

Kidnapped by My Mate Novel

Chapter 131 – Kidnapped by My Mate Series II: His Lost Queen

Filed To Story:

It was his way of protecting me. I knew this. But that didn't make me feel any better. I didn't want to be protected—I wanted to know if he was okay. I needed to know if he was okay.

My eyes darted to Liam who was still right next to me, watching me intently. “He cut off our connection,” I told him.

Tears of panic pooled in the corner of my eyes, but I quickly suppressed them. “W-What do I do? I can't make out what he's feeling anymore.”

A pause ensued while he tried to determine the right thing to say. His hesitation was evident, immediately telling me that whatever he was going to say would upset me.

“I think...the only thing you can do... is wait.”

And upset me, it did.

“My mate is in trouble and you want me to do nothing?” I demanded. “What if he gets hurt? What if he gets ~killed~?”

“Belle, listen to me. I think we both know that Azazel Mortar is behind this. I need you to be fucking serious.

“How the hell are you going to be able to help when faced with one of the most powerful vampires in the world? What could you possibly do to help your mate during a situation like this?”

“More than I could do sitting in my living room, twiddling my thumbs, and playing fucking Go Fish!” I snapped back, seething with anger.

“I'm the queen of the supernatural, of Zaweth and I need to be there if something is happening. I'm not selfish and I'm definitely not a coward.”

“I need to be with my mate if something is happening. And you’re not going to stop me.”

Not saying another word, I sprang up and with conviction, made my way to the front door once again.

Liam used his vampire speed to appear in front of me in less than a second, blocking my path. “I can’t let you do that,” Liam said.

“Get out of my way, Liam. I mean it.” My voice was fuming.

His arms crossed over his chest while he stared me down with an unwavering expression. “No.”

I was so done with this shit. I was so done with other people thinking they were the ones in charge of my own damn life.

Making up my mind, I marched over to the kitchen, pulled open a drawer, and grabbed a knife.

Liam’s brows rose with shock as I approached him once again. “Belle, what are you doing? The most you’re going to achieve here is hurting yourself.”

“I’m not an idiot, Liam.” I tried to keep my stance strong as I held up the knife. “Get out of my way, or I start swinging.”

Liam’s lips curled up at the corners. He was clearly amused by my threats.

“Do you even really know how to use a knife? I’ve been training in blade combat since I was eight years old. I would take you down easy—even without my vampire abilities.”

“It doesn’t take a genius to figure out how to stab someone,” I replied. “Now, move.”

“You know I can’t do that. I wouldn’t be able to live with myself if something were to happen to you. And neither would your mate.”

It was sweet, really. Liam was a good friend. It was too bad he was also a butt face.

And then... I’m not really sure what happened next.

One moment I was strutting toward Liam, knife in my shaking hand, ready to do whatever I had to do to get to my mate.

And the next, I was standing in the middle of the hallway outside my apartment, only inches away from stabbing a very nice-looking stranger in the stomach.

“What the hell?” exclaimed the curly-haired woman standing in front of my front door. I immediately recognized her as one of Grayson’s original pack members from Minnesota. Bridget, maybe?

I had the opportunity to talk to her during my first week in Zaweth and remembered thinking she was really cool and extremely stylish.

Standing next to her was another werewolf whom I didn’t recognize as much. I knew his name was Christopher, though.

Like most male werewolves, he was huge and intimidating. It didn’t help that he was dressed in all black and covered in muscle.

So Liam hadn’t been lying when he’d said there were two werewolves stationed outside my door, tasked with keeping me inside.

Bridget just barely dodged my knife before I realized what I was about to do and pulled it back to my side.

“Why do you have a knife?” Bridget asked. “Were you about to stab me?”

The man looked behind him at the closed door before swinging his gaze back at me, confusion written all over his face. “Where did you even come from?”

I was just as confused as they were. I had no idea how I got here. Did I black out?

Oh, my god, did I actually stab Liam? I mean, I know I threatened to do it, but I never actually meant to.

Relief surged through me when I heard Liam’s voice calling out from inside my apartment.

“Belle? Belle! Fuck!” He let out a string of curses while he started searching around for me. “This isn’t fucking funny, Belle!”

The two werewolves seemed to narrow their eyes on me, obviously hearing the same thing I did.

“I, um...,” I began. I took a few steps back. “I should go.”

Without saying another word, I turned on my heel and started sprinting down the hallway.

“Hey! Hold on!” the man yelled behind me. The sound of his much quicker footsteps could be heard racing after me. Bridget was busy banging on the door to my apartment, trying to get Liam’s attention.

I wasn't even halfway down the hall when Christopher grabbed my arm, attempting to pull me to a stop. I squeaked, preparing to fight against him—but then he released me. He just let me go.

My eyes flew up, looking behind me, only to find that Christopher was no longer there. In fact, not even the hallway was there.

I was once again in a whole other location. And this time, I didn't recognize where I was.

I was surrounded by tall trees that never seemed to end, obviously in the middle of a forest. But which forest? Was I still in Zaweth?

And, more importantly, how the ever-loving fuck did I get here? Was I losing my mind or did I just apparate like a damn wizard straight out of Harry Potter?

"Each Fae develops their powers based on need and circumstance," Evangeline's voice rang out in my mind.

Could this be what she had been talking about? I needed to get out of my apartment, so I appeared on the other side of the door.

I needed to get away from the werewolves guarding my apartment, so I instantly appeared in the middle of the woods somewhere. Not the most helpful solution but I suppose it would work.

At least I wasn't locked up with Liam anymore.

Holy fuck. Was I a fairy now?

GRAYSON

HALF AN HOUR EARLIER

After hundreds of years, the invisible border protecting the kingdom of Zaweth and preventing just anyone from wandering in was taken down, and we had no idea how or why.

I didn't even know that it was possible. The warlock who put them up all those years ago, Gulius Mallor, was still alive and had been a resident of Zaweth his whole life.

While not immortal, warlocks were some of the longest-living creatures in existence. They were often referred to as the sea turtles of the supernatural world, living on average for a thousand years.

They were also incredibly rare. Gulius was one of few in existence and also one of the oldest at 912 years old.

And he was missing. The only man who could do anything to help was nowhere to be found.

The supernatural kingdom had a lot of enemies who wouldn't think twice about taking advantage of our borders being down. For all we knew, they could already be in Zaweth.

Kyle and I scrambled to protect the borders before it was too late. At least one hundred of our best warriors were stationed around the entirety of Zaweth, and we were recruiting more volunteers to take shifts.

We had been patrolling the borders for the last several hours. It was dark now, the night sky blanketing us with dark shadows and moonlight.

The forest was quiet at night and brought my wolf and me great peace.

I wasn't able to enjoy this peace though because Belle was upset with me. I felt her seething and worrying through our bond, taking advantage of our new connection and constantly checking in on me.

I wholly regretted not teaching her how to mind-link—an ability that she would be able to take advantage of now that we were fully bonded—before I left her.

It would have been an extremely useful ability to have, especially since I took her phone so I could be the one in charge of what information she was exposed to.

