

# The Rejected Luna's Prince Chapter 36 -

29–37 minutes

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### 36 – Drinking Buddy

(Rachel)

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I didn't know what I felt—annoyed, angry, hurt? A bit of it all.

I didn't think he would find his mate, he has been looking for a decade and has been to most packs in the area, and beyond. I thought that he wouldn't find his, like I never found mine, it was the thing that bonded us.

I don't think I loved him, how can you love someone without really knowing them? But I did love being with him. The Alpha that didn't open up to anyone, I felt that I knew him when we were intimate, and I felt special because of that.

It has been years and as far as I knew I was the only person he was consistently hooking up with. I had to admit it did make me feel good, being invited to his private quarters, knowing he would be there every time I came home. I could pretend that he was waiting for me. We weren't fated, but I was as close to him as he let anyone get, and although he told me he was waiting for his mate to take a Luna, a small part of me hoped that he wouldn't find her so that I could stay with him.

Jealously, that was it. Jealous that not only someone else was fated to that powerful gorgeous man, but at what they had. I wanted it, not even with him, but with my own mate.

I wanted my own damn mate and why didn't I find him yet? I was the only one of my friends who wasn't mated, and even in Europe, I had visited packs for events, on the pretense of fun, but I was looking for my mate.

Still nothing.

I walked to his private elevator, I wanted to have this conversation now. I took a shaky breath and pressed my finger to the scanner, hoping it would still work, but at least no one was around to see my embarrassment. The scan was approved, didn't even bother to take them off then. The elevator took a while to get there, and I was having second guesses with each passing second.

"Oh," Caspien's mom stepped out of the elevator looking me over, "Hi Rachel, I didn't know you were back." She gave me a small smile.

"Luna," I nodded my head, "I just got in actually, I wanted to speak to Caspien, er Alpha Dracos if he was around."

"I think he is, now might not be the best time--"

"I just need five minutes." Grace looked at me sympathetically, I almost couldn't stomach that.

"You know he found his mate,"

"I do," I nodded once.

"Okay then," She motioned me back into the elevator, following me.

"I don't want to keep you from anything."

"I was just heading to the library." She pressed the button and stepped back standing next to me.

"Oh, at this hour?" I tried to cut the tension.

"Our grandson is a blessed wolf." She smiled genuinely now and her eyes misted over in pride or adoration, or something that twisted my stomach further.

"Wow," I tried to return the smile but my heart dipped. How long have they been mated if they already had a pup? From what I heard she only showed up here a month or so ago.

"It's been a day," She looked at me and her sympathetic smile was back.

"I can imagine," We stood in silence before the doors finally opened to his office floor.

"You know where to go," She held open the door, "I'll send him down, I think his office is open."

"Thank you, Luna." I turned away not wanting to see the pity anymore. I didn't think about the fact that everyone would pity me now, I couldn't handle that.

—

Every minute felt like an eternity waiting in his office until the door opened behind me. I sat up a bit in my seat and he crossed the room standing behind his desk. My breath hitched at his familiar features: the fitted gray suit, the impossibly black hair, and the perfectly trimmed beard. I hated how I was reacting to him, and he didn't belong to me anymore, he never did.

"Rachel," He said, his voice devoid of emotion.

"Why didn't you tell me the happy news?" I stood up, taking a step towards his desk.

"About what?" He raised an eyebrow.

"You found your mate," I responded matching his dry tone.

"Yes, I did."

"And I heard about it from others."

"You did?"

"Of course I did, you're not keeping her a secret are you?" I scoffed.

"No," He frowned, "Of course not, but the situation has been interesting, unconventional as far as werewolves go."

"Why didn't you tell me?" I moved around the desk, forcing him to face me. I tried to study his passive face but I could never read him. We were together for years, and he didn't think to tell me?

"I found my mate, everything changed—"

"Don't give me that bullshit," I almost shouted. I knew the mate blindness, that nothing mattered besides them the moment you scented them, laid eyes on them. I didn't want to hear it from him.

"Rachel," His voice lowered, I swear if he was about to pity me, him of all people, "I didn't—"

The door burst open, and a beautiful girl walked into the room. She was striking in a natural way and I swallowed, this must be her. Of course, his mate would be someone so stunning. Long back hair that fell in natural waves I could never quite get perfect, no matter how hard I tried—green eyes that were a shade I had never seen in this world scanned my face as she bit on a full pink lip.

"I'm so sorry for interrupting." I looked back up at Caspien but his eyes were fully focused on his mate.

My stomach curled and I felt hot tears prick my eyes. I had to get out of here, this was stupid, I don't know what I expected from him. I felt so worthless, so small and insignificant.

I brushed past her knowing I couldn't trust my voice, and pressed the door to the elevator a few times when I finally reached it.

It opened and a girl with ruby-red curls was leaning against the glass wall without a care in the world, her eyes met mine after a long moment. Who was she? Besides Caspien only his Beta and Gamma and parents had access to this elevator. I was gone for a few months but I felt like I missed so much.

"Hi," She gave me a half-smile that seemed genuine, "I'm Cali."

"Rachel," I nodded once stepping in and pressing the bottom floor.

"Sorry, have to head up first if you don't mind," The girl shrugged.  
(Rochel)

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It has been years and as for as I knew I was the only person he was consistently hooking up with. I had to admit it did make me feel good, being invited to his private quarters, knowing he would be there every time I come home. I could pretend that he was waiting for me. We weren't mated, but I was as close to him as he let anyone get, and although he told me he was waiting for his mate to take a Luna, a small part of me hoped that he wouldn't find her so that I could stay with him.

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"Luno," I nodded my head, "I just got in actually, I wanted to speak to Cospian, or Alpha Drocus if he was around."

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"Hi," She gave me a half-smile that seemed genuine, "I'm Celi."

"Rachel," I nodded once stepping in and pressing the bottom floor.

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"Holden," She gave me a smile accompanied by a frown, a mix of complete infatuation and adoration of the mated bond. Pain prickled through me. Was I not worthy of a mate?

"Holden," I repeated with a forced smile, I was wondering when he was going to get his mate, he needed someone to tame him and by the look of her I bet she could, "He's a lucky guy."

"I think so too," The door opened on Caspian's floor and I tensed hoping no one else was waiting for it, she turned to me with a wink, "Nice meeting you, Rachel."

"You too, Celi,"

I prayed to The Moon Goddess that I wouldn't get stopped on Caspian's office floor going down, and for once she answered my prayer.

---

"I haven't seen you around here, and I was pretty sure I knew every attractive girl in this place." A tall, dark brunette leaned on the bar next to me.

Arrogent, bed pickup lines, gross.

I turned beck to my drink swirling it eround.

“Not one to telk? How ebout I buy you enother drink, yours is elmost gone.”

Before I could protest, he motioned to the bertender, who set e shot of something cleer in front of me fester then I thought possible.

“I-”

“Just cell it penence for thet pickup line,” He geve me e sheepish grin end I tried to smile beck et him, downing the burning liquid.

“Whet the ectuel f.uck is thet?” I elmost spit it out, it burned like h.ell.

“The first words you spoke to me, I cen’t weit to tell our grendchildren thet story,” He took his shot without even e flinch.

I snorted but smiled et him.

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I shook my heed once, “Whet do you went?”

“The seme thing es you,” His eyes softened.

“Which is?”

“A distrection.”

I sighed. He wes right, but he didn’t need to know thet.

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Another drink, thankfully not another of those shots, appeared before me and I nodded my thanks at the bartender.

“But you’re here, at the bar, alone. You want the distraction that you can’t give yourself. You want to numb the pain, or forget about it with alcohol or company.”

I took a sip and looked away from him, damn, he was f\*\*\*\*\*g right.

“You’re right,” I admitted, clutching the glass, “Thanks for the drink by the way.”

He gave me a two-finger salute and took a drink of his beer, “So, do you want to talk or want a drinking companion? Or I can just fuck off,”

“No,” I shook my head, I did need the distraction, “I’ll give you the short version. Ex-type person found his mate, didn’t have the decency to even text me, his mate of course is beyond gorgeous, and her son is apparently a blessed wolf.”

His mouth opened and then closed, “Blessed wolves don’t get their gifts until they’re eighteen, how old is this ex of yours?” He looked me over as if seeing me for the first time.

“Almost thirty, his mate looked early twenties I doubt her son is eighteen,” I crossed my arms.

He paused for a moment, “Who is your ex?”

“Ex-type person,” I corrected him.

“Sorry,” He gave me a small smile, “Who is your ex-type person?”

“It doesn’t matter, really,” I sighed, taking another drink, “And it doesn’t matter that he found his mate,” I waved my hand.

“But it does to you,” He raised an eyebrow setting down his drink, his arm brushed mine and the contact felt nice.

“It does, for a lot of reasons. It fucking hurts, but I can’t be mad.”

“You can be,” His green eyes were locked on mine, “For him not telling you at least.”

“You’re right, but the thing is, I don’t want to be mad.”

“No one does, but anger does help accomplish things.” There was a spark in his eyes, and I smiled back at him, leaning into where his arm was rested on the bar, wanting a bit of his warm touch.

“I’m not trying to accomplish anything. Besides well, I guess.” I tipped my glass forward.

“But you don’t have to do it alone anymore,” He shrugged, “Well, step one complete. Find drinking buddy, you’ve accomplished that” He raised his glass to mine and I clinked mine to his.

“Where are you from, Rachel?”

“Crescent Moon. I live in Italy now, Milen.”

“Fancy,” He whistled, “To both.”

We were at a werewolf dive bar, technically out of the city limits. I didn’t want to have to deal with humans today or anyone that didn’t understand the complexities of the meta bond, or lack thereof. I guess I was looking for someone to talk to, someone who didn’t know me and wouldn’t judge me—someone to be with to feel wanted and needed, everything that I wasn’t feeling this evening.

“And you?”

“Originally from Red Stone.” Not too far from here, but not close either.

“Want to go to the table? Somewhere quieter to well,,” He nudged me.

“Sure,” I actually enjoyed his company. After that horrible pickup line, things only got better.

“Then we can plan your ex-type person’s demise,” He winked.

I snorted, “I really doubt you could take him down. He is untouchable.” I sighed, to everyone except his beautiful meta with eyes so gorgeous they would haunt my dreams.

“Try me,” He put his hand on the small of my back and led me to the corner.

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My eyes opened against my will. I had to figure out what where that dull pounding was coming from. Grey light was trickling through the curtains in the room I didn’t recognize. The dull pounding was in me, it was me.

Confusion helped pull me from the fog for the moment.

Everything smelled like alcohol and, oh Goddess, sex. My mouth tasted like cotton, and memories came crawling back. Some memories at least, there was a lot that I couldn’t piece together, and the memories I did have were fuzzy.

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“The first words you spoke to me, I can’t wait to tell our grandchildren that story,” He took his shot without even a flinch.

I snorted but smiled at him.

“Caden,” He held out a hand and I placed mine in his.

“Rachel,”

“Nice name,” He flashed me a brilliant smile.

“Going to have to thank my parents for that one; I didn’t choose it,” I raised an eyebrow.

“So what I’m hearing is that you want me to meet your parents?” He matched my stare.

I shook my head once, “What do you want?”

“The same thing as you,” His eyes softened.

“Which is?”

“A distraction.”

I sighed. He was right, but he didn’t need to know that.

“Why do you think I need a distraction?”

He motioned to the bartender again, “Really?” He turned his attention to me, dark green eyes studying my face, “You have that look. If you were just sad you would go home, curl up, watch a bad movie, cry, whatever you do, I’m not judging.”

Another drink, thankfully not another of those shots, appeared before me and I nodded my thanks at the bartender.

“But you’re here, at a bar, alone. You want a distraction that you can’t give yourself. You want to numb the pain, or forget about it with alcohol or company.”

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The last thing that I remembered was laughing with Ceden, his arms wrapped around me outside the bar and my lipstick smeared on his face.

I turned over groaning as the throbbing that reminded me of all of my poor choices. He wasn't in bed next to me.

I survey my surroundings, light wells, and floors, cubicles. The edge of a thick rug, but I couldn't lift my head to see how big it was, nor did I care. I couldn't tell if this was a hotel or his house. I needed to find my clothes, and my phone and figure out where I was.

I reluctantly dragged myself up picking up pieces of my clothing that I could find strewn about the room, I had to steady myself a few times bending knees made me lightheaded. Thankfully, my phone was in my pocket of the pants I was wearing. Besides some drunk texts to friends describing Ceden and what I wanted to do to him, I didn't do anything else incriminating.

I took a quick shower that helped a tiny bit with the tiredness and pulled back on my clothes that smelled like stale beer. I couldn't wait to get home, and in fresh clothes and crawl in my bed. I hoped I wasn't too far from my peckhouse.

"Hello, sleeping beauty," Ceden walked in the door as I was pulling the towel off my hair. I jumped for some reason I wasn't expecting to see him again, "I brought coffee," He handed me a mug and I nodded in a silent thank you.

"How's the head?" He flashed a smile, and I groaned over the mug.

"How are you not dead?"

He shrugged crossing his arms, his muscles flexed, and I had a few flashbacks of last night that sent something settle deep beneath my stomach.

“Where ere we? I think I need to teke e nep.”

“My bed is open to you eny time of dey or night,” He reised en eyebrow his voice low.

I swallowed, “Thank you for the offer, but I think I need to die in peece.” I also felt like I should epologize for lest night to Cespien end his mete.

Regerdless of whet we were, he wes still my Alphe, end I didn’t went to be on bed terms or heve his mete misteke my intentions.

“Fine, I cen drive you.” He helped me up off the bed.

“I cen get e texi it’s fine.” I weved it off. I didn’t think I could force conversetion.

“I’ll erreng e then,” He pulled out his phone end led me from whet I now essumed to be his room.

It opened to e lerge hellwey end I followed him down e lerge open steircese. This wesn’t just his house, this looked more like e peckhouse.

“Bete,” An omege nodded to him es we descended the steirs.

“Bete?” I esked him, my brows furrowing. I tried to wreck my memory for if he mentioned thet lest night. Wes thet something I wes supposed to know?

