, has Petal stopped talking finally.'

'She's sleeping too.' She smiled at her phone 'it's going to take him some time to get used to it.'

'He will. likely Atlas is not as chatty, Alpha wolves can be quiet and broody. Take more than a few days. Has he told his dad yet?'

'No, but I'm not worried about it, I think he's holding it back on purpose. I've not told him what I am either. Conner told me not to.'

'Going to shock that man into silence.'

'Likely so from what I hear. Has an alliance been agreed upon yet?' she knew there was one in the works, though it had yet to be sorted out. Something about all parties needed to be present, and with her and Conner not there, it was hindering the alliance. Even though both she and Conner had stated they were happy with it, Alpha Cole had stated he wanted to see EI for himself.

Conner had told her that it was just normal not to worry about it. She'd met him a few times over the years, it seems her and her dad had gone camping in his pack many times, and she'd been out there with Cordi, Collin and Xavier a few times as well. Their pack, from what she could tell, was nothing at all like Logan's. Cole's pack was much more open and friendly, there was never a problem with humans in their pack grounds, they all went to school in the human world and had human friends.

'No, but I believe were all coming out in a few days, after you've settled into the pack. So, we'll see you soon.'

'Okay, I missed you lots'. I did.

'Then girl no more running off hey.'

‘Unlikely to happen, Petal does not like flying at all.’

‘Lol I gotta go, catch up in a few days.’

‘Okay.’

She sighed as they came up to the gates of Logan’s pack, and had been desperate to get away from here from the minute she’d been brought here. Had gotten out and was now back, didn’t really know how to feel about it, to be honest. Only knew that Logan was not going to be dictating her life to her. She had not stood for it before, and she wasn’t about to now either.

Though what she was going to do with herself for the time being, summer was over now, she had no idea. She looked up as she heard her cousin gasp ‘Oh my, this place is so different,’ She was upfront with Brayden, he was driving the pack car. Took her for a cruise around the pack, at his leisure. El did want to go and see her mother but she knew that Emily had never been to another pack before, certainly not one like this.

Saw her gasp “Whole moley.” When she saw the pack house come into view. “We’re going to live in there?”

“Yes, on the top floor, in the West Wing.”

That grabbed her attention. She was the only one down that end, as far as she knew, shrugged it off. “Brayden, could you drop me at the hospital, not the pack house, please.”

“Of course, El. You might want to wake Conner.”

She looked at him, smiled and shook her head. “He’s tired, Petal’s killing him,” she giggled softly. “Just let him sleep.”

“Hmm, I wouldn’t, he won’t like that you got here, and he didn’t get to present you himself. He might seem all laid back right this minute, El, but here he will likely be a bit like his old self.”

“If he treats me like that, I’ll let Petal bite him good and proper.” She muttered. If he decided that they weren’t going to be seen together, well she would make sure they weren’t together at all.

“That’s not what I meant. He’s going to want the whole pack to know who you are to him, that is his job, to do that.”

“Fine, but he better not be cranky for lack of sleep. Or he’s yours.”

The car pulled up out the front of the pack's hospital, now she understood why it didn't cost anything for them to get medical attention, most of the time they didn't need it, only the young and pregnant usually went to the hospital.

"Conner." She shook him slightly.

"Already." He sighed as his eyes flicked open 'Please tell me Petal is still sleeping.'

"Yes," she nodded "Come on take me to my mother." She unclipped her seatbelt and got out of the car.

He slid out right behind her and slipped his hand into hers, and nodded to Brayden. "Why don't you take Emily up to see your suite, we'll walk back. I'd like to stretch my legs a bit."

She saw Brayden nod and then he was off with Emily headed for the packhouse. As they walked inside the hospital, she saw many pack members greet him and look a bit shocked as they saw him holding her hand.

"It's weird." She murmured. "They're all staring at you holding my hand."

"That is not what they're all staring at." He smiled at her.

"Then what is it?"

"I'm marked and so are you. They can see my mark on you, and yours on me. Also, can smell that you belong to me and vice versa."

"Oh, I'd not thought about that." She hadn't really and with Petal sound asleep her sense of smell was diminished. "Do you know where you are going?"

"Yes El, your mother will be in the Luna Suite, which is also where you will be if something happens and you're injured or need medical treatment. It's now your suite as well, seeing as you're the future Luna to the pack."

Shook that off, still found that a bit weird, watched him push open a door that actually stated 'Luna's Medical Suite' on it, and walked in without hesitation. Both his father and her mother were there. Her mother was sleeping, from what she could tell.

Saw his father look right at her, and then at Conner, looked right at the marks on their necks, frowned at Conner's. It was not silver like it was supposed to be, but orange and black like Petal's was. She really did like it, had accidentally woken him up a few times touching it, learned very quickly it was super sensitive to her touch and brought that man right to full arousal.

Hers was much the same though it was silver and orange. A little odd, Conner had told her usually they would be the same. She didn't know, but had then taken quite an interest in others of her kind and found most kitsune's marks varied, were a blend of their colours. Her Aunt Juliana's was black and silver and her uncle Angelo was black and brown.

"Son, it's good to have you home." He stated and then looked at El, "You, young lady, have some explaining to do. But I am glad you are home. I see my son has claimed you."

"Mm," she nodded, she didn't think she had any explaining to do, he knew she wanted out, had kept her under lock down because he thought she would run away. What was there to explain? She'd done exactly what he thought she would.

She walked over to the bed and looked at her mother. She looked very tired, quite pale as well, reached out and touched her "Mum?"

"Sleeping El, I know you want to talk to her but it's best she gets proper rest,"

"I don't like it, she looks sickly."

"Is unfortunately, under a lot of stress, your disappearing act didn't help her either."

"That was your fault Logan," she told him "If you'd not tried to control everything about my life, I may have just liked it here."

"Well, you're part of this pack now, so get used to it."

Turned her eyes right on him and stared right at him "I'm not afraid of you Logan, I'm also not a part of this pack."

"You are Mated to my son Eliza, so yes you are."

"Hm, well, I'm only staying till mother has the baby, then I'm gone again, if you're going to treat me so terribly."

"Excuse me, I have never treated you terribly."

"I call bullshit." She shot right at him, saw his jaw tick and felt Petal wake up and look right at him, snort inside her mind. But she stretched out and shook herself and smiled as she saw in her mind's eyes all her tails fan out, curl up and then drop down behind her to sit down.

"I won't take that attitude of yours, regardless, you are mated to my son. Even he has to show respect."

“Respect will be given when it is given, Logan.”

Saw him step towards her. “You will be staying here, El. If that is what your mother wants.”

“I’ll be doing what I please from now on or Petal will have a piece of you. Or my grandma, she’s headed this way. I do believe to have words with you about my treatment while I was here.”

“I treated you like any other in this pack. So, I treated you fairly.”

“I think grandma will be the judge of that.” Smiled right at him. “Is a truth seer, good luck getting anything past her.”

“Don’t fight, please.” It was her mother.

She turned and looked down at her, “Hi, how are you doing?” took her hand in hers and squeezed it gently.

“I’m tired, El, to be honest, and I don’t want you to fight with Logan.”

“Then he needs to be nice to me.” She sighed.

“You both need to be nice to each other please.” She sounded so very tired, felt Conner touch her and looked at him.

“We’ll give you a few minutes, alone.” He said softly and kissed her temple before leaving the room and taking his father with him.

“You and Conner, huh?”

“Yes, it appears so.” She nodded “We can talk about that later. Are you really just tired or are you dying?”

“I’m tired El, the pain was so bad today they sedated me pretty heavily, it’s still affecting me is all.” Squeezed her hand “I’m really glad you’re home. Please tell me you’re going to stay. I didn’t like you being away from me.”

“Till the baby is born, then we will see.” She answered honestly “When are you due?”

“I’ll be due in a month or so, they think, from the rate of growth of the pup.”

“Why would you do this to yourself?”

“I love him, El, I want a baby with him. Just like you will with Conner.” Saw her look right at her. “What will you have, El?”

“A Kit in all likelihood.”

Saw her mother smiling. “I wonder if that is why your middle name is Kit, I never liked it, but your father and grandma insisted on it.”

“Likely a tie to my family lineage.” El nodded.

“Is your fox beautiful?”

“Yes, her name is Petal. And she kind of does look like a flower with a bunch of petals around her. You’ll love her. Dad would have been so proud of her.”

“Honey, he was always proud of you. Made me jealous some days the way he loved you. I swear he loved you more than me at times.”

“I don’t think so, just differently is all.”

Watched her mother’s eyes start to close “I didn’t throw away his things El.” She said and then was back asleep once more.

“I know, Conner told me.” El murmured and leaned down to k**s her forehead “Thank you.” felt Petal look right at her, she was their human mother, and she looked so tired and drained. It was a worry.

