

Kidnapped by My Mate Novel

Chapter 81 – Kidnapped by My Mate Series II: His Lost Queen

Filed To Story:

He took in a deep breath, leaning in so close that I felt his breath fan over my face.

“It’s only ever been you. You’re the only person I will ever be mating with. I’m still your mate, and you’re still mine.”

“But... But I saw...” I couldn’t finish the sentence. The memory hurt too much.

“I know what you saw. I know. And I promise you there’s an explanation for it, just like there’s an explanation for every other terrible thing that happened to you because of me.

“Kyle stopped us before anything happened.” He wiped away the tears streaming down both my cheeks with the pads of his thumbs.

I could feel his pain radiating off of him through the bond in the same way I was sure he could feel mine. It only made each other’s pain worse.

“I can’t believe you’ve thought I was mated to someone else this entire time. Didn’t you feel it when Kyle stopped us?”

I remembered feeling them stop but... “I-I thought it meant you were... finished.” I shut my eyes tightly. I didn’t want to think about this.

“I don’t know. I couldn’t tell what I was feeling through all the pain. I-I...” My voice trailed off, my throat constricting.

Grayson made a whimpering noise. I opened my eyes, barely able to see him through my pooling tears. He took another tentative step forward, so his body was brushing up against mine.

“Will you please let me hold you?” he asked.

I should have said no.

But I didn't.

Grayson wrapped his arms around me and pulled me flush against him. That was all it took for me to burst into tears. My emotions came pouring out all at once, exhaustion and pain nearly overtaking me.

"I'm so sorry, Belle," Grayson repeatedly whispered in my ear. "It's always been you. I promise it's always been you."

My knees buckled beneath me. I nearly dropped to the cement beneath us, but Grayson didn't miss a beat.

He scooped me up into his arms, hugging me close to him as he began to walk. I didn't even care where he was taking me. I just needed to be close to him.

I sobbed into his chest like I had done earlier this morning when he'd found me.

The information that he hadn't slept with another person and that he was still technically my mate was shocking.

I didn't know how to process the relief and pain that was coursing through me. So I didn't. I just cried and let Grayson hold me.

Only minutes had passed when I heard Grayson speak again. "Belle, where are your keys?"

I lifted my teary gaze from the crook of his neck. To my utter surprise, we were in front of the door to my apartment. I frowned. How the hell had we gotten here so fast?

How had he even known where I lived? I guess he really did have ways of finding out my information.

"Belle, baby. Keys. Please, I just need to get you inside and into bed so I can take care of you properly," Grayson said.

I blinked, finally processing what he was saying. "I left them at the diner," I realized. I weakly wiped the tears from my eyes. "It doesn't matter, though. The lock doesn't work."

"What?" Grayson snapped. His hand flew to the doorknob and twisted. The door opened with no problem.

He growled, the feeling vibrating against my chest. "You've been staying in an apartment that doesn't fucking lock?"

I shrugged sheepishly. "It's not like I have anything worth stealing."

He swore under his breath, his body trembling with the evidence of his wolf, but he stepped through the doorway without arguing.

And that's when sudden panic rose in my chest.

"Wait!" I yelled.

Grayson's movements paused, and he looked down at me in concern.

"The fact that you didn't sleep with someone else doesn't change anything," I said, swallowing thickly.

Grayson's brow furrowed. "What do you mean?"

"I mean you're not forgiven," I somehow managed to say without fumbling over my words.

"You may not have had sex with that girl, but you still cheated on me. I saw it— felt it. A- And you still said horrible things to me and hit me and abused me and..." I paused, breathing deeply.

"What you did to me is still unforgivable."

Grayson growled. "No. Fuck this. You need to know what happened. It wasn't me—"

"I don't care!" I yelled back. "I truly don't care! Nothing, absolutely nothing can excuse what you did to me! Now, put. Me. ~Down!~"

Grayson's throat muscles shifted in a pattern, and he made a hoarse animal sound at the back of his throat. He still didn't let me go. And I wanted to scream.

Finally deciding I'd had enough, I brought my leg up as hard and fast as I could and slammed my knee right into his crotch, knowing it was the only place that wasn't covered in pure muscle.

And therefore also the place where I could do the most damage.

Grayson immediately groaned. His face turned red, and the muscles in his neck bulged, shock and pain taking over his features.

He didn't let go of me, but his hold loosened just enough for me to squirm my way out of his arms and onto the ground.

Still overtaken with pain, Grayson doubled over slightly. Knowing this was my only chance, I pushed him out of the doorway of my apartment and slammed the door shut directly in his face.

I didn't waste a second before grabbing a folding metal chair from the table nearby and placing it under the doorknob.

Then I grabbed the door chain and bolt lock and made sure both were secure, praying it would be enough to keep him out. My apartment may not lock from the outside, but it sure as hell did from the inside.

I wasn't stupid enough to sleep in an apartment where any random person could come in at any time while I was in there.

It only took a second for Grayson's angry voice to be heard from the other side of the door. He banged against the wood. "Belle! Let me in right now!"

I didn't reply as I watched my door shake on its hinges. I backed up, afraid he would come smashing through at any moment.

I knew Grayson could break it down if he wanted, but I really hoped he would give up before it came to that.

I could feel tears start to fall again as Grayson continued to bang against the door.

"Open this door right now, Belle, or I swear I'll break it down!"

I sat down on my mattress, which still left me in view of the door, bringing my knees close to my chest. I couldn't stop the sobs that took over my body.

I didn't even care if Grayson could hear me. I didn't care about anything anymore.

I just sat on my bed and... cried.

The banging stopped the moment the first sob left my mouth. I could barely hear Grayson's broken voice whisper, "Belle..."

He sounded so sad, so broken. But not as broken as I felt. And definitely not broken enough for me to do as he asked.

I wasn't sure how long I stayed like that. I cried for what felt like hours until my throat was coarse, and my voice was gone. I didn't hear Grayson again. I wasn't even sure if he was still outside my door.

I tried telling myself I didn't care.

GRAYSON

I had never loved Belle more than I did at that moment. I had never been more proud of her.

I had never been more frustrated with her.

I paced back and forth behind the back of her apartment building, my entire body reverberating with growls. The building was run down and falling apart and definitely not fit for my woman.

I wanted nothing more than to go in there, throw her over my shoulder again, and take her to a five-star hotel.

There I would hand-feed her the best food money could buy, rub her tired feet, and tuck her into bed with my arms wrapped around her.

I could feel her sadness and devastation through the bond. She had stopped crying about an hour ago but was still awake.

The quiet shuffling I heard from her window every once in a while told me that she couldn't sleep.

I felt ridiculous. Here I was, an alpha—no, the king of the supernatural, dammit—

standing outside my mate's apartment like a pathetic stalker, desperate to catch any sort of glimpse of her.

Even the slight shifting of her open window curtains from the wind made my heart race.

It was midnight, and her apartment light was still on. I continued to pace beneath her window, never taking my eyes away from the glass.

My chest wouldn't stop vibrating from my wolf's constant growling. He missed his mate just as much as I did. Even my vampire missed her, although he had barely spent any time with her.

My jaw clenched. Why the hell was she still awake? She had been working her ass off all day. I thought I had brought her home to rest, not to stay up all night.

I knew she was exhausted. She must be in so much pain, too, pain caused by her resisting the mate bond and continuing to keep me out of her mind.

If she would just let me in, let me comfort her through the bond, she would understand how much I missed her. Needed her. Regretted everything that had happened.

I froze when I saw a slight movement from behind the glass of her window. My breathing stalled. Belle slowly approached the window, eyes puffy and cheeks stained with tears.

She was still in her waitressing uniform, although it was wrinkled now from wearing it all day.

She looked outside hesitantly, with her arms wrapped securely around her waist the way she did when she was feeling vulnerable.

I knew she could feel me watching her by the way her body relaxed just the tiniest bit, taking comfort in the feeling of my gaze on her.

And then, although it was dark out and I was sure she couldn't see me, her gaze found me, staring for a few moments.

I couldn't control it when my vampire and wolf both came surging forward, trying to get a better look at their mate. I was grateful for the darkness. I didn't want my bright red eyes scaring her.

Her hand raised and rested gently on the window glass as if she were reaching out to me. My wolf whimpered. I took a step forward, barely able to hold myself back.

A tear fell down her cheek.

My heart utterly shattered. Without thinking, I approached her, needing to hold her in my arms and tell her everything was going to be okay.

With trembling hands, she slammed her window shut and tugged her curtains closed, blocking my view of her. I stopped walking, knowing she was telling me she wanted me nowhere near her.

She started crying again. I could hear her constant sobs that she was trying so hard to suppress even through her closed window. And there was nothing I could do.

Chapter 82 – Kidnapped by My Mate Series II: His Lost Queen

Filed To Story:

All I could do was stand there and hope she would eventually let me in, let me explain what had really happened.

Belle had finally fallen asleep a little over an hour later, thank God. After crying—

sobbing herself into exhaustion, her breathing finally started to even out sometime around two in the morning.

I was sitting beneath a tree right outside Belle's apartment, staring up at her window. I had never felt so useless, so helpless in all my life. I didn't know how to do this.

Keeping my distance was killing me—and her. I knew the bond was causing her so much pain because I was so near, trying to give her the final push to force us together.

But she was so damned stubborn and wouldn't do what was good for her.

The image of my mark on her neck entered my mind. It was so swollen that it took the form of a giant lump. It was surrounded by small boils and was no doubt infected.

I couldn't even imagine how much it hurt. It made me physically ill to think about how much pain she was in and to know that, at least for the moment, there was nothing I could do to help.

At this point in our relationship, we should have been fully mated, and the mark should be nothing more than a small, white scar on her neck, only visible if you are looking for it.

But because Belle and I had been apart for so long, because she denied the bond, it was huge and irritated, a consequence of our starving mate bond.

A sudden and horrifying scream of terror broke me from my thoughts, coming from Belle's apartment.

I immediately knew something was wrong with my mate and was on my feet and sprinting toward her in under a second.

I jumped up to her window without a problem and pried it open, swiftly ducking into her room and landing on my feet with ease.

I searched the small room for threats but was confused when I found none.

My frantic gaze found Belle. She was on the bed, very obviously still asleep. But she was whimpering and tossing and turning.

A deep frown was settled on her beautiful face, and tears were streaming down from her tightly shut eyes. She was having a nightmare.

Another shriek of terror came from her mouth, shattering my soul. "No!" she screamed, still asleep. "Please, no!"