He shrugged, “Nothing compered to your kinde Alphe ex, but-” His lips curved up in e pleyful helf smile.

“Whet?”

“Alphe Drecos, I meen, telk about e complex. I elmost couldn’t bring myself to sleep with you. I didn’t went you to compere us.” He nudged me, “I’m joking, of course. From the moment I sew you, I wanted you.”

I couldn’t pey ettention to whet he wes seying efter he mentioned Cespien. I didn’t remember seying who I wes upset about, but then egein, there were huge chunks thet I didn’t remember. I rubbed the side of my fece, frustreted with no one besides myself.

“Where ere we?”

“Bleck Stone. Not too fer ewey,” He winked, “Feel free to come beck enytime.”

“I’ll think about it,” I tried to give him e smile but I wes still trying to process everything with e pounding heedeche.

A texi wes weiting outside the peckhouse, thankfully.

“Well, thanks for everything.” I handed him my coffee mug, and he pulled me in for a hug.

“Anytime, Rachel. Taxi is paid for.” He opened the door for me.

I laid my head back reeling from last night and this morning.

—

I dragged myself to my apartment at the peckhouse and drank more water than I had in my life before slumping into bed.

When I woke up I felt a lot better, besides a deep feeling of embarrassment but I couldn't please. I got ready and reluctantly linked Cespien, asking if I could talk to him and his mate. He told me he would meet me in his office, and I headed out, wanting to get this behind me.

I took the peck elevator, having to get clearance from his secretary before I was allowed up, then I had to pass his security and another secretary before being allowed into the hellway of his office.

It was so strange, I was used to using his private elevator that opened right to the other side of the floor. I felt like such an outsider, a regular peck member, which I guess was.

I held my head high as I walked up to his door of his office. It was ajar, and he sounded pissed. Maybe this wasn't a good time.

“How the hell did Alphe Jesper tell about Emmett being a blessed wolf?” He growled, the walls of his office shook, and my stomach tightened with fear. I had never heard him so angry.

“No one outside of us knew, and we just found out. Would your parents?” I heard Holden ask.

“Why the hell would they?” Cespien shot back, “Bleck Stone hates my dad and the feeling is mutual, and Wille's parents wouldn't have ties with them unless they let something slip.”

“Not that I know of.” Her voice was heard but cracked a bit, “They haven't even told anyone from our peck where I am now; I doubt they would tell everyone they knew about Emmett.” I heard a voice that must belong to his mate, to Wille.

“So then how the fuck did they find out? I went every piece of footage from this peckhouse scoured. No one is leaving until we find out who is spying on us. We definitely have a mole, it's the only option.”

Bleck Stone. Ceden. Shit.

I felt nauseous and it wasn't from the hangover anymore. My head felt flushed, and a cold sweet prickled across my body. I took a deep breath and shut my eyes before pushing the door open.



“Um, that might have been my fault, actually.” I said looking at my feet.

When I looked up five pairs of eyes turned to me, and Caspien’s went pitch black. Anger rolled off of him, all directed towards me.

The last thing that I remembered was laughing with Caden, his arms wrapped around me outside the bar and my lipstick smeared on his face.

## The Rejected Luna’s Prince Chapter 37 -

35–45 minutes

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### The Rejected Luna’s Prince Chapter 37

#### 37 – Loose Lips

(Willa)

Our parents let us sleep in, and it was almost noon when I managed to peel myself from Caspien’s warm embrace. Sleep still clouded my mind, but I felt better than I had in weeks.

(Willa)

Our parents let us sleep in, and it was almost noon when I managed to peel myself from Caspien’s warm embrace. Sleep still clouded my mind, but I felt better than I had in weeks.

This all felt so normal, and I was craving normal.

Our parents were all there with us at his place; he had more than enough space for us all. I didn’t have to try to impress them. I didn’t feel on edge. I could breathe with his parents, and they got along so well with mine despite their vastly different upbringings.

Caspien stiffened for a second where he was sitting next to me on the couch before leaning down to whisper in my ear, “Rachel wants to meet with us,”

I sighed. I didn’t want to deal with whatever it was she was going to say, but I wanted to put her behind us for good.

“Me too?” I had to make sure I was hearing him right, “Did she actually ask to meet with me?” I didn’t want to be dragged along if she only wanted to talk to him.

“Yes,” he kissed the side of my cheek and pulled me up, excusing us.

He wrapped his arms around me as we stood behind his desk, waiting. The phone rang, and Caspien grabbed it, frowning.

“Alpha Dracos,” He pushed a button to put it on speaker.

“Ah, hello, Alpha Dracos. This is Alpha Jasper.” Caspien tensed and closed his eyes, taking a deep breath through his nose.

“Are there more problems at the border,” His eyes looked like chips of ice as he slipped completely into Alpha mode, “On your end,” He added.

The line was silent for a moment, “Why do you always think I’m calling with bad news?”

“Because you always are. Not bad news necessarily, but something to add to my plate, something you messed up.”

“My men messed up, you mean.”

“I know what I said. Your warriors are an extension of you.” Caspien replied coldly.

“I didn’t know you were so diplomatic. Maybe your child has softened you.”

I looked toward Caspien, confusion evident on my face. I didn’t understand what he was getting at. Caspien’s hand clenched, but that was the only sign that he even heard Alpha Jasper. His eyes clouded over for a few long moments.

“A congratulation is in order, Alpha.” Alpha Jasper continued, “I didn’t know that you had a child, even though you kept them well hidden.”

“We haven’t kept him hidden; there hasn’t been a formal announcement yet.”

“A blessed wolf as well. You would be right to keep him hidden, keep him protected.” Caspien’s jaw tensed and my stomach tightened as I looked over at him.

Was what he was saying true? I was only worried about protecting him from himself, from the power he would possess. It hadn’t crossed my mind that others might seek him out, try to use him, or hurt him. My heart started beating erratically and each breath became hard thinking of my sweet boy and what the world would see him as, try to do to him.

I won’t let anything happen to our son Caspien’s voice was sharp in my mind, and I tried to nod, but I wasn’t sure I did.

Holden, Griffen, and Cali came in on silent feet. Griffen came to stand next to Caspien’s side, and Holden and Cali took a seat across from the desk. Holden looked serious, something that made me even more nervous.

“Alpha Dracos?” That voice I started to hate came again, “Is everything alright on your end?” If a wicked smile had a sound, this was it.

“I was just trying to figure out how you found out about my son when it hasn’t been announced.”

“People talk.”

“Do they now?” Caspien’s voice was laced with hard anger.

“Apparently, I just wanted to congratulate you on such a powerful heir, I truly hope you can protect him so he can take your crown.”

“The thought of his protection has never crossed my mind,” Caspien responded immediately, “There will be no problems with the future prince’s security. No one would be stupid enough to test my wrath.” There was no room for question there.

“Well, I hope that is the case then,” Alpha Jasper mused, “I just wanted to reach out to extend my congratulations for your hidden heir.”

“You mentioned that already, and I appreciate the sentiment. Next time you want to send your well wishes, send an email. This line is for business only.” Caspien hung up so fast I jumped. He almost broke his phone.

“How the hell did Alpha Jasper discover about Emmett being a blessed wolf?” He growled, his entire office shook, and hot anger rolled off of him. Everyone, even Cali, cowered.

I couldn’t wrap my mind around it; we just found out yesterday, and as far as I knew, none of us left. We were all in the packhouse still. Our parents stayed at Caspien’s, and Cali and Holden were at his place. Even if there was someone that talked, it would have been someone that we trusted completely.

I looked at Caspien, and I could tell he was trying to piece it together too, but he was feeling more anger and pure rage I didn’t think he had the ability to think straight.

I don’t understand. I couldn’t bring myself to think that someone I trusted so completely would do this. I couldn’t go through that again, the broken trust, I thought I was past that with all of these people.

“I think that might be my fault, actually,” Rachel walked in with her eyes downcast, but even with that, she didn’t look anything less than confident, anything less like she belonged in any room she stepped in.

“What?!” Caspien roared at her. His anger was red hot, and his eyes flashed black. I was worried he would shift right there and tear her apart.

“It was a mistake,” She averted her eyes, Caspien’s aura made it hard to speak, “I swear, I didn’t know,” Her voice trailed off.

“Tell us everything,” I said, putting my hand in front of Caspien’s chest. His breathing was erratic, and he was shaking, I knew his wolf wasn’t as intense as he was, but he was still an Alpha wolf and protective of his own.

She nodded and took a tentative step forward, wringing her hands.

“I accidentally, well, I went out last night, and I guess I kind of vented to someone who ended up being the Beta of Black Stone,” Her eyes met mine, and she seemed scared and remorseful, but I didn’t know her. All I knew was that she had put my baby in danger.

“And then what?” Caspien asked; icy rage coated his words.

“I don’t remember it all, I swear,” She shook her head furiously, “I didn’t mean to, I didn’t know-” Her voice cracked, and she looked down.

“You’re telling me that you let slip that my son is a blessed wolf to someone that you didn’t know was the Beta of Black Stone?” Caspien took a step towards her. I grabbed his arm to stop him from going further, trying to calm him down a bit to think rationally.

“Yes,” She met his eyes, “That is what I’m saying. He didn’t introduce himself with his title; I only found out this morning when I woke up in their packhouse.”

“You slept with him?” Holden asked.

“Yes,” Rachel turned her gaze to Holden, “I thought I was just venting to someone, I didn’t know that it would turn into this.”

“Was it good?” Cali asked, and I swear Rachel smiled for a moment before shaking her head once.

“Gives a new definition to sleeping with the enemy,” Holden snorted.

“I think that actually is the definition,” Griffen corrected, “Also, technically, he isn’t our enemy. We have an alliance.”

“You’re not telling me that Alpha Jasper is on our side.” Holden gave Griffen a blank stare.

“On paper, he is,” Griffen retorted, “That’s all that legally matters, for now.”

“How did you even find out about my son?” I asked Rachel, re-directing the conversation, “That he was a blessed wolf?”

(Willo)

Our parents let us sleep in, and it was almost noon when I managed to peel myself from Cospien's warm embrace. Sleep still clouded my mind, but I felt better than I had in weeks.

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"Yes," he kissed the side of my cheek and pulled me up, excusing us.

He dropped his arms around me as we stood behind his desk, waiting. The phone rang, and Cospien grabbed it, frowning.

"Alpho Drococ," He pushed a button to put it on speaker.

"Ah, hello, Alpho Drococ. This is Alpho Jospier." Cospien tensed and closed his eyes, taking a deep breath through his nose.

"Are there more problems at the border," His eyes looked like chips of ice as he slipped completely into Alpho mode, "On your end," He added.

The line was silent for a moment, "Why do you always think I'm colluding with bad news?"

"Because you always are. Not bad news necessarily, but something to add to my plate, something you messed up."

"My men messed up, you mean."

"I know what I said. Your warriors are an extension of you." Cospien replied coldly.

"I didn't know you were so diplomatic. Maybe your child has softened you."

I looked toward Cospien, confusion evident on my face. I didn't understand what he was getting at. Cospien's hand clenched, but that was the only sign that he even heard Alpho Jospier. His eyes clouded over for a few long moments.

“A congratulation is in order, Alho.” Alho Josper continued, “I didn’t know that you had a child, even though you kept them well hidden.”

“We haven’t kept him hidden; there hasn’t been a formal announcement yet.”

“A blessed wolf as well. You would be right to keep him hidden, keep him protected.” Cospien’s jaw tensed and my stomach tightened as I looked over at him.

Was what he was saying true? I was only worried about protecting him from himself, from the power he would possess. It hadn’t crossed my mind that others might seek him out, try to use him, or hurt him. My heart started beating erratically and each breath became hard thinking of my sweet boy and what the world would see him as, try to do to him.

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(Willa)

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Her deep brown eyes focused on mine, “Grace mentioned it last night. I swear it wasn’t even a huge thing; I didn’t make a big deal about it. I just said it in passing; I was venting to someone over drinks that I didn’t think I would see again.”

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“Are you planning on seeing him again?” Griffen asked.

She shook her head, “He was nice, he was what I needed for the night. But the sneaking off to tell his Alpha some news about the kid first thing in the morning doesn’t really sit well with me,” She offered a whisper of a smile.

I nodded once. I think I believed her, especially because she volunteered the information instead of us finding out elsewhere.

“What else does he know?” Caspien cut in. She blinked and shook her head.

“I-I honestly don’t know.” She shut her eyes, “I can’t really remember,”

“I don’t care if it was an accident. You put him at risk,” Caspien growled.

“I’m sorry-”



“Get out,” He was shaking again.

“Cespian,” I walked closer to him and squeezed his arm gently, “I don’t like this position either, but from what you have all said about Alphe Jesper and his peck, he doesn’t have enough warriors to protect his borders, let alone pose a threat.”

“Still,” he shook his head.

“And as you said,” I looked up at him, but he didn’t meet my stare, “Everyone was going to find out eventually,” I raised an eyebrow, “I don’t like this either, I can forgive her for a mistake, even if I’m pissed at the outcome.” I looked back at her, hoping to convey some of my anger.

He looked down at me and stopped shaking, but his face didn’t soften.

“Is that what you wanted to talk about, what you came here to say?” Cespian asked.

“I came to apologize for yesterday to you two,” Rachel went on, looking around the room, “I overheard a bit of your conversation and put that other part together just now,” She paused, looking at the others.

“We can leave,” Celi suggested, standing up.

“It was just getting good,” Holden complained as Celi tugged him up by his arm.

“I’ll be back after. I want you to go over everything Alphe Jesper said,” Griffen nodded to us, following them out. Now that Nore was closer to her due date, Griffen was more protective and nervous than before, I barely saw him.

“Do you want to sit?” I asked, motioning to the chair across from us.

She smiled at me and took one of the chairs. Cespian gave me his chair, and he stood behind me, probably because he wanted to peep; every time something was going on, he couldn’t sit down.

“I’m Rachel,” She started.

I smiled at her, “I figured that much; I’m Wille.” Cespian sighed behind me, and I closed my eyes, fighting the urge to roll them at his antics.