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Chapter 75

Conner POV

Conner stepped into the hallway, pushed his father out the door before him. He was annoyed with the man’s attitude already, couldn’t just smile and say hello. Be happy that they were all home for a single moment and leave everything else off the table.

He himself now understood what freedom felt like, his father had controlled every moment of his life, all his life and being off on the other side of the world, even though he’d been desperately searching for El, he’d not had to answer to that man once. All decisions had been his to make, there was no constant pressure.

He also knew that his semester here had been deferred, as had his entire units. They now all had six months off, and to be honest, they had all just sagged with relief, knowing they were finally getting a break from the constant study that was forced upon them all. The four of them were just going to enjoy being part of the pack. Spending time with their Mate's.

It did make him happy to know they were all now Mated. His entire unit had found their Mate's at the same time he had, or roughly so, that was a good thing, he thought, would make them all stronger and the pack stronger when it came time for he and El to take over. If he could get her to agree to stay here in the pack, she'd just told his father she would stay until her sibling was born and then see.

Perhaps it was a good idea for he and his unit, all their Mates, to get out of the pack for a few years, experience true freedom of choice, then come back after they had all studied abroad, what they wanted to study. It might make them better leaders for the pack. He knew El really did want to study over there in Italy.

"Please don't fight with Eliza, it took me a long time to find her, and her aunt could have killed me for the way Atlas marked her. She fought it."

"You marked her without consent?" his father frowned right at him, disapproval written all over him.

"Atlas had to, she couldn't shift, was stuck it seemed, her body wanted to shift and she was in agony because she couldn't. She actually needed us to mark her to let her beast be fully realised. She and I still weren't getting along at the time. Are now but you," he stared right at his father pointedly, "Need to let up on her, she hated it here because of the rules you had laid out, the way you trapped her here and locked her in." he sighed, had called it a prison on more than one occasion, also now knew what it was like to be inside another pack, Juliana's pack was so relaxed and open, even he'd been happy there. Hadn't once felt threatened or even uncomfortable inside that pack. "only agreed to come back because of her mother's current condition, otherwise she wouldn't be here at all."

"Well, she's here now, Conner, and here she will stay."

"Good luck getting her to stay." Conner muttered "You're not going to be able to control her father, she was more than willing to stand up to you as a human. Imagine how it will be now that she is not human. Is a shifter and with alpha b***d at that."

"I am still the Alpha, she will learn Conner. Perhaps you need to explain the chain of command to her."

"Oh, she understands just where she fits in, that is a given. Her Aunt Juliana, made sure she understood that."

“Then she’ll fall in line like all shifters do. Or I’ll.”

“You lay a hand on her, and I’ll lay hands on you.” Conner snarled right at him, Atlas right there on the surface as well. They knew he was going to say ‘punish her’. It’s what he did. Even Conner had seen his fair share of punishment growing up, when he’d fought back against the constraints of his father’s rule.

He saw his father look right at him but say nothing, no Mate liked another threatening to hurt their Mate. Certainly not an Alpha Wolf, even if it was their own father who was the current Alpha, he nor Atlas would be standing for it.

“Calm down Conner, just keep her in line is all I’m saying.”

“I want El to be who she is. Petal is very free spirited, likely due to her lineage, I doubt controlling her is going to happen, even for you. So just let up or she will be gone once that pup of yours is born, and father. I will be going with her if she leaves, likely take my whole unit as well.”

Stood and waited for the explosion he knew was coming, could see the anger in his father for the defiance he was now displaying towards his own Alpha. Could actually feel that anger coming off of him in waves.

Having Brittney in the pack’s hospital and away from him, his constant worry about her condition, which he should be, she looked bloody terrible in there. Even to Conner, it looked like death was knocking at her door. His old temper was shining through. If Brittney didn’t make it, his father was going to be back to that mean domineering Alpha, instead of just a strict domineering Alpha. Perhaps that man needed to go and spend some time in Juliana’s pack himself, see just how it should be. With happy, comfortable pack members. Not having the entire pack bending to his every whim at every given moment, allowed the freedom to choose their desired career path in the human world or in the pack, for that matter.

Heard the door open behind him and then heard the snarl that ripped out of Petal as she was hit by his father’s waves of anger. It was pure Alpha aggression, he felt her Kitsune aura roll right off of her and his father’s head whip round as he realised just how strong she was.

“It’s alright Petal, just a father-son dispute.” He slipped his hand into hers, turned and looked at her, smiled gently at her, her amber eyes were glowering right at his father. She wasn’t taking kindly to the threat to her own Mate, it seemed.

Reached out and touched her face gently, drew her attention to him, saw those eyes move to his and smiled, such a brilliant shade of amber, so very beautiful to look at, such a complete contrast to El’s silver-grey.

She moved into his arms, and leaned into him, though snarled again at his father, "Let's take a walk huh, let you have a look around." His eyes moved to his father "We'll catch up later." He told him and then turned and walked her away from him before all hell broke loose.

"What's his problem?" El asked as they stepped outside.

"I dare say he has the same concern you voiced about your mother." He sighed "She doesn't look good, El."

"I know." She murmured softly, heard sadness in her voice and hugged her reassuringly "Our doctors will do everything they can to keep her safe and comfortable."

"Are your doctors the same as human doctors? Do they understand human biology?" she came to a standstill and looked up at him worriedly.

"Yes, El. They all actually study out in the human world as well as learn here in the pack. Have human degrees in medicine."

Saw relief wash over her, "She is in good hands, but that pup she's carrying is growing at a fast rate, that is what's causing her pain,"

"Can she deliver early, like maybe have a caesarean to help."

"It is possible." Conner nodded "It's also likely the pack doctor has already brought this up, father, I can see is stressed out. When he is completely stressed, he becomes angry and is more aggressive with the way he handles things in the pack."

"He's mean Conner."

"He can be." Conner nodded, "Come on, let's walk and let Petal look around."

"She wants out to be with Atlas."

"How about we settle in first, give it a few days, then let her out."

"Are you keeping her from your father?"

Conner chuckled "Yes I am." Smiled down at her "I thought you could get a little pay back of your own, he's going to want to see her, likely today. Photograph her for the packs data base. Just say no, tell him Petal doesn't want to show herself."

She looked up at him. "Are you trying to tick him off?"

"No, I'm trying to make him understand you're not going to bend to his will. In fact, El, you don't have to. Did you see the way he and his wolf stare at Petal, they already know

your beast is stronger than his.” He chuckled “I want to see what he thinks he can do about it.”

“This is not the Conner I know.” She murmured.

“Hm, you’ll see shades of him. I’m certain he’s still a right a*****e. But to be honest, El.” He smiled right at her “I’m happy, I love you and that makes not just me happy but Atlas as well.” He stopped walking and tilted her chin up, leaned down and kissed her softly “I want to show you, our suite.”

“I have a room and last time I was here I wasn’t allowed down your end of the pack house.” She muttered.

“Well, we have a whole wing to ourselves now. The entire west wing of the top floor, it was always mine, and my units, where we would all live once I found my mate and took over. I have a whole suite down the end of the hall from you.”

“Oh, which room. I’ve been in most of those.”

Looked right at her surprised by this revelation. “Really?”

“Hmm.” She shrugged as they walked along again, “There wasn’t much I was allowed to do and roaming about freely of a night when everyone was asleep, was something I did. Nothing around here is locked. So, I wandered is all.”

He laughed softly, as they climbed the pack house’s front steps, “It’s the one at the far end, that takes up the entire western side of the pack house.”

“Oh, that is massive. Got a nice view of the forest too. I liked it in there actually, spent some time wandering about in there, lots of rooms. But mostly stood or sat on the balcony and stared out at the forest. It’s really pretty.”

“All those rooms are for all our Kits.” He murmured softly. “I love the view to.” He smiled and was happy that she liked it, didn’t really surprise him that much, knowing she was his Mate. They seemed to like several things that were the same. “Might need a few more bedrooms from my understanding.” He chuckled, thinking about what he’d learned about kits and their litters.

“I’m too young for that, Conner.” She shook her head.

He completely agreed with that statement, was only eighteen, but according to Juliana, it wasn’t up to them was up to Petal herself, and her kitsune was thinking about kits. He, however, was happy to just spend a few years with El, enjoy her, every damned inch of her.

Headed up the stairs, he didn't have his access card to the elevator right this minute, and would definitely have to get her one, saw Marlo coming down the fourth floor hallway, "El?" he called out.

She turned and looked at him. Conner pulled her right into his side. Pure instinct on his and Atlas's part, couldn't help it. A full display of his ownership for that young wolf to see.

Watched Marlo see it and blink, saw him look from El to Conner and then back to her, "It's good to have you back." Saw him tilt his head and blink as he realised she smelled different, could smell Conner's mark and now knew she belonged to him.

"Hi Marlo." She nodded.

Watched that boy bow his head ever so slightly "Luna." He murmured "I'm glad you're well."