I approached her quickly, careful to stay quiet so as not to wake her up. If she woke up and found me in here, she would be even more terrified than she was now.

"Belle, baby," I whispered as I knelt down next to her bed. I had to ignore the fact that it was just a mattress on the floor in an effort to keep some sort of trace of my sanity.

Her body was covered by a simple, thin blanket. She was shivering, goosebumps appearing on her arms, her nipples pointing through her thin tank top. My hands twitched with the need to touch her.

“Grayson,” her terrified voice said.

My shoulders dropped as I sighed. “I’m here, baby, I’m here.”

“No!” she suddenly screamed out. “Grayson, please, no! Please, don’t....”

My stomach hit the floor in realization. She was having a nightmare about... me.

She was dreaming that I was hurting her... forcing myself on her.

“I’m sorry!” Belle continued. Her voice was obstructed by her tears. “I’m sorry.

Please don’t—”

“Belle, God, no,” I whispered. I gently took her hand in mine. “Shh...,” I said. “Shh, it’s okay. I’m here. I’m never going to hurt you again.”

I thought hearing my voice would help her, but it did the complete opposite. She struggled more the moment she heard me speaking to her as she tried to pry her hand out of mine. I wasn’t having any of it.

My voice might terrify her, but my touch shouldn’t. She’s been deprived of it for so long.

The more Belle started to kick and scream, her nightmare worsening, the more desperate I became to calm her. I had to do something.

I crawled into bed next to her and wrapped my arms around her, tugging her flush against my form.

For a moment, she struggled against me, pounding her tiny fists against me and kicking in her sleep.

It didn’t affect my hold on her. In fact, I just tightened my grip, draping one leg over her and letting my hand go up the back of her shirt to rest on the bare skin of the small of her back, grounding her to me.

I held her tightly, feeling her shaking against me.

It was then that I realized how broken she really was. I could feel her prominent spine against my hand on the small of her back.

Her cheeks were caved in, and the outline of her ribs prodded against my stomach.

It made me wonder when the last time she ate was.

I had been watching her work all day and didn't see her take a break once, not even to eat something after I had demanded it of her. Did she have a source of food?

I frowned and hugged her closer to me. I would make sure she ate tomorrow, even if she didn't know it was me who was providing the food for her.

Her body eventually stopped struggling against me, recognizing the touch of her mate. I sighed deeply in relief. She was still shaking, and there were still tears leaking from her closed eyes, but at least she was calm.

"Grayson," she whispered in her sleep. "Please... I'm sorry..."

My wolf whimpered. "No," I said, desperation leaking from my tone. "You've done nothing wrong." I hoped she could hear me even if she was still asleep.

"You did nothing wrong. You hear me, Belle? I'm the one who should be sorry. I made the mistake, not you. I love you so much. You have to know that. I love you so fucking much."

"Grayson," she whimpered again.

I sighed and leaned forward to kiss her forehead. "Shh..." I mumbled against her hairline. "You're okay now. I'm here, and you're okay. Relax now, my love. I've got you. I've got you."

As if I had issued a command, her body slowly began to still its shaking, and she sighed contently.

She unconsciously moved closer to me, finding comfort in the arms of her mate, and nuzzled her face into my chest, right where she belonged. I felt the tightness in my chest release a bit.

Unable to help myself, I leaned down and licked the angry mark on her neck. I knew it wouldn't do much to heal it in the long run, but it would relieve her pain for now.

The only way to truly heal it and the bond would be to remain in physical contact with her. It would feed the bond that was so obviously starving.

It was either that or mate, but that was more complicated now.

Mating no longer meant merely completing the mate bond and linking her to me forever, but now the consequence was an unknown shift for Belle.

I hadn't forgotten that Belle would shift into a fairy after we mated for the first time; I had just chosen to push it out of my mind for the time being.

I didn't want to think about her going through a painful shift after I made love to her, something I had no control over because we would eventually have to mate or risk starving the bond even further.

Belle whined against my chest, moving her neck to the side so I would have access to my mark. She wanted me to take care of it for her.

I happily lapped at it, more than willing to take care of my mate in whatever way she needed.

Eventually, Belle fell into a deeper sleep, finding peace in my arms. When was the last time she slept properly?

Based on the dark circles beneath her eyes and the look of exhaustion I saw on her face, it had to have been around the same time I had, if not before that.

I wondered if the bond let her sleep at all. Was she in too much pain?

I struggled to keep my cool and not let my wolf take over. I had to remind myself that I had Belle back now.

It might take a while to fix what I broke and make her trust me again, but I had her in my arms, and she was getting some much-needed rest. That was all that mattered.

"Sh...", I continued whispering against her ear, basking in the feeling of her relaxing into me for the first time in months. "I love you, Belle. I love you. I'm so sorry."

We stayed like that for the rest of the night. I didn't let myself fall asleep, not wanting to accidentally stay here until morning but also not wanting to let Belle out of my arms.

I studied her for most of it, holding back my wolf's angry growls every time I noticed how broken and frail she looked.

Our time apart had really taken a toll on her, but, God, she was so strong. Not many would be able to make it through three months without their mate, especially before completing the mating ritual.

Our bodies were already gravitating toward each other, trying to force us to mate.

It would have been painful at this point even if she hadn't run from me.

I sighed when the sun began to rise hours later. I turned slowly, knowing I should get up so that Belle didn't freak out when she woke up.

The moment I moved, though, Belle whimpered and pressed her frail body closer to me. She wrapped her arms around my neck and stuffed her face into it.

My chest tightened. I wanted to stay with her more than anything in the world. And I knew that Belle wanted me to stay too; she just wouldn't let her conscious self give in to that need.

I groaned quietly when she threw one of her legs over my waist, unknowingly pressing her hot core up against mine and nuzzling further into my neck, taking in deep breaths of my scent.

"I know, love, I know," I whispered against her hair. I inhaled deep breaths of her scent, too, before placing a final kiss on her forehead.

"I have to go now, beautiful, but rest assured I'm not leaving you. I'll be right behind you wherever you go, protecting you and making sure you're okay.

"You just let me know when you need me, and I'll be there, okay?" I tilted her head up gently so I could see her beautiful sleeping face.

I smiled softly when I noticed she had some color back in her cheeks. She didn't look so tired and pale anymore. Good.

"Please. Please talk to me soon. Please, just listen to what I have to say. I love you. I need you in my life."

Moving as slowly and gently as I could, I disentangled myself from my mate and pushed myself away from her, grunting through the physical pain it caused me.

My entire body burned with the need to get back in bed and press Belle back against me for the rest of eternity.

Male werewolves found it extremely hard to be away from their mates, especially when they were in pain.

We could go mad with the need to nurse them back to health and ensure that whatever hurt them never went near them again.

I was going against my very nature by putting even a foot of distance between us.

I ignored my wolf and vampire that were pushing me to stay. They were only making my inner turmoil worse.

They didn't understand that to get her back, we had to stay away. We had to give her space so she knew we would never force her into anything ever again.

I grunted when my wolf seized control of my body and suddenly pushed me back so hard that my body slammed onto the bed, barely missing Belle's sleeping form.

My gaze snapped to look at her. She was still asleep, thank goodness. Her ability to sleep through it only reminded me of how badly she needed rest.

I promised myself I would be back tonight. And every night after that. I would give up sleep for the rest of my life if it meant helping my mate rest.

Just as Belle started to shift in her sleep, I escaped through the window.

Chapter 83 – Kidnapped by My Mate Series II: His Lost Queen

Filed To Story:

GRAYSON

The moment my feet met the ground after jumping out of Belle’s window, I reached out to Kyle.

“Kyle,” I said to him through mind-link.

His response was immediate.

“Well, hello there, Alpha. Nice to hear the sound of your voice on this fine morning.

Although, I would have thought you would be...well, occupied~ after finding the luna yesterday—if you know what I mean.”~

I forgot how much he could talk. I ignored his inappropriate comment—no time for his antics today. “I need you to come to Maine,” I said, getting straight to the point.

He didn’t respond for a few seconds.

“Uh, yeah, I don’t know if you know this, but you sort of put me in charge of an entire kingdom when you left, so I’m a little, um... extremely~ busy at the current moment

—~”

“I don’t care,” I interrupted. ~“This is more important. There is no kingdom without its queen.~ I need you here right fucking now. Belle is refusing to listen to me.”~

“That’s because she knows what’s good for her. Smart girl.”

I growled through the link, ensuring he could hear my anger and impatience.

“Jeez Louise, okay,” he said. ~“Someone is not in a joking mood today. I can be there by the end of the day if I take the private plane. Will that work for you?”~

“Fine,” I grunted. ~“She needs someone to talk to who she can trust, and...that’s not me at the moment.”~

“So you’re bringing in the big guns, eh? I’m leaving now. I’ll keep you updated on my ETA.”

“I’ll text you her address.” I was already taking my phone out of my pocket.

“See you soon, Alpha.”

Just as I felt Kyle’s presence flee from my mind, I heard a loud ringing sound coming from Belle’s window. An alarm. I stiffened. I had only just left her apartment a few moments ago.

I looked down at the watch on my wrist. It was a little after four in the morning.

She had been up until two.

Where could she possibly have to be so early in the morning that was more important than her getting sleep?

The correct answer was nowhere. She should not be up right now.

I heard her groan and then turn off the alarm. The sounds of her moving around the room came next.

I began to pace once again, wanting nothing more than to go up there and demand she go back to sleep.

My vampire pushed me to use the power of the Mortars on her, while my wolf wanted me to use my alpha tone. I pushed them both aside.

Minutes later, I swiftly moved to the front of her apartment building when I heard the sound of the front door open and close.

She exited the building warily, her gaze scanning around her, no doubt looking for me. I was too far in the shadows for her to see me, though. But I knew she could still feel me watching her.

Fury consumed me when I saw that she was wearing that fucking waitress uniform again. My eyes scanned her form. She was so beautiful.

I had to hold back a groan as I watched her hips sway while she walked. As much as I loathed the uniform, I couldn't deny that it made her look damn good. Too damn good.

I didn't know if I would be able to get through another day watching her prance around in that fucking outfit.

I followed behind her quietly, sure to stay far enough away so that she wouldn't see me. I had to hold myself back from dragging her back to her apartment and having my wolf sit on her again until she slept.

Seemed to work last time she needed rest.

I paused my walking when she abruptly stopped and grabbed one of the heels on her feet. She peeled it off her foot, uncovering her battered skin beneath.