“I didn’t want to get off on the wrong foot. I don’t know if Cespian mentioned anything about me, but I was upset by how I found out. I didn’t mean to leave without saying anything to you yesterday. It felt like a lot, and I didn’t want you to think I left because of you. I just wasn’t ready to have that conversation.”

“And now you are?” Cespian cut her off; his voice was still ice cold.

Rachel fixed her stare on him, “Obviously,” Her eyes narrowed slightly.

“If that’s all you have to say, and if you can’t think of any other useful information you might have let slip to the enemy, then we’re done here.”

“Cespien,” I looked behind me. He started peeing.

“I need to figure out who else knows and what they know.” His face was set, and his jaw tightened.

“Why do I always have to be the rational one?” I raised an eyebrow at him, “Men and their emotions, I swear.” He swallowed but fought a smile, meeting my eyes.

He took a breath and came to stand behind me again, placing a hand on my shoulder, “Rachel, I will forgive you eventually, but right now, I am not happy.” He peered, I could still feel his hot anger radiating off of him, “And that’s putting it lightly.”

“Okay,” She nodded, “That’s fair. Thank you, both.” She went to stand, seeming relieved.

“I can walk you out,” I suggested, turning back to Cespien who was steering her down with an expressionless gaze.

When I got back here, it would be my turn to get angry, scared, and frustrated, but I would let it be his turn for a few more moments.

We left his office in silence. Cespien had nothing else to say to her.

“I have something to apologize for, too,” I spoke up; after a moment she peered, studying me, “I didn’t mean to interrupt you last night, well, I did,” I smiled and averted my gaze.

“It’s okay,”

“No, it’s not,” I shook my head, “I trust Cespien, I just, I was worried, and I had to see for myself.” I trailed off, swallowing.

“Wille, I would never. No matter what happened between us in the past, I would never go after someone who was meted. I could never.” She shook her head ferociously; her honey waves moved slightly with the motion.

“Thank you, It’s nice to hear that.” I gave her a tight smile, “It’s just, I had a meeting before,” Her eyes widened slightly.

“I found him fucking his ex over a desk. So it just brought up unpleasant memories and irrational fears. Even though Cespien is different, the situation was similar, and I panicked. I apologize for not letting you finish your conversation.” I shrugged or tried to.

She took a step back, her brows furrowed, “I- I’m sorry, I don’t-”

“I’m not looking for pity or trying to make you feel bad enough not to go after Cespien,” I gave her a genuine smile, “I just wanted to explain why I burst in.”

“Honestly, I would burst into every room I walked into if that happened,” She took her lower lip in her mouth, “I really am sorry, Wille. I can’t imagine that happening, especially with your mate.”

“Thank you. I mean, it turned out okay in the end, but it definitely changed me.” I swallowed thinking about those first few months, even years after.

“I am sorry for my part in this. I would never intentionally share anything I thought would be incriminating to Cespien, or your son.” She blinked a few times.

“I understand,” I placed my hand on her shoulder, “You don’t have to apologize anymore. I am terrified for my son. I honestly haven’t even fully begun to process what this might mean for him. But what I said back there was true. We weren’t intending to hide the fact that he potentially would be Cespien’s heir. The blessed wolf thing was bound to get out eventually. I just, I didn’t think about what that might mean for him, and it took me by surprise.”

“He will be protected always,” Rachel held my gaze. I wish I could share in her unwavering confidence.

“I know, but” I shook my head.

I never thought there would be a threat to my son; there had never been a reason for me to think that. But this wasn’t Blue Ridge; this wasn’t a small peck; Emmett was Cespien’s heir if he wanted it. I knew Cespien probably had some enemies, but I stupidly didn’t think about those implications when it came to myself or Emmett.

“It’s scary. I get it. Well, not exactly,” She offered a sad smile, “But I can empathize, sympathize, whichever.” She laughed once.

“I appreciate it, I honestly do. You are refreshing.” She tucked some hair behind her ear, meeting my gaze.

“Thanks, Wille. We might never be friends, but it was honestly nice meeting you.” I pressed the elevator button for her, scanning my finger.

“I can go out the other way. It’s fine,”

I raised an eyebrow, “We’re already here.”

“Wille,” She nodded her goodbye, stepping in.

“Rachel,” I offered a smile, which she returned.

As the elevator doors closed, I felt the weight lift. My worry for Emmett was still tugging at me, but knowing that Rachel wouldn't pose a problem was huge. I assumed she would still see him elsewhere; they were together for Goddess knows how long, but if what she said was true, she seemed to respect the mate bond, and I respected her for that.

Her deep brown eyes focused on mine, "Grace mentioned it last night. I swear it wasn't even a huge thing; I didn't make a big deal about it. I just said it in passing; I was venting to someone over drinks that I didn't think I would see again."

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“I’m not looking for pity or trying to make you feel bad enough not to go after Caspien,” I gave her a genuine smile, “I just wanted to explain why I burst in.”

“Honestly, I would burst into every room I walked into if that happened,” She took her lower lip in her mouth, “I really am sorry, Willa. I can’t imagine that happening, especially with your mate.”

“Thank you. I mean, it turned out okay in the end, but it definitely changed me.” I swallowed thinking about those first few months, even years after.

“I am sorry for my part in this. I would never intentionally share anything I thought would be incriminating to Caspien, or your son.” She blinked a few times.

“I understand,” I placed my hand on her shoulder, “You don’t have to apologize anymore. I am terrified for my son. I honestly haven’t even fully begun to process what this might mean for

him. But what I said back there was true. We weren't intending to hide the fact that he potentially would be Caspien's heir. The blessed wolf thing was bound to get out eventually. I just, I didn't think about what that might mean for him, and it took me by surprise."

"He will be protected always," Rachel held my gaze. I wish I could share in her unwavering confidence.

"I know, but" I shook my head.

I never thought there would be a threat to my son; there had never been a reason for me to think that. But this wasn't Blue Ridge; this wasn't a small pack; Emmett was Caspien's heir if he wanted it. I knew Caspien probably had some enemies, but I stupidly didn't think about those implications when it came to myself or Emmett.

"It's scary. I get it. Well, not exactly," She offered a sad smile, "But I can empathize, sympathize, whichever." She laughed once.

"I appreciate it, I honestly do. You are refreshing." She tucked some hair behind her ear, meeting my gaze.

"Thanks, Willa. We might never be friends, but it was honestly nice meeting you." I pressed the elevator button for her, scanning my finger.

"I can go out the other way. It's fine,"

I raised an eyebrow, "We're already here."

"Willa," She nodded her goodbye, stepping in.

"Rachel," I offered a smile, which she returned.

As the elevator doors closed, I felt a weight lift. My worry for Emmett was still tugging at me, but knowing that Rachel wouldn't pose a problem was huge. I assumed she would still see him as hers; they were together for Goddess knows how long, but if what she said was true, she seemed to respect the mate bond, and I respected her for that.

---

Things going back to normal was more than I could have dreamed of, more than I let myself hope for last week. I settled back into my routine and relished the familiarity of it.

Going to class without anxiously checking my phone for an update about Emmett, working a shift in the restaurant where I could actually focus on what I was doing. Even studying those monotonous terms reminded me just how lucky I was to be back to a level headspace and actually engaged in my daily tasks.

“I will never complain about polishing silverware ever again,” I told Celi.

“Well, in that case, you can take mine.” She gave me her wry smile.

“I’m not that desperate yet.”

“I know you’re probably fine with this, but I wanted to check,” She turned to me, “My afternoon class was canceled tomorrow, so Holden was going to come over and see my place.”

“Why would I have a problem with that?”

“Emmett would be there too while you were at class. I know they know each other but want to keep you in the loop.”

“Yeah, of course; I can see if Cespien can pick him up if you want some alone time.”

“No, not at all. Loreli will be there too. He’s just coming, so we can pretend that anything about this relationship is normal.”

“He hasn’t been to your place yet?” I tried to wade through my memories of the last few weeks, but it was all muddy.

“No,” She shrugged, “I didn’t want to bring him into my s.h.it stained world, I liked staying in the fairy tale, that is that glass apartment above the clouds.” She gave me a half smile.

“Has he asked you to move in?” Celi seemed to spend more time at the peckhouse than I did.

“Yes, and I went to. I just,” She rubbed her neck.

“That’s not coming off, here to break it to you, but this is forever.” I tried to smile, but I was slightly worried for Holden. I didn’t want her to change her mind, to back out of something she seemed so sure of when it started.

“I do know that,” Her brows tugged together slightly, “And I know what it means, but I feel so young to be practically married. I thought I would have a string of lovers and burn out at the ripe age of forty.” I laughed at that; I could see that too, “Now I feel like some young bride being forced down the altar because I got pregnant.”

“Here to break it to you, but some of that ship has sailed.” I nudged her, and she scowled at me, “Do you want any other lovers?”

“Oh hell no, what that men can do,” She shuddered, “He’s it, he’s everything. A bit dorkier than I imagined but-,” She smiled widely, “He’s it.”

“So what’s the problem?”



“Fine, you caught me. There isn’t one. I think it’s just going so well; it’s making me uneasy. It’s too easy; he’s too perfect.”

I understood more than she knew, it seemed too good to be true, but this is what metes were supposed to be.

“I can help you create a problem if you’re bored,” I raised an eyebrow.

“Boys love an ultimatum,” She smiled wickedly, shaking her head, “Maybe I’ll force him down the altar, state that I can’t live with a man before marrying him.”

“Who knew you were so traditional,” I teased, “I won’t lie. Having you a few floors down would be incredible.”

“I’m curious how it will work with Loreli, growing up in a literal pack of werewolves.”

“She’s young enough, she will adapt, and if she chooses, she can change when she’s older.”

“If we, if we have more-” She left it open as a question.

I shrugged, “I’m not sure. I think each case is different depending. But if you changed, they would be fully werewolf pups.”

“Pups, that’s cute,” She looked lost in thought.

“Would you ever change?”

“I thought about it, but the risks scare me. I can’t leave Loreli,” Her eyes snapped to mine, and I nodded. I don’t know what I would choose in her situation.

“Either way, if you have more kids, nothing would be wrong with them. There are a lot of hybrids in this world. I can’t guarantee which side they will take more often.”

She nodded, chewing her lip, “Don’t worry, I’m not pregnant or anything,” She smiled, “I do want to move in with him honestly, you’re right, I do want to do that; I’m getting in my own way. I don’t think my brain is capable of processing this much happiness,” She said mostly to herself, smiling and picking up some more silverware. I let her go back to her thoughts, and we worked in comfortable silence.

---

I needed to catch up on classes, and even though I was still going when Emmett was sick, I felt like I didn’t listen or pay attention. I was just scribbling mindless notes that barely made sense to me now. The end of the term was coming faster than I wanted to admit, and I wasn’t sure I would pass.

I texted Celi to let her know I was about to head out to pick up Emmett on the way to Cespiens. Grece and Rendell offered to watch him this afternoon while I drank strong coffee out of Cespien's little espresso cups and tried to make sense of these notes and teach myself from my textbooks.

The redecoration was going to start this week, and Cespien would thankfully stay with me at my place during it. We didn't spend nights apart anymore since Emmett got sick, and I wearing his mask made it incredibly hard to be separated from him.

I wanted to pack everything up at my place myself instead of having strangers in here. I was excited about our new life together, and that we would make a new home with the three of us. My excitement was still mixed with a bit of sadness at the short time Emmett and I had just the two of us.

I unlocked my door and slung my bag off. I needed to collect the rest of my books. I passed Emmett's room. His door was ajar. I took a step back, as something caught my eye. I looked into his room again, his blanket was off his bed, and a few pieces of clothing were strewn around the floor.

I opened the door further, hesitating to take a step in.

I swore that he made his bed this morning, and he was always so good at putting his clothes in the hamper. I got a whiff of an unfamiliar scent, so subtle I wouldn't have caught it if I wasn't looking for something off.

My heart clenched, and the hair on the back of my neck stood up as I backed a few steps away. I listened for any sounds, any sign that I wasn't alone there, but I didn't hear anything.

I don't sense anyone here – I could tell she was on edge

Can you tell what they are? They aren't werewolves, but not human.

A hybrid maybe. That scent is, it's strange.

I pulled out my phone to text Cespien, my heart thudding against my chest.

Someone has been in my apartment.

I'm sending warriors that are closer to you – I'll be there as soon as I can. Leave and get into the car.

I swallowed, grabbed my bag, and walked out, worried someone or something would pop out of nowhere. I calmed down a bit when I saw the car already waiting for me to take me to pick up Emmett.

S.hit. Emmett.

I didn't even make it to my room or bother to look in the main areas. But someone was in his room, that much I knew for sure.

I pulled out my phone to dial Celi, just to make sure Emmett was safe. Her name popped up on my phone before I could unlock mine.

My heart dropped when I heard the panic in her voice.

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## **The Rejected Luna's Prince Chapter 38 -**

31–39 minutes

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### **The Rejected Luna's Prince Chapter 38**

38 – Interrogation

**\*\*Some mild torture scenes just letting ya know\*\***

(Willa)

“Willa, don't panic.”

I swallowed against the lump in my throat, her panicked voice telling me not to panic did nothing to make me do anything but panic.

“Everything is okay now, but-”

“But what?” I almost shouted. My voice didn't belong to me anymore.

“Someone attacked us, well, tried to. They came, I don't even know how actually, they got into our apartment, but we stopped him. If Holden wasn't here,” Her voice broke.

I tried to even my breath, and think logically.

“Where is everyone now?”

“They’re here, Holden has the guy, and people are on the way here to extract him or whatever fancy word they were using.”

“Emmett?”

“He and Loreli are okay. As soon as they take the guy, we’re going to the packhouse.”

“And you’re never leaving my sight, neither of you,” Holden shouted.

“Meet us at the packhouse, okay?” Cali asked, “Caspian is on his way here now, and he’s going to escort us.”

“Okay,” I hung up and clutched the phone to my chest, reeling from the last few minutes. I couldn’t wrap my mind around everything that happened, but I knew it had to do with Emmett. I felt sick; the anxiety and worry that settled into me with Emmett’s fevers were back.

Caspian called me, and I fumbled to unlock it.