I tried sending her soothing vibes through our link but they did little to calm her.

This was to be expected.

It was hard for newly mated couples to be apart from each other, even when both were in safe environments and not possibly facing a battle with a psychotic vampire.

I hadn't been kidding yesterday when I said I planned on keeping her in bed for the rest of the week. And I still planned on doing exactly that as soon as I knew that my kingdom was safe.

I reached out to Belle through the link, checking in on her. She liked feeling my presence because it ensured her that I was all right. She calmed just slightly, but her worry for me was still strong.

I sighed. I hated leaving her with Liam. It wasn't easy to be away from her after mating, especially since she hadn't shifted into a fairy as I had been expecting her to after we were done.

Had the prophecy been wrong? Or was there a shift still coming?

I pulled out my phone and sent a quick text to Liam, asking him to tell Belle to stop worrying and to go to bed. I would be back with her as soon as possible. Her anxiety was completely unnecessary.

This entire situation felt all too familiar.

Leaving Belle right before mating and being pulled out to protect the borders from an unexpected breach reminded me a little too much of the night that Azazel took control of my body.

I had no doubt in my mind that he was the one behind all of this. Kidnapping Gulus Mallor, despite being a harmless old man, and coercing him to remove the borders was not beneath Azazel.

If my suspicions were correct, all we had to do now was wait for Azazel to act on whatever ridiculous plan he was cooking up.

And then I would kill him, make him pay for what he did to my mate.

And then I would return to said mate, throw her down on the nearest surface, and let her continue with whatever she planned to do to me before we were interrupted.

Then I would plow into her repeatedly until we were both too exhausted to continue.

Maybe I would take her from behind this time. Or watch her face twist with pleasure while she rode my cock and dug her nails into my chest like I knew she loved to do.

“You know, I gotta tell you, this whole ‘being a hybrid’ thing is seriously proving to be both a blessing and a curse,” Kyle said to me, feigning exasperation.

We were walking through the woods, checking in on our warriors around the borders to make sure there wasn’t any land that wasn’t covered. Kyle hadn’t stopped talking the entire time.

I could have done this on my own.

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Still, Kyle insisted that I not be left alone since the last time Azazel was on my territory without permission, he took advantage of my solidarity, taking over my mind and body for several months.

“What are you going on about?” I responded.

“Well, thank you for asking,” Kyle started. “Becoming a hybrid comes with a lot of benefits—bigger, faster, stronger. An all-together better warrior. And that’s all great.”

He let his gaze slide to me. “What they don’t tell you about becoming a hybrid is that you have to fucking smell it every time your alpha is thinking about mating with his luna.”

I grinned. His comments about my potent sex pheromones didn’t bother me nearly as much as they did before I had finally taken my sweet little mate.

My temper was much more manageable now. My wolf was at ease for the first time since I had become old enough to find my mate because Belle was mine in every way, shape, and form.

I had everything I had ever wanted.

But my need for her was still at an all-time high. Mating with her had only made me more insatiable.

I wanted to fuck her blind. Nonstop. Forever. To watch her face scrunch up adorably with constant orgasms. To pleasure her until she was just as addicted to me as I was to her.

I seriously doubted that need would ever go away. Kyle would soon realize that and learn to ignore it.

At least he was the only one with senses strong enough to sense it every time I was thinking about sex with my irresistible mate.

My pheromones weren’t nearly as strong as they were before, so no one besides him would be able to sense them. It was only Kyle’s burden to bear, and I was fine with that.

“Breathe through your mouth,” was the only solution I provided for him.

Kyle groaned. “I thought it would get better after the two of you finally did the hanky panky.”

“Then you’re an idiot.”

He chuckled, shaking his head. “Guess—”

He didn’t get to finish that sentence because, at that very moment, a blinding light took over the space around us, and an invisible source slammed into my body.

It lifted me off my feet and threw me to the ground at the base of a tree. The wind was knocked out of me, and I grunted from the impact, coughing several times.

What the flying fuck was that?

I rolled to my side as I tried to get my breathing under control and groaned at the intense pain in my shoulder. And then I realized what had happened.

The invisible force field protecting Zaweth was back up. I could see the dome-like enclosure just barely visible and glistening above me.

“How the fuck...,” I murmured.

I sat up and searched for Kyle, my heart nearly stopping when I found him.

No, no, no...

I was up and sprinting over to him in less than a second and fell down to my knees next to him.

Kyle was lying on his back on the ground, unmoving, showing no signs of breathing, unseeing eyes looking up at the sky without emotion.

A deep wound, thin as if it were made by the cut of a knife, started at the top of his head and ran down the entire right side of his body, all the way to his feet in one long, gory line.

It cut through his right eye and ran down his cheek, the side of his throat, chest, stomach, and leg.

Blood pooled from him and formed a puddle around us, completely soaking my jeans and filling the air with the scent of iron and death. It was a scene straight out of a horror movie.

The force field had cut right through him. His right foot was nearly in two pieces, sliced right down the middle, severed up to his ankle where the wound morphed into a grisly flesh wound.

I had no doubt that if I were to roll him onto his stomach, the gruesome, cable-like wound would be running up his backside as well.

It created a perfect line that circled the length of him in the way that the force field appeared around him, starting at his feet and then moving upward.

“No. No. No!” I shouted. I grabbed his shoulder, shaking him, trying to get him to move. “Kyle!” He didn’t even twitch.

I could barely bring myself to breathe. Panic speared the walls of my throat, clogging my windpipe.

If this was what the force field had done to Kyle when it was restored...then what had it done to the hundreds of pack members stationed along the border?

They were all within the area where the force field would have materialized.

“A pity,” a familiar voice said behind me. “Your beta was an irritating nuisance, but it was never my intention to kill him.”

I stood and snapped around to face the owner of the voice.

It was no surprise that Azazel Mortar stood before me, dressed casually in black slacks and a matching black button-up shirt.

His cocky grin showed off his pointed fangs, and his vivid red eyes seemed to glow ominously in the dark.

“Casualties of war, I suppose,” Azazel continued, his menacing grin expanding over the pale skin of his face. He spoke cheerfully as if he were engaging in good-natured conversation with an old friend.

All-consuming fury raced through me, taking over my every thought, my eyesight going red with crazed and fervid rage.

Azazel Mortar had just successfully killed my beta along with an unknowable number of my pack members. He had taken control of my body for months and tortured my mate.

He had made us all live in fear of him and his next move, wondering every day if it would be the one in which he would achieve his goal and finally take the throne.

But not anymore. Tonight, he would pay for his sins. Tonight, Azazel Mortar was a dead man.

With a roar, I sprang forward, advancing in a flash.

I reached for him with extended claws, intent on ripping out his organs, his tongue, and his eyes. Never his jugular though. Or his heart. No, that would be too easy.

His death would not be quick or painless—it would be excruciating and gruesome.

I would make sure he felt it when I broke each one of his bones before tearing both his arms from his body at an agonizingly slow speed and then did the same with his legs.

I wanted him to know what it was like to have his blood run from his open wounds and pool around his body, knowing he was helpless to do anything to stop it. The same way I had felt when I watched Kyle’s blood pool around him mere moments ago.