Her foot was covered in blisters and red, irritated skin. There were blood and scabs, too, due to those damn heels she was forced to wear.

"Shit," Belle muttered under her breath, her shoulders sagging. After throwing her hair up into a bun, she took off her other shoe and continued her walk fucking barefoot on the concrete sidewalk.

My wolf growled so loudly in my chest that I was surprised when Belle didn't turn around to look for me. My wolf lurched my body forward, urging me to go to her.

I forcefully shoved him down. I was already fighting against my nature by not allowing myself to tend to her; I didn't need my wolf working against me too.

I continued following her, my body stiff and sore from holding myself back.

She walked barefoot for nearly half an hour until she reached the same diner she had spent all day at yesterday.

My wolf vibrated in my chest, furious to see that she was back here after working so late last night and not getting paid.

Thankfully, though, there were two other waitresses there, already working. So she wouldn't be by herself.

I pushed my wolf down once again, took a deep breath, and entered the diner behind her.

BELLE

"Your boyfriend is here again," Candice said in a singsong voice as she came to stand beside me.

“Who?” I played dumb. I had seen Grayson walk in when my shift started but had already decided that I was under no circumstances interacting with him.

I was too tired—both emotionally and physically—to deal with him today. Maybe if I ignored him long enough, he would give up on me and leave me alone. I mean, he had done it once, hadn’t he?

“Oh, come on. Don’t tell me you haven’t noticed him yet.” Candice teasingly poked my side. “No one could ignore that face of his. Or body. He’s been staring at you since he sat down.

“Is there a reason you haven’t gone over there yet?”

I glanced up at Grayson. He was in the same booth as yesterday, and, just like Candice had said, he was indeed staring at me. Warmth traveled through me when my eyes met his. I looked away quickly.

“Who’s Belle’s boyfriend?” Brenda asked, walking up behind us to get to the cash register.

Although she was almost two decades older than us, Brenda was always interested in whatever gossip was circulating around the diner that day. “Is that Liam kid here again?”

A low growl came from the corner, barely audible. My heart rate picked up, knowing where the noise had come from without even having to look.

“Liam is not my boyfriend,” I said quickly. I already knew Grayson didn’t like Liam; in fact, I was almost positive he had done something to him.

He still hadn’t turned up after disappearing yesterday and didn’t answer when I had tried to call him this morning. I was starting to get really worried.

I didn’t need Grayson hearing people call Liam my boyfriend when I still wasn’t convinced he hadn’t let his wolf eat him or something. Do werewolves even eat vampires?

“He’s just a friend. I don’t have a boyfriend.” I was sure to speak clearly so that a certain someone was sure to hear me.

“Maybe not, but that guy in the corner is definitely interested,” Candice continued.

She had no idea.

Brenda looked amused. “Oh, really?” She glanced over at Grayson. A flush took over my cheeks.

I knew Grayson could hear us no matter what, but honestly, did they have to make it so obvious that we were talking about him?

“Why don’t you go over there? He’s cute,” she whispered to me.

I rolled my eyes. “I already told him I wasn’t interested when he was here yesterday,” I said. “I don’t know why he’s back here.”

“Maybe he’s hungry,” Candice provided unhelpfully.

“Have you taken his order yet, Belle?” Brenda asked.

I looked down. I thought about lying but knew Candice would give me up immediately if I did.

“No,” I responded, hoping she wouldn’t make me go over there and talk to him. “He didn’t order anything yesterday. He just sat there all day. I figured today would be the same.”

Brenda frowned. “Hun, your job is to take orders. And if he’s not going to get any food, he can’t stay here and take up a perfectly good table. I’m gonna have to ask him to leave if that’s the case.”

My eyes widened. I did not want any of my coworkers interacting with Grayson, especially my sweet manager, Brenda. I knew what he was capable of.

I wouldn’t be able to forgive myself if anybody got hurt because Grayson lost his temper over something as stupid as telling him to leave the diner.

“He’s not doing anything,” I said. “Can’t he just sit there?”

Brenda shook her head. “You know the rules. If he’s not a paying customer, then he can’t stay here.”

I sighed, already feeling my body heat and my stomach roil at the thought of having to talk to him. “I’ll go take his order right now,” I murmured.

Brenda nodded in approval. “Let me know if you have any problems.”

I approached Grayson’s table slowly, my lips pressed together in a fine line. He watched me the entire time, waiting patiently with his hands folded in front of him.

“What do you want to eat?” I asked sharply when I finally stood in front of his table.

“I thought you didn’t want to serve me,” he replied, his deep, smooth voice causing shivers to travel up my spine. As if he hadn’t heard the entire conversation that just ensued.

I looked up from my notepad, glaring. “If you don’t order something soon, my manager is going to kick you out.”

A half-smile curved his masculine mouth. “Are you finally admitting that you want me here?”

“No, I just don’t want you hurting anyone when they try to force you out. Now, please, just tell me what you want.”

I hated that we were arguing again. I was so, so exhausted.

Even though I had slept through the night for the first time since arriving in Evergreen—something I was astonished to realize when I woke feeling warm and content—fighting the mate bond was starting to take its toll on me.

Grayson studied me closely, his brows tugging together. “Baby, have you eaten anything today?” he asked me, completely ignoring my request.

“Stop calling me baby. Order something, or I’ll pick something out for you.”

“I’ll order if you tell me what you’ve eaten today,” he replied sternly. “Don’t think I won’t drag you out of this diner the same way I did yesterday.”

I knew he wasn’t bluffing. I screamed internally.

“I had a bowl of cereal, okay?” I finally answered.

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Filed To Story:

He frowned. “That’s not enough food. You didn’t eat anything yesterday. I will not have my mate fainting or starving herself when those things are easily avoidable.”

When he called himself my mate, an agony so fierce gripped me that it nearly took my breath away. My entire body slumped. I had to bite my lip to keep from whimpering in pain.

“You’re not my mate, Grayson,” I whispered, letting my tone convey how hard this all was for me. “I don’t care if you never slept with anyone else. You gave me up. I wanted you, and you gave me up.”

I swallowed the ball forming in my throat, looking away from his intense expression. I couldn’t have this conversation with him again. It felt like being rejected over and over again.

I took a few steps back. "I'll have Candice bring you some pancakes or something.

Stay if you want. I really don't care anymore. I have to get back to work."

He grabbed my wrist before I could walk away. Sparks danced up my arm and warmed my skin.

"If you would just let me explain," he said, "you would see how much I want and love you. I never gave you up. It wasn't up to me. I never meant for any of this to happen to you."

My throat was too dry to swallow. "Yeah, well, it did," I said, my voice sounding quiet and defeated, even to me. "The damage has been done."

I pulled my arm from his grip and walked away.

BELLE

I hated that he was here. I hated that, as hard as I tried to ignore him and focus on my work, he was the only thing I could think of.

I was aware of his every move, of his eyes that followed me everywhere I went in the small diner.

And most of all, I hated that my traitorous body wanted nothing more than to go to him and forgive him for every single horrible thing he had ever done to me.

Because I still needed him. God, why did I still need him?

He had rejected me. He had tried to mate with someone else. There was no way to make it any clearer that he didn't want me. So why was I still reacting this way to him?

Why was it so physically painful to stay away from him?

I grabbed the tip left for me on the table of my last customers of the night. It was dark out now, and the diner had finally cleared out, leaving only Grayson behind.

Candice and Brenda had left a few hours earlier, and the cook, who was still in the kitchen, was going to lock up after I was gone.

For the first time in several hours, I allowed myself to glance in his direction. I immediately regretted it. He was looking straight at me.

Our gazes clashed, and instantaneously, it was like a wave of warm, soothing water cascaded over me. I sucked in a deep breath as some relief came to my aching body.

Grayson had a look of worry and frustration on his face, but it softened the moment we made eye contact.

His shoulders fell slightly. “Belle,” he mouthed, his expression turning into one of pure torture.

I knew he wanted me to go to him. He was desperate for it. I could feel his emotions coursing through whatever remained of our bond.

Giving in, I approached him slowly, hesitantly. He watched my every move, his entire body tense as he tried to hold himself back from pouncing on me.

When I finally came to stand in front of his table, I crossed my arms securely in front of my stomach as if they would provide me with some sort of protection from the dangerous creature in front of me.

“We’re closing now. I’m leaving.”

Grayson’s deep green eyes dimmed a bit when he realized I wasn’t here to finally hear him out. “Okay.” He started to get out of the booth. “I’ll walk you home.”

I didn’t move. “I’m really tired,” I whispered.

Grayson frowned. “I know, baby. You need sleep. You barely got any last night.”

“No, that’s not what I meant, Grayson. I’m tired,” I repeated.

He stared at me, still not understanding.

“I don’t want to do this anymore. I don’t want you to be the only thing on my mind anymore. I had made progress, real progress before you came.

“I had started to recover from what you put me through. But now you’re here and...” I groaned. “I want to be free of you—of this hold you somehow still have on me even after everything you did to me.

“I want to go back to who I was before you held my heart. I’m not me anymore. I’m the version of myself that is tortured by everything you put me through.”

Grayson opened his mouth to speak.

“And I don’t want to argue,” I continued quickly, cutting him off before he could say anything. Tears began to pool in my eyes. I wiped them away before they could fall.

“Look, I know what we had...” I paused, swallowing down the massive ball in my throat. “I know what we had wasn’t what you wanted...”

Grayson growled. “That’s not—”

I interrupted him quickly. I needed to get this out. “Let me finish, or, I swear to God, I’ll kick you in the balls again.” I was completely serious; it was starting to sound like a really good option right now.

I took a deep breath. “And I know that, as an alpha, having a mate means you get more power. So maybe the mate bond is making you regret...rejecting me because of that.”

Grayson stood and reached for me. I took a step back.

“Belle, please—” he tried to say.

“No, you have to let me get this out. I need to get this out.”

His breathing was so erratic. His eyes were black. His jaw was clenched. But he seemed to understand my need and nodded sharply for me to continue.

“We’re both hurting,” I kept going quietly. “But it’s only because of this supernatural bond between us. In the end, we’re not supposed to be together. And you knew that.

“You knew that the first night I came to stay with you. It doesn’t excuse how you treated me, but you knew you didn’t want me and that I wasn’t the right mate for you.”

Grayson growled loudly, his entire body shaking. I was obviously making him upset.

“So even though I—I—” I had to look away at this point, somehow keeping myself from breaking down into gut-wrenching sobs.

“Even though I may have loved you...I don’t think you ever loved me. Not really.