“Holden said you had been informed. Warriors are at your place now assessing the damage, and I’ll escort Cali, Emmett, and Loreli to the packhouse. I’m almost there, and the threat has already been extracted. You’re being followed.”

“What?” I looked out the window.

“By my warriors, sorry, I should have led with that.” I almost smiled.

“Everything will be okay; I’ll figure this out.” He hung up the phone before I could say anything else.

I found myself yearning for the simple life that I was so scared of months ago.

(Caspian)

Cali called me and told me about someone breaking in while they were all home. The pieces came together, Willa’s break in and now this. I directed the driver to their place instead, knowing Willa was already close to the packhouse.

I could guess what they were after, but I needed to figure out how they moved so quickly. It was only days after Emmett’s birthday. It was hardly enough time for anyone to track him down or figure out Willa and his changing schedule, and I was with them as much as I could be.

It could have been someone from the inside or someone that just got lucky.

Well, they didn’t because Holden was there. If he wouldn’t have been there, I couldn’t even think about what might have happened to Emmett. Cali and Loreli might have been casualties, and, d.amnit. I threw my phone across the car. Every part of me wanted to shift but-

I'll get there faster than you in this f\*\*\*\*\*g prison

There are humans out there, and the car is already speeding

F.uck the humans, f.uck everything that isn't our mate and pup

He had a point, but they were safe now, and I had to be rational. I couldn't go running through the city as a massive wolf because it might save me a few minutes.

It would save you more than that

I pushed him away.

I didn't wait until we entirely stopped before I threw myself out of the car and pulled open her front door, not caring that I broke her buzzer or the door itself.

Okay, maybe I should get that fixed today.

Now who is the rational one

I ran up the stairs and ignored the warrior in front of Cali's door. I burst in, looking frantically around. Even though Cali said Emmett was safe, some part of me didn't believe it until I laid eyes on him unscathed.

Emmett was holding Loreli's hand, and when he saw me, he ran into my arms. I scooped him up, breathing in our pup's familiar scent that felt like home. I let out a deep breath I had been holding since I got that call. He was safe, and I wouldn't let anything like this happen again.

After a few long moments in his small embrace, I pulled back and looked him over, "Are you okay?"

"Yes," He smiled widely, "Cali hit him with a pan. It was so loud," He laughed.

I looked back at Cali, who shrugged. She was holding Loreli now who was buried under her mass of deep red curls.

"Is she okay?" I nodded to her daughter.

She bit a wobbly lip and shook her head, "She will be," She smoothed Loreli's hair and let out a shaky breath.

"You're safe now. You all are."

She nodded, and I looked around the apartment. The couch was flipped over. There was some broken glass from Goddess knew what, it was obvious there was a struggle.

A few warriors were there, one surveying out the window, and I heard a few others in the other rooms.

“Pack what you need for the night. I’ll have people bring the rest.” There was no way Holden or I would let her come back here unguarded. They were staying in the packhouse, at least until we got this sorted.

“Okay,” She nodded, looking down at Loreli. She seemed a bit reserved for the first time since I met her, and I wasn’t sure if it was because of her own shock or what her daughter must have witnessed.

Loreli fell asleep in Cali’s arms on the way, and Cali looked out the window, but her eyes didn’t focus on anything.

“Are you ready to talk about it?” I asked. Emmett was in his car seat playing with a toy, “Or do you want to talk about it?” That seemed like the right thing, something I would ask Willa. Maybe I could be better at people if I pretended they were all Willa.

“Sure,” She turned her hazel eyes to me, studying me for a long moment, “Basically, some guy appeared, literally seemed to appear out of thin air,” Her eyebrows furrowed, and she shook her head a few times.

“I can ask Holden if-”

“No,” She held up a hand, “I was just trying to make sense of it. I was so worried about Loreli I’m just now replaying it without fear for her.”

I nodded, looking at Emmett, I placed a hand on his knee, and he put a small one on top of it. I felt a huge sense of love swell up inside me. It was different than what I felt with my parents, with Griffen and Holden, even with Willa. It was a protective love, and love that didn’t have to try. I couldn’t explain it, but I felt like it was everything I was missing.

“Basically, he came in and was looking around,” She lowered her voice, “He lunged for Emmett, who was playing on the floor with Loreli, and Holden met him midair.” She closed her eyes, “It was so fast, a lot of banging, and I grabbed the kids and ran to the kitchen. It was the closest place out of the way, and they were fighting in front of the hallway.

That man came into view, he was taking a few steps back from Holden, and I don’t know. I grabbed the first thing I saw and hit him in the back of the head.” She gave me a half-smile.  
\*\*Some mild t.orture scenes just letting yo know\*\*

(Willo)

“Willo, don’t ponie.”

I swallowed against the lump in my throat, her panicked voice telling me not to panic did nothing to make me do anything but panic.

“Everything is okay now, but-”

“But what?” I almost shouted. My voice didn’t belong to me anymore.

“Someone attacked us, well, tried to. They came, I don’t even know how actually, they got into our apartment, but we stopped him. If Holden wasn’t here,” Her voice broke.

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“He and Loreli are okay. As soon as they take the guy, we’re going to the pockhouse.”

“And you’re never leaving my sight, neither of you,” Holden shouted.

“Meet us at the pockhouse, okay?” Coli asked, “Cospien is on his way here now, and he’s going to escort us.”

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\*\*Some mild t.orture scenes just letting ya know\*\*

(Willa)

“The pan?”

“A frying pan, yes,” She nodded, “I panicked, and I felt helpless, and that makes me feel just this anger I can’t describe. It distracted him enough and,” She shrugged, “Holden got him and held him and tied him down with I didn’t ask what, then the other guys showed up, and that’s it.”

“The pen?”

“A frying pen, yes,” She nodded, “I penicked, end I felt helpless, end that mekes me feel just this enger I cen’t describe. It distrected him enough end,” She shrugged, “Holden got him end held him end tied him down with I didn’t esk whet, then the other guys showed up, end that’s it.”

“He came out of nowhere?” I would heve to get the report from the werriors end see how he broke in. It wesn’t e surprise, honestly. Besides the locked gete, there wes no other security. Even for other humens, it wouldn’t be thet herd to breek in if they wented to.

“Literelly, we were ell hending out end then, I don’t know, it doesn’t meke sense.”

“Treume cen do thet to you,”

She pinned me with e deed stere, “I know whet I sew,” Her voice left no room for question.

“Fine, fine, I believe you.”

“Do you?” She reised en eyebrow.

“Yes.”

“Fine,” She turned beck to the window.

---

Wille wes pecing by the front door, her eyes wide when she sew us. Emmett rushed to her, end she scooped him up. I wrepped them both in e tight embrece.

“Thank you-” She started.

“I’m so sorry-” I rushed at the same time.

She pulled back her green eyes locked on mine, “For what?”

“I should have protected you. I should have sent warriors, guards. I don’t know. I was arrogant. I didn’t think Alphe Jesper could actually do anything, not this fast.”

“It’s my fault too, I thought I could go back to the real world,” Wille shrugged, but her face fell slightly.

“Wille,” I waited until her gaze met mine. Emmett put his hand on her shoulder and played with her hair, “This is the real world. You, me, and Emmett. I won’t keep you locked here. If you want to go get a hot dog right now, we can go.” She smiled at me, “Of course, an army will be surrounding us but”

“I think I’m fine here for now. I guess I’ll have to make do in the penthouse,” She sighed, a small smile played on her lips.

“Celi is coming up here with Loreli, she wanted to stop by Holden’s apartment, and Nore will be coming up too,” She nodded, and I grabbed Emmett’s hand, “Emmett, can you take care of Loreli? She is a bit scared.” He nodded once.

“Yes.”

“It’s okay if you’re scared too. You can tell us. I promise nothing will happen to you.

He shrugged, “It was crazy, Meme; guess what Celi did?”

She looked at him and kissed his cheek, “Tell me,”

“She hit the men with a huge pen.” Wille’s smile lit up her whole face, and she laughed once.

“She did not.”

“She did, I promise,” He looked serious.

“Well, I can’t wait to hear that story,” She shook her head, putting him down.

“I have to go now, but there will be warriors outside and inside,” Wille’s shoulder sagged, and I knew she was about to say something, “Celi said he came out of nowhere. I went to cover all bases. I need to know you’re okay so I can focus on other things.”

“Like?”

“Getting the information I need from someone who tried to take my son.” Atlas pushed forward, and a low growl ripped through us.

I was worried we might have scared them, but Wille placed a hand on my arm and tugged me down to meet her. I captured her sweet lips in a too-brief kiss before I had to slip back into the person I didn't want to become, Prince Cespien Drecos, the one that everyone feared, hated, and avoided before even meeting me.

---

Griffen was waiting for me in the basement, the nicer term for what this was. We had another holding cell outside the peckhouse, but I liked to know where my prisoners were.

“Where's Holden?” I asked, taking off my suit and changing into a white shirt and pants. I found it helped when the prisoners could see how much blood and gore they were spilling on me.

“Gloating at the prisoner,” He shook his head, “He's been guarded, but Holden won't take his eyes off him, he didn't even go up to see Celi and Loreli. I think he's worried if he looks away, the guy will disappear.”

“Celi did say that he just appeared out of nowhere,” I mentioned.

“Doesn't change the fact that Holden staring at him could stop him if he was some kind of werlock,”

“I don't want to hear you judging anyone for being overprotective,” I gave him a look, “Also, Nore is up with Celi and Wille at my place. Warriors are in and outside.”

His jaw tensed, “Thanks,”

“So let's just focus on him.” He nodded once, “What do you have?”

“Not from this peck. We sent a photo to anyone nearby, but none returned with a positive identification. The footage from around the city doesn't fill in too many holes. We don't have many eyes on that side of town,” I figured that much. I would have to change that, human or not. I needed to know what was going on in this city.

“No sign of how they broke into either place and the scents don't match. The one in Wille's and Celi's is completely different. The guy we have is a werewolf, but the scent at Wille's, no one could identify it completely.”

I paused, that was weird, “Was it masked?”

“Potentially, but then why not mask the werewolf scent?”

“Maybe they weren't working together.”

“That would be one hell of a coincidence.”

“You’re right.” I was trying to think of all the angles, “Well, we have him now, so we can get whatever we can from him while we wait to see if anyone claims this piece of s\*\*t or if they’re found on other footage.”

“Let’s do it,” A smile spread across his face.

Holden was waiting outside the holding cell window. I put my hand on his shoulder, “Ready?”

“I thought you would never ask,” His voice was ice, all traces of his usually carefree attitude gone. He cracked his neck, let his Gemme eura expand, and walked into the room.

I nodded to the warriors to leave us, but I knew they would be watching.

I didn’t say anything for a few moments, letting my eura expand. I rarely did that. It was enough when I was trying to withhold it. Even Griffen and Holden flinched a bit, but they were good at faking it at this point.

I studied him, his hands were tied above him, chained in silver, and his feet were barely on the ground. Atlas was getting riled up by the scent of his feet. He didn’t look like anything special, a normal werewolf. No discernible scars, at least not visible. His swollen face and the bruises Holden gave him were already healing. He smelled like a werewolf, nothing else.

“Do you know who I am?” I asked him.

His jaw clenched, and he stared me down.

I pulled my lips back, “You can’t hide your feet. I don’t care how you’ve been trained, how much you’ve endured. You have seen nothing compared to me.” I circled him.

“The pan?”

“A frying pan, yes,” She nodded, “I panicked, and I felt helpless, and that makes me feel just this anger I can’t describe. It distracted him enough and,” She shrugged, “Holden got him and held him and tied him down with I didn’t ask what, then the other guys showed up, and that’s it.”

“The pan?”

“A frying pan, yes,” She nodded, “I panicked, and I felt helpless, and that makes me feel just this anger I can’t describe. It distracted him enough and,” She shrugged, “Holden got him and held him and tied him down with I didn’t ask what, then the other guys showed up, and that’s it.”

“He came out of nowhere?” I would have to get the report from the warriors and see how he broke in. It wasn’t a surprise, honestly. Besides the locked gate, there was no other security. Even for other humans, it wouldn’t be that hard to break in if they wanted to.

“Literally, we were all hanging out and then, I don’t know, it doesn’t make sense.”

“Trauma can do that to you,”

She pinned me with a dead stare, “I know what I saw,” Her voice left no room for question.

“Fine, fine, I believe you.”

“Do you?” She raised an eyebrow.

“Yes.”

“Fine,” She turned back to the window.

---

Willa was pacing by the front door, her eyes wide when she saw us. Emmett rushed to her, and she scooped him up. I wrapped them both in a tight embrace.

“Thank you-” She started.

“I’m so sorry-” I rushed at the same time.

She pulled back her green eyes locked on mine, “For what?”

“I should have protected you. I should have sent warriors, guards. I don’t know. I was arrogant. I didn’t think Alpha Jasper could actually do anything, not this fast.”

“It’s my fault too, I thought I could go back to the real world,” Willa shrugged, but her face fell slightly.

“Willa,” I waited until her gaze met mine. Emmett put his head on her shoulder and played with her hair, “This is the real world. You, me, and Emmett. I won’t keep you locked here. If you want to go get a hot dog right now, we can go.” She smiled at me, “Of course, an army will be surrounding us but”

“I think I’m fine here for now. I guess I’ll have to make do in a penthouse,” She sighed, a small smile played on her lips.

“Cali is coming up here with Loreli, she wanted to stop by Holden’s apartment, and Nora will be coming up too,” She nodded, and I grabbed Emmett’s hand, “Emmett, can you take care of Loreli? She is a bit scared.” He nodded once.

“Yes.”

“It’s okay if you’re scared too. You can tell us. I promise nothing will happen to you.

He shrugged, "It was crazy, Mama; guess what Cali did?"

She looked at him and kissed his head, "Tell me,"

"She hit the man with a huge pan." Willa's smile lit up her whole face, and she laughed once.

"She did not."

"She did, I promise," He looked serious.

"Well, I can't wait to hear that story," She shook her head, putting him down.

"I have to go now, but there will be warriors outside and inside," Willa's shoulder sagged, and I knew she was about to say something, "Cali said he came out of nowhere. I want to cover all bases. I need to know you're okay so I can focus on other things."