Conner heard the actual disappointment in the boy's voice, nearly smirked at him, held it in. He didn't need to rub it in that she belonged to him. Knew that Marlo had been more than interested in her before, hadn't liked it at all, but he didn't need to be an a*s about it, part of him wanted to be, but refrained himself.

"I am." She nodded, sounded a bit stand offish to Conner. He was still not sure what had happened between them, hadn't thought to ask her when he'd finally found her. His only concern had been trying to obtain her for himself, get her to see he really did want her.

"Marlo." Conner greeted him.

"Alpha." Was the greeting in return, "I'll leave you, sorry to disturb you." watched him turn and walk away from them both, down the stairs.

"You can still be friends with him, you know, with anyone you want to be."

"I doubt his group of friends want anything to do with me." She shrugged.

He frowned right at her "What happened, between all of you? You seemed to be getting on well."

"I thought so too." She murmured "but.." she shrugged.

"But?" he pushed her a little, wanted to know what had happened, he'd seen Willah go after her, heard Willah's jealousy.

"I don't know." She shrugged "I didn't want to date him, wouldn't let him k**s me at that music concert and he got mad at me. I asked to come home and he was different after that."

"Hooked up with Willah." He nodded, he'd seen it. "After that, Willah and you, something happened, I know that much. The day I chased you around the woods." He smiled to himself "that was fun for me." He hugged her "I'm going to do that again, a lot." He smirked down at her.

Saw EI shake her head, "Is that all you think about?"

"Mm a good 80 percent of the time, yes." He laughed softly "Now, back to Willah before that 80 percent takes over."

"I don't know Conner, she came at me about staying away from Marlo, her and her friends. I told her I wasn't interested, and I wasn't, was trying to deal with you and our, whatever the hell it was. But she didn't believe me and then suddenly they were all ignoring me. I realised, I guess they weren't actually my friends. So, I just got up and left. It wasn't a nice feeling to be honest. I thought I had made friends, but it was all just Marlo's doing, I guess. Told them to like me or pretend to." She shrugged. Watched her stop at her room and go to open the door.

"Not your room anymore." He murmured and tugged her down the hallway to their suite.

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Chapter 76

EI POV

She'd heard Conner say they had a suite, the entire top western wing was for him and his unit, plus all their Mates. She'd actually been in the suite he stated was now theirs. It was massive, to say the least. It had a balcony that was split into two sections, one attached to the end that had the kitchen, dining and living areas, and what she could only think had to be the master bedroom as well.

Then one that ran along all the bedrooms down the other end, which had a massive open area between the rooms, likely just a separate living room area, she supposed, she had no idea.

She watched Conner push the door open and blinked, to see that it now had furniture in there. She walked into the room to find the dark hardwood floors had a soft green, deep pile rug covering it, and a cream lounge suite.

She heard him close the door quietly behind her. He didn't really say anything to her, was letting her take it all in, walked around the room and looked at him. He smiled at her when she picked up a dark green decorative cushion. "I like green," he told her.

"I can see that. Is the bedroom going to be all green?"

"Hmm, yes." He nodded.

"What if I don't like green everywhere?" she smiled at him as she put the cushion back on the lounge, "Can I change it?"

"My instincts tell me to say yes to you, but I really do like dark green in the bedroom. It relaxes me, helps me sleep better." He told her.

Eliza didn't really mind, but if everything was going to be shades of green she was going to need some other colour in here as well. She moved her eyes about the room and stopped at the sight of photos on the mantle above the open fireplace.

Walked over there and picked one up. It was of her and her father, taken when she was sixteen, touched it and smiled. They were out camping, smiling up at the camera together. Her father was holding a grasshopper he'd caught. Looked at the others on the mantle, there were so many. Her as a baby with her dad, and her mum. Ones of her as a child playing in the yard, even one of her holding a daffodil up to her father as he took the photo of her.

He'd always told her that one was his favourite, she was about 3 in the photo, and apparently had just wandered out into the garden on her own and picked it, brought it back to him. He'd watched her from inside, go and touch them all, and as he stated pick the right one, there had been over three dozen out there and she'd wandered along till she'd chosen one to pick to give to him. Even she liked that photo.

Touched one of her and her Grandma, chuckled softly at the thought of her grandma strolling on into this pack and likely putting Logan in his place. "Where did you get these from?" she turned to ask Conner, only to find him right there behind her, she'd not even heard him move across the room. Stealthy when he wanted to be.

"I had that whole storage shed cleaned out and brought here for you." he slid his arms around her waist and hugged her.

"Before or after, you Marked me?"

Heard him chuckle, "Before I even left here to go to Italy to hunt you down, I wanted to get everything ready for you here, so you would be comfortable in my home with me."

"You didn't even know if you could find me. Or if I would, come home with you."

"That is true, I was completely distraught when you got severed from me. Spent three days wallowing in your bed."

She turned and looked right at him. "Really?"

"Yes, ask the boys. I was inconsolable. The bloody omegas had been in there and cleaned your room. I couldn't even smell you." he muttered that last part. "Now there is something I want to discuss with you, about that."

"About you being inconsolable?" she laughed. "That was your own fault."

"Not that, your scent. You smell like the soaps and shampoos you use. I know your Mate scent is delectable to me, you smell like my favourite place in the world, the forest, but I don't actually know what you really smell like. I would like to."

El turned and looked at him questioningly, "I don't know what you're talking about."

"Yes, you do." He chuckled "I don't mind if you continue to use your special soaps and what not to mask your true scent from others, but I want to know what you truly scent of. Will you not use your regular soaps and shampoos so I can smell you?"

"What if you don't like it?" she frowned up at him.

"I will love it, everything about you draws me to you. Even that first day you arrived, I looked you over, human and all, and off limits. I noticed how nice your a*s was and thought it would be good for grabbing on to." He grinned and she felt his hands slide down her body and do just that, growled right at her "Your a*s is f*****g perfect El."

Tried to swat him away only to have him laugh "We're all alone, in our suite. Let me have you, I've not gotten to have you once since we got on that first flight."

"It's all you think about." She laughed as he started pulling her backwards across the room, knew he was headed for the bedroom.

"It is, my need to have you, drives not just me crazy insane, but Atlas too. You recall him mating you, yes? All raw animal needs, very possessive of you."

"Conner." She laughed as he picked her up. "Yes, I remember, out in the woods, he took me without warning."

"You threatened to leave him, he was having none of that." He chuckled as he carried her into the bedroom. Heard the door get kicked shut and got a look at the bedroom for the first time, a massive black fourposter king sized bed, with a duvet cover that was white at the top and had a forest imprinted on it, in varying shades of green started light and got really dark at the bottom. There were white curtains hanging from the windows and two massive potted ferns on either side of the room.

A soft looking white-chaise by the far wall opposite the bed with a soft green throw rug over it, and a massive black rug on the floor. The walls were all cream in colour bar the one behind the bed. It was a feature wall, wallpapered with trees all over it.

"You really do like the forest, huh?"

"I do, and we're going to spend a lot of time in it." he put her down on the bed. "Naked at that." He grinned down at her. "Now my Luna, may I have my way with you here inside our suite?"

"Have I ever said no to you Conner?" El smiled up at him and saw that grin turned into a smirk instantly.

"No, you could never resist me."

"I could not." she smiled, not even when she'd been innocent, his touch had created a need in her to have him, to want to go that next step with him. "Strip for me." She asked and heard him laugh at her boldness.

Got to lay there and watch him pull his clothes off for her, she'd thought it would be just ripping them off, but it was not, took his time and let her see all of him, was actually stripping for her, even turned around and murmured "Like what you see baby?" Before crawling onto the bed, above her and looking right down at her.

"I do like what I see." El murmured and slid her hands down his bare chest, traced her fingers softly over his defined abs, trailed her fingers down his deep v-line and got a growl right from him as she curled her hand around his big hard c**k, and started to stroke him. Denied him that k**s when he leaned down to capture her mouth with his.

"Be a good wolf and let me play with you." she murmured softly, full of amusement, as his lips hit her neck instead of her mouth.

Got bit right on her neck playfully "What game do you want to play?" he asked.

"No game, I just want to touch you, like you always touch me." Found his blue eyes right on hers.

"Really, I know all the things I like doing to you. You want to do all those things to me?"

“Mm I do, Conner, will you let me?”

“Oh, hell yes baby, k**s and touch me everywhere, be warned though.” His body was suddenly pressed hard down on hers “I’ll lose all control at some point and have to have you, take you with all I have, for hours upon hours, I’m going to let myself drown in your scent of arousal and make the hell out of you all night long.”

El smiled up at him, “I know you will, I’ll want you to.” She pulled his mouth down on to hers “I’ll want all of you Conner, everything you have.” She whispered against his lips before kissing him softly she’d likely never get enough of him, the raw need to have him, actually loved the power behind him when he took her.