You just felt a connection to me because of some magical bond you had no control over.

“You felt trapped. And that’s why you acted out the way you did.”

I took a deep breath, wiping my sweaty palms on the front of my skirt. I looked back at him.

His eyes were black with the presence of his wolf, and dark hair was sprouting from his arms, letting me know that he was just barely keeping himself from shifting.

I wasn’t going to let that intimidate me into not finishing, though.

“But that’s okay. I—” I could barely even say it. “I’m letting you go. If the bond is making you feel regret over what you did to me, I don’t want you to feel that way anymore.

“In fact, I don’t want you to feel anything when it comes to me anymore.” I took a step forward. I studied his heaving chest and strained muscles. I was on thin ice, but I continued anyway.

“You know I’m not what you want. It’s why you treated me the way you did back at your pack house. It’s why you tried to mate with someone else. You were mad I ended up as your mate—and rightly so.”

I brought my arms tighter around me, letting my gaze stray to the window next to us, out to the small town that had become my home over the last few months.

“I’m strong. I know that. I’ve gone through a lot in my life, and I’ve always been able to pick myself back up and keep going,” I looked back at him.

“But I’m no luna. And I’m definitely not strong enough to survive what you put me through again. And, whether or not you wanted to, you ~would~ put me through it again because you don’t love me.”

“You would eventually come to resent me—the same way you did a few months ago.”

I shuddered at the thought of being rejected again. Even just thinking about it made my mark burn and my heart sink.

“So I’m asking in a civilized and genuine way—no more shouting or ignoring you or begging you to leave me alone...

“If you care about me even a little bit—if anything you said to me in Paris was even a little bit true—do me a favor and let me go.

“Ignore the mate bond that’s telling you you need me or that you should want me for power. Go home. Go be the alpha I know you are and find a new mate that would be better suited for you.

“You don’t need me. I would only drag you down.”

By the time I had finished, Grayson looked so close to shifting that I could practically see his face beginning to morph into his wolf.

He was breathing deeply, his muscles had grown, dark hair was sprouting from his arms, and his irises were pitch black.

“May I speak now?” His voice was so deep that I could barely understand him.

I nodded slowly.

“Good.”

In a flash, he was in front of me, gripping my waist and slamming me to his body. I nearly moaned at the contact, reveling in how good his touch felt against my skin.

I was still shocked by how much bigger he was. He looked incredible—strong, fit, and healthier than ever.

The time away from me really did him good, which only further proved my point that he was better off without me.

He leaned down, so his lips were right next to my ear, his breath cool over my mark, causing me to shiver. I tried to push against him, but he was too strong.

It was clear that I wasn't leaving his arms until he let me go.

"You're mine, Belle," he growled against my skin. "You have always been and will always be mine. And I will go to the ends of the earth to make sure you understand that."

I tried to step out of his embrace, but he just tightened his arms around me. I was too tired and weak to put up a fight.

So instead, I just let the tears fall, crying silently as I fell forward until my forehead rested on his chest.

He seemed to hold his breath, waiting to see if I was going to move before wrapping his arms completely around me and pulling me impossibly closer.

I knew I should have fought harder, but it was what the bond wanted, and it felt incredibly good to give in to it—even just for a moment.

Grayson was starting to calm down as his wolf slowly gave him back control. It was obviously helping to have me in his arms.

After basking in his warmth for just a few more seconds, I finally whispered into his chest, "You're never going to let me go, are you?"

He leaned down and gently kissed the top of my head. "I think you already know the answer to that," he murmured against my hair.

I pursed my lips together and squeezed my eyes shut, willing my tears to stop. They didn't. I nodded. "Yeah, I do."

It made sense, really. Life was never meant to be easy for me. I was a fool for thinking that it could be.

Chapter 85 – Kidnapped by My Mate Series

II: His Lost Queen

Filed To Story:

I was destined to be in love with a man who didn't love me back, who only wanted me for the power I could give him, and who resented me because he got stuck with me.

And yet, although all of that was true, he still couldn't seem to let me go.

"Does this mean that you'll finally let me explain?" Grayson asked. "I promise it'll be worth your time."

I leaned back, wiping the tears from my eyes. I shook my head. "No, it doesn't matter. No explanation will change the fact that I'm not the one for you. I can't be your luna."

I licked my lips, tasting the saltiness of my tears. "I have to go."

I started to move away, but Grayson grabbed my arm. "No, no more of this. It wasn't me who—"

"Stop! Let go of me, Grayson. I mean it!" I yanked my arm out of his and took a step back. To my surprise, he didn't try to grab me again. "Please, ~please, just leave me alone."

"You know I can't do that," he replied in a low voice. "I'll never be able to leave you alone. I can't live without you, Belle."

I backed away from him. "For your sake, I really hope that's not true."

BELLE

I was grateful that Grayson let me walk away from him back at the diner. I was grateful for the walk home by myself, where I could gather my thoughts and cry without feeling like someone was watching me.

I entered my dark apartment, violently kicking off my stupid heels, not caring where they landed. My tears continued to flow, dripping down my neck and onto the cotton of my shirt.

My heart nearly stopped when I flicked on the lights. A huge figure was standing in the middle of my kitchen. I let out a loud shriek, immediately turning to run back out of the door.

"Luna! Stop screaming! Jeez, it's just me!"

My eyes adjusted, and I was finally able to see. “Kyle?” I asked. “Oh, my god, Kyle?”

I barely even recognized him. He looked different—like, really, really different. He seemed to have gone through the same transformation that Grayson had.

His body was bigger, stronger, and more mature. He had grown at least a foot in height, just like Grayson, and his muscles were larger and much more defined.

But it was the big goofy grin he was sporting on his face that told me he was still my same old Kyle, despite his intense physical transformation.

I stared at him for several long moments, trying to decipher if my exhausted mind was playing a trick on me. “Are you really here?” I asked him, approaching him slowly.

“Come give Daddy some sugar,” he responded, opening his arms wide.

I launched myself into his arms. He grunted from the forceful contact but didn’t hesitate before wrapping his arms around me, pulling me in even closer.

The tears came rushing from my eyes, and sobs exploded from my mouth. I wasn’t even sure why I was reacting this way to seeing him again.

I just needed a friend. I needed someone I trusted who knew about everything I had gone through.

“Ah, hell, babe,” Kyle said consolingly, leaning his cheek on the top of my head and squeezing me tighter. “Don’t cry.”

“I’m sorry,” I sniffled into his chest. Wiping my nose with the back of my hand, I looked up at him and smiled. “I’m just really happy to see you. Really happy. I’ve missed you so much.”

“Of course you have. I’m very missable.” Kyle rolled his eyes, returning my smile just as enthusiastically. “I’ve missed you too.”

I disentangled myself from his arms and stepped back, wiping at my tears. “What are you doing here?”

“I came to check on you,” he explained. His eyes darkened a bit as they ran over my face. “I heard you were having a rough time.”

I couldn’t stop the heat that rose under my cheeks. I knew I looked bad, but I still hated that Kyle was able to see it on my face.

My brows tugged together. “How did you hear that?”

“The alpha, of course.”

Just a tiny bit of disappointment settled in my stomach. “You... You’ve been talking to him?”

Kyle nodded.

I wasn’t sure why I had been hoping Kyle had stopped talking to Grayson after everything that had happened between him and me. It wasn’t fair of me to wish for that.

Grayson’s pack, as toxic as it may have been for me, was Kyle’s home. It was where Elijah was and where he had spent all his life.

I guess I had just been hoping to have a common advocate in all of this, a friend I didn’t need to keep secrets from.

But now... There was no way I could tell Kyle everything I was thinking and all I had experienced now that I knew he was still under Grayson’s thumb.

All of the questions I had been wondering over the last few months came rushing to the edge of my tongue, waiting eagerly to be asked.

I wanted to know what had happened after I left, how Elijah was, and did Kyle confront Grayson after finding him in bed with another girl who wasn’t me?

I asked the most obvious question first. “Why are you a literal giant now? Have you and Grayson gone on steroids or something?”

“Or is there a new werewolf disease I don’t know about that is making you all fifty feet tall?”

Kyle laughed. “No steroids, I promise. And, as far as I’m concerned, I haven’t caught any diseases, although Elijah might disagree with that.”

“So what happened?”

I looked over his enormous form. He wasn’t nearly as big as Grayson was now but still looked extremely intimidating—much more intimidating than before.

And that was a hard thing to accomplish since both he and Grayson had already been much larger than the average human before the transformation.

Some part of me was a little relieved that it wasn’t just Grayson who had grown significantly. It meant he didn’t get stronger because he was away from me, but rather due to another reason.

Something else must have happened.

“I think that’s something the alpha would like to explain to you himself,” Kyle told me.

I looked around, suddenly worried that Grayson was watching us or maybe listening in. What would he do if he knew Kyle was here?

“Does Grayson know you’re here? I don’t think he would like—”

“Alpha knows I’m here,” Kyle replied to my question. “In fact...” He jerked his chin behind me.

“I invited him here,” a deep voice finished.

I whirled around to find Grayson standing in my doorway. Of course he was here.

Even when I couldn’t see him, he was always nearby.

Grayson’s eyes immediately narrowed in on Kyle’s hands that were still on my waist. He let out a low growl. “Get your hands off my mate, Beta.”

Kyle’s arms dropped to his sides in less than a second.

I glared at Grayson. My temper rose. “Not your mate,” I snapped at him. “Kyle can touch me if he wants. You shouldn’t even be here.”

Kyle whistled low under his breath. “You weren’t kidding, Alpha. It is bad.”

I turned back to Kyle, ignoring Grayson’s glare. “Beta? You’re the beta now?” I asked him.

He shrugged sheepishly. “It’s a long story.”

“A story I definitely want to hear,” I said. Had it happened after Adalee died? “You don’t have to leave soon, do you?” Sudden panic hit me. I didn’t want Kyle to leave.

I wanted him to stay here as long as possible. The friendship I cultivated with him was the only thing I didn’t regret from my relationship with Grayson.

After months of being by myself—if you didn’t count Liam’s overprotectiveness—

the amount of comfort I found in him standing here in my apartment was immeasurable.

Kyle shook his head. “I’m here for as long as I need to be,” he replied, sating my worries.

I let out a deep breath. “Okay,” I said, feeling less tense. “Okay. Can I get you anything to drink?” I hurried over to my cupboards, grabbing the only glass I owned. I paused. “Actually, I only have water.”