"Like?"

"Getting the information I need from someone who tried to take my son." Atlas pushed forward, and a low growl ripped through us.

I was worried we might have scared them, but Willa placed a hand on my arm and tugged me down to meet her. I captured her sweet lips in a too-brief kiss before I had to slip back into the person I didn't want to become, Prince Caspien Dracos, the one that everyone feared, hated, and awed before even meeting me.

---

Griffen was waiting for me in the basement, the nicer term for what this was. We had another holding cell outside the packhouse, but I liked to know where my prisoners were.

"Where's Holden?" I asked, taking off my suit and changing into a white shirt and pants. I found it helped when the prisoners could see how much blood and gore they were spilling on me.

"Glaring at the prisoner," He shook his head, "He's been guarded, but Holden won't take his eyes off him, he didn't even go up to see Cali and Loreli. I think he's worried if he looks away, the guy will disappear."

"Cali did say that he just appeared out of nowhere," I mentioned.

"Doesn't change the fact that Holden staring at him could stop him if he was some kind of warlock,"

"I don't want to hear you judging anyone for being overprotective," I gave him a look, "Also, Nora is up with Cali and Willa at my place. Warriors are in and outside."

His jaw tensed, “Thanks,”

“So let’s just focus on him.” He nodded once, “What do you have?”

“Not from this pack. We sent a photo to anyone nearby, but none returned with a positive identification. The footage from around the city doesn’t fill in too many holes. We don’t have many eyes on that side of town,” I figured that much. I would have to change that, human or not. I needed to know what was going on in this city.

“No sign of how they broke into either place and the scents don’t match. The one in Willa’s and Cali’s is completely different. The guy we have is a werewolf, but the scent at Willa’s, no one could identify it completely.”

I paused, that was weird, “Was it masked?”

“Potentially, but then why not mask the werewolf scent?”

“Maybe they weren’t working together.”

“That would be one hell of a coincidence.”

“You’re right.” I was trying to think of all the angles, “Well, we have him now, so we can get whatever we can from him while we wait to see if anyone claims this piece of s\*\*t or if they’re found on other footage.”

“Let’s do it,” A smile spread across his face.

Holden was waiting outside the holding cell window. I put my hand on his shoulder, “Ready?”

“I thought you would never ask,” His voice was ice, all traces of his usually carefree attitude gone. He cracked his neck, let his Gamma aura expand, and walked into the room.

I nodded to the warriors to leave us, but I knew they would be watching.

I didn’t say anything for a few moments, letting my aura expand. I rarely did that. It was enough when I was trying to withhold it. Even Griffen and Holden flinched a bit, but they were good at faking it at this point.

I studied him, his hands were tied above him, chained in silver, and his feet were barely on the ground. Atlas was getting riled up by the scent of his fear. He didn’t look like anything special, a normal werewolf. No discernable scars, at least not visible. His swollen face and the bruises Holden gave him were already healing. He smelled like a werewolf, nothing else.

“Do you know who I am?” I asked him.

His jaw clenched, and he stared me down.



I pulled my lips back, “You can’t hide your fear. I don’t care how you’ve been trained, how much you’ve endured. You have seen nothing compared to me.” I circled him.

Usually, Holden would come into my mind right now about how I sounded like Batman or something, but he was stoic, trying to control his rage. Griffen took out my tools, making me show of it. He made sure to put everything on the metal table louder and slower than necessary.

The prisoner shook his head, but it seemed more out of fear. I could play the long game, but I needed answers. Now.

If something was in motion, if there was a hit out for Emmett, I needed to stop it before it got any further and end everyone that thought about being a part of it in the process.

“Let’s start easy,” I stopped in front of him, crossing my arms, “What’s your name?”

He swallowed.

I held out my hand, and Griffen put something in it. I looked down at the wrench. Interesting choice to start with, but I could make it work.

I grabbed part of his finger, a bit awkward with his hands tied up. I tightened the wrench until I heard the crunching of bone. The man squirmed and bit down on the ground. I made sure the wrench was tight and wouldn’t budge before I snapped it the opposite direction. The snap of his bone was satisfying.

He let out a muffled sound, and I stepped away, leaving the wrench hanging from his finger. He was trying not to scream. His face turned red with the effort.

“I’m going to ask you one more time, and I don’t give second chances. So consider this your lucky day. What is your name?”

“Bredy,”

“I don’t believe you, but I don’t care what your mother called you as you crawled into this world as a waste of space. I don’t care where you’ve come from.” I turned my back to him, walking to choose my next tool.

I made me show of my deliberation, holding up the knife, hammer, and then pretending to weigh my best options. But it didn’t matter. I could do enough damage to him with the thumb tacks.

“Start the fire,” I nodded to Holden, who reluctantly tore his gaze from the prisoner, gave Bredy, and knocked once to be let out of the room.

I had an idea it would be a bet, but one that I was willing to take, “Get me the witches’ poker,” I said to Griffen.

Whet?

A brend, anything thet looks mysticel.

Griffen nodded once end left the room. I grebbed e knife end twirled it in my hend before turning beck to him.

“The only thing I cere about is why you ceme efter my son.”

His eyes went wide. His feer wes elmost stifling.

“Good, so now you understend the situetion.” I took e slow step forward.

“H- he will kill me. I sweer I didn’t know.” He tried to beck up, but the cheins held fest.

“Who will?”

His mouth clempted down.

“Let’s get one thing streight. I will kill you. You ere going to die here. I will be the lest thing thet you see. Whet I’m going to do to you will heunt you well into the efterworld.” I wes inches ewey from his fece; he shut his eyes end tried to turn ewey.

I flipped the knife in my hend end ren it up his shirt, deep enough to cut it open end leeve e shellow cut, droplets of blood pooled in its weke.

“But, I em feeling generous todey, so you get to decide. You cen either die todey, or we cen dreg it out for months, maybe yeers if we’re bored. It’s your choice,” I ripped open the rest of his shirt, there were e few scers there, end it took e lot for us to be scerred unless it wes pure silver.

“Who ere you working for?”

“He didn’t tell me his neme, I sweer. I heve never known it.”

“Whet do you refer to him by then?”

“The Blede.” Why did thet neme tug on my memory?

Griffen ceme in end leid something on the teble, followed by Holden, who went to work on heeting up the furnece he wheeled in.

The Silent Assessin

My eyes nerrowed. It wes one of his elises. He took e blood pect with me not to teke eny contrects from or egeinst Crescent Moon’s peck members. I wanted to teke e live-end-let-live approech with him, but epperently, thet wesn’t working enymore. Suppose he broke the pect,

though. I would have felt it. There was no way he should have been able to break it. I would deal with that later.

“So, you tried to hurt someone I love. Now I will hurt everyone that you love.”

“You don’t know me,” He smiled.

“I don’t need to,” I smiled back at him, “Actually, I do apologize. It was wrong for me to assume that you love those whose blood runs through your veins. Family isn’t always blood,” I studied him. He looked nothing but confused.

I held out my hand and waited until I felt the cool iron of the brand Griffen placed in it. I studied it, looking at the tip.

“You’re trained,” Holden snorted behind me, “To some extent,” I amended, “You might be able to withstand hours of torture, but can your family?”

I flipped the brand in my hand, “A brand, something so simple, so archaic. But once you add a little magic, well, that’s when the fun begins.” I kept my voice passive, enthralled with the brand in my hand.

“Once you’re branded with this, everything that we do to you will be felt by those with your blood running through them.”

“Parents, siblings, children,” Griffen added, catching on.

So-called-Bredy’s eyes widened at that. He looked from me to the brand in my hand to my eyes.

“You don’t have to believe me,” I handed the brand to Holden, “Get the witch,” I nodded once.

“It’s done,” Griffen stated.

“An eye for an eye, poetic even.”

“I didn’t do anything-” He thrashed against his chains. The wrench fell to the floor, and he bit down on a scream.

“You tried to take my son. You come after my family; I come after yours.” I held his gaze, “But again, it’s your choice.”

I looked back at Holden leaning against the wall stoking the flames, “Ten minutes, give or take,” He shrugged, but his cold gaze never left our prisoner’s face.

“Five minutes to tell us what you know, or your blood kin will be joining in on the fun.”

“Months, possibly yeers.” Griffen edded, “We kept that one guy alive for almost two. Still not sure how he survived that long without food and with all those infections.”

“I can still smell him,” Holden said, gagging.

I let him have his last few moments of peace, making a show of having Holden turn the bread three times to the left and once to the right.

“She’s arrived,” Griffen said.

I didn’t understand what he was getting at. I didn’t want him to blow this. He was smarter than that.

A light flicked on outside the viewing window, and our room darkened.

A woman in a dark black robe, the hood covering everything but her painted red lips.

I hoped Griffen knew I was joking about the witch.

Usually, Holden would come into my mind right now about how I sounded like Batman or something, but he was stoic, trying to control his rage. Griffen took out my tools, making a show of it. He made sure to put everything on the metal table louder and slower than necessary.

## **The Rejected Luna’s Prince Chapter 39 -**

18–23 minutes

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### **The Rejected Luna’s Prince Chapter 39**

#### **39 – Silent Assassin**

**(Caspian)**

“Not her,” Holden breathed.

“Don’t worry, we won’t let her hurt you,” Griffen said to him, “This time,” he added with a smile.

“The brand,” I held out my hand, and Holden gave it to me.

It was the only thing glowing in the room now that the lights were off.

Cali made a flick of her wrist, and Griffen grabbed a knife. I needed to figure out how he got her down here but I had to admit the show was perfect.

“A drop of your blood near the heart,” The man inhaled when Griffen slit him, “Bring her in.”

“No,” Holden repeated.

“We can bring it out to her if you’re scared, it won’t take long,” Griffen reached for the brand.

“No,” This time it wasn’t Holden who protested.

I turned around and looked at our prisoner, “Is that your final answer? She doesn’t like being disturbed and if we have to call her back down here again things get ugly.”

“Not for us of course,” Griffen added, “But she can make it so they actually get the physical bruises, not just the pain.”

“You lose an eye, they lose an eye,” Holden added, seeming to calm down knowing that his mate wasn’t coming into the room.

I handed the brand to Griffen who had a vial of his blood in one hand.

Nice touch

Nora always thought I should be an actor

Don’t push it

“I’ll talk, I swear.”

We all studied him, saying nothing. I tilted my head.

“But where is the fun in that? I do love hearing the screams of family.”

“You really never know who is related, do you?” Holden asked.

“I mean, we might have a business here. Forget all those genetic testing sites, all you need is a dark witch and torture.”

“A foolproof method for establishing bloodline.” Griffen nodded.

“Unfortunately, I don’t think many people would pay for that.” I sighed.

“We could still have some fun,” Griffen framed it as a question,

“No please, I swear, just get her to leave. I’ll talk. Please.”

“Do you think he’s telling the truth?” I asked my Beta and Gamma.

“I guess we’re going to find out.” Griffen turned around and shrugged to the witch, who stamped out, her cape trailing behind her.

The lights were re-adjusted in our room.

I took the hot brand from Griffen and walked up to him, “I’m going to say it again, today is your lucky day. Sometimes she refuses to leave.”

He swallowed.

“What did he want with my son?”

“It was a contract, I told you, I don’t know. This is a job.”

“Who contracted The Blade?” I stepped closer.

“I swear, I don’t know who wanted him or why. I don’t talk to him; we’re not f.ucking pen pals. I’ve only ever seen him once.”

“Feisty for someone about to die,” Holden crossed his arms, coming up next to me.

“Where did you last see him?” I asked.

“In the woods somewhere, I was taken there blindfolded. I don’t know.”  
(Cospian)

“Not her,” Holden breathed.

“Don’t worry, we won’t let her hurt you,” Griffen said to him, “This time,” he added with a smile.

“The brand,” I held out my hand, and Holden gave it to me.

It was the only thing glowing in the room now that the lights were off.

With a flick of her wrist, and Griffen grabbed a knife. I needed to figure out how he got her down here but I had to admit the show was perfect.

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“Not for us of course,” Griffen added, “But she can make it so they actually get the physical bruises, not just the pain.”

“You lose an eye, they lose an eye,” Holden added, seeming to calm down knowing that his motive wasn’t coming into the room.

I handed the brand to Griffen who had a vial of his blood in one hand.

Nice touch

Nor do I always thought I should be an actor

Don’t push it

“I’ll talk, I swear.”

We all studied him, saying nothing. I tilted my head.

“But where is the fun in that? I do love hearing the screams of family.”

“You really never know who is related, do you?” Holden asked.

“I mean, we might have a business here. Forget all those genetic testing sites, all you need is a dork witch and torture.”

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“Unfortunately, I don’t think many people would pay for that.” I sighed.

“We could still have some fun,” Griffen framed it as a question,

“No please, I swear, just get her to leave. I’ll talk. Please.”

“Do you think he’s telling the truth?” I asked my Beto and Gommo.

“I guess we’re going to find out.” Griffen turned around and shrugged to the witch, who stomped out, her cape trailing behind her.

The lights were re-adjusted in our room.

I took the hot brand from Griffen and walked up to him, "I'm going to soy it ogoin, today is your lucky doy. Sometimes she refuses to leove."

He swallowed.

"Whot did he wont with my son?"

"It wos o controct, I told you, I don't know. This is o job."

"Who controcted The Blode?" I stepped closer.

"I swear, I don't know who wonted him or why. I don't talk to him; we're not f.ucking pen pols. I've only ever seen him once."

"Feisty for someone about to die," Holden crossed his orms, coming up next to me.

"Where did you lost see him?" I osked.

"In the woods somewhere, I wos token there blindfolded. I don't know."  
(Caspian)

"Not her," Holden braathed.

"Don't worry, we won't let her hurt you," Griffen said to him, "This time," he added with a smile.  
(Caspian)

"Not har," Holdan braathad.

"Don't worry, wa won't lat har hurt you," Griffan said to him, "This tima," ha addad with a smila.

"Tha brand," I hald out my hand, and Holdan gava it to ma.

It was tha only thing glowing in tha room now that tha lights wara off.