But then, just as I was about to reach Azazel, my fingers barely brushing over the fabric of his shirt, he was gone, no longer in front of me. I whirled around with another livid roar.

His dark chuckle did little to inform of his location. It sounded like he was everywhere, coming from every direction.

“Did you really think I would make it that easy, Alpha Grayson?” Azazel said, his tone mocking as his voice boomed from all around me.

He was everywhere but nowhere. His physical form was nowhere to be found.

I bared my teeth. “Come out and face me, Azazel.”

Another chuckle. “Oh, I plan to.”

The sound of rustling could be heard behind me, and I immediately turned. Azazel was leaning against a tree with his arms crossed over his chest, that infuriating smile still tugging at his lips.

I lunged for him once again and was able to reach him this time.

I had no idea how he’d managed to evade my attack from before, but it didn’t matter because I was already plunging my claws into his stomach. His red eyes widened as I began to twist them into his flesh.

And then, just like that, he was gone again. My hand was still flexed, still covered in his blood, but there was no longer anyone in front of me. I looked around in confusion.

“Tsk, tsk, tsk,” Azazel tutted. “And here I was, thinking we had a real connection.”

I realized with a start that he was beside me now, a few feet away, watching me gleefully. And, despite my just plunging my clawed hand into his gut, he seemed to be completely unharmed.

His clothes were just as orderly as they were before, and no blood stained the fabric of his shirt.

My molars ground together. “What game are you playing, Mortar?” I demanded.

I took a slow step toward him, determined to keep him in my line of vision this time, but was abruptly stopped by another voice— Azazel’s voice, but coming from the other side of me now.

“After all those months spent sharing the same body, nearly the same consciousness, I truly had started to feel like I knew you. I may have even started to respect you.”

While this new version of Azazel—the version of him who had just spoken—

stepped forward, the one I had just been looking at was still standing to my right, watching me.

My gaze snapped back and forth between both of them. There were two of him.

Two copies of the same man standing right in front of me.

“It hurts, really.” His voice suddenly came from behind me. I whirled around, only to find another Azazel approaching, making the new count three.

There were three Azazel Mortars surrounding me. “It hurts that you’re so set on killing me,” this third version continued with a sad shake of his head.

“Although, I suppose I intend to do the same,” the version to my left said.

“My brother did always call me a hypocrite,” the Azazel at my right said. “I gather he was right.”

My attention snapped between all of them, my neck straining to keep them all in my line of sight as I realized that any one of them could attack the moment my back was turned and I faced another.

This was nearly an impossible task—especially when I heard multiple pairs of footsteps rustling the forest floor, and countless Azazel Mortars stepped out of the shadows of the trees, surrounding me.

At least forty of him formed a large circle around me, all of them sporting the same outfit, the same psychotic smile, the same bright red eyes.

Magic. It was the only explanation. Azazel was using some sort of magic to make multiple copies of himself. But I already knew that none of the versions surrounding me were the real him.

And if my theory was correct, harming these duplicates would do nothing to the real him.

I could kill them, yes—just as I had just killed the second Azazel that had appeared in front of me—but a new clone would undoubtedly appear in its place, uninjured and grinning at me.

Deciding to put my theory to the test, I shot my hand out and, using pure force, sank it into the chest of the Azazel closest to me, not hesitating to wrap it around his heart.

It was extremely satisfying to watch fear take over his expression as he realized my intentions—to rip his heart straight from his chest.

But before I got the chance to bring his miserable life to an end, he vanished into thin air, gone just like that. My hand formed a fist around nothing, still covered in his blood.

“That wasn’t very nice,” a new version of Azazel said, appearing in front of me in the same spot where the old one had stood.

His plan was clear. He recognized that he would have never been able to kill me on his own. We both knew I was bigger, faster, and stronger.

He would stand no chance, especially with the army of werewolves and vampires that I had on my side.

But he had taken care of any help I would have been able to ask for by killing all of the warriors near me when he somehow managed to put the force field back up.

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He knew that I would guard my borders with the best of my pack members. I had no way of knowing about the horror that would take place when the force field was put back.

I fell for his trick and had the blood of countless of my people on my hands to show for it.

Now, though, he could face me without any members of my pack coming to aid me.

I could mind-link for help, but it would take them too long to get here.

I was at the edge of Zaweth, a half-hour sprint in wolf form from the main part of the kingdom. And Azazel knew that. He was going to make this as quick as possible.

It all made sense. One version of Azazel I could handle. Hell, even fifty of him would be a walk in the park.

But it was when all of those versions of him became virtually indestructible—

simply reappearing completely unharmed, the moment I killed them—that things started to get a little dicey for me.

But luckily for me, I saw the only flaw in his plan.

I knew he wasn't capable of achieving this level of magic on his own, just like how I knew he wasn't capable of taking down the borders of Zaweth on his own. He was using warlock magic.

It was why I would bet my life that Gulus Mallor was somewhere nearby at this very moment, aiding Azazel in his attempt to take over the throne.

And wherever Gulus was, the real version of Azazel had to be too—someone had to be telling Gulus what to do, when to put the force field back up, and when to make new clones.

Both Azazel and Gulus had to be somewhere close—close enough to watch what was happening.

And, if I had to guess, Gulus was probably using magic to keep them hidden behind some invisible curtain and to mask their scents.

But if I could find Gulus and kill him, all magic would stop and I would be able to end Azazel's pathetic life without any more obstacles.

But I would have to make it through Azazel's indestructible clones in order to do that. That was the part that might prove to be a little difficult.

I had a very small window of time to figure out where Gulus was before Azazel made his clones attack. If I could just keep Azazel talking, I might be able to find him before it was too late.

There was no such thing as real invisibility. It might be hard to spot at times, but every invisible force field had a glimmer, a barely visible iridescent quality.

If I could find that glimmer, then I would find Azazel.

"I'm impressed, Azazel," I said in a low tone. "Leave it to you to figure out the only way to actually kill me without risking your life or doing any dirty work."

I scanned the many versions of his face that surrounded me, looking for any sign of glimmering magic while I spoke. "You truly are a coward through and through."

I hoped the coward comment would get to him. And it did. In sync, each one of the faces around dropped into a tight sneer.

"What you call cowardice, I refer to as good judgment," Azazel's voice snapped back. "I will not be known as the fool who died because he thought he could take on Alpha Grayson Stoll."

My brows rose. "Clones or no clones, that title is nevertheless destined to be yours."

Make no mistake, Azazel. You will die today. At ~my~ hands.”

The clones bared their fangs at me. I was running out of time and still had to find where Gulius was hiding the real Azazel. He was going to attack at any moment.

I was proven correct when several of the clones advanced on me without warning, using their vampire speed to move faster than I was able to comprehend. But I was fast too.

I shifted into my wolf before they could reach me and tore through the first clone with my teeth.

The second and third were taken care of just as quickly, my own vampire speed proving to be very effective on top of my werewolf abilities.

I was able to hold my own for a while.