“That’s okay. Not thirsty,” Kyle answered, raising a brow at the old plastic cup in my hand.

I set the cup back down on the counter. Then my attention swung back to Grayson, who was still standing in the doorway of my apartment. I crossed my arms over my chest.

“Is there a reason you’re still here?” I asked him.

Kyle snorted.

“I’m here,” Grayson started, giving Kyle a look that could make anyone’s blood turn cold, “because we need to talk.”

“Is that why you invited him here?” I asked him, motioning to Kyle. “Bringing him here is part of your plan to try and lure me back to your evil lair to torture me some more, huh?”

Kyle coughed to hide another laugh.

“I’m not planning to—” Grayson didn’t finish that sentence, growling in frustration.

“He’s here to help me explain. If you won’t listen to me, then maybe you’ll listen to him.”

“I already told you—”

“I know what you said,” Grayson said, cutting me off.

“And if I have to hear any more bullshit about how you’re not good enough for me or not meant to be my luna come out of your mouth, I might lose my fucking mind.

“I could understand if you thought that what I did was unforgivable—”

“Well—” I interjected, trying to explain that what he did was unforgivable...

“But I’m not going to let you go on thinking that you’ve done anything wrong,”

Grayson continued. “Or that there is anything wrong with you because it’s a fucking lie, Belle.

“You hear me? It’s a lie that your brain is telling you because of years of assholes telling you you’re not enough when, really, it was them who had the issues, not you.”

He took a deep breath, obviously trying to calm himself before his anger took over.

He took a few steps toward me. “I need you to let me explain what really happened, baby. Will you let me do that? Please?”

I tightened my arms around myself, feeling intensely uncertain. “I...” I swallowed.

Exhaustion was starting to hit me, and for a moment, I wished the floor would open up and swallow me whole just so I could have some peace.

Chapter 86 – Kidnapped by My Mate Series II: His Lost Queen

Filed To Story:

I didn’t think I could handle another fight with Grayson right now. Each one was so unbelievably taxing and forced me to fight more and more against nature that demanded I forgive him.

I didn’t want to do it anymore.

“Come here, baby,” Grayson said. He grabbed one of my folding chairs that was leaning against a wall and carried it to me, setting it down in front of me. “Sit down.

You’re starting to sway.”

For once, I didn’t argue. He was right; the room was starting to spin around me, and my knees felt weak. I let my body fall into the uncomfortable chair, dropping my head into my hands.

Knowing my mate was near, my stomach roiled inside of me, and my mark burned, begging for Grayson’s touch and affection.

As if he could hear my thoughts, Grayson knelt down next to me, placing one of his big hands on my leg, letting his thumb run over my bare skin in the way he knew made me turn to mush.

I didn’t have the energy to push him away.

“Please let me explain, Belle. Please,” he begged.

I sighed. Tears of frustration were starting to form in my eyes once again. I couldn’t seem to keep my tears back when I was around him.

“I don’t get it, Grayson. I really don’t. Why do you even want to explain? The way you treated me...” I shook my head.

“You gave me up. You made it clear you didn’t want me—that you wanted to hurt me. So I don’t see why you would come back. What changed?”

“So much,” Grayson said. “So much changed—and, at the same time, nothing at all. I came back because I love you. I love you so much that it hurts. I can’t lose you. That is why I’m here.

“I need you to know that because I can see how much pain it is causing you to think that I don’t. To think that I don’t want you. It isn’t true. None of what happened at my pack house was true.”

A single tear dripped from my cheek and onto his hand, still on my knee. I heard Grayson’s harsh intake of breath and saw his nostrils flare.

My eyes found Kyle’s. He nodded encouragingly at me, giving me a sympathetic look. “It’s important you hear this, Luna,” he said.

“So you’re on his side?” I asked Kyle. “You think what he did to me was okay?”

Kyle immediately shook his head, looking horrified by the idea. “No! No, Goddess, of course not. No one should have to go through what you did. But the alpha has an explanation—and a good one.”

When I didn’t answer right away, still hesitant, Kyle continued. “You can trust me, Luna. I would never do anything to hurt you. You know that.”

I licked my dry lips. “I thought the same thing about him,” I said, looking at Grayson.

Grayson’s expression flashed with so much pain that I almost regretted what I said.

His eyes were completely green right now, and I found myself falling into them.

I missed his eyes so much, and I hadn’t seen them in so long since his wolf had been in control basically the entire time he’d been here.

I missed Grayson. I missed my Grayson so, so much.

Part of me wondered what the harm was in letting him explain. It’s not like I had to agree to be with him after hearing what he had to say. I was just...scared. So scared.

After everything he had put me through, self-preservation was my number one priority. I would not let him hurt me again.

After a few more moments, I finally answered. “Okay.”

Grayson’s breathing stalled. “Okay?” he repeated, hope and shock lacing his tone.

Honestly, I was a bit shocked too. I nodded. “Okay. You can explain. Tell me what happened.”

I could practically see the extreme relief traveling throughout Grayson’s body.

“But,” I continued quickly before he could say anything, “you have to promise me something.”

Grayson responded with apprehension. “All right.”

“If I let you explain... and the explanation isn’t good enough, you have to leave me alone. No more following me around. No more showing up at my work.

“No more asking my old friends to come here to manipulate me into talking to you.

You have to let me go. For good. I can’t handle any more of this. Okay?”

Grayson studied me for several long seconds before answering. “Okay.”

I leaned back in my chair, taking in a deep breath. “All right. Let’s hear it then.”

GRAYSON

Finally, I thought in relief.

Fucking. Finally.

Belle was going to let me explain. I could fix this—I would fix this.

“Thank you,” I said softly. I reached out and tucked a piece of stray hair behind her ear, seeing the way she had to resist her need to lean into my touch.

“Thank you for affording me just a little of your trust. I know it’s hard, but it means the world to me.”

She didn’t respond. She didn’t need to. I knew she still was hesitant and wary, but I also knew she wanted this all to be over just as much as I did.

Even now, her body was gravitating toward me, so desperate for the comfort she knew her mate could give her. And I was desperate to deliver. Soon I would be able to.

“Kyle is here because I betrayed you, and you need someone you trust with you for this conversation.”

She glanced up at Kyle, who gave her a lopsided grin. “I’ll always be in your corner, Luna,” he said.

Belle smiled weakly back at him, but I could see her discomfort grow at being called her title. I gave Kyle a look.

I knew it was in his nature to call her Luna, but I had told him not to call her that before he had gotten here. He mouthed his apology.

Here goes nothing.

I gripped her knee gently. “Belle, look at me. I need you to hear me when I tell you this.” She turned her head to me, her gorgeous blue eyes glossy with unshed tears.

“It wasn’t me. Everything that happened to you at the pack house—it wasn’t me doing any of it.”

“I don’t understand,” she replied quietly. “What do you mean?”

I glanced over at Kyle, who was standing quietly against the wall. He shrugged.

Fuck. I had gone over this conversation so many times in my head, but now that the moment was here, it felt like the words wouldn’t come out of my mouth.

How the hell was I supposed to explain this to her? What was the best way to make her believe me?

“I was being controlled,” I continued. “By a vampire.”

Belle stared at me for a while, processing, searching my eyes for the truth. “I can’t tell if you’re joking or not,” she finally said.

“Yeah, I wouldn’t believe you either,” Kyle interjected unhelpfully.

I glared at him.

“Sorry. It just doesn’t sound very believable,” Kyle continued, raising his hands in defense. He looked at Belle.

“But it is true. He was being controlled by one of the most powerful vampires alive.

He...The alpha started a war over it.”

Belle looked between the two of us, her brows tugging together.

“Do you remember the first night I brought you to my pack house?” I asked her.

“When I had to leave you late at night to deal with vampires on my territory?”

She nodded tightly. A sweet blush took over her cheeks as she probably remembered what we had been about to do right before all of this happened.

“That was the last night things felt normal,” she whispered, the sadness in her voice nearly tangible in the air. “You changed after that.”

“Exactly. The vampire attack was a trap. The former vampire king, Azazel Mortar, was waiting for me. He used dark magic to take over my body. I was there, witnessing everything, but I had no control.”

“The vampire king?” Belle repeated stiffly. “You’re trying to tell me a vampire king took over your body?”

~“Former vampire king,” I emphasized. “The throne was taken from him, and he was replaced by his brother, Zagan Mortar. He wanted to take over my pack to regain control of the vampire kingdom.”

“That’s why the alpha was acting so strange,” Kyle cut in. “Do you remember me telling you he was thinking of letting vampires onto the territory?”

Belle nodded.

“Well, that’s why. His body was taken over.”

She looked back at me. “I...,” she mumbled. “I don’t...”

I took one of her hands in mine, pressing my lips against her fingers in what I hoped was a soothing gesture. It pleased me when she didn’t try to pull away. “I know this is a lot to take in.”

She nodded. “If what you’re saying is true...H-How do I know you’re not still being controlled by a vampire?”

“Because you can feel the mate bond between us,” I said, squeezing her hand gently. Even I could feel the powerful tingles traveling between us, demonstrating our bond.

“You can feel it when I touch you. Or when I talk to you. You couldn’t feel it before when Azazel was in control of my body.”

She thought about it for a second, looking down at our conjoined hands. I could tell she knew I was right.

“The sparks weren’t...they weren’t as strong when I was staying with you back at the pack house. But I thought—I just—I thought it was because you didn’t”—her gaze dropped—“want me anymore or something.”

I tucked my hand beneath her chin, lifting her head until she was looking at me again. “I will always want you. Do you understand me? Always. You’re my mate. My other half.

“There isn’t a world in which you’re out there, and I don’t want to be with you.

We’re meant to be together. I can’t survive without you.”

More tears fell from her eyes as she really let my words set in. I didn’t know if she believed me or not, but it really didn’t matter. I would prove it to her.

“The vampire is gone now. He’s no longer inside of me. That’s why I’m acting normal again. He gave up control of my body the day you ran away.

“He’s gone now, and he’s not coming back. I can promise you that.”

Chapter 87 – Kidnapped by My Mate Series II: His Lost Queen

Filed To Story:

“How?” Belle asked. “How did you get him out of you?”

I didn’t know how to answer that without scaring her.

“That’s complicated,” Kyle said when I hesitated. “The alpha almost died.”

Belle’s eyes snapped to mine, wide and filled with worry. “You almost died?”

The last thing I wanted to do was make her more upset than she already was. But I also needed to present her with all the information and evidence.

I pulled my shirt over my head to reveal my upper half and the scar where I was impaled with a tree branch. It was an impressive mark, taking up almost all of my chest.