Wanted it hard and rough, craved it as much as he wanted it, pushed at him before he got his own way, having her, he rolled himself right onto the bed next to her, stretched out on his back and stated, “Strip for me.”

El chuckled “Yes Alpha.” And batted her lashes at him as she stood up, a massive growl ripped out of him, and her eyes widened.

“Might not want to say that, like that, till you’re ready to scream for me.” he told her “We like that a lot.”

El smiled at him, would have to remember that one. She thought to herself, as she stood up on the bed before him and slowly peeled her clothes off just like he had for her, acted a little shy and fiend covering her body with her clothes, only to have him rip them away from her.

Straddled him and sank down to press her body to his, slid her mouth down his neck and over his chest, nipped softly at his skin, then sharply at his n****e, heard him hiss a little in pain “Oh, you can take it.” she smiled up at him as her hand slid lower down his body to trail a single finger down his hard c**k and then back up to tease the tip of him.

Looked right up at him as she tasted him, heard him growl as her tongue slid over him “I don’t think it will fit.” She murmured “It’s too big.” She pouted up at him a little.

Saw him smirk right at her, “Try anyway. I’ll enjoy whatever you can take of me.”

El slid her mouth over him and tasted him like he always did her, sighed herself, as she started to suck on him, sliding him in and out of her mouth, felt his hand on her head and heard him g***n as she got deeper with each movement “f**k El,” she heard him g***n a few minutes later, “You need to stop or I’ll cum.”

Flicked her eyes up at him, he never stopped when she begged him to, and the goddess, she wanted to taste all of him, was turned on by the fact that he was, could smell his arousal and wanted more of it herself.

Didn't stop, slid a hand down to caress his balls, heard him swear and sucked even more, harder and faster, taking as much of him as she could till she felt his hand grip tightly into her hair and then his seed spilled all hot inside of her, slid right down her throat. Slid her mouth off of him and kissed the very tip of him.

His eyes were so dark blue they were almost black right this minute as he stared down at her, crawled her way back up his body and kissed him. She let him taste himself on her lips, the way he always did her. His hands were on her, moving over her hot and eager to touch her, curved right over her backside and then he was touching her.

She m****d at his touch, cried out as he pushed two long fingers inside of her, and was riding them a second later, pushing herself back against them, felt his other hand move to stoke her clit, and g*****d right into his mouth, he knew exactly how to touch her, firm and needy. She rode his hand right into o****m, cried out his name right into his mouth.

"Do you want me, El?" he asked, slipping his fingers from her.

"Yes." She m****d softly, pushed herself up and looked down at him. He was good and ready for her, lined herself up with him and then locked eyes with him as she took him for herself, pushed herself down hard and eagerly, taking all of him into her. "f**k Conner," she m****d and let her eyes close as her head fell back, started to move herself up and down on him riding him slow at first and then quicker and harder till she was crying out once more.

Leaned forward to grip onto his shoulders "Conner." She begged him, as she continued to ride him.

Heard him growl right into her mouth as he rolled them over and gave her what she wanted, all of him with all he had till she was screaming for him. Felt him slam home as her body clamped tightly around him, felt his seed spill hot inside of her and m****d at the sensation.

He slipped from her body only to turn her over and pull her up onto all fours "El, we're not done." He growled right into her ear, his voice all deep with desire.

She smiled to herself. She could enhance that, "No, Alpha?" she questioned, as sweetly as she could and heard him growl with excitement, felt excited herself just hearing him respond to her softly spoken, teasing words, then he was taking her, furiously, both his hands on her h**s gripping her tightly as he pounded with her with everything he had. All rough and primal, like she knew he would, how they both really liked it, were turned on by it, couldn't get enough of each other.

Screamed in pleasure as she felt him knot himself to her, his whole body was leaning over hers, holding her tightly to him, his breathing as ragged as hers was, his forehead resting on her head "Oh El, you are amazing." He told her.

“You’re amazing Conner.” She murmured “Goddess how can you just make me feel like that, need you, ache so much for you?.” and she did, could already feel her desire burning away, was going to want to have him all night long and she knew it, and ache growing inside of her for him already.

“f**k El.” He murmured as his knot released, but was then growing hard inside of her a moment later “Oh f**k yes.” He growled and she heard him take in a deep breath “Your heat is here.” He was suddenly taking her again. “You’re mine now.” He growled right down at her.

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Chapter 77

Conner POV

He was lying there watching El sleep, her head was resting on his pillow right next to him, and her arm was stretched across his chest, with her hand curled around his neck, she was all leaned into him. Her heat was over, it had only lasted three days.

But they had been three glorious days of the two of them just going crazy in this bedroom. The smell of her heat had sent him wild with need. El had been just as crazy about it, wanting him as much as he had wanted her. It had been a rough and tumble three days for the two of them, but they had both enjoyed it.

It had also made Atlas all primal in his response to her, and Petal had been just as demanding. Containing her had been a bit of an issue. She’d wanted to go outside to mate in the woods. Trying to keep her inside for it had taken some convincing, letting her rip out of El here inside the suite had been the only way to contain her in the end. So that Atlas could be allowed to mate her, both of them in their true forms, that had been what she’d really wanted in the end. Seemed to solve the problem.

Laying there watching El sleep, he could actually smell her now. Her true scent was not masked by those products she used, smelled like apple blossoms and the very subtle smell of hibiscus seeds, even her natural scent was light and barely there, with the exception of her Mate scent that was just for him, pine needles. It surprised him that that was what she smelled about him as his Mate scent as well.

Probably didn't need that soap of hers at all, though without it he could tell that she was a shifter. He knew that she was Kitsune now, but to others it would be likely that they could tell she was a shifter, but it would be of unknown origin. Which would be curious to them and likely to draw unwanted attention to her. To any kitsune, likely why they masked their scent, they didn't want other shifters out there knowing about them.

Juliana had told him that was how they liked it. No one really knowing about them, or their ways, for that matter. Had told him, Sloan would let them know about the Kitsune ways. He had his doubts about that, she'd likely tell El and leave it up to her as to what to discuss with him or the pack.

Conner wondered if his father would pick her as a Kitsune or just still think she was a fox shifter. His father had yet to pick up what she actually was, though she had been using that soap of hers, prior to coming home. All his father knew, was that she was a shifter, still thought she was a fox but had not said anything, only that she needed to present herself to him. Conner thought it was unlikely he could actually tell she was a Kitsune, or he wouldn't have tried to have a go at her. He would have been cautious himself on that front.

Conner did like knowing that he was the only one to smell her like this. Her actual true scent, not that scent of soap she used. He reached out and touched her face softly, already couldn't imagine his life without her, wanted to wake up every day in this bed with her right there.

If she wanted to continue to use those products, he was going to let her. That just meant that he would actually be the only one to know what she really smelled like, all the time. Brushed a few loose strands of her hair from her face and pressed his lips to her forehead. Wondered if her heat was natural or if Petal had decided she wanted those kits already.

Juliana had told him that Kitsune's were not like other Shifters, and they would choose when they wanted to have kits, and how many they wanted as well or how often. That it could be a hundred years before Petal wanted to do that. Not something he wanted, would want an heir to take over, for his Heir to grow up with all his unit's children to provide them with a good, strong bond.

Petal did know El wanted to wait on that front, as did Conner. Both of them were of the opinion El was too young to have children. Let alone many all at once. Atlas, however, was of the opinion he would do what Petal wanted in the Kit department.

It seems no one had a say in it other than Petal, though he was hoping that Petal would take into consideration El's young age, El's wanting to wait on having Kits. They both thought after university was a good option. Guess he was now just going to have to wait and see on that matter.

He'd had to explain to El what a heat was. He had done that here in this bed, after her need to be sated that first time had settled. She'd asked him what the heck had just happened to her and Petal. She didn't understand it at all. It was an interesting conversation and she'd stared right at him and then muttered 'I'm not some bloody animal.' Only to have him chuckle and murmur 'Technically, yes you are baby.'

She'd hit him and muttered 'No I'm not. Petal is the animal.' Which only made him chuckle even more.

He had no intention of getting up and out of this bed until she was awake for the day. He'd not told anyone it was over, so his father would not harass him about El coming downstairs to be initiated into the pack or having her show him what she was either. Things that should have happened the day she had arrived, but due to her going into heat, pretty much the minute they'd gotten here in their suite, hadn't had to.

Though she had taken the opportunity to tell her grandmother she was in heat, got a shocked response of 'Oh.' From her then a 'let me know when it's over.' Seemed it had shocked her grandmother as well. Likely they had not been expecting it at all, seeing as Kitsune were not like other shifters, liked, it appeared, to take their time in producing kits.

He knew that Sloan had only one child, Taro, and he'd been conceived with a human father, and he knew Sloan was 500 years old because Juliana was that old. And Juliana's eldest daughter was 300 years old, so Juliana had been 200 before she'd had her first child.