But they just kept coming, throwing themselves on me until I had thirty or more—it was hard to tell—on top of me, tearing into my flesh with their teeth and claws the same way I was tearing into them with my own.

My priority was keeping them away from my jugular. Azazel hadn’t provided his clones with any weapons, so they only had their fangs and nails to help them.

They would try to go for my neck because it would be the quickest and easiest way to kill me. I couldn’t let that happen.

Before I had the chance to kick them off, two clones bit into my leg at the same time, ripping into my muscle, wrenching a chunk out with their teeth, and spitting it on the ground.

I howled in pain as my leg gave out from beneath me and forced me down.

I tried to get up while still trying to focus on limiting their access to my throat, but two more clones did the same to my other leg, and I fell to the ground once more.

I... I was losing. In less than thirty seconds, Azazel had me pinned to the forest floor. His clones piled onto me, and I was quickly becoming helpless to stop them.

Even if I did somehow manage to keep them from piercing my jugular, his teeth and claws were tearing into me all over my body. I would soon be losing too much blood.

Then a miracle happened. At the same moment a loud yell could be heard in the distance, each and every one of Azazel’s clones froze.

They became unmoving statues on top of me, some with their teeth still lodged into my skin, others dropping to the ground mid-jump.

Although confused, I wasn't complaining. I continued to fight them off of me, finding it much easier to do now that they weren't fighting back.

I had barely gotten half of them away from me when, without warning, they all simply... disappeared.

Yes, that's right—all of the clones vanished from on top of me and around me, almost as if they had never been there at all to begin with.

I wasted no time in standing and taking another fighting stance. I wasn't a fool. This had to be a trick. Why would Azazel simply give up in the middle of a fight?

Then I heard the sound that made my blood run cold. The terrified voice of my mate, screaming my name. "Grayson! "

BELLE

My thoughts were cut short by the sounds of growling and hissing coming from somewhere behind me. It sounded like people were fighting—a lot of people.

Vampires and werewolves, if I had to guess.

My stomach took a dramatic dive when I realized I recognized the owner of the growls. I would know that sound anywhere. It was Grayson's wolf.

I sprinted in the direction of the noises, my heart racing as the sound of my mate's distress only seemed to grow louder and more intense.

Even in the dark, what I found was worse than I could have ever imagined. There were two men, one with silver-gray hair and the other with pitch-black hair, both looking out into a clearing of trees, their backs to me.

The bigger one was standing, dressed in all black to match his hair, arms crossed over his chest in a casual manner. The other man was crouched down low, his long, brown, hooded trench coat skimming the ground.

His arms were held out in front of him, and his fingers were splayed out. It took me a moment to realize exactly what they were looking at.

There was a mountain of people piled on top of a fighting, snarling wolf. They were biting the wolf, tearing into him with claws while he howled and attempted to fight against them.

Grayson. The wolf was Grayson.

And the longer I looked, the sooner I started to realize that all of the people on top of him were the same person.

They were all carbon copies of one of the men standing in front of me—same clothes, same black hair...and red eyes.

It was Azazel Mortar. Azazel Mortar was trying to kill my mate.

There was a lot about the situation that I didn't understand.

I didn't know how it was possible that there were so many versions of Azazel. Or what the older man crouched down on the ground with his arms out was doing.

But none of that mattered. All I knew was that I needed to help.

I acted on pure instinct. I ran forward with the knife from my kitchen still gripped tightly in my hand.

Azazel turned, probably able to hear me coming, and looked at me with a wide, familiar gaze. I knew those eyes. I had seen them back at Grayson's pack house, staring down at me with an almost gleeful hatred.

I don't know how I had ever thought Grayson was capable of the evil things that this man in front of me had done to me all of those months ago. And now he was trying to kill the love of my life.

So I was going to kill him.

Azazel didn't have a chance to act on the shock I caused him when he saw me coming because my knife was plunged into his stomach a second later.

He gasped, his arms falling to his sides, his mouth going slack.

I didn't want to take any chances, so I pulled the knife out of his stomach and then drove it back in as hard as I could. Then, just for good measure, I did it once more.

Gotta make sure you hit those vital organs, right?

Blood poured from him and onto my hand. He coughed and the blood from his mouth splattered onto my white shirt and jeans.

He grabbed my wrist, claws digging in. The fury was evident in his eyes. "You bitch," he spat.

His body began to slouch forward, and I was forced to release my hold, unable to hold up his massive form against my much smaller one.

He hit the forest floor on his stomach with a loud thump and took my knife down with him, still lodged deep in his stomach.

I watched as his blood began to form a puddle around his down-turned figure. His back rose and fell unevenly with his final raspy breaths. And then he was still.

My pulse could be felt in my throat. Behind my eyes. Like a racehorse, pounding away rapidly in my chest. It dawned on me exactly what I had just done.

I had killed someone.

Evil vampire or not—a man was dead... because of me.

His blood was all over me. On my hands. Splattered across my face. It was pooling under my shoes.

No one tells you about how much blood there is after stabbing someone to death.

So. Much. Blood.

I was so engrossed by the horrors of what I had just done that I didn't even take into consideration that there was another man until it was too late.

The much older man, who had obviously been trying to help Azazel take down my mate, was still crouched on the floor—but he was looking back at me now.

He had shoulder-length white hair streaked with gray and the strangest bone structure I had ever seen.

It made me pause—somehow both alarmed and captivated by his odd features all at the same time.

He had an intense square jaw which was accentuated by his short, blunt haircut, and his sharp cheekbones protruded from beneath his flesh, hollowing out his cheeks in a way that could only be described as morbid.

His skin, although most was covered by his clothing, what little I could see was wrinkled to the point of disturbance.

Tattoos covered nearly every inch of his body.

Chapter 134 – Kidnapped by My Mate Series II: His Lost Queen

Filed To Story:

They were faded and dilapidated with old age, peeking out from beneath the sleeves of his brown leather coat and snaking up his bony fingers, climbing his neck and circling his face, and even disappearing into his hairline.

The dark ink was moving too, dark swirls dancing along his skin almost as if it were floating—alive, a part of him. It reeked of magic. But not the type I was used to.

The magic that I could sense this man was capable of was dark and powerful.

But that wasn't the most disconcerting part of his appearance. No, that title belonged to his eyes.

They were purely white, his irises barely even visible, his pupils taken over by the snowstorm that was his gaze. And they glowed, bright and jarring in the darkness surrounding us.

The whole visual was like something out of a horror movie—a creature crouching, staring at me in the night, only his white eyes visible.

And the way he was looking at me—it made my blood run cold. His attention swung down to Azazel's body, still lying at my feet, and then back up to me. And I instantly knew—this man meant to kill me.

I barely managed to shriek out my mate's name before his bony fingers were wrapped around my neck and my body was pinned against a tree with enough force to make the world around me spin.

Shit, I just had to drop my knife, didn't I?

GRAYSON

I couldn't see Belle, telling me she was somewhere behind Gulus's invisible shield, but I could smell her. I could hear her strangled, terrified gasps. And that would be enough to guide me to her location.

I was still in wolf form when I started running in the direction of her scent.