Belle gasped. Her hand flew out to touch the scar. “He did this to you?” she asked.

Then, as if realizing she had unintentionally touched me, she tried to pull her hand away.

I stopped her by placing my hand over hers, ensuring she couldn’t move it away.

She didn’t fight me.

“It had to be done,” I explained. “It was the only way to force Azazel out of my body.

He would have died with me if he'd stayed."

"But you...you didn't die? You were okay?" Belle asked. "Sorry, that's a stupid question. Obviously, you didn't die. Just...how does someone survive something like that?"

Her fingers moved over the scar on my chest, lightly tracing the raised skin.

I glanced at Kyle, who met my gaze with apprehension.

"There are two reasons," I said, not sure how I was going to explain this to her without scaring the crap out of her and sending her running to the hills.

"First, I was given the blood of Amelia Mortar. She is a vamp—"

Belle gasped. "I actually know who she is!" she exclaimed, looking somewhat pleased she knew about something without needing to have it explained to her. "I was given her blood too."

My wolf surged forward in my consciousness. "Why the fuck were you given the blood of Amelia Mortar?" I demanded.

I instantly regretted my harsh tone. Belle sucked in a breath and leaned further back in her chair, tugging her hand off my chest and cradling it to her own.

She suddenly watched me with a wary, tentative expression. I had to remind myself that the last time she had heard me speak to her that way was right after my hand had connected violently with her cheek.

I had to try harder to keep my anger in check.

I swore under my breath. "I'm sorry, love. My anger is not directed at you," I told her. "It's just that...the only reason anyone is given the blood of Amelia Mortar is if they are near death."

"I-I was. The night that Adalee found me," Belle admitted. "She almost killed me."

I growled. I didn't want to remember that night. Even though Adalee trying to kill Belle was the only reason I was able to find her again, it had still been one of the most terrifying moments of my life.

Belle nodded slowly. "Liam and his sister, Laila, gave me her blood after the attack."

It made sense. It was why she hadn't any markings on her when I'd found her.

My body shook with anger even as I was grateful for what Liam had done for my mate. I still couldn't help the possessiveness or protectiveness I felt for her.

“What’s the second reason?” Belle continued. “The second reason you are alive. You said there were two.”

I tried to prepare myself to tell her this information.

“When Azazel took over my body, he bit me and unintentionally injected me with vampire venom.”

Belle’s breathing picked up just the tiniest bit. “Vampire venom? Does that do the same thing as their blood? It healed you?”

“You know how my eyes turn black with the presence of my wolf?” I said as gently as I could. “And do you remember my eyes turning red when I found you?”

I cursed myself to hell over how terrified she suddenly looked.

“R-Red eyes?” she stuttered out. “You actually had red eyes? I thought I was making them up.”

I gripped her knee when her breathing started to become more labored and raged, the same way it had when I had found her and she’d had a panic attack.

I moved closer to her, sitting on my knees so that my face was level with hers. I cupped her face in my hand.

“Hey. Hey, you’re okay, baby. Take some deep breaths,” I told her, keeping my tone firm and even. “You’re okay.”

Her breathing didn’t calm. “I keep having nightmares of you with red eyes. Every night. You chase me and say you’re never leaving me alone and...” Her chest started to rise and fall more violently.

“Nightmares?” My heart broke. Was that what she had been dreaming of last night?

“No, God, baby, no. It’s not something you need to be afraid of. If anything, it should make you feel safer.”

She didn’t look convinced—far from it.

I looked at Kyle. He met my gaze, but it was clear that he didn’t know how to tell her this either.

I swung my attention back to Belle. “You remember my wolf, right?”

Belle nodded once, her eyes still wide, her breathing still wild.

I let my eager wolf come to the surface, turning my eyes black.

Belle visibly relaxed at his presence. My wolf growled happily in my chest.

I loved that she was so comfortable around him—especially considering how she had reacted the first time she had met him—but it killed me that she no longer felt that way around me.

I promised myself that I would be changing that soon enough.

“Well...” I hesitated for a moment. “Meet my vampire.”

I let my vampire come forward and fill my consciousness. My wolf took a step back, allowing my eyes to turn into a bright, vibrant red.

Belle did not react well.

She leapt out of her chair, causing it to fall and clatter behind her. She stumbled away, nearly tripping over her feet to get away from me. I could see the panic attack starting to gain control of her body.

I stood. “It’s okay, Belle,” I said, trying to calm her. “I’m not going to hurt you. You don’t have to be afraid.”

I was completely gutted by the piercing fear that flared in her eyes.

I started approaching her, needing to do something, but stopped when she shrieked through her gasping breaths, falling back even more until her back was pressed firmly against the wall behind her.

Belle was looking around, trying to determine her escape route.

She reminded me of a caged animal desperately seeking a way out. She looked so utterly fragile, worn to the bone, and beyond exhausted.

I tried to push my vampire down so she wouldn’t have to look at my red eyes that so obviously caused her so much fear, but my vampire wasn’t budging. He wanted Belle to see him.

And he wanted to look at her. He had been holding back for so long, not wanting to scare her, but now that he was let out, he was refusing to be stuffed back in.

“Belle, it’s okay,” I tried pleading with her. “It’s okay, baby.”

She shook her head. Her hand flew up to grasp her throat.

Kyle stepped forward. “He’s not going to hurt you, Luna. His vampire cares for you just as much as his wolf does.”

Her eyes were wide with fear, uncertainty, and so much pain—pain I understood well because I’d been living in hell ever since the day she’d left me.

I regretted ever showing her my vampire. She had already been so afraid, and I had only made it worse.

I tried to push my vampire down once again. He wasn’t listening to reason, convinced he could help her if I would just let him. I fought against him.

Belle reached a shaking hand to the doorknob of her apartment. She was going to make a run for it. She was going to go out into the cold night, barefoot and without a coat, mid-panic attack.

I couldn’t let that happen.

An unfamiliar feeling abruptly formed in my throat and rose up. It was my vampire

—he was doing something, making some sort of noise, in the same way my wolf growled.

I started to purr. It wasn’t a noise I had ever made before, vibrating from under my rib cage and in my throat. I wasn’t even sure how I was doing it.

My vampire seemed to be making the sound out of pure instinct.

Belle reacted to my purrs almost immediately. Her body relaxed, and her breathing slowed. Her eyes became hooded and calm.

She sucked in deep breaths as she watched me, no longer reaching for her door but rather appearing entranced with the sound coming from my chest.

My vampire’s purrs were calming her. They were helping her. It seemed as though she couldn’t help but react to the noise.

She even began to lean forward, gravitating toward me as if she couldn’t help herself.

I took that as my opportunity to go to her. I never stopped purring for her since it seemed to be helping her, taking over the duty from my vampire now that I knew how to do it.

She watched me through hooded eyes as I approached her, determined. The moment she was within reach, I wrapped my hands around her waist and pulled her to me.

I needed to feel her against me, to comfort her. She automatically melted into my hold, no longer fighting. In fact, she seemed eager to let me take her weight against me.

She ducked her face into my chest, right against the spot where my purrs were the strongest. She sighed, absorbing the vibrations I was producing while I stood there, stunned.

With Belle still in my arms, I threw a look at Kyle over my shoulder. He was watching us with wide eyes, appearing to be just as confused as I felt.

Belle shifted against me, and her bright blue eyes turned up, peering at me. Her pupils were dilated.

“How... How are you doing that?” she whispered. “How are you making that—that purring noise?” Even as she spoke, she pressed herself against me, seemingly unable to help herself.

“My vampire,” I replied softly. My purrs grew stronger, and her eyes became more hooded. “My vampire wanted to calm you down. I’ve never purred before.”

And I had a feeling she was the only person I could do it for.

She pressed her face back into my chest. Calming her didn’t seem to be the only effect my purring had on her because, suddenly, the smell of her arousal filled and saturated the air.

“Kyle,” I barked. “Out. ”

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Filed To Story:

“Yep,” was his immediate reply.

Then he used his vampire speed, and a gust of wind blew past us. The door to Belle’s apartment opened and closed as Kyle left the room, leaving Belle and me completely alone.

GRAYSON

After Kyle left, Belle glanced up, scanning the room.

Her brows furrowed when she didn’t find my beta. “Where—?”

I cut her question short by sweeping her off her feet and marching her to the bed—

or should I say, her mattress on the floor.

I pushed down the feeling of fury caused by the fact that it still smelled like Liam Blackwood and sat down on the mattress with my back to the wall and Belle on my lap.

She clung to me tightly, her arms wrapped around my neck. I had to pry her off my chest to get her to look at me, but I never ceased my purring. It calmed her and made her less afraid.

That's what she needed right now.

At the same time, the smell of her arousal was only growing the longer I purred.

She shifted restlessly on my lap, her cheeks flushed with bright pink.

Huh, so it seemed as though purring had two effects on my gorgeous mate.

I carefully brushed a lock of brown hair that had fallen from her ponytail behind her ear. I cupped her jaw.

"How are you doing, baby? Are you feeling better?" I asked her, running the pad of my thumb over her cute chin.

She nodded. "Yes."

She placed her hand over my vibrating chest. I put my hand over hers, holding it there.

"I, uh...", she whispered. "I have some questions."

I gently squeezed her hand. My purrs increased just the slightest bit. "Ask me anything, beautiful."

Her pupils were blown out and large. She licked her lips and shifted her hips against me once again. I could tell she was trying to hold herself back by the way she kept glancing at my lips.

"Could you...", she started. "Could you, um, stop purring? I—I'm having a hard time concentrating."

I couldn't help but chuckle. This was a useful little trick my vampire had given me. I would definitely have a good time exploring all the ways my little mate reacted to it later.

But for now, I let the sound of the purrs roll to an end, giving her some reprieve.

She let out a deep breath, her body slumping a bit in relief. "Thank you."

Now that my purrs weren't calming her anymore, she stiffened just slightly.

Afraid she would try to run from me again if given the opportunity, I gripped her hips and pulled her closer, ensuring she had no way out.

“What are your questions, Belle?” I coaxed.

I noticed her studying my eyes.

I hadn’t been paying attention to what color they were, too focused on my mate, but now I realized that they were a dark red—a mix of black and red for both my wolf and vampire.

They were both at the front of my consciousness, watching Belle with just as much interest as I was.

“So you’re a...vampire now?” she asked, her voice quiet and meek.

“A hybrid,” I corrected softly. “My wolf is still here. I have both creatures in me.”