It made him wonder just how many Kitsune there were out there in the world. If they only had Kit's every few hundred years, it wasn't likely there were that many. There was also the possibility that he and El would have wolf pups as well as kits. That was an interesting thought to him.

It made him think about what they would look like. Would the kits be a mixture of Petal and Atlas's colouring, or would the kits have just Atlas's colouring or would they be similar to Petal's coloring? If they had wolfen pups, would they have Petal's very unique Melanistic coloring? He'd honestly never seen a wolf with that kind of colouring. Could be very interesting indeed.

Smiled to himself as he thought about wolves with Petal's Kitsune colouring. Kind of like the idea of his sons or daughters being unique, just like their mother was. Would make it interesting when they found their Mate's as well. Would have to start thinking about alliance's and what he would want as a guarantee for his childrens safety.

Saw El's eyes open and that beautiful silver-grey of her eyes look right at him, saw her smile a little right at him, he rolled right onto his side and slid his arms around her to cuddle her "morning baby." He murmured as she hugged him back. Liked that she was

so receptive to him, he was not going to be holding anything back, everyone in this pack was going to know how much he loved her.

“Morning.” She murmured right back.

“We should shower and get up. Your heat is over.”

“How do you know?”

He smiled at her. “You smell normal once more, no scent of heat on you.”

“Okay.”

They showered and dressed for the day, then headed downstairs to eat breakfast with everyone else. It was only 8am. Smiled as he saw El message her grandma and got an ‘Okay I’m on my way.’ He mind-linked to Adam and his unit to find them all in the dining room. It was time to introduce El to his unit’s Mates.

She got along with all of his unit already, and he was certain that she would also get along with their Mates. When she was comfortable and happy in her surroundings, El was happy to talk to anyone, about pretty much anything at all, it seemed. He’d watched her interact with her cousins and other pack members in the Willow Moon Pack. She was a likeable person to most. Open to making friends right away.

The way she had been brought here, the way his father had separated her from everyone, and put such tight constraints on her. That had likely been the reason she was so rude and standoffish, the whole time she had been here.

Hadn’t wanted to be here, and then locked in, so of course she was going to be a nightmare to deal with. It didn’t help that she had Alpha b***d, but no-one knew it. Likely also was the reason she was so very stubborn and challenging as well.

Conner introduced El to Adam and Cameron’s Mate’s. She smiled and said it was lovely to meet them. She got eyed right off by Adam’s gypsy Mate Sage, saw that girl tilt her head and smell her more than once, frowned a lot and then just chuckle to herself.

Likely she either knew what El was or suspected as much, but then El was chuckling a moment later and he recalled, Gypsy wolves could talk to whoever they wanted at any given moment. As he watched all of them, he could see that they were actually talking to each other, and found something amusing at that. She had gone back to using her soap this morning. When he’d asked why, she’d just shrugged it off and said “I’ve always used them. I like them.”

He had found out that her grandma had introduced them to her years ago when she was just a girl, told her it was special and made just for their family. That didn’t surprise him at all. Now he knew what she was.

His attention was drawn to all the girls as they all started laughing. His whole unit were watching them, clearly something was going on between the four of them, likely Sage had connected all their minds to her. He was really glad she was getting along with them all right away, this would make life easier and happier for her, here inside the pack. A place she didn't much like the last time she'd been here.

'Conner.'

'Father?'

'I'd like you to bring El for initiation after breakfast and I'd like to see her shifter as well.'

'I'll be taking her right to her mother, and I believe Sloan is on her way here as we speak. Might want to wait on that till her grandmother gets here.'

'I'll not be waiting, she's you're Mate, needs to be registered to the pack.'

'That being said, she has not decided to stay here, will be here till her brother or sister is born and then will be making a decision.'

'Conner, that is unacceptable, you're the Heir to this pack. She is the future Luna. Fox or not, she has to present herself. I do understand they run a bit differently to us wolves, but as your Mate she needs to comply.'

'I'll ask her. But Brittney is her first priority after breakfast.'

'I expect her in my office no later than lunch son.' The mind-link severed.

He shook his head, that man was not going to get what he wanted from El any time soon. If Petal didn't want to shift for him, she just wouldn't. He couldn't make her, though watching his father try might be interesting. Likely find himself Alpha Ordered to bow down by the future Luna of the pack. She was going to be just like Juliana, have a dual rank. Was going to be an Alpha Luna. He smiled at her as he thought about that, she outranked even him. That made him wonder if there were any creatures out there that could outrank her.

Might just have to look into that when he had some free time, needed to make sure she was safe from those that could cause her harm, didn't think there would be many not with his knowledge and all those lives she had as well. Reached out and slid his hand through her hair, she'd not pulled it up today, fell in a glossy black cascade down to the middle of her back.

She looked right at him, and he just smiled at her. "Father is demanding you present yourself."

Heard his whole unit snort, and the girls as well. Likely they were all in the know now as well. "I told him we'd be off to see your mother first. That he might want to wait on your grandmother turning up. Didn't much like it."

"Is mum awake?" she asked.

"I'll ask?" he nodded, mind-linked to the pack doctor and found out she was up, having breakfast also looked a bit better this morning than she had a few days ago. No growing pains so far today. He relayed this to EI, and they excused themselves the moment they were done eating to head for the pack hospital.

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Chapter 78

EI POV

Breakfast with Conner's unit and their mates was nice. Those girls were all smiles, Sage picked what she was right away and mind-linked right to her 'Wow I only know one other Kitsune, she's mean.' Then laughed, 'Well, not mean but super strict and you can't put anything past that one, picks a lie in an instant.'

'Her name wouldn't happen to be Sloan now, would it?' EI asked her.

'Yeah, you know her?'

'She is my grandmother.' EI chuckled, 'Can't wait for her to meet Logan.'

'Oh, he's not going to like her at all.' Sage told her. 'The man needs to chill out, big time.'

EI could only agree with her.

They sat and ate, and she noticed many of the pack members were looking at her sitting next to Conner, curious it seemed. Stood up with him when breakfast was over, looked about the dining room himself at all those looking at him and her, as his hand slid to small of her back, "EI is the future of this pack. Your future Luna," he turned and looked right at her, smiled "My Mate, cheeky as she is, and ran away from me as she

did. Is Mine now.” His hand slid into her hair and he leaned down and kissed her for all to see.

Before they walked out of the dining room, heading for the pack hospital. It was a nice twenty-minute walk, she slipped her hand into his and he smiled right at her. It was really nice to know that he did not have any intention of hiding their relationship from anyone here. He’d just announced her to those in the dining room. She knew he or his father would do it at some point through a pack wide mind-link.

Everyone they saw smiled at him and her, addressed them as Alpha, Luna. Which was weird to her, considering she now understood her mother was actually the Luna of the pack. She was only the future Luna. Queried him on that as they walked.

“That is what your rank is. It’s that simple, they do not need to state future. You are a Luna ranked pack member because I am an Alpha Wolf.”

“How does that work? I’m Alpha-blooded as well?”

“Yes, you are, and you will likely have the choice to hold both titles, though in our world Alpha-blooded females usually become Luna’s to their Mates. Are still Alpha-blooded but not considered the leader of the pack. Unless her Mate is of lower rank, then she holds the Alpha title if she is to lead a pack, that is. It gets a bit complicated.”

“Sounds it.” she nodded “So I can be like Auntie Juliana, an Alpha Luna?”

“If you want to be, yes.” He smiled “Kind of like that about you.”

El shook her head. “You like everything.”

Saw him grinning now. “You just make me happy. I have never felt like this, even when I didn’t know what you were, I’d never felt anything like what you and I had.”

“Got around, didn’t you?”

“Hm, do you want to discuss it?” He sounded open to it.

“No. To be honest, I do not.”

“El, you have nothing to worry about. I only have eyes for you. Atlas only has eyes for you and Petal. We will never hurt you. Ever.”

She nodded as they walked into the hospital, found her mother sitting up in her bed. She looked much better, smiled right at her “You look better.”

“I feel better.” Was the answer. “the doctor told me the baby has stopped growing, she is hoping all together.”

"That would mean it's due soon," Conner stated.

"Yes, a day or two, maybe a week, I was told."

"Mother." El looked right at her "I don't want you to do this to yourself again. What if you'd died and I wasn't here." She voiced the fear she'd had. Hadn't been there when her father died, it had been sudden and unexpected. This would have been too, for her. Didn't know how she would have coped with it.

"I agree, this was more than difficult for me. My age didn't help either. So, no more, this one will be enough." Her mother reached out for her hand. "You're not human?"

"Not so much." El nodded. "What are you? What was your father?"

"Dad was human, grandma Sloan not so much. She's on her way here, by the way."

"Okay. Is she going to play nice with Logan?"

"I don't know, I guess that depends on if Logan is an a*s."

"El, please don't speak like that about Logan."