Azazel's clones had definitely done a number on me—more so than I'd like to admit—but the pain hadn't hit me yet.

The adrenaline racing through me made my injuries completely tolerable, if not altogether painless. My sole focus was on saving my distressed mate.

The moment I passed through Gulius's shield, I froze, stopping dead in my tracks.

That nasty, old warlock had Belle pinned against a tree by her throat, her feet dangling at least a foot above the ground.

My goddamn heart lodged beneath my jugular. She was covered in blood. It splattered over her face and drenched her white shirt. It dripped from her shoes.

Her wide eyes met mine while she violently struggled against his hold. Fuck, she looked so small compared to Gulius. And delicate.

My innocent, helpless little mate was being strangled by one of the most powerful men in the world. It was my worst nightmare taking place right before my very eyes.

Something wet beneath my feet stole my attention for a single second. I was stepping in blood.

And there was someone lying on his stomach just feet away from me, his lifeless, red eyes seeming to look directly at me.

Azazel.

Azazel was dead.

"Take one more step," Gulius said, "and I'll snap her neck."

I forced my wolf to give up control so I could shift into my human form. Once I was again standing on two feet, I addressed Gulius in what I hoped was a calm, even tone.

"Put my mate down, Gulius. " The power of the Mortars passed from my mouth and onto him, forcing him to heed my command.

He roared as he released his hold, and Belle went tumbling to the ground. She immediately started gasping for air, violent coughs making her whole body convulse.

A small amount of tenseness was released from my chest.

"Step away from her, " I continued. Gulius did, taking several steps back. "~Look at me.~"

The moment he was facing me, a level of fear I was not expecting became clear.

Genuine terror was painted all over the warlock's withered face.

Although I had never met him, I had always respected Gulius Mallor. I'd grown up hearing stories about him and his kind nature.

He was once regarded with great prestige, even a consultant to some of the greatest kings of Zaweth.

But now he had hurt my mate. So now I wanted to rip his head from his shoulders.

“He made me do it,” Gulius tried to explain. “He used the power of the Mortars to force me to take the borders down and hurt all of those people. I had no choice.

“I would never try to remove you from the throne. You are a wonderful ruler.”

I nodded slowly. “You claim that he used his powers to force you to do his bidding?”

Gulius nodded his head vigorously. “Yes!”

“How did he find you?” I asked.

Gulius frowned. “What?”

“You have lived in Zaweth all of your life,” I said in a low tone. “In fact, you’re known for your refusal to leave the kingdom grounds. You are often referred to as a hermit or a bit of a loner.

“But our records show you leaving Zaweth for the first time in hundreds of years just a little over a week ago.” I looked at Belle, checking to make sure she was okay.

She was still coughing, but it was gentler than before, and she had managed to bring herself up into a sitting position. She was going to be fine. I let out a breath of relief.

“Now, normally, I wouldn’t think twice about this information. You’re free to come and go from Zaweth as you please. But it is the timing that makes me question the true motives behind your visit to the human world.”

“Azazel made me do it!” Gulius exclaimed. “He forced me out of Zaweth!”

I grit my teeth together. I hated liars.

“Azazel isn’t allowed within the borders of Zaweth.

“There is no way for him to get information in either. He had absolutely no way of reaching you unless you reached out to him first. Unless you left Zaweth to meet with him.”

Gulius swallowed, his mind visibly racing to come up with an explanation to justify his strange behavior. “I-I...”

“But you could have left for another reason,” I kept going. “Maybe to visit an old friend or travel the countryside for a while.

“It seems a reasonable enough theory that Azazel could have tracked you down after you left kingdom grounds and forced you to do his bidding then.”

Gulius was nodding again, agreeing with everything I was saying with wide eyes.

I took another step forward, muscles bunching in preparation for the attack that was about to take place.

“But, you see, Gulius, if that were truly the case, an innocent man wouldn’t threaten to kill the girl who had just set him free. He wouldn’t strangle the mate of the king who he claims to respect.”

Gulius knew that it was all over. I could see it in his white eyes. Defeat. Acceptance.

He took in a shaky breath.

“I was once great. Not so withered and old. The kings of the supernatural once sought my advice. But now...” He trailed off, wincing as though the rest of the sentence caused him pain to think about.

“I thought I could have been great again. But it seems as though I have found myself on the wrong side of history. And now, after all these years, that is all I will be known for, isn’t it?”

I didn’t answer. He didn’t want an answer.

He nodded slowly and then gently shut his eyes. “Just make it quick.”

And I did. He was dead and on the ground, his neck snapped, mere seconds later.

It wasn’t because I felt pity for him or wanted to grant mercy—it was because I had a mate who needed me, and I didn’t want to waste another moment before making sure she was okay.

Belle whimpered my name when I pulled her into my arms, tears of relief cascading down her cheeks. My own relief was so great that I nearly sobbed myself.

“Are you all right?” I asked as I brushed her messy hair from her face. Her small body was shaking against mine, the trauma of the night taking its toll on her.

She nodded. “Are you? Y-You’re hurt. Your legs—”

She was talking about the wounds on either of my legs where Azazel had ripped pieces of my flesh out with his teeth.

I shushed her, placing a gentle kiss on her forehead to try to calm her worries.

“They will heal. I have dealt with far worse than a few measly bites.”

She was quiet for a few seconds while she searched my expression. Then she said,

“You’re naked.”

I couldn’t help the laugh that rumbled from my chest. “That’s what you’re worried about?”

I wiped a finger over her cheekbone, smearing some of the splattered blood on her face. My smile dimmed. “Did you kill Azazel?” My voice was gentler now, filled with concern.

Her blue eyes rimmed with more tears before darting over to where Azazel’s body still lay on the ground.

Then she did something I wasn’t necessarily expecting. She looked down between us at her shirt and grabbed the fabric, holding it out for me to see.

“He got his blood on my shirt. I think it’s ruined. I don’t think I’ll be able to get it out.” She chewed on her lip while trying to keep her tears at bay, still looking at the blood-stained shirt.

“I didn’t know there would be so much b-blood.”

My heart broke the tiniest bit. I tilted her head back up and placed my forehead against hers, trying to get her to look up from the blood all over her.

“I think you’re in shock, sweet girl,” I told her, continuing to smooth her hair back.

“We’ll get you a new shirt. You don’t have to worry about that.” I kissed her lips once. “You saved me, Belle.”

“You were doing a terrible job on your own,” was her response.

I laughed again.

“If you ever lock me up and then go risk your life ever again,” she continued, “I’ll kill you. I’m not kidding. I’ve already killed one person. I know how to do it now.”

Fuck, this girl was cute. And very serious when she was threatening someone.

“Consider me warned,” I relented. We would just have to cross that bridge when we came to it.

“And you can’t block your emotions from me either.”

“What?” I asked. “I didn’t...” My voice trailed off while I searched through our bond, only to find that she was right. I had been keeping my emotions from her, and I wasn’t even aware of it.