“And that’s why you’re so big now?” Her eyes scanned over my chest and my arms.

I could hear her heart rate jump slightly. “Becoming a vampire...made you grow?”

“Sort of.” I rubbed her hips soothingly, holding myself back from purring once again since it seemed to make her so calm the last time, and she looked terrified now.

“When I went through the transition, my vampire made me stronger, faster, the ultimate predator. The change in size just came with it.”

“Are you—Are you dangerous?”

“Never to you. Do you understand that, Belle? My vampire loves you, just like my wolf, just like I love you. You have absolutely nothing to worry about. I would never even lay a hand on you.”

Her eyes dropped from me. “You said that before too.”

She took a deep breath. “And Kyle is a-a hybrid too now?”

I nodded. “He was bitten too. So he went through the transition as well.”

Her small hand went to my neck and gently touched the scar where Azazel had sunk his teeth into me.

The two little puncture wounds were barely even visible anymore and would completely heal with time.

I had almost forgotten about the scar but was glad that Belle had found it. It was further proof that what I was saying was the truth.

Her eyes darted back to mine. “You were bitten by the king of vampires?”

I nodded. If she needed to hear all of it again, I would happily repeat myself until she felt like she understood. “Former king of vampires.”

“And he turned you into a hybrid werewolf-vampire?”

“Yes.”

“And took over your body for months?”

“Yes.”

She dropped her face into her hands. “This is a lot to take in. I don’t even know if I can believe you. This story is just too insane.”

Out of pure instinct, I started to purr again, but this time I was quieter so that she could barely even hear me.

Her body could sense the vibrations, though, and she visibly relaxed. Good. When she relaxed, I did too.

“I know, love. I’ve got you,” I replied. I gently pulled her back to me and tucked her into my chest. She let me take all of her weight and even nuzzled into me.

Intense relief swelled inside of me. She was finally listening to me. She was letting me hold her without fighting. She was giving in to the bond.

My hand ran up and down her spine. She shivered against me.

“So...it wasn’t you who said all of those...horrible things to me about how you would only ever want me for pleasure and power?” Her words were thick with tears.

I tensed when I realized she was about to start crying again.

“It wasn’t you who hit me multiple times and tried to sleep with someone else when I wouldn’t?”

“No. It wasn’t me.” My heart tightened, doing rolls behind my rib cage. “But I was there. I could see everything he was doing to you, saying to you. It almost killed me.

“I was trapped, forced to watch my mate being tortured.”

Her eyes were wide and round. “You could see everything?”

I nodded. “I fought hard to get free. It was why he spent so little time around you.

Every time he went anywhere near you in my body, I fought against him, pounding on his consciousness.

“It made him weak. But I couldn’t get free, no matter how hard I tried. My wolf did once.”

“Your wolf!” she exclaimed. “That day you broke my cheekbone—he took care of me.”

As if on cue, my wolf growled softly in my chest, letting her know he was there.

Belle smiled softly at the sound.

“No way I thought to myself. “I didn’t break your cheekbone,” I said, reminding her.

“I would never even think of hurting you like that. Azazel Mortar was the one who hit you.”

“He did it to mess with me, to make me angry and prove that he had control over me and could do whatever he wanted to you, and I couldn’t do anything to stop it.

Except I did.

“My anger was so great when he hurt you that my wolf was able to break through the dark magic blocking us and tend to you.

“But as I’m sure you noticed, he’s not the best communicator in the world, so he couldn’t explain to you what was going on. He could only apologize.”

My wolf bristled inside of me at the memory. We had never felt more powerless than we had at that moment.

“I remember,” Belle muttered quietly, pain filling her voice.

I hugged her tighter to me. A moment of silence passed as I let her process everything that I was telling her.

“So...,” Belle started. “You’re you again? You promise there’s no more evil vampire inside of you?”

“Yes. I’m me again. No more evil vampire. You have no idea how long I’ve waited to tell you.”

Belle looked up at me, hesitancy filling her gaze. “But how do I know it won’t happen again? How do I know you won’t just...change on me again? I don’t know...”

She shuttered.

“I don’t think I can handle that again.”

“Because it won’t. I won’t let it. I’m stronger now than I was before. I know how to prevent it. And my vampire would never stand for it.”

She leaned back, hesitating for a moment. Then she tried to get off of me.

I quickly grabbed her waist, pulling her back to me. “What are you doing?”

“I...I think I need a moment,” she whispered. “I need time to process this. And I can’t do that around you. You make my brain stop working.”

“It’s the mate bond. It wants us together because that’s where you belong. With me.

Chapter 89 – Kidnapped by My Mate Series II: His Lost Queen

Filed To Story:

You need me just as much as I need you. We need each other.”

I gripped her waist tighter, not enough to hurt her, just to show her how desperate I was. “Please don’t make me leave you again.”

She seemed to struggle internally for several seconds. “I need to have a clear head.

So I can think.” She shook her head. “I just need some time.”

It was physically painful to let her crawl from my lap. She walked to the door of her apartment and opened it. She looked at me, waiting.

I got up slowly, never breaking eye contact with her. When I was standing in front of her, I gently grabbed her face with both hands, tilting her head up so she was looking directly into my eyes.

“Take all the time you need, mate. I’ll wait for you forever,” I told her. Then I leaned forward and kissed her forehead. “You let me know when you’re ready.”

And then, with great effort, I left her.

BELLE

I shut the door behind him and fell into a chair the moment Grayson left. I could hear my heart beating in my head, making my entire skull pulse.

As always, my mark burned, begging to be near my mate again. I groaned.

There was a gentle knock on the door, and the only reason I knew it wasn't Grayson was that I didn't feel the connection to him.

"Luna?" Kyle's voice came from the other side of the door. He pushed the door open and peeked his head inside. His eyes softened when he saw me crying. "Is it okay if I come in?"

I nodded. It would be nice to have some company.

He came in, looking around my apartment. "So this is where you've been staying over the last couple of months, huh? It's, uh...pretty crappy." He didn't even try to maintain politeness.

I couldn't help but laugh. I appreciated that he didn't pity me like everybody else.

"Yeah," I agreed, wiping my nose. "It's pretty crappy."

"Beats the room you were staying in at the pack house, though. That's a plus. At least you've got heat here."

I winced. I didn't want to talk about my life back at the pack house or the circumstances I was living in. I especially didn't want to acknowledge the way Kyle was looking at me with a pointed look.

"Why didn't you come to me, Luna?" he finally asked. "It kills me to know that you were suffering so much and felt like you had no one to turn to. I would have helped you. You know that, right?"

"I'm sorry," I whispered back. "I didn't know what to do. I didn't want Grayson to hate me any more than he already did. He told me to stay away from you."

"I was desperate not to do anything that would upset him."

"That's just one more sign that the alpha was taken over. He would rather die than make you feel that way. Didn't he prove that to you in Paris?"

I didn't know how to respond. I knew he was right. A few moments passed. Kyle leaned against the small kitchen counter, crossing his arms over his chest, watching me.

“Can he hear us?” I finally asked.

Kyle shook his head. “No. He told me he was going to go for a walk. He wanted to give you space. I just came to check on you.”

I sighed. I could feel the distance between Grayson and me growing, and it was starting to make me feel sick.

“He’s telling the truth, isn’t he?” I whispered. “I can feel that he’s telling the truth.”

Kyle gave me a sympathetic look. “Yeah, he’s telling the truth. I found out the day you left. He’s been a pain in the ass ever since. He hasn’t stopped looking for you for a single second.

“He couldn’t focus on anything else.”

I dropped my head into my hands. “I miss him. I miss him a lot. Why the hell do I miss him? I shouldn’t still feel this connected to him, should I? He was so... horrible to me.”

“He’s your mate,” Kyle responded in a soft tone that told me he understood. “He’s your soulmate, the one person who was made specifically for you. How could you not miss him?

“It’s a miracle that you could stay away from each other for so long without going insane.” He paused. “But you know it’s okay to still be scared, right? After everything you’ve been through...”

I looked at him. More tears welled in my eyes. “I can’t do it again, Kyle. I can’t be with him and get rejected again. It... It almost killed me last time.”

Kyle’s chest rose and fell with heavy breaths. “He won’t let you go through that again. He’ll never reject you. He’ll protect you.

“He’s stronger now. More prepared. More determined to keep you safe after everything he put you through.”

“His pack hates me, though. I don’t know if I can go back there. I can’t be a luna when everyone rejected me. They wouldn’t even talk to me. Does Grayson even understand how disappointed his pack was with me?”

Kyle grabbed the other folding chair and sat down next to me. “Listen to me, Luna.

It’s important that you hear this. Azazel commanded them to treat you that way.

The pack had no choice.”

“R-Really?” I asked.

“Yes, really. They wanted to meet you, to get to know you. They never got that chance. They were in the same trance that the alpha was in.

“They had to watch as you suffered, even though they desperately wanted to help.”

“They told you that?” I asked, my tone quiet and unbelieving. “You’re sure?”

Kyle nodded. “I’m positive. They feel horrible about the way they treated you. If you came back to the pack house, you would see for yourself how sorry they are.

“I’m sure they would love the opportunity to try and make it up to you.”

I leaned back in my chair, barely comprehending what he was telling me. I didn’t even notice my hand go to Grayson’s mark on my neck. I suddenly desperately wished he were here.

“Go to him,” Kyle said, uttering the words I was thinking. He smiled. “He’s waiting for you.”

I was up and out the door in seconds.

My stomach was a mess of fluttering butterflies as I ran out the front door of my apartment building barefoot, searching for my mate.

“Grayson?” I yelled. Tears were streaming down my cheeks, and, for the first time in months, it wasn’t because I was sad.

My heart raced in my chest when I couldn’t find him. “Grayson!” I yelled a bit louder, not caring if anybody around me heard.

A sudden burst of wind and a blur of movement in front of me made me jump back and scream. When I opened my eyes, I met Grayson’s dark-red ones with a gasp.

“What’s wrong?” he demanded, scanning my form. “What is it? Are you hurt?”

I didn’t think about it before launching myself into his arms.

He stumbled back a few steps, obviously not expecting my abrupt attack. For a second, he just stood there, his massive chest rising and falling with small growls against me.

I was almost afraid I had jumped to conclusions too quickly, but then he wrapped his arms around me and pulled me closer to him.

And I burst into tears. With my arms around his neck and my face stuffed into his chest, I let all of my emotions free. And then I pulled his face to mine and kissed him soundly.