Stared right at her mother, "I never liked him mother, he didn't treat me nicely at all." Saw her own mother look at Conner, he didn't say anything at all. He knew how Logan had treated her.

"Honey, it's just that he's used to dealing with his pack in a certain way. Tried to treat you the same was all."

"I'm not a member of his pack, never was. Didn't even know it was a pack, so all I saw was a controlling a*****e."

Saw her mother sigh, didn't say anything for a long time. "Will you try and get along with him, now that you know he is not human, has reasons for being the way he is."

El sighed herself "I guess I could try, but if he continues to treat me like that, I'm going back to Italy." She told her mother.

"El, you're mated to Conner, you can't just leave him because you don't like Logan."

"Conner and his whole unit will be going with me."

Watched her mother's eyes go very wide, and turn to Conner, he just nodded "I want El to be happy, and father likely wants to control her, as he does everyone else here. Not all pack Alpha's are like him, some, like the gypsy's, are very laid back. Other packs I've been to their Alpha's don't rule with an iron fist. I get why she didn't like it here."

“Conner, that’s your father you’re talking about.” She frowned up at him, was the current Luna and didn’t like the way he was speaking so freely, it seemed.

“It is, ask that man about pack studies. Do the wolves here have a choice?”

“Of course, they do. I myself have talked to a few to try and help them with deciding on what they want to do.”

“Ah, you mean the omegas and warrior ranked. I bet not one highly ranked child.”

“What?”

EI smiled, it seemed her mother didn’t know her Mate as well as she thought she did. Though now she did understand all his anger and aggression all the time. Why he got so quickly ticked off with her attitude and disrespect. Conner had assured her he wasn’t an abusive Mate towards her mother, that he’d actually never really seen his father so sweet and charming on occasion. Was smitten by her mother. Would never hurt her.

Now that she actually understood what he was and what her mother was to him, his human Mate, she did understand him a bit better. She also knew that her mother never got a shifter either, and was still human.

She didn’t want to talk about Logan, or anything that was going to bring about stress for her mother. “How about I agree not to antagonise him, if he lets me be who I am.”

“Alright.” Her mother smiled “Be the EI I know.”

“Yes.” EI nodded “Now about this brother or sister I am having.”

“It’s a girl.” Her mother smiled.

She heard Conner snort and both her and her mother looked right at him. “He’s not going to know how to handle a girl, can’t handle you.” he tugged EI’s ear “That will be fun for us to watch.”

She shook her own head, sometimes Conner just completely surprised her, with who he was on the inside, not the man he’d been just a few months ago.

“Being Mated EI, changes one sometimes.”

“For the better, I hope,” she murmured, looking back at her mother “Petal wants to say hello, if you’re up for it. Not a full shift.”

“Of course.” She actually saw her mother light up. “Am I the first here to see her other than Conner and the boys?”

"Yes, of her choosing, had a moment with Logan yesterday, she wants to say hello to you though." El nodded, saw more excitement come from her mother and smiled, let Petal push forward and look right at her. She knew her mother would see Petal's amber-coloured eyes. It was the only difference when one's beast pushed forward in human form.

"Mother." Petal's slightly higher pitched gravelly voice addressed her.

She watched through Petal's eyes as her mother's hand moved to her mouth, and then reached out to touch her. "My goodness, look at your eyes, so beautiful Petal. I hope I get to see you soon."

Petal chuckled softly and hugged her "When I want to, you have no idea how hard it is to stay in there and she does the weirdest things, mother." Leaned back and shook her head "I don't understand humans sometimes, odd creatures at the best of times, and wolves so pushy and needy, possessive creatures if ever there are any." She was talking a mile a minute, just like she did inside of El's mind.

There was no stopping her from talking about all the weird things she'd seen in the past few days, about the not-so nice flight over here, how she did not like to fly at all. How her Mate Atlas was her whole world, then just giggled about it. She went on to talk about flowers she liked to smell, that she loved when El ate chocolate or cake. El tried to rein her in but there was no stopping her. It seemed she wanted to talk to her mother about everything and anything. Could see her mother chuckling softly when Petal took a breath.

"You speak very fast, Petal."

"Oh yes, Conner doesn't like it, always asking El to shut me up for even just a minute, he's boring to say the least." Petal turned and looked right at him, poked her tongue out at him and then receded finally. Had been talking nonstop for nearly an hour with her mother.

"She's quite the chatterbox." Her mother laughed, "Not much like your quiet sullen moodiness El."

"Makes up for all of it." El chuckled, "I don't mind, actually it's nice to always have someone to talk to."

Logan walked into the room and looked from her to Conner, to her mother and she stepped back so he could be with her. "I'll let you have time with mother." El commented.

"You don't have to leave El," he stated, "You are a part of this family. I told you when you were here last even."

“Didn’t feel like it,” she muttered, and saw her mother’s disapproving look, headed for the door, didn’t know if she wanted to deal with him and his overbearing ways at that point. Still had reservations about the man, the way he treated his pack members. Made them study what he wanted them to, not let them be who they were. Controlled all of them, she’d seen just how much freedom the fox shifters had gotten, nothing was forbidden to them, they were never locked in or demanded to do this and that. Or not that she had seen anyhow, also knew they were allowed to study anywhere in the world they wanted to.

“El, you and I will have to talk at some point. I am the Alpha here.”

“I know that, but you are not my Alpha.” She looked right at him. “That would be my Grandma and her twin sister. I’m still a part of their pack. Just visiting at this point.”

“You are Conner’s Mate.”

“Yes I am.” She nodded, “But still not your pack member, may never be. If you’re going to just treat me like you did before.”

“Eliza, we obviously need to find some common ground.”

“Or perhaps, you need to apologise to me.” She said and stared right at him.

Saw him staring right back at her. She was not going to back down. He couldn’t order her to at this point either. Felt a hand slid across her back and looked at Conner. “Come on let’s go for a walk. No fighting now.”

“I’ll win it.” she smiled right at Logan “He just doesn’t realise it yet.” Then turned and walked out the door after she got a gentle nudge from Conner.

“Please play nice, I know he’s an a*s at times, been living with him my entire life, kind of have to pick your battles.”

“It’s not going to be a battle, Conner, and I would like an apology from him.” she sighed.

“Not likely to get it, not even I get that, or it’s a rare thing anyway. He’s also more grumpy than normal with your mother in the hospital and, worrying about her health, will likely calm down once the baby comes. And she and your mother are declared healthy and can go back to the Alpha Suite.”

“How about he apologises, and I’ll be nice to him,” she offered.

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Chapter 79

Conner POV

Conner watched El sit in his father's office on the lounge where he had directed her to sit. It was just after lunch, getting her into this office had not been easy, even the open channel from Petal to Atlas showed him that Petal didn't intend to present herself to his father, didn't believe that she had to at all.

Was of the same opinion as El, was not his pack member to order around, she understood that Logan was Conner's father and the current Alpha to the wolven pack she was now in, but he was not her Alpha. Petal listened when Logan spoke to her but didn't seem to really care about his words all that much. Appeared to be annoyed with him as much as El was.

He saw his father sigh and let it go for the moment. Conner had never really seen him do that before; let go of something he thought he was right to do. It was interesting, El didn't so much as stare him down, just shook her head and stated "I can't make Petal do anything, she doesn't want to. So, no."

Petal, who normally was the ever-present chatterbox, was currently quiet. Not even Atlas liked it, his own wolf thought that something was wrong with his Mate. Though they knew what she was, she had no fight training, neither did El for that matter, he'd not broached the subject with her yet. But was going to have to train her, didn't know if that was going to go down so well.

But he could see his father at some point getting so ticked off that he was going to wolf out on her, likely before he understood what she was. He was curious himself as to if Petal would appear in full form or just roll her aura at his beast and make him submit to El's human form.

After a full minute of silence, he heard his father sigh once again, watched his blue eyes move right towards him and Conner shook his head but said nothing. He was not going to make her do anything she didn't want to. When he and El were in charge, this pack was undergoing a massive overhaul. Everyone would be able to have that freedom she had so longed for. That freedom he and his unit had actually tasted while away from this pack hunting for her.

"El let's talk about your mother then." He said, gaining her full attention now, "I'd like to start with letting you know what the pack doctor has decided for your mother's health

and wellbeing.” At her nod he went on “Dr Jeanie does not think your mother should deliver naturally, will be having a c-section.”

“When?” El asked. Right away, she’d asked about that herself, and didn’t think childbirth was something that her own mother was well enough to go through.

“She is not sure at this point. If your little sister doesn’t grow anymore she can safely carry her to full term, but...”

Conner sat next to El and both he and Atlas could feel a little anxiety coming from both El and Petal. More so, Petal who had just gotten her mother, and not once had she stopped Petal from talking a mile a minute about anything she wanted to talk about. Appeared to just love her as much as El did. That made him wonder if it was just him that couldn’t handle it. Was it because Atlas was quiet most of the time, only spoke when he had something to say at all?