Chapter 135 – Kidnapped by My Mate Series II: His Lost Queen

Filed To Story:

“I’m sorry, baby. I didn’t know I did that. It must have been some sort of instinct—my wolf trying to keep you from worrying.”

“Well, all it did was make me worry more. It’s why I knew I had to come find you.

The only reason you would have done that was if you were in real trouble.”

“While we’re on the subject, how exactly did you get away from Liam? And how did you get here so fast? Last I checked on you, you were still in our apartment.”

Belle looked around at the forest surrounding us. The sun was starting to rise, so everything was a little clearer now as the morning mist caught in the light. It was beautiful.

“I-I honestly don’t know. I don’t even really know where we are—”

Her eyes stopped on something and narrowed while she tried to determine what it was. Fear immediately took over our bond. “Is that...?” she asked.

In an instant, she was gone from my arms. I veered back, looking down in confusion at the spot where my mate had just been.

“Belle! ” I roared.

My mate had just disappeared like fucking Houdini. Here one second, gone the next. The only explanation was magic.

My gaze found Gulus, thinking he had to be the culprit, but he was still very much dead behind me.

“Oh, my god...”

My head snapped toward where Belle’s voice had come from, only to find her now several yards away from me, kneeling on the ground.

I would have been more confused over how she had gotten all the way over there if it weren’t for the thing she was looking at.

“K-Kyle!” she sobbed while taking in his mangled form, still exactly where I had left him. “Oh, my god, Kyle!”

I used my vampire speed to get over to her quickly. I knelt down next to her in front of my dead beta.

Belle barely managed to speak through her sobs. “W-What h-happened? What d-did this to h-him?”

My throat suddenly felt too thick to speak. With everything that had happened, I had momentarily been able to push the horror of my best friend’s death aside.

I’d had to focus on defeating Azazel. I’d had to avenge him. I couldn’t have let myself get overwhelmed by his death.

I wished I could have just stayed in that state of mind forever.

Now, kneeling next to his body, his blood still fresh on the ground, grief like I never could have imagined consumed me like wildfire.

Half of his body was completely destroyed by the force field.

The wound was gruesome, bits of his flesh hanging from him in some areas while his bone was visible in others. His right eye had been ripped right through.

How... How were we ever going to let Elijah see his mate like this? It would break him. Fuck, it was about to break me.

And the worst part was, he wasn’t the only one like this. There were many warriors stationed around the border when the force field went back up.

Likely, not everyone had been standing directly in the zone that could have killed them, but I knew there still had to be some.

Who knew how many of my people—my family members—I had lost today?

Belle’s sobs were loud and gut-wrenching. She kept saying his name over and over like she was going to make him wake up.

I put a hand on her back. “He...” I swallowed. Why couldn’t I talk? My mouth felt numb.

My entire body felt numb while I started to come to terms with just what a significant loss my kingdom was facing today.

The need to cry was strong in my chest, but I couldn’t bring myself to do it. “He was standing at the border when the force field went up. It tore through him.”

Belle shook her head, her movements jerky and frantic. She placed a shaking hand on the cheek that wasn’t cut and caressed his skin with her thumb.

“He’s going to be okay,” she whispered. “He’ll be okay.”

Her entire body was shaking again. The trauma of this day was taking its toll on her, and she was no doubt still in shock from killing Azazel.

This was the last thing she needed right now. I wish I had protected her from this. I would have told her about Kyle’s death eventually, but not right after everything she had gone through today.

The last way I wanted her to start grieving for him was seeing his body like this.

“Belle, we should go back,” I said to her. “We need to bring his body to Elijah. We need to let him know what happened.”

My heart sank just thinking about it. Elijah already knew his mate was dead—he would be able to feel it through the bond.

Seeing his body like this would be grueling, and I doubted that Kyle would want Elijah to witness him like this, but I wouldn’t be the person to keep Elijah from seeing him.

If Belle died, there wasn’t anything on planet Earth that would prevent me from seeing her, from holding her against me one last time.

Belle shook her head again. “No!” she shouted. She put her hands on either side of his while she continued to sob. “No, he’s going to be fine. I’m going to make him fine. I’m not going to let him die.”

Heavy—everything felt heavy, my eyes, my heart, my limbs. This was all too much.

Belle wasn’t making any sense. She was in deep denial. I needed to get her away from here before she completely broke.

“Belle...,” I started, keeping my tone as gentle as possible. “He’s already dead. He’s been gone for a good while. There’s nothing we can do now but bring him back.”

I put my hands on her waist, getting ready to physically pull her away when she started to scream again.

“No! No, don’t touch me! Don’t touch me!” She shoved my hands off her.

The way she looked at me with her red-rimmed eyes made it feel like I was being pressed down into the earth, both of our sorrow threatening to bury me.

“I’m going to help him,” she whispered. She sounded so desperate. “You have to let me help him. Just give me a few minutes, please. Then we can go back. But I need a few minutes. He’s not gone yet—he’s just not.”

I stared at her, trying to understand. What the hell did she think she was going to be able to do for him now? Kyle died the moment the force field had gone up.

The only good thing we could take away from that was that it was painless and quick. He didn’t have to suffer.

But if trying to help him now would help her go to sleep tonight, would help her to know that she did all she possibly could, then I would let her stay a little longer.

“Okay.” I nodded. “A few minutes.”

Intense relief surged through the bond. “Thank you,” she whispered.

She looked back down at Kyle’s barely recognizable face and put a hand on each cheek, in the same spots they had been before.

This time, though, she put her forehead down against his, closing her eyes tightly.

She simply held him like that for a long moment, tears racing down her cheeks and onto his.

After a few more seconds, she started to speak. “You’re okay. You’re okay, Kyle.

You’re going to be fine. Please, please be fine.”

This went on for several minutes. She whispered to herself while she held him, repeatedly saying that he was going to be okay.

I sat back and watched in silence, my heart breaking more and more with every second that passed. How long was I supposed to let this go on?

Her grief was causing her to hallucinate, to think she could bring a corpse back to life. To say I was worried was an understatement. Could all of this have something to do with her dad dying?

Maybe she felt like she could have done more. Was it possible that she blamed herself for his death?

Nearly ten minutes later, we were still there. I knew I had to pull her away eventually. I had a whole kingdom to take care of. Kyle was likely not the only person who died today.

I had to be there for my subjects. And this couldn't be good for Belle, taking it upon herself to heal a dead man. What did it say about her mental state?

I was just about to put my hand on her back and tell her it was time to go when I heard someone approaching. The person's footsteps moved quickly, telling me it was a vampire.

Minnie appeared a moment later. I wasn't unhappy to see her. Maybe she could help me convince Belle to remove herself from Kyle's body.

I wasn't surprised to see her either. As the Mortar healer, she was called to where people were hurt.

She took in the scene silently. She looked at me first. She seemed unfazed by my nudity, but her lips turned down when she noticed all of the wounds I was sporting from Azazel and my battle.

Then her eyes moved to Belle crouching over Kyle. I saw the moment she realized exactly what had happened. Her body deflated before she looked back at me and shared a look of devastation and sorrow.

She came to stand next to us.