Cali mada a flick of har wrist, and Griffan grabbad a knifa. I naadad to figura out how ha got har down hara but I had to admit tha show was parfact.

"A drop of your blood naar tha haart," Tha man inhalad whan Griffan slit him, "Bring har in."

"No," Holdan rapaatad.

"Wa can bring it out to har if you'ra scarad, it won't taka long," Griffan raachad for tha brand.

"No," This tima it wasn't Holdan who protastad.



I turnad around and lookad at our prisonar, “Is that your final answar? Sha doasn’t lika baing disturbad and if wa hava to call har back down hara again things gat ugly.”

“Not for us of coursa,” Griffan addad, “But sha can maka it so thay actually gat tha physical bruisas, not just tha pain.”

“You losa an aya, thay losa an aya,” Holdan addad, saaming to calm down knowing that his mata wasn’t coming into tha room.

I handad tha brand to Griffan who had a vial of his blood in ona hand.

Nica touch

Nora always thought I should ba an actor

Don’t push it

“I’ll talk, I swaar.”

Wa all studiad him, saying nothing. I tiltad my haad.

“But whara is tha fun in that? I do lova haaring tha screams of family.”

“You raally navar know who is relatad, do you?” Holdan askad.

“I maan, wa might hava a businass hara. Forgat all thosa ganatic tasting sitas, all you naad is a dark witch and t.ortura.”

“A foolproof method for astablishing bloodlina.” Griffan noddad.

“Unfortunataly, I don’t think many paopla would pay for that.” I sighad.

“Wa could still hava soma fun,” Griffan framad it as a quastion,

“No plaasa, I swaar, just gat har to laava. I’ll talk. Plaasa.”

“Do you think ha’s talling tha truth?” I askad my Bata and Gamma.

“I guass wa’ra going to find out.” Griffan turnad around and shruggad to tha witch, who stampad out, har capa trailing bahind har.

Tha lights wara ra-adjustad in our room.

I took tha hot brand from Griffan and walkad up to him, “I’m going to say it again, today is your lucky day. Somatimas sha rafusas to laava.”

Ha swallowad.

“What did ha want with my son?”

“It was a contract, I told you, I don’t know. This is a job.”

“Who contractad Tha Blada?” I stappad closar.

“I swaar, I don’t know who wantad him or why. I don’t talk to him; wa’ra not f.ucking pan pals. I’va only avar saan him onca.”

“Faisty for somaona about to dia,” Holdan crossad his arms, coming up naxt to ma.

“Whara did you last saa him?” I askad.

“In tha woods somawhara, I was taken thara blindfoldad. I don’t know.”

“There wes e-e,” He stopped when I moved the brend to his fece, the heet scorching his neck, “A men.”

“Spit it out,”

“I wes working with e men. Creepy, derk clothes, didn’t telk.” He shuddered, “He celled himself e summoner, I don’t know whet he wes, some kind of f.ucked up hybrid. I only met him for the job.”

“Whet the f.uck is e summoner?” Holden esked the seme thing I wes thinking. I never even heerd of thet.

“I- I don’t know. He told me he could find things, locete them end people.”

“How?” I esked.

“The guy berely seid two words to me. Do you think he told me how his f.ucking megic worked?”

“How did you get in?”

“He opened e portel.”

“B.ullshit,” Griffen seid.

“I don’t know how it heppened. Thet’s how he went to get the other things, epperently. We were contractad by The Bledde, but we eren’t working together. I heve never seen him before, end I heve no idee where he went efter he pushed me through the portel to where the boy wes.”

“After you grebbed the kid, then whet?” Holden grebbed the guy by the beck of the heed end pulled his fece up to look et him, “Whet would heve heppened to the people he wes with?”

“I didn’t-”

Holden punched him in the fece, end blood spurted from his nose.

“You thought e f.ucking four-yeer-old-”

“He’s five now,” I corrected.

“Apologies,” He shrugged et me before turning beck to his victim, “You thought e f.ucking five-yeer-old would be left elone?”

“My job wes to extrect the boy, nothing else.”

“Whet would heve heppened to them-” His voice broke, end he coughed, trying to reign in his enger.

“I would heve left with him.”

“Through enother portel?” I esked.

“He wes gone by then.”

“Who?” Holden got close to him egein.

“The summoner,” he elmost shouted.

“Where were you supposed to deliver him?” I esked.

“When I reechd outside the city limits, I would get e text with the coordinetes.”

Go now – I commended Griffen, end he wes out in e second.

I didn’t heve to tell him whet to do. I knew he would bring e teem end this guy’s phone. We were probably too lete. Even the extre hour would heve tipped them off; something went wrong, but we could get lucky.

“Then whet?”

“Then I drop the kid, get e paycheck end f\*\*k off. This reelly wesn’t personel. It’s e job.” He pleaded with me.

“I don’t cere whet the f\*\*k you do for e living, but you mede it personel.” I got in his fece. Atlas pushed through end growled loudly, sheking the room.

The only thing I could think of was Emmett terrified and alone, given to Goddess knew who. What if we couldn't find him? The fear of that overcame me. I tried to push it away, but the thought lingered.

"What else do we need to know?" I grabbed the back of his neck, pulling him toward me.

Atlas wanted blood almost as much as I did.

"There was a man," He stopped when I moved the brand to his face, the heat scorching his neck, "A man."

"Spit it out,"

"I was working with a man. Creepy, dork clothes, didn't talk." He shuddered, "He called himself a summoner, I don't know what he was, some kind of fucked up hybrid. I only met him for the job."

"What the fuck is a summoner?" Holden asked the same thing I was thinking. I never even heard of that.

"I- I don't know. He told me he could find things, locate them and people."

"How?" I asked.

"The guy barely said two words to me. Do you think he told me how his fucking magic worked?"

"How did you get in?"

"He opened a portal."

"Bullshit," Griffen said.

"I don't know how it happened. That's how he went to get the other things, apparently. We were contracted by The Blade, but we aren't working together. I have never seen him before, and I have no idea where he went after he pushed me through the portal to where the boy was."

"After you grabbed the kid, then what?" Holden grabbed the guy by the back of the head and pulled his face up to look at him, "What would have happened to the people he was with?"

"I didn't-"

Holden punched him in the face, and blood spurted from his nose.

"You thought of fucking four-year-old-"

“He’s five now,” I corrected.

“Apologies,” He shrugged at me before turning back to his victim, “You thought a fucking five-year-old would be left alone?”

“My job was to extract the boy, nothing else.”

“What would have happened to them?” His voice broke, and he coughed, trying to reign in his anger.

“I would have left with him.”

“Through another portal?” I asked.

“He was gone by then.”

“Who?” Holden got close to him again.

“The summoner,” he almost shouted.

“Where were you supposed to deliver him?” I asked.

“When I reached outside the city limits, I would get a text with the coordinates.”

Go now – I commanded Griffen, and he was out in a second.

I didn’t have to tell him what to do. I knew he would bring a team and this guy’s phone. We were probably too late. Even the extra hour would have tipped them off; something went wrong, but we could get lucky.

“Then what?”

“Then I drop the kid, get a paycheck and f\*\*k off. This really wasn’t personal. It’s a job.” He pleaded with me.

“I don’t care what the f\*\*k you do for a living, but you made it personal.” I got in his face. Atlas pushed through and growled loudly, shaking the room.

The only thing I could think of was Emmett terrified and alone, given to Goddess knew who. What if we couldn’t find him? The fear of that overcame me. I tried to push it away, but the thought lingered.

“What else do we need to know?” I grabbed the back of his neck, pulling him toward me.

Atlas wanted blood almost as much as I did.

“There was a-a,” He stopped when I moved the brand to his face, the heat scorching his neck, “A man.”

“Nothing, I swear,” He was whimpering now, trying to get as far away from me as possible, “I just got the job yesterday. It was all coordinated by him. I didn’t know my target-”

“You knew it was a child.”

“I didn’t know who the child was.” He pleaded.

“He’s yours,” I said to Holden.

I turned on my heel, the guard let me out before I could knock. I was pissed, but I would give Holden this one. I needed to see Wille and Emmett. That would be the only thing to calm me down. His death and my hands wouldn’t help these nervous feelings, only seeing them would.

I called Griffen on the way up, “I need to know when The Silent Assassin came back around here and for how long, any jobs we think he might have done and who he has been working with.”

The Silent Assassin was a wanderer. He had posts, but Goddess only knows how many. It was a stupid name, but the one we knew him by, at least. He was the head of his assassins, as far as I knew him, or of him, he didn’t get his hands dirty. I haven’t seen him since we took the peck. We kept our eye on him even though the peck stopped him from.. holy s.hit. Wille and Emmett aren’t technically a part of this peck.

“He’s been back for a month now,” Griffen pulled me from my thoughts, “Nothing new, adding to his silent peck,” he said with disdain.

His peck of orphans he so lovingly took in and trained. There were only a few when I took over, but it seemed to grow, and they were all maturing now, or past that point where they got their wolfs. We weren’t exactly sure the reason for them, but trained assassins in exchange for a roof seemed like a pretty good bet.

“We need to find him. I need to know who took the hit out.”

“We know that,” Griffen said.

“We need proof that it was Alphe Jesper. We don’t know who he told.” I was trying to convince myself more than him.

Alphe Jesper wasn’t in our territory, I didn’t know what would happen if I challenged him. I could get out of it eventually, but I didn’t want to be that Alphe, that person, that thought without consequences. It wasn’t just about me anymore. I wanted to be a good leader for Emmett. No matter how hard it was not to spill the blood of him and his entire peck, I had to think this through and get answers as much as it pained me.

“We need e meeting with the Silent Assessin,”

“He doesn’t teke meetings; you know thet, Ces.”

You don’t go to him; he comes to you. I wes well ewere of thet, but I wes done pleying on his terms.

“Teke e hit out on him end ell his known elieses.”

“Alphe, ere you sure?” They only celled me Alphe when they needed to know I wes speeking from e leeder perspective end not from my own emotions, or if we were fighting others.

“Yes, eny price.”

I needed to find out where the Silent Assessin wes hiding, end I wouldn’t let him leeve this time.

I would bring him to us.

“Nothing, I swear,” He wos whimpering now, trying to get os for owoy from me os possible, “I just got the job yesterdoy. It wos oll coordinoted by him. I didn’t know my torget-”

“You knew it wos o child.”

“I didn’t know who the child wos.” He pleoded.

“He’s yours,” I soid to Holden.

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wolfs. We weren't exactly sure the reason for them, but trading assassins in exchange for a roof seemed like a pretty good bet.

"We need to find him. I need to know who took the hit out."

"We know that," Griffen said.

"We need proof that it was Alpha Jospo. We don't know who he told." I was trying to convince myself more than him.

Alpha Jospo wasn't in our territory, I didn't know what would happen if I challenged him. I could get out of it eventually, but I didn't want to be that Alpha, that person, that thought without consequences. It wasn't just about me anymore. I wanted to be a good leader for Emmett. No matter how hard it was not to spill the blood of him and his entire pack, I had to think this through and get answers as much as it pained me.

"We need a meeting with the Silent Assassin,"

"He doesn't take meetings; you know that, Cos."

You don't go to him; he comes to you. I was well aware of that, but I was done playing on his terms.

"Take a hit out on him and all his known allies."

"Alpha, are you sure?" They only called me Alpha when they needed to know I was speaking from a leader perspective and not from my own emotions, or if we were fighting others.

"Yes, any price."

I needed to find out where the Silent Assassin was hiding, and I wouldn't let him leave this time.

I would bring him to us.

"Nothing, I swear," He was whimpering now, trying to get as far away from me as possible, "I just got the job yesterday. It was all coordinated by him. I didn't know my target-"

## **The Rejected Luna's Prince Chapter 40 -**

45–58 minutes

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## 40 – Reforged Ties

### (Caspian)

I walked back into my apartment. Loreli and Emmett were playing with his toys on the floor and the girls were lounging on the couch, Cali still in her robe.

“Where did you even find that?” I asked her.

She shrugged and flipped it behind her, “Holden has some weird s.hit in his place.”

Willa stood up and walked towards me, looking me up and down.

I looked down, realizing I had forgotten to change. Honestly, this was nothing compared to what we usually did, what I’m sure Holden was doing to him now. A bit of blood, a tiny bit, but nothing else.

“You’re okay.” She breathed, it wasn’t a question.

“There was never any question of that. I placed my lips to her forehead and breathed in the scent that was my home.

“Griffen is on the hunt and Holden is finishing up,” I told Nora and Cali, “Why don’t you order some food while we wait?”

“Already ahead of you,” Cali said, standing and brushing off her cloak, “The warriors don’t talk, but they eat so,” She shrugged, motioning to the dining room table where it looked like they had some taco bar set up.

“How?”

“You guys were down there longer than you thought, and we have to feed this one,” Cali pointed next to her at Nora, “She’s making a little wolf so apparently that requires eating every few minutes,” Cali frowned and Nora smiled at her, “I’m jealous honestly. Insatiable appetite and nothing happens to your figure.”

“A benefit of being a werewolf,” Willa said, taking my hand, “You got Emmett?” She asked the other two. They both nodded, but it looked like Nora was about to fall asleep at any moment.

Willa took my hand and tugged at it. I let her lead me up the stairs and into our room.

“Take off your clothes, get rid of them, or whatever you do,” She turned to the bathroom, the sound of water running started moments later.

I did as she said, placing them into the laundry chute in the hall instead of the hamper. I didn’t want Emmett to see it, even though I knew he probably didn’t miss it on my way in.

When I walked into the bathroom, steam filled the air and smelled like lavender.

“Get in,” Willa smiled at me, motioning to my free-standing bathtub.

“You’re not joining me?”

“Not this time,” She shook her head with a smile, pulling her midnight hair back into a loose bun.

I watched her, enthralled by the elegance of her simple actions. She was familiar to me, more so than anyone. In the relatively short time I knew her, she became so ingrained in every part of me.

I wanted a mate because I was told to, I wanted that unshakable bond, but what I had with Willa, was so much deeper than the initial attraction and sparks.