Though he had been more vocal with El here than he normally was. Even now, he just let Petal have free rein inside his mind to chat incessantly and he was happy to listen to her all day, liked that she talked all the time. He was happy all the time, chortled at things she said and called her his little flower all the time.

Conner slipped his hand into hers as she sighed, and tried to comfort her as a Mate would, with his presence and touch. She looked a little worried on the surface, and he knew she was. He and Atlas could feel it, that and she had voiced it as much when they’d left the hospital that first day. “But?” she asked softly, could hear the worry in that one word as she looked at his father.

Even saw his father register her concern. “To be honest with you, El, I think it would be better to do it earlier, within the week, for her health. I don’t want to lose Brit, I love her.” he looked tired and drained, her being not well for so long was starting to affect him and Hale, it seemed. “Alpha pups are strong and resilient, even if your little sister is delivered early she will be fine. She has a good strong heartbeat and the Doctor is happy with her development.”

“So, you’re telling me this because?”

“Because the doctor wants to wait as long as possible, but what I want is that the minute there are more growing pains, for the pack doctor to perform that c-section, without hesitation. I don’t like seeing her suffer anymore than you would. I think you need to be informed of the decision is all. She’s only a few weeks from full term by the look of it.”

El nodded “I don’t want to lose my mother, so if an early c-section is what you think is best, as her Mate, then push for it. I honestly don’t think she is well enough to go through labour. It looked like she was dying to me. I don’t want that.”

“Alright, I was hoping that you and I would be on the same page about this. It is good that we are, perhaps El, we could do that more often?”

“I will try to play nice, as mother puts it, for her sake. But I won’t be treated like I was the last time I was here.” She stated simply.

Saw his father’s eyes glaze over and then his whole body just shot up off the couch he was sitting on, knew something was wrong instantly, felt Atlas stand up inside his mind. They knew the first sign of trouble brewing.

Was connected to a pack wide mind-link a moment later ‘All pack members on alert, return to your homes. We have an unannounced nine-tailed Kitsune strolling across the western border into the pack, stay away. Leave it be, do not attack it.’

His eyes met Conner’s “Get the boys.”

“No need, that would be Sloan strolling into the pack.”

“Grandma’s here?” he watched El’s eyes widen and then she was up, could see the smile on her face now.

“What?” his father’s eyes moved from him right to El and he watched as it dawned on his father just what she was, watched that man’s eyes widen.

“Where Conner?” El asked him all excitedly, and he could feel Petal’s excitement, she was already talking a mile a minute, and before he could even answer her question. Her eyes were glazed over, and he realised it was likely Sloan, they were of the same pack, she was in mind-linking range to El.

Even his father was watching on as she smiled so big, lit up her whole face. Goddess, she was beautiful when so filled with excitement and happiness.

“El go.” He voiced to her. Both he and Atlas could feel Petal itching to rip out of El to head for her grandmother, likely wanted to present herself to the woman and her Kitsune. He understood that El and Sloan were close, had always been like that. A good family bond they had with each other and, from what he could tell, had been the same with her father. It was one of the reasons why coming here had been so hard for her.

She looked right at him for just a moment, and he couldn’t but help smiling up at her, just nodded and she was gone, just like at full Petal speed. Chuckled to himself as he got up, saw his father glare right at him “She’s a kitsune?”

“Yes, and it’s her choice to show you or not. To tell you what she is or not? Outranks even me father.” He stated simply as he strolled out the door, “You might want to present yourself to Sloan on the front step. Formally so, she is Alpha Luna ranked, as El could be if she chooses to be.”

He could hear his father walking behind him, the man's unit were already in the foyer of the pack house. They all looked right at him more than shocked and he could see why as he stepped outside and found El's torn clothing on the front steps had shifted and they had likely seen her.

Adam, Cameron and Braydon were all headed this way. He could feel it, could also feel pack members on the move mind-linked to them all. "Please relax everyone, there is nothing to fear, the white Kitsune on pack territory is the future Luna, Eliza's grandmother Sloan, coming to see her granddaughter, for the first time since gaining her Kitsune herself."

The feelings that came from the pack were fast and many, some laughed excitedly, others felt a little fear, but mostly it was pure curiosity, not often one got to see a Kitsune, let alone two in a lifetime. Or on pack territory. "Just go about your business as normal." He encouraged them all.

Got one reply "Alpha can the children come see them." it was Sage.

"I don't see why not, by the packhouse front stairs." He smiled, it would be an amazing sight. He didn't think that Sloan would begrudge a bunch of children their excitement. Knew Petal wouldn't, she was too happy and excited, and she had liked the kits back in her home pack. Likely would like wolven little ones just as much.

He knew the moment El came face to face with her grandmother, Petal was instantly quiet, filled with respect, but the love that rolled off of her beast, made Atlas purr. Everyone looked at him and Adam shook his head.

"Conner?" his father asked. He'd never once heard Atlas purr before.

"Petal is open to Atlas at all times, he can feel her, what she is feeling. She just came face to face with her grandmother, it was a nice feeling." He smiled to himself. "You'll be respectful when they get here, right?"

"Like I have a choice, Conner," he muttered.

Actually, heard the man's entire unit chuckle. They all knew Logan was a complete control freak, and now he had no control at all. Likely Sloan would do and say as she pleased and roll her aura right at his father if she was unhappy about something, anything at all. He recalled Juliana stating Sloan would have just killed him, for Marking El that way, didn't have the patience to wait it out, it seemed. Likely was one to act before thinking at times, though a retrieval specialist, she was very good at plotting and planning, and wondered just how many packs she'd been in. Who was she allied with over here and what if any council members knew of her?

The gypsy children all arrived first, running towards the packhouse, and were very excited. Sage strolled on past and pecked Adam on his cheek before heading off to be with her own. Her sisters were just as excited it seemed by this prospect.

He stood with his unit at the bottom of the stairs, while his father stood at the top along with his unit, showing the pack lineage on display, who was the current reigning Alpha and that he was the heir.

Conner stood smiling at the Gypsy wolves. They were all talking quietly amongst themselves, excitedly and happy, caught the word Sloan and he realised they likely all knew her. He could see that all the children were excited and laughing.

It took a good 60 minutes more before he saw the two of them, and wasn't it a sight, a fully grown white Kitsune with black tips on her tails, strolling out of the woods alongside Petals Melanistic Kitsune. He couldn't but help smiling right at them. Sloan's Kitsune was a good size bigger than Petal, at least a foot and a half taller.

He heard his father and the man's entire unit suck in a breath at the sight of not just Sloan but Petal. It was magnificent to see them, filled him with pride to see Petal in full form, it would likely always amaze him. He could feel Atlas itching to be out of him to go and be with her and reminded him of formalities first. That Sloan was going to want to see him at some point, to just wait. There was nothing prettier than his Mate in her shifted form, stood watching as she walked this way, her tails all up and swirling about her.

Much the same as was her grandmothers Kitsune, likely didn't even know they were doing that. Just happened naturally when they walked. An unconscious display of what they were and the power they held.

Smiled when, all of a sudden, all the gypsy wolfen children ran off yelling "Aunty Sloan." And were all over her, chuckled himself at the sight of the youngest ones latching onto to her Kitsune's tails and being dangled about in the air. Watched on as she pranced around with them, a full show of her strength on display. Before putting them down, they were running back squealing to the mothers and siblings, all happy and excited about being played with.

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Chapter 80

EI POV

Petal ripped right out of her the moment she was outside the packhouse, uncaring of who saw her, she could run faster in her Kitsune form than her human one. Then just raced with all the speed she had towards her grandma, could not only hear her inside their mind, but feel that pack connection she had felt with everyone inside the Willow Moon Pack. She was excited to meet her grandma as much as El was excited to meet her grandma's Kitsune, herself.

Could hear her grandma chuckling now, likely could feel how quickly they were coming, though her grandma was still strolling along, at her own pace. 'Did the Alpha freak out when I hit the pack?' she sounded fully amused to El.

'Shot to his feet and was all tensed up.' El giggled right back 'So I guess so.'

'Good. I like it when they fear the unexpected.' Sloan laughed heartily.

'You're in trouble grandma, not telling me anything all this time.'

'Got laws sweetie, sorry. But with your grandfather being human, your father being human and your mother human, you had the gene, but it was very unlikely you would shift. So, with sadness, it was decided we wouldn't tell you. I wanted to, as did Taro but...'

'I understand.' She did a little. If she'd never met Conner and he'd not known what she was to him, likely would still be human, no Petal for her. That's how Aunt Juliana explained it to her anyway. They were racing through the western woods, and they could feel that Atlas and Conner were still at the packhouse, hadn't followed. She'd thought he would. He'd not really let her go off by herself at all since he'd found her, was never more than on the other side of the room to her.