"I've been going around the border healing people who were affected by the force field," she explained softly, her arms crossed over her chest.

"Many people have only been affected by the blow of it going up without actually getting hit. But we haven't yet accounted for everyone..." she studied Kyle with red-rimmed eyes.

"Numerous people were beyond help. They...They were already gone."

I nodded slowly. "I thought that would be the case. Thank you for helping the people that you did."

"I'm sorry for your loss, Alpha. He was a good beta," Minnie continued.

"He'll be missed," I responded. "As will everyone we lost today. It's a sad day in Zaweth."

Minnie looked back at Belle. She was still crying, whispering words to Kyle that I could barely make out.

“Is she saying something?” Minnie asked.

“She’s telling him that he’s going to be okay. She said she’s trying to heal him,” I explained.

Minnie’s dark brows pulled together in confusion. “Heal him? Doesn’t she know he’s...?”

I shrugged. “I don’t know. She’s in shock. She’s been like this for ten minutes.”

Minnie let out a heavy sigh. “All right. Well, maybe we should—?” She cut herself off before she could finish, her eyes widening. “What the hell?”

I followed her line of sight until I was looking at the same thing she was. What the hell was right.

Kyle’s foot used to be in two pieces, split down the middle until halfway up his ankle, where it became one long cut. But that wasn’t the case anymore.

His foot...seemed to have mended itself. There wasn’t even a cut anymore, just a white scar.

And that scar traveled all the way up his leg, stopping right at his lower abdomen where I could literally see the skin repairing.

It was healing. His wounds were healing.

“How...? Is...Is the luna doing that?” Minnie asked, looking just as flabbergasted as I was.

“Fairy.” It was all I could bring myself to say because it was the only thing that made any sense. “It’s her powers.” I looked up at Minnie. “She’s using her fairy powers.”

Minnie’s eyes widened. “Because the two of you mated. The prophecy.”

When I looked back at Kyle’s body, his gruesome gash was still disappearing, turning into nothing more than forgotten trauma that seemed to have happened years ago.

I couldn’t help the way my chest filled with hope. Was it actually possible for Belle to heal Kyle after everything that had happened to him? To bring him back to life?

Belle was still kneeling over Kyle, her forehead to his, her hands grasping his cheeks.

“You’re going to be okay. You’re going to be fine, Kyle. I’m not going to let you die.

I’m not going to let you do that to Elijah. You’re going to be okay.”

She whispered things of that nature nonstop. I wasn't even sure if she knew what she was doing, her eyes shut so tightly.

Hopefully, she could feel it, though—hopefully she knew about the magic that was taking place right now because of her.

It was several long minutes before his face started to heal, all of it slowly repairing itself like two pieces of fabric being sewn back together.

The scar was impressive, fully healed and spanning down the entire length of his body. Minnie and I sat in rapt attention, holding our breaths while we waited to see what was going to happen next.

“L-Luna?” Kyle’s voice suddenly groaned out. “Ooohh, you’re going to be in so much trouble when the alpha finds out you’re here.”

Belle finally leaned back to look at him, her breath catching in her throat. “Kyle?”

she whispered. “You’re... You’re okay?”

Kyle tilted his head in confusion. “Of course I’m okay. Are you worried about the explosion? What the hell even was that? And how did you get here? Does the alpha know you’re here?”

He sat up a bit, so he was leaning back on his elbows. “Is that blood on your face?”

Belle tried to laugh, but it came out more like a gasping sob. She covered her mouth with her hand. “Oh, my gosh, you’re okay.” She launched herself into his arms.

Kyle caught her with a surprised grunt.

“I-I’m so glad you’re okay...,” she sobbed.

“What...?” Kyle asked, completely flabbergasted by Belle’s odd behavior. He finally looked at me, noticing my presence for the first time since he’d woken up.

His eyes widened. “I swear she hugged me, Alpha.”

His attention swung over to Minnie when she let out a giggle. “You saw it, right?” he asked her. “I had nothing to do with this!” He gestured down at my sobbing mate on his chest.

My laugh was deep and genuine and filled with relief. He thought I was pissed that he was touching Belle. Usually, that would be true. I would make an exception for today, though.

“What happened to you?” Kyle continued as he took in my appearance.

I was sure I looked pretty rough, still all bloody and bruised from the battle.

“Did you shift?”

Belle sat back, finally releasing him. She laughed while she wiped her nose and sniffled. Her gleeful eyes found mine. The broad smile she offered me may have been the sweetest thing I had ever seen.

It looked like Kyle was going to be okay. Azazel was dead. And my mate was a fucking badass fairy.

BELLE

THREE WEEKS LATER

There was nothing better than sitting in a tub of steaming hot water after a long day.

Grayson and I had to be up at the butt-ass crack of dawn for training, and then we were busy up until about ten o'clock that night.

And, yes, you read that right, Grayson was finally teaching me how to fight, despite my months of begging him.

Now that I was getting better at using my powers, Grayson knew he would never be able to keep me away from danger if I had my heart set on participating.

Locking me up with Liam would never happen ever again because I could just magically appear wherever I damn well pleased.

So Grayson agreed that if I was going to insist on putting myself in harm's way rather than hiding away like a helpless doll, I might as well know how to defend myself.

In addition to all of this, after we finally mated for the first time, we couldn't get enough of each other.

And I wasn't just talking about sex—although the sex was great. We just wanted to be around each other constantly.

It felt good to know that Grayson truly hadn't been avoiding me for all that time when he first brought me to Zaweth.

He was just sexually frustrated—to put it mildly—and being around me without being able to touch me only made his frustration a million times worse.

But now we could spend as much time with each other as we wanted—and, boy, did we take advantage of that. The only time we spent apart was when I went off with Minnie to help save someone's life.

Healing people was the most rewarding experience ever. I understood why Minnie loved what she did so much. There was nothing quite like being the one to give a suffering person a little bit of peace.

Minnie's and my powers were definitely different, but they usually ended with the same result.

If someone chopped their finger off, Minnie could heal it, so it was no longer an open wound. But it would still be a stub.

I, on the other hand, would be able to reattach the finger, to mend the skin back together so there was nothing left behind but a simple scar.

And most importantly, I could bring people back to life—a power that I developed after Kyle was killed by the force field.

But although I had been praised after discovering this ability, it had its downsides.

One was the time limit. I couldn't do anything for a person who was gone longer than a few hours.

It was terrible to rush to help someone only to find that I was too late. And then, it became my responsibility to tell the family.

I also didn't think it was fair for me to decide who got to live and who had to die. I didn't want to play God. Therefore, I only brought people back to life on rare occasions.

My one exception was the day that Azazel killed countless people with the force field. I saved everyone I could, leaving only a few people who were beyond saving.

I had done what I could to help. And I felt unbelievably good about that.

Grayson and I were equals now, both respected and loved by our people. We shared the responsibilities and burdens of being rulers of Zaweth—of the supernatural.

And we loved each other. More than I ever thought it was possible for two people to love each other.

Grayson didn't say anything as he entered the bathroom.