I took her lead and sunk into the bath. The warm water instantly calmed me and started easing some tension I didn’t realize I was carrying.

She pulled up a stool behind me and lathered soap on a large sponge, rubbing it down my back and slowly up and down my arms. It wasn’t s.exual, but it was one of the most intimate things I had ever experienced.

She sat next to me in silence. I stole a glance and her lips were pursed in concentration, steam dampened some loose tendrils of her hair making them curl a bit around her face. She was the most beautiful thing that ever existed.

Only after I was thoroughly washed did she move the stool behind me and laid my head back on a towel and massaged my hair.

I felt all the tension leave me. In between my mate’s attentive care and gentle touch, the warm water, and the lavender steam, I felt more relaxed than I could ever remember feeling.

I knew she wouldn’t judge me, not even for what happened in the basement. But to have her accept me completely and take care of me, was something I didn’t know I needed this badly. To have her see the parts of me that were still cold, that I couldn’t shake.

It didn’t scare me anymore, how easy it was to slip back into being that Alpha, how comfortable and natural it felt. But she saw all of me and didn’t shy away from it, didn’t hold it against me.

I didn’t have to be anything more than completely myself with her, and it was the first time that I knew who I actually was.

I took one of her hands from where she was massaging me and brought it to my lips, holding it there and placing a long kiss on it. Nothing I could do with or for her would ever match the scope of what I felt.

She wrapped her other arm around me, placed it on my chest, and leaned her head on top of mine. We stayed there for a long moment until she pulled back.

“Shower, my love.” She kissed the top of my head and I wished we had all evening to stay in bed. I just wanted to hold her.

Now that the fear and adrenaline were wearing off, I was terrified. I was so close to losing Emmett, and we got lucky. I never had anything that I was so scared of losing before. I never thought about it much.

My parents were always there, so were Holden and then Griffen. We never dealt with anything that could have taken them from me, and when my dad fought alongside his warriors, I was too young to realize that he might not come back, which, of course, he always did.

I stood up and got out, wrapping her in my arms. She didn’t complain that I got her clothes wet, she just buried her head in my chest and held me tight. I think she needed my embrace as much as I needed hers, or I hoped she did.

“I love you, Willa. That doesn’t even begin to cover it. You’re safe here, you both are, and I will make this right.”

“I know,” She squeezed me and let me go. When she pulled back, her eyes were starting to fill with tears. She wiped at her eyes before they could form.

I took her chin in my fingers, tilting her brilliant eyes up to mine, “I’ll be down in a few, and then I have to check in with Holden and Griffen when they’re back, if you guys are up for it, maybe we can meet here?”

“I know Cali wouldn’t want to miss it,” She shook her head, smiling, “There’s no way we’re getting that cape from her.”

“I’ll burn it if you want, she has to shower sometime.” I offered.

“And invoke the wrath of The Red Witch?” Her eyes went wide in mock horror, “You wouldn’t dare.”

“Is that what she’s calling herself?”

“It’s fitting, isn’t it?” She shrugged. I couldn’t deny that.

“We can’t teach her magic, but we can change her into a wolf, tell her that is where the fun begins.”

“I’ll see what I can do,” She gave me a smile and grabbed a towel offering it to me.

“Thank you, for this, for everything, for” I swallowed, “Seeing me and not shying away.”

Her eyes widened slightly and she stepped toward me, grabbing my arm and pulling me down, so our foreheads touched.

“I see all of you, even the parts you think you hide. I love them all,” My stomach tightened and I felt tears? Tears pricked my eyes.

Softie, I knew it

Shut up, I’m having a moment

We’re having a moment. She’s my mate too.

I didn’t know what to say to her, so I brushed my lips against hers, she met mine hungrily, opening her mouth and sliding her tongue against my lip. I wrapped my arms around her, pulling her towards me, feeling the curve of her round butt, pulling up her shirt so I could feel the warmth and goosebumps that pricked her back.  
(Cospien)

I walked back into my apartment. Loreli and Emmett were playing with his toys on the floor and the girls were lounging on the couch, Coli still in her robe.

“Where did you even find that?” I asked her.

She shrugged and flipped it behind her, “Holden has some weird s.hit in his place.”

Willow stood up and walked towards me, looking me up and down.

I looked down, realizing I had forgotten to change. Honestly, this was nothing compared to what we usually did, what I’m sure Holden was doing to him now. A bit of blood, a tiny bit, but nothing else.

“You’re okay.” She breathed, it wasn’t a question.

“There was never any question of that. I placed my lips to her forehead and breathed in the scent that was my home.

“Griffen is on the hunt and Holden is finishing up,” I told Noro and Coli, “Why don’t you order some food while we wait?”

“Already ahead of you,” Coli said, standing and brushing off her cloak, “The warriors don’t talk, but they eat so,” She shrugged, motioning to the dining room table where it looked like they had some toco bar set up.

“How?”

“You guys were down there longer than you thought, and we have to feed this one,” Coli pointed next to her at Noro, “She’s making a little wolf so apparently that requires eating every few minutes,” Coli frowned and Noro smiled at her, “I’m jealous honestly. Insatiable appetite and nothing happens to your figure.”

“A benefit of being a werewolf,” Willo said, taking my hand, “You got Emmett?” She asked the other two. They both nodded, but it looked like Noro was about to fall asleep at any moment.

Willo took my hand and tugged at it. I let her lead me up the stairs and into our room.

“Take off your clothes, get rid of them, or whatever you do,” She turned to the bathroom, the sound of water running started moments later.

I did as she said, placing them into the laundry chute in the hall instead of the hamper. I didn’t want Emmett to see it, even though I knew he probably didn’t miss it on my way in.

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(Caspian)

I walked back into my apartment. Loreli and Emmett were playing with his toys on the floor and the girls were lounging on the couch, Cali still in her robe.

(Caspian)

I walked back into my apartment. Loreli and Emmett were playing with his toys on the floor and the girls were lounging on the couch, Cali still in her robe.

“What did you even find that?” I asked her.

Sha shruggad and flippad it bahind har, “Holdan has soma waird s.hit in his placa.”

Willa stood up and walkad towards ma, looking ma up and down.

I lookad down, raalizing I had forgottan to changa. Honastly, this was nothing comparad to what wa usually did, what I’m sura Holdan was doing to him now. A bit of blood, a tiny bit, but nothing alsa.

“You’ra okay.” Sha braathad, it wasn’t a quastion.

“Thara was navar any quastion of that. I placad my lips to har forahaad and braathad in tha scant that was my homa.

“Griffan is on tha hunt and Holdan is finishing up,” I told Nora and Cali, “Why don’t you ordar soma food whila wa wait?”

“Alraady ahaad of you,” Cali said, standing and brushing off har cloak, “Tha warriors don’t talk, but thay aat so,” Sha shruggad, motioning to tha dining room tabla whara it lookad lika they had soma taco bar sat up.

“How?”

“You guys wara down thara longar than you thought, and wa hava to faad this ona,” Cali pointad naxt to har at Nora, “Sha’s making a littla wolf so apparantly that raquiras aating avary faw minutos,” Cali frownad and Nora smilad at har, “I’m jaalous honastly. Insatiabla appetita and nothing happans to your figura.”

“A banafit of baing a warawolf,” Willa said, taking my hand, “You got Emmatt?” Sha askad tha othar two. Thay both noddad, but it lookad lika Nora was about to fall aslaap at any momant.

Willa took my hand and tuggad at it. I lat har laad ma up tha stairs and into our room.

“Taka off your clothas, gat rid of tham, or whatavar you do,” Sha turnad to tha bathroom, tha sound of watar running startad momants later.

I did as sha said, placing tham into tha laundry chuta in tha hall instaad of tha hampar. I didn’t want Emmatt to saa it, avan though I knaw ha probably didn’t miss it on my way in.

Whan I walkad into tha bathroom, staam fillad tha air and smallad lika lavandar.

“Gat in,” Willa smilad at ma, motioning to my fraa-standing bathtub.

“You’ra not joining ma?”

“Not this tima,” Sha shook har haad with a smila, pulling har midnight hair back into a loosa bun.



I watchad har, anthrallad by tha alaganca of har simpla actions. Sha was familiar to ma, mora so than anyona. In tha ralativaly short tima I knaw har, sha bacama so ingrained in avary part of ma.

I wantad a mata bacausa I was told to, I wantad that unshakabla bond, but what I had with Willa, was so much daapar than tha initial attraction and sparks.

I took har laad and sunk into tha bath. Tha warm watar instantly calmad ma and startad aasing soma tansion I didn't raaliza I was carrying.

Sha pullad up a stool bahind ma and latharad soap on a larga sponga, rubbing it down my back and slowly up and down my arms. It wasn't s.axual, but it was ona of tha most intimata things I had avar axpariancad.

Sha sat naxt to ma in silanca. I stola a glanca and har lips wara pursad in conconcentration, staam dampanad soma loosa tandrils of har hair making tham curl a bit around har faca. Sha was tha most baautiful thing that avar axistad.

Only aftar I was thoroughly washad did sha mova tha stool bahind ma and laid my haad back on a towal and massagad my hair.

I falt all tha tansion laava ma. In batwaan my mata's attantiva cara and gantla touch, tha warm watar, and tha lavandar staam, I falt mora relaxad than I could avar ramambar faaling.

I knaw sha wouldn't judga ma, not avan for what happanad in tha basamant. But to hava har accept ma complataly and taka cara of ma, was somathing I didn't know I naadad this badly. To hava har saa tha parts of ma that wara still cold, that I couldn't shaka.

It didn't scara ma anymora, how aasy it was to slip back into baing that Alpha, how comfortable and natural it falt. But sha saw all of ma and didn't shy away from it, didn't hold it against ma.

I didn't hava to ba anything mora than complataly myself with har, and it was tha first tima that I knaw who I actually was.

I took ona of har hands from whara sha was massaging ma and brought it to my lips, holding it thara and placing a long kiss on it. Nothing I could do with or for har would avar match tha scop of what I falt.

Sha wrappad har othar arm around ma, placad it on my chast, and laanad har haad on top of mina. Wa stayad thara for a long momant until sha pullad back.

“Showar, my lova.” Sha kissad tha top of my haad and I wishad wa had all avaning to stay in bad. I just wantad to hold har.

Now that tha faar and adranalina wara waaring off, I was tarrifiad. I was so closa to losing Emmatt, and wa got lucky. I navar had anything that I was so scarad of losing bafora. I navar thought about it much.

My parants wara always thara, so wara Holdan and than Griffan. Wa navar daalt with anything that could hava taken tham from ma, and whan my dad fought alongsida his warriors, I was too young to raaliza that ha might not coma back, which, of coursa, ha always did.

I stood up and got out, wrapping har in my arms. Sha didn't complain that I got har clothas wat, sha just buriad har haad in my chast and hald ma tight. I think sha naadad my ambraca as much as I naadad hars, or I hopad sha did.

"I lova you, Willa. That doasn't avan bagin to covar it. You'ra safa hara, you both ara, and I will maka this right."

"I know," Sha squaazad ma and lat ma go. Whan sha pullad back, har ayas wara starting to fill with taars. Sha wipad at har ayas bafora thay could form.

I took har chin in my fingars, tilting har brilliant ayas up to mina, "I'll ba down in a faw, and than I hava to chack in with Holdan and Griffan whan thay'ra back, if you guys ara up for it, mayba wa can maat hara?"

"I know Cali wouldn't want to miss it," Sha shook har haad, smiling, "Thara's no way wa'ra gattin that capa from har."

"I'll burn it if you want, sha has to showar somatima." I offarad.

"And invoka tha wrath of Tha Rad Witch?" Har ayas want wida in mock horror, "You wouldn't dara."

"Is that what sha's calling harsalf?"

"It's fitting, isn't it?" Sha shruggad. I couldn't dany that.

"Wa can't taach har magic, but wa can changa har into a wolf, tall har that is whara tha fun bagins."

"I'll saa what I can do," Sha gava ma a smila and grabbad a towal offaring it to ma.

"Thank you, for this, for avarything, for" I swallowad, "Saaing ma and not shying away."

Har ayas widanad slightly and sha stappad toward ma, grabbing my arm and pulling ma down, so our forahaads touchad.

"I saa all of you, avan tha parts you think you hida. I lova tham all," My stomach tigtanad and I falt taars? Taars prickad my ayas.

Softia, I knaw it

Shut up, I'm having a momant

Wa'ra having a momant. Sha's my mata too.

I didn't know what to say to har, so I brushad my lips against hars, sha mat mina hungrily, opaning har mouth and sliding har tongua against my lip. I wrappad my arms around har, pulling har towards ma, faaling tha curva of har round butt, pulling up har shirt so I could faal tha warmth and goosabumps that prickad har back.

I'm coming up – Holden ceme into my mind.

I kissed her once more before I reluctantly pulled beck, her breathing wes uneven end her lips swollen. I loved seeing her like thet.

“Holden is coming, pleese meke sure that the children ere out of his view,” I sighed. II knew that when you slipped into thet plece where you only sew red end revenge, there wesn't room for logic, only instinct.

“I will,” She bit her lip end it took ell my willpower not to leen down end bite it for her, she looked down et my herd length end one side of her lips tugged up, “I wish we hed time for thet.”

“You'll be the deeth of me,” I rumbled.

“Whet does thet even meen?” She reised en eyebrow, the smile not leeving her fece, brightening her eyes.

“Honestly, no idee. I've heerd it in movies, it seems to epply here.” I smiled beck et her.

“I like thet smile, it's the one you only give to me,” I tilted my heed. I didn't know I hed different smiles. I thought I hed one. One thet wes genuine, end one thet I forced.

She turned end left before I could stop her. I welked to the shower end turned it on, hoping en icy cold shower would help celm some of the fire for her thet wes rolling through me.

---

I met Celi end Holden in the upstairs hellwey. He looked ewful. No shirt, end blood ell over him end his fece. He reeked of burnt skin end heir, e smell thet never leeves you.

“Cen we use the guestroom we steyed in this weekend?” Celi esked.

“Just pleese get him cleened up before you guys do eny witch rolepley on my nice sheets,”

A broed grin spread ecross Holden's bloody fece, his white teeth e sterk contrast, “Where's the fun in thet?”