She let it go, she didn't know what wolven laws or protocols were around here, and he had to relinquish her at some point. She was still inside the pack and he knew she wasn't running away from him. Just running off to meet her grandma, so likely he wasn't at all worried about her running away from him. This was not like every other time she'd run away from him.

Petal came to a standstill right before her grandma's Kitsune. Aunt Juliana had not been wrong, she was the exact opposite in colouring, all white with black tips on her tails. As big as her as well. She was bigger than Petal and by a lot. She'd wondered if she would grow to the same size as Aunt Julian's kitsune and been told that Petal was fully grown and wouldn't get any bigger.

'Young one.' She heard a gravelly voice, also higher in pitch like Petal's, which seemed to be the distinct tone of a Kitsune, 'Present yourself to me your Alpha Luna, Blade. A full display, young one.'

El had no idea what that meant. Aunt Juliana had not asked her to do that, but Petal seemed to know what it meant. Inherited knowledge passed on down like all shifters got. Petal shook herself out and then all her tails were up and fanned out, in much the same way that she had reacted to Aunt Juliana's hand gesture. Though she took it one step further and sat herself down before Blade, all her tails displayed around her and then they were lifted up about her and the tips all drooped down and out.

El looked at what she could from behind Petal's eyes and realised she actually looked like a flower right at that minute, saw Blade sit and do the exact same thing, 'Wow you look like a daffodil,' she gasped.

'So do you,' her grandma's voice came right back to her, could hear the smile in her voice 'Petal is aptly named, I see. I've never seen colouring like yours before, she is beautiful, though it makes me curious.' She saw Blades head tilt slightly to the left as they sat looking at each other.

'About?' El asked right back.

'If you had a twin that wasn't viable, and so you got both her and your colouring. A blend of both.' Blade stood up and Petal followed suit, they both shook themselves out and then they smelled each other before just standing and touching their heads together. She noticed it was in almost the same way Petal and Atlas did, a mark of love and respect she knew.

Then Blade walked on through the woods and Petal fell into step with her, were once again on the move, headed towards the pack's centre. Was asked to lead the way to the packhouse, Petal seemed happy to do that.

'Where is that Mate of yours? I thought his beast would be with you...Treating you like a princess, I hope.'

'Yes, it's kind of weird though. Conner went from being all snarky and rude to lovey, and is always asking me what I want. Giving me choices for everything. Completely different to how he was when I was here before.'

'So, he well should.' Heard her grandma sigh, 'Though I heard from Juliana, you had to be Marked by force to attain your shift. Needed him to gain Petal.'

'That does sound right.'

'Lucky I was not there, would likely have killed him for it.' heard her sigh 'Though it seems to have worked out well.'

'It has, still getting used to it, but he barely leaves my side. Everyone here knows I'm his Mate. And they all call me Luna, that's weird to me still.'

'You'll get used to it. It's a mark of respect within the pack. If one address's you any less without permission, you have the right to punish them.'

'What?'

'It is the wolfen way, also our way, though Juliana is less strict on that matter, likes her pack calling her Aunty or by her first name.'

'I did see that a lot, the kits all loved her. She's really nice, I see you in her.'

Got chuckled at for that comment 'You're forgiven Kit, now did Conner know what you were, figure it out before he caught up with you in Italy? Juliana is stubbornly silent on the finer details. Told me to get my butt home if I wanted to know everything that is going on inside our pack.'

'Why aren't you there?' El asked 'And no, he thought I was a fox, but had no idea about the Kitsune at first.'

'Good, I have one more question I want to ask. Did you run away from him back to the pack and he hunt you all the way there?'

'No, he and his unit found me at the university. Gave me the option to talk to him at his hotel or in my pack. Took me to the pack when I asked him to.'

'Good.' Was all she said on the matter and El wondered if that had been important, kind of got the feeling it was to her grandma.

'Grandma, why aren't you in the Willow Moon Pack?'

'Juliana doesn't need me there, she is more than capable. I like my job here. Get to see the world, rid it of nasty pieces of work. Generally, work for the Alpha Council or Alpha's here for one thing or another.'

'What's an Alpha Council?' El asked. She'd not heard that term before.

'A group of retired Alpha's and Luna's that help to try and maintain order, doesn't always work. They mostly leave wolf packs to deal with their own things but, sometimes they have to get involved. They're good for starting new packs. Punishing the worst of the worst. Spend a lot of time in the wolfen kingdom, a place I do not go.'

'Oh, is it bad there?'

'Not particularly. Just the king has a lot of witches, who are seers. Blade gets agitated around them, doesn't like people prying into our thoughts, and that is their job. We came across one once out here in the wolfen world. That stupid seer latched on to me in human form without warning. It didn't go down so well, that seer also did not survive.'

Which didn't really go down so well with its coven leader, but once he realised what I was, he just stared at me and walked away.'

'Witches don't like you?'

'Witches are a law unto themselves, kind of like us Kitsune, just stay out of their business and they'll stay out of yours, for the most part.'

They stepped out of the forest and headed for the pack house. She could see Conner standing there smiling at them, could feel Atlas wanting to be with Petal and chuckled softly. She was amazed by all the children running and yelling Aunty Sloan and then were just all over Blade, laughed at the sight of her treating them to a little ride on her tails, almost looked like a swing ride at a carnival. As the children got lifted up into the air and spun around before being put back down. Certainly, it looked like the children enjoyed it. It did look fun.

'Does that hurt you, your tails?'

Heard her grandma laugh 'No Kit, I'm quite strong.' Looked right at her 'Petal might be able to do it one day, but she is quite small, might want to wait on that a few years. Like a hundred. Now let's meet the wolf that dared to imprison my grandchild.'

'He's a surly grumpy one. Also, a control freak.'

'I got that, though the aggression Conner put off was more than his father's.'

El didn't say anything to that. She didn't know, had not actually seen any aggression in him with the exception of the day she'd told him she would leave. Atlas had not liked it at all, and mated the hell out of her for it. Though even that she'd enjoyed, he'd been all possession and aggressive about it, laying his claim on her, just the thought of her leaving him had set his possessive side off. From her understanding, he'd not even scented her then, just considered her his, because she could satisfy Conner and, apparently, that was not easily done.

Didn't think there was ever a time when he'd not been sated by having s*x with her, she still thought it was crazy insane how much pleasure she derived from s*x. How much she wanted it, couldn't get enough of it once they started. Was always up for it, even when she was tired his touch could make her hot and bothered, bring out a need in her to have him once more. It was completely crazy.

Petal looked up at him and he smiled right at her as they stopped in front of him, "I've got clothes coming for the two of you." he stated simply, he didn't sound at all concerned about her grandma standing next to her in front of him.

Though Blade looked at Conner, she walked right past him and up the stairs was headed for Logan. He was the current pack Alpha and likely the one she had a bone to

pick with. Seemed happy that El was happy with Conner, his behaviour, it seemed, was excused, for the moment. Likely giving her choices to everything had saved him from her grandma.

Blade stood before Logan, her head lifted up to look at him, came up to his chest, was staring him down it seemed. She got to watch Logan bow his head slightly, saw Blade look at the man's unit and they all also bowed to her. She wondered why she hadn't made Conner and his unit do that? Just looked them over and passed by them all as though they were of no concern to her.

Saw a young girl come from the pack house, blink at the sight of Blade and then bow and step over to her "Clothing for you," held out a dress to her, watched her grandma shift without a care in the world as to who saw her naked body take the offered dress and thank the girl with a smile. Slipped it on "Logan, we meet at last." She commented "Where is Brittney? Should be standing by your side or do you control and restrict her movements as well?"

El was shifted back to herself, but she noted Conner and his unit surrounded her and protected her naked body from being seen by all. He was the only one facing her. All the others were facing out away from her. She slipped the dress on and smiled up at him. "Thank you," she murmured; he knew she was not exactly comfortable with being naked in front of others.

Her attention returned to her grandma, who was now looking at her, saw her smile at what she'd seen, must have liked it, the way he'd not let anyone see her naked. "I'll see Brittney, before you and I, Logan, get into the treatment of my Kit here."

"I treated her like everyone else inside the pack." He commented.

El wondered if that was true,.. watched her grandma turn and look right at him 'I can smell a lie Logan, best you don't do that, unless you want a fight. Think I'd win that, don't you? This will be your only warning, for not just you, but your entire pack. Honesty is the only way to go with me." Then she turned away from him. "Conner, you will take me to Brittney, I want to see about her condition, seeing as Logan states she's in the hospital. I'll do that on my own." She shot over her shoulder at Logan. That must have been mentioned while she was being shifted back.

El had to turn away to hide the smile that touched her face. If Logan thought she was a handful, how was he going to deal with her grandma? Watched her walk down the stairs. "Give me a moment to talk to you as well boy." Her grandma looked right at Conner as she headed towards them.

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