My lips turned up the tiniest bit, but otherwise, I stayed quiet too, keeping my eyes shut, even as I felt his gaze roam over my naked body and heard his breathing turn laborious.

I had left the bubbles out of my bath today for a reason.

I could hear rustling as he approached me and then quickly removed his clothes.

Neither of us spoke when he scooped me up in his arms and settled us back into the still-hot bath, with my back against his chest and his legs on either side of my hips.

He purred for me, the vibrations rolling through my body and settling in my core, making my pussy pulse with sudden need.

I hummed, knowing that his goal was to turn me on. As if I weren't already turned on the moment he walked into the room.

I wasn't the only one. I could feel his hard length pressing up against my lower back like an invitation, one I was eager to accept.

I didn't hesitate before reaching behind me and wrapping my hand around him, giving his pulsing manhood a few strokes. He growled low.

Eagerness filling my chest, I turned and straddled his lap. I pressed my lips to his before grabbing his length once more and lowering myself down on him.

We both groaned in bliss against each other's mouths as I started to ride him, squeezing my pussy around him in the way I knew he liked.

After a few moments, he removed his lips from mine and let his head lull back against the ridge of the tub.

He watched me bob up and down on his dick, taking in my bouncing breasts and blushed cheeks with a predatory look in his eyes.

I could already tell tonight was going to be a long night. And I was looking forward to every second of it.

Grayson had his hands on my hips to help guide me up and down his cock but otherwise left me to do what I wanted—to be in charge of both our pleasure.

My chest swelled. I was no longer afraid to touch him.

A few minutes later, we were both groaning in satisfaction as we came, me pulsing around him while he filled me up with his hot cum—a feeling I was never going to get sick of.

I leaned on his chest when we both came down while he ran a hand up and down my back in soft strokes. And I suddenly felt faint with loving him so much.

I told him exactly that. “I love you, Grayson,” I whispered against the skin of his chest.

His purring increased. “My perfect little mate.” He bent down and kissed my forehead. “I love you, too. More than you’ll ever know.”

Chapter 136 – Kidnapped by My Mate

Universe: The Alphas Doe

Filed To Story:

I was six years old the day I met Ace.

I was on a cruise with my family in the Bahamas. Back then, it was just me, my mom, and my dad. Joe, my stepdad, and all the kids that came with him didn’t come until much later.

I remember being happy. So, so happy. It was the first vacation we had ever been on as a family, and my parents had saved up for a long time.

My parents and I were splashing around in the pool, laughing as we enjoyed ourselves. It was the summer they taught me how to swim.

Back home, they were always so busy, especially my dad. After school every day, I went straight to daycare and wouldn’t see them until late.

We spent weekends together, but I never had their full attention on me. Something always came up. Dad was definitely a workaholic, returning home late every night.

So, this vacation, with their undivided attention on me, was a dream come true.

My dad had just pulled me into his arms and was getting ready to toss me back into the water when Ace appeared next to us.

Dad paused, looking at the little boy who just stood there, staring at me, breathing deeply like he was having some sort of asthma attack or something.

Ace was always breathtaking, even as a child. There was something about him that drew you in, forcing you to stop and look.

He had short brown hair, tan skin, and piercing, dark-blue eyes—so dark that they almost seemed purple.

I remember being totally captivated by him. I felt as if he had hypnotized me and was unable to look away.

Without saying a word, Ace grabbed my arm and tugged me away from my father.

I was too transfixed to resist. It didn't seem odd that this stranger was dragging me away from my parents without explanation. It almost felt natural—like he was meant to do it.

After his startling blue eyes, the next unusual thing I noticed about Ace was the sparks. Everywhere he touched me, I felt little pleasurable pops of electricity.

I looked down at our interlocked hands in confusion. How is he doing that? Does he have magical powers or something?

“Um, excuse me, young man.” My father waded forward. He put a hand on my shoulder, pulling me a step back.

Still, Ace didn't let go of me. In fact, his grip only tightened.

“Just what do you think you're doing with my daughter?”

Ace's eyes narrowed at my father, seeming to darken in color. “No,” he stated, his tone final.

Ace tugged me forward, forcing my father to release me. I went crashing into Ace's chest, and he wrapped his arms around me and turned me away from my parents as if to shield me from them.

“Mine.”

That was the first of many, many times I would hear Ace call me his.

My father's brow furrowed, and I could tell he had no idea what was going on.

I should have felt worried, too, but I didn't. I was too taken by the boy in front of me.

Putting my cheek against his shoulder, I wanted to feel the sparks on my face. I giggled when they danced along my skin. They felt funny.

Ace looked down at me. Some emotion I couldn't quite make out shone in his eyes.

Two people I didn't recognize put themselves in front of Ace and me, stepping up to my parents. I would learn later that they were Ace's mom and dad.

They started speaking with my parents, holding their hands out in front of themselves when my mom tried to step around them to get to me.

As hard as I tried to make out what they were saying, there was too much noise around us for me to hear anything. It seemed serious, whatever it was.

Ace ignored them, took my hand in his again, and started to drag me away.

“Hey,” I said to him. I looked down at our hands. The sparks were getting stronger, spreading a strange but pleasant warmth through my body. “How do you do that?”

I tried raising our hands to my face to inspect them, but Ace wasn’t having it.

He tightened his grip. “Don’t pull away from me.”

I swallowed. “I wasn’t. I just wanted to know why your skin is electrocuting me.”

We were on the other side of the pool now, far away from most people. He stopped and turned to look at me, never releasing my hand.

“It’s because you’re mine,” he said as if it were the most obvious explanation in the world.

My brows knit together. “Uh, what do you mean?”

He stared at me in response.

“Um, okay, I think I’ll go back to my parents now,” I murmured.

The words tasted bad coming out of my mouth. I didn’t actually want to go back to my parents but I didn’t know what else to do in the situation.

I glanced back at my mom and dad. They were still talking to the two strangers.

“No,” Ace said again. “You’re going to stay right here. With me.”

I blinked. “Did you want to play or something?”

Once again, Ace didn’t respond. He was too busy studying me.

Okay...

“What’s your name?” I asked instead.

“Ace Stoll.”

I smiled. I was finally getting somewhere with the dude. “I’m Dorothy! But everybody calls me Doe.”

For the first time, Ace’s scowl disappeared, and a small smile formed on his lips.

“My Doe.”

I gave him a funny look. “Why do you keep calling me yours?”

“Because you are mine.”

That vacation soon became the Ace-and-Doe vacation. We spent every second together, playing, running around, and swimming in the pool.

Our parents were always nearby and usually chatting, although I never knew about what.

I remember seeing my parents’ concerned expressions but never paid much mind to them. Why would they choose to sit and talk when there was so much fun to be had? Adults were weird.

I liked being around Ace. He didn’t talk a whole lot, but we still had fun. I loved it when I made him smile or laugh. I could chat his ear off for hours, and he would sit and listen, engrossed in every word.

Later, I would hear my mother say we balanced each other out, and I couldn’t help but agree.

He was calm and quiet, while I was hyper and loud. He thought through his every move, while I was spontaneous and constantly in need of someone to hold me back from doing stupid crap.