Grayson growled against my mouth, tugging me closer.

He pulled away after a few seconds. “Belle,” Grayson groaned, his forehead pressing against mine. “Don’t cry. Please don’t cry, love.”

“I can’t help it,” I replied, nuzzling my face into his chest once again, taking in his spicy scent that I had missed so much.

I smiled up at him, wiping my tears away the best I could. “I just really missed you.”

I paused.

“And I’m really glad you’re not an evil vampire anymore. That really—” I took in a deep shuddering breath. “That really sucked.”

His jaw tightened. “You...believe me?” He seemed to hold his breath as he waited for me to answer.

I nodded, cupping the side of his face, the tips of my fingers running through his hair. “I believe you. I believe you, Grayson.”

His mouth split into a huge, breathtaking grin. “Thank God,” he whispered, searching my eyes. “Thank God.”

I expected him to kiss me again, but he didn’t. Instead, he swept me off my feet, pulling me chest to chest, wrapping my legs and arms around his huge, muscular form.

The only reason I didn’t fall was because of his hands supporting me beneath my butt.

“Kyle. Go home,” Grayson grunted.

I whirled my head around. I hadn’t even realized Kyle had also exited my apartment and was watching us from the doorway.

“I just got here!” Kyle complained.

“Kyle doesn’t need to go. I want to catch up with him, too,” I argued.

Grayson didn’t reply. He was already walking in the opposite direction, taking me with him.

“Wait!” I shouted, looking back at Grayson’s poor beta, who he was leaving behind.

“What about Kyle? We can’t just leave him after he came all the way here!”

Grayson’s reply was two words, growled and low and leaving no room to argue.

“Don’t care.”

I glared at him, ready to keep arguing. I just decided to forgive him, and this was how he wanted to act?

I gasped when Kyle suddenly appeared right behind us. I hadn’t even seen him move.

Sensing his presence, Grayson turned and bared his teeth at him threateningly. He gripped me to his body so tightly that I was almost worried he would start bruising me soon.

“Whoa, there,” Kyle said, taking several steps back. He bared his neck. “I meant the Luna no harm, Alpha.”

“Put me down, Grayson,” I demanded, wiggling in his arms.

Grayson growled yet again and then buried his face into my neck. He started to suck on my mark.

I gasped. “Grayson!” I pushed at his shoulders even as my body lit up with pleasurable flames. “Stop it!” My face bloomed with heat at Kyle witnessing this.

“It’s all right, Luna,” Kyle said, trying to comfort me. “Now that you’ve given into the bond, he’s going to be like this for a while. Possessive and only worried about making sure you’re okay.”

“He’ll only get mad if I stay.”

Chapter 90 – Kidnapped by My Mate Series II: His Lost Queen

Filed To Story:

“So you’re leaving?” I asked, trying to ignore the man who was sucking on my neck like some sort of leech.

Kyle shrugged. “Someone has to take care of the pack.”

Grayson started to walk away before Kyle had even finished his sentence. I glanced away for a single second to see where Grayson was taking me, and when I looked back, Kyle was gone.

I searched for him, but he was nowhere to be seen.

I sighed and leaned my head on Grayson's shoulder, giving up. A small smile appeared on my lips when he started to purr.

"Where are we going?" I asked.

"Hotel," Grayson growled.

"But my apartment is right back there. Why don't we just go there?"

"I'm never fucking allowing you to go back to that bullshit apartment ever again."

I leaned back in his arms so I could look at him. "You're never allowing me?" I repeated.

He nodded, not even bothering to respond. Then his hand gently gripped the back of my head and led my face into his neck. "Keep your eyes shut tight, baby, okay?"

"Why?" I asked, my lips moving against his skin as I spoke, causing sparks to shoot all the way to my toes.

"Just keep your eyes closed and trust me."

And then he started running. I could feel the wind whipping around us, and for a second, I thought he might have put us on some sort of vehicle based on how fast we were moving.

I made the mistake of peeking over his shoulder. That was when I realized what was really happening.

Grayson must have been using his newfound vampire powers to run faster than I was even able to comprehend.

I shrieked and tightened my hold around his neck.

Grayson's huge hand automatically clamped onto the back of my head and pressed my face down into his neck, blocking my view of the world flashing past us as he continued to run.

I could feel the vibrations of his purrs starting against my chest, although I couldn't hear them due to the wind in my ears. He shushed me soothingly, one of his hands petting up and down my spine, trying to calm me.

Mere seconds later, we were standing in front of a door. A hotel door. My breathing was ragged, still shocked by what had just happened.

“Did I scare you? I didn’t mean to, I promise,” Grayson said, gently brushing my messy wind-blown hair from my face.

I looked up at him. “Maybe a little,” I admitted softly, still breathing heavily. “New vampire powers?”

He nodded. “I’m sorry. I couldn’t wait any longer to make sure you were taken care of.” He pulled out a key card from his pocket, then let us in.

“When did you get a hotel room?” I asked him as he carried me inside.

“Three days ago. When I found you.”

It was a nice room, reminding me of the one we had stayed in while in Paris, only not nearly as large.

It didn’t have a kitchen or multiple floors, but it did have a living room with a large dining table and two rooms connected to it.

Grayson brought me over to the table and set me down. He kept his body between my spread legs so he was pressed up firmly against me. My cheeks heated at the intimate position.

“Come here,” Grayson said, tucking his hand under my chin and leading my lips to his. I sighed in pleasure.

He kissed me thoroughly and passionately, successfully taking my breath away and making my entire body tingle.

“God, I’ve missed you. I’ve missed you so fucking much,” he spoke when he finally pulled away minutes later.

“I’m never letting you out of my sight ever again. It would take the Moon Goddess herself to ever take me away from you. Even then, I would fight like hell.”

I smiled up at him, feeling at peace for the first time in an extremely long time. “I’m okay with that.”

I hadn’t even realized I was crying until Grayson frowned and wiped one of my stray tears with his thumb.

“Why are you crying?” He leaned his forehead down against mine. “I can’t stand seeing you cry. I can’t stand that it’s me who keeps making you cry.”

I shook my head. “I’m just happy. They’re happy tears.”

His nostrils flared slightly. “I still don’t like it. I’m going to fix everything. I promise.

You’ll never have to cry ever again.”

And he kissed me again.

BELLE

Kyle had been right when he’d said Grayson would be possessive for a while.

Grayson was acting more than just possessive—he was acting completely insane.

About five minutes after arriving at the hotel, he ordered me a mountain of food from room service and had it delivered to the room.

He never stopped touching me in one way or another, and his eyes were pitch black and completely terrifying with the presence of his wolf.

He barely spoke except to explain things to me, give me orders, or tell me for the millionth time how sorry he was and how he would make it up to me.

Even then, his sentences were usually only one word. It was painfully obvious that his wolf was very much in control of the situation.

The moment the food arrived, Grayson sat me down on his lap at the dining table and put a plate of food in front of me.

It was some sort of creamy-looking pasta with chicken. It looked and smelled delicious. He had his own plate in front of him as well.

“Eat,” he said, motioning to my plate.

I didn’t need to be told twice. I was absolutely starving.

I was only about three bites into the absolutely incredibly sinful meal when I felt Grayson brush my hair away from my shoulder. I could feel his gaze on my red, irritated, infected mark.

I shivered when he brushed his thumb over it gently.

“Eat,” Grayson repeated. I hadn’t even realized I had stopped chewing, waiting in anticipation to see what he was doing. “You need food.”

Then he leaned down and kissed the mark, nearly causing me to choke. His lips felt so good on the wound I couldn't help but let out a small moan.

"What about you?" I asked, sounding breathless. He hadn't touched his food yet.

"Just eat, Belle. Don't make me tell you again."

"Sheesh," I murmured. "Bossy much?"

I took another bite, just happy to get some food besides peanut butter sandwiches, cereal, or leftover scraps from the diner into my stomach.

Once Grayson seemed to be satisfied with the amount I was eating, he leaned down and kissed my mark once again.

I squirmed in his lap. I tried to ignore him, but that proved impossible when his tongue slipped out and ran over the spot. To my immense embarrassment, I felt my panties start to dampen.

I couldn't help it; months apart made his touch feel even better than it had before, if that was possible.

"Grayson," I said, elbowing his stomach lightly. "Stop that."

He didn't listen to me. He continued to lap at the mark, running his tongue over it and then sucking the skin into his mouth repeatedly, leaving kisses in between. He was driving me insane.

"Eat," he said once more against my skin when he noticed my chewing had stopped.

His voice was significantly lower than it had been minutes before. He continued kissing me.

How the hell did he expect me to keep eating when he was doing that? He knew how sensitive that spot was, and yet, here he was, torturing me.

"Do you have to do that right now?" I whined even as I unconsciously tilted my head to give him better access. My face heated up. "You're being very distracting."

"Your mark isn't healing properly because we were apart for so long. The more time I spend tending to it, the less pain you will be in."

I glanced down at his plate of untouched food. "Don't you want to eat, though? You have to be hungry."

"No, I want to take care of you. You need food, and you need your mark to heal."

His teeth suddenly scraped against my mark, nearly causing me to shoot out of his lap with pleasure. I gasped.

With his hand on my hips, Grayson settled me back down, growling low. He actually had the nerve to seem annoyed with me.

“Stop squirming and eat,” he ordered for what felt like the millionth time.

“You’re going to make me choke on my food if you keep doing that,” I complained.

His hands squeezed my hips in a warning. “Don’t talk about you getting hurt. I’m already on edge.”

I rolled my eyes. Grayson said nothing else as he pushed my plate closer and then handed me my fork that I hadn’t realized I had dropped.

“Eat.”

And his lips were back on my neck.

The rest of dinner was brutal. Grayson seemed perfectly content to suck and lick at my neck. For me, however, finishing my meal proved to be extremely difficult.

To my immense embarrassment, I was practically panting by the end of it, leaning completely into him, my head tilted to the side, encouraging his torture.

I felt languid and relaxed and utterly at peace. At the same time, though, I had never felt more wrung up.

My panties were extremely wet, and my clit was pulsing, begging for attention from his sinful tongue still on my neck.

His purring was so loud that it basically drowned out any other sound in the large room. I was totally and completely attuned to him and his every movement.

I wiggled against him, an embarrassing whining noise escaping my lips before I could stop it.

Grayson smiled against my skin. “You doing okay there, baby?”

I rolled my eyes. As if he didn’t know what he was doing to me.

“U-Um...” I could barely form a coherent sentence. “Grayson...”