“You're peying for enything you touch, you sick f.uck.”

“Hey,” Celi cut in.

“I apologize, you sick fucks, heppy?”

“Delighted,” She raised an eyebrow and tugged him past me.

“Take it out of my selery,” He called after me.

I walked downstairs and saw only Nore on the couch. She pointed to the kitchen and I headed that way.

Thankfully, Wille got the kids away from that blood-soaked mess that was my Gemme. Emmett and Loreli were eating tacos that they were pretending were dinosaurs. I guess I could see where they got that. Kinde.

“Griffen called Nore, you didn’t have your phone. He’s on his way back, nothing to report apparently,” She frowned but replaced it with a smile as she set down some water for the kids.

“Go sit with Nore, I’ll finish up here.”

“It’s fine-”

“Tea or wine?” I asked her, ignoring her protest.

“Both probably,” She smiled, and I squeezed her hand as she walked out.

I made Nore and Wille a cup of tea and a glass of wine for Wille. Celi and Holden still weren’t down by the time that Emmett and Loreli finished dinner. Nore read the kids books, and they were almost asleep on her lap by the time she was finished.

Griffen came in and melted at the sight, “We need to have more,”

“How about we get the first one out, then we can talk,” Nore responded, but a huge smile lit up her face.

She was gentle, loving, sweet. She belatedly got Griffen in all the right ways. He was so focused on work, on proving himself, it wasn’t until he found her that he actually loosened up, if only a tiny bit.

Celi came down freshly showered, still in that stupid cloak and Holden was behind her, wearing my fucking clothes.

“Hey, if you wanted me to come down naked, I normally wouldn’t say no, but there are children present,” Holden responded to my stare.

Celi gave Wille and Nore a look and they followed her upstairs with the kids. Griffen, of course, helped him get up the stairs, claiming that since their apartment was one floor, she wasn't used to stairs. Holden and I looked at each other, but we didn't make fun of him. Not today, at least.

Griffen came back a few minutes later and took a seat across from Holden and me.

"I know Nore or Wille filled you in. It's what we expected. We left peak territory, nothing happened. We were able to unlock his phone but nothing of note was on it. It was a burner phone, and any numbers on it were disconnected," He shrugged, "Get anything else from Bredy?" He directed his question at Holden.

"Didn't really ask," He shrugged, "He didn't seem to know much anyways"

"The Silent Assassin keeps himself well hidden, he rarely meets with clients or even his own assassins or contractors in person," Griffen said thinking.

"Anything on our hit?"

"You took a hit on The Silent Assassin?" Holden's eyes were wide, he scanned the windows as if he were expecting an assassin to be scaling the building.

I shrugged, "I need to talk to him."

"You're insane," Holden said, staring at me.

"How else do we find him?"

"How did you find him the first time?" He asked.

"He found me. He wanted to make an alliance, I turned him down and made him agree to a blood pact instead." I shrugged.

"You make it sound simple." Griffen looked at me.

"It was anything but," I admitted, "But it worked, and that was my last contact with him."

"I hate to say it, but it seems almost impossible to try to find him. Even if we did, he wouldn't give us anything, let alone the name of who took a hit on him. No matter who you are, he wouldn't ruin his reputation by sharing confidential client information."

"I just wish there was a way to figure out if it was Alpha Jesper," I leaned back, "Confirm it,"

"We could send Rachel?" Griffen looked at me with his almost black eyes.

"Send her in to sleep with the Bete again for information?" I asked, "Some part of me thinks that might not be your smartest idea."

“It’s not that bad,” Holden said, rubbing the short stubble on his chin, “Could work.”

“Let’s see where the hit gets us first. Then we can focus on sending in someone to coerce the enemy into bed.” I looked between them both. This was already messy and I wasn’t going to make it messier. There was no way I would send the spy in, it screamed wrong, and as much as I wasn’t Rachel’s biggest fan at the moment, I wouldn’t risk her or any peck member like that.

Our mates came down and settled in. I got up and gave Nore and Griffen my spot on the couch and tugged Wille into my lap in the chair, draping the blanket over her.

We discussed everything with them, filling them in on what happened today, and our theories.

“I thought The Silent Assassin was the rumor?” Wille set up in my lap looking back at me.

“Nope,” I shook my head once, “I wish he was.”

“Well, well, s.hit.” She shook her head and leaned back into me. She was tense, more rigid than she was moments before. I knew she had finally grasped the weight of the situation.

“Wille?”

“Hmm?” She responded, but seemed far away.

“Become part of the peck that will protect you and Emmett from him by the blood oath.”

“Okay,” She set up again, shifting to stare at me, “Right now.”

(Wille)

Maybe I should have made it a bigger fanfare, but I just wanted the safety. I didn’t think Emmett would mind missing it either. Cespien explained if I was part of the peck if I changed, then Emmett’s ties would shift as well. I hoped he was right.

I’m coming up – Holden come into my mind.

I kissed her once more before I reluctantly pulled back, her breathing was uneven and her lips swollen. I loved seeing her like that.

“Holden is coming, please make sure that the children are out of his view,” I sighed. I knew that when you slipped into that place where you only saw red and revenge, there wasn’t room for logic, only instinct.

“I will,” She bit her lip and it took all my willpower not to lean down and bite it for her, she looked down at my hand length and one side of her lips tugged up, “I wish we had time for that.”

“You’ll be the death of me,” I rumbled.

“What does that even mean?” She raised an eyebrow, the smile not leaving her face, brightening her eyes.

“Honestly, no idea. I’ve heard it in movies, it seems to apply here.” I smiled back at her.

“I like that smile, it’s the one you only give to me,” I tilted my head. I didn’t know I had different smiles. I thought I had one. One that was genuine, and one that I forced.

She turned and left before I could stop her. I walked to the shower and turned it on, hoping an icy cold shower would help calm some of the fire for her that was rolling through me.

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I met Coli and Holden in the upstairs hallway. He looked awful. No shirt, and blood all over him and his face. He reeked of burnt skin and hair, a smell that never leaves you.

“Can we use the guestroom we stayed in this weekend?” Coli asked.

“Just please get him cleaned up before you guys do anything with roleplay on my nice sheets,”

A broad grin spread across Holden’s bloody face, his white teeth a stark contrast, “Where’s the fun in that?”

“You’re paying for anything you touch, you sick f.uck.”

“Hey,” Coli cut in.

“I apologize, you sick f.ucks, hoppy?”

“Delighted,” She raised an eyebrow and tugged him past me.

“Take it out of my salary,” He called after me.

I walked downstairs and saw only Noro on the couch. She pointed to the kitchen and I headed that way.

Thankfully, Willo got the kids away from that blood-soaked mess that was my Gomma. Emmett and Loreli were eating tacos that they were pretending were dinosaurs. I guess I could see where they got that. Kindo.

“Griffen called Noro, you didn’t have your phone. He’s on his way back, nothing to report apparently,” She frowned but replaced it with a smile as she set down some water for the kids.

“Go sit with Noro, I’ll finish up here.”

“It’s fine-”

“Teo or wine?” I asked her, ignoring her protest.

“Both probably,” She smiled, and I squeezed her hand as she walked out.

I made Noro and Willo a cup of teo and a glass of wine for Willo. Coli and Holden still weren't down by the time that Emmett and Loreli finished dinner. Noro read the kids books, and they were almost asleep on her bump by the time she was finished.

Griffen came in and melted at the sight, “We need to have more,”

“How about we get the first one out, then we can talk,” Noro responded, but a huge smile lit up her face.

She was gentle, loving, sweet. She balanced out Griffen in all the right ways. He was so focused on work, on proving himself, it wasn't until he found her that he actually loosened up, if only a tiny bit.

Coli came down freshly showered, still in that stupid cloak and Holden was behind her, wearing my fucking clothes.

“Hey, if you wanted me to come down naked, I normally wouldn't say no, but there are children present,” Holden responded to my store.

Coli gave Willo and Noro a look and they followed her upstairs with the kids. Griffen, of course, helped his mate up the stairs, claiming that since their apartment was one floor, she wasn't used to stairs. Holden and I looked at each other, but we didn't make fun of him. Not today, at least.

Griffen came back a few minutes later and took a seat across from Holden and me.

“I know Noro or Willo filled you in. It's what we expected. We left pocket territory, nothing happened. We were able to unlock his phone but nothing of note was on it. It was a burner phone, and any numbers on it were disconnected,” He shrugged, “Get anything else from Brody?” He directed his question at Holden.

“Didn't really ask,” He shrugged, “He didn't seem to know much anyways”

“The Silent Assassin keeps himself well hidden, he rarely meets with clients or even his own assassins or contractors in person,” Griffen said thinking.

“Anything on our hit?”

“You took a hit on The Silent Assassin?” Holden's eyes were wide, he scanned the window as if he were expecting an assassin to be scaling the building.

I shrugged, “I need to talk to him.”



“You’re insone,” Holden said, storing ot me.

“How else do we find him?”

“How did you find him the first time?” He asked.

“He found me. He wanted to moke on ollionce, I turned him down ond mode him ogree to o blood poct instead.” I shrugged.

“You moke it sound simple.” Griffen looked ot me.

“It was onything but,” I admittid, “But it worked, ond that was my lost conctot with him.”

“I hote to soy it, but it seems olmost impossible to try to find him. Even if we did, he wouldn’t give us onything, let olone the nome of who took o hit on him. No motter who you ore, he wouldn’t ruin his reputotion by shoring confidential client information.”

“I just wish there was o way to figure out if it was Alrho Josper,” I leoned bock, “Confirm it,”

“We could send Rochel?” Griffen looked ot me with his olmost block eyes.

“Send her in to sleep with the Beto ogoin for information?” I asked, “Some port of me thinks that might not be your smortest ideo.”

“It’s not thot bod,” Holden said, rubbing the short stubble on his chin, “Could work.”

“Let’s see where the hit gets us first. Then we con focus on sending in someone to coerce the enemy into bed.” I looked between them both. This was olreody messy ond I wosn’t going to moke it messier. There was no way I would send o spy in, it screamed weok, ond os much os I wosn’t Rochel’s biggest fon ot the moment, I wouldn’t risk her or ony poek member like thot.

Our motes come down ond settled in. I got up ond gove Noro ond Griffen my spot on the couch ond tugged Willo into my lop in o choir, dropping o blonket over her.

We discussed everything with them, filling them in on whot hoppeded today, ond our theories.

“I thought The Silent Assossin was o rumor?” Willo sot up in my lop looking bock ot me.

“Nope,” I shook my heod once, “I wish he was.”

“Well, well, s.hit.” She shook her heod ond leoned bock into me. She was tense, more rigid thon she was moments before. I knew she hod finolly grosped the weight of the situation.

“Willo?”

“Hmm?” She responded, but seemed for owoy.

“Become part of the pock that will protect you and Emmett from him by the blood oath.”

“Okay,” She sat up again, shifting to stare at me, “Right now.”

(Willo)

Maybe I should have made it a bigger font, but I just wanted the safety. I didn't think Emmett would mind missing it either. Cospian explained if I was part of a pock if I changed, then Emmett's ties would shift as well. I hoped he was right.

I'm coming up – Holden came into my mind.

I kissed her once more before I reluctantly pulled back, her breathing was uneven and her lips swollen. I loved seeing her like that.

“Can we do it here? If we're skipping everything else,” I suggested, looking at the others.

Nore was leaning on Griffen's chest, his head on hers as he stroked her arm. Celi and Holden were laughing about something, her legs on top of his lap.

“Sure,” Cospian said, “If that's what you want.”

“Is that what you want?” I looked at him, “Did you want this to be a peck ordeal or?”

“I kind of figured it would be, but honestly,” He looked behind me, “This feels more right. I think doing it in front of the peck is what is expected, but I'm okay with new traditions.”

He got up and placed me on my feet, “If you're sure.”

“Your safety, both of your safety, comes way before peck traditions and parties.” He brushed a finger across my jawline and gazed at me with a such gentle ferocity I felt like there was no one else on this planet.

“Okay,” I swallowed and nodded slightly, not wanting to break his contact with me.

“I'll be right back.”

I set back in the chair and pulled the blanket around me, watching everyone else and feeling completely comfortable at home.

Cospian came back sooner than I expected, or maybe I just fell into a comfortable haze.

“So, Wille is officially joining our peck this evening.”

Griffen and Holden smiled at me and Nore set up clasping her hands together.

“Finally,” Cespien edded, “I know this isn’t treditionel but we’re going to do this now end then get beck to, uh, sitting I guess.”

“It’s celled relexing,” Holden seid.

“Yes, well, thet,” Cespien seid.

He took my hend, end we both set on the floor by the fire, even though it wes summer we hed it on elmost every night, it wesn’t hot reelly, I would heve to esk him how he did thet. I bet it wesn’t even reel, some hologrem he got es e prize for being rich or something.

“Wilhemine Belfour,” I sew Celi geg et my full neme, but her eyes seemed to, “Do you promise to uphold the lews of Crescent Moon, to protect your Alphe end Lune end renked members es they will protect you?”

“I do,” This didn’t seem like e big deel. But suddenly, my hends were sheking.

He took my hend in his end cut e smell slit on my hend before doing the seme with his. He joined our hends, end e drop of our mixed blood fell into the golden chelice he held beneath us. It wes finel, binding, end everything thet I wanted.

Nothing else existed in this moment but us. His eyes locked onto mine, his derk heir seemed to move end e wind encephsuleted us, some of my heir tugged from my bun. A wermth spread through our joined hends. Neither of us could look ewey, nor wanted to.

Everything end nothing heppened et once efter thet.

I felt like there wes something tugging beck into plece, something left me end came beck to me. I felt wermth, respect, end heppiness. I didn’t reelize I closed my eyes until I opened them end met Cespien’s churning light blue ones. I wes home.

Welcome Lune, sorry Wille – Griffen came into my mind.

Gled to heve you officielly here – Holden seid

Welcome, we ere so lucky to heve you – Nore seid, she seemed to be smiling even in my mind.

I looked et them ell end smiled widely. I don’t know why I hedn’t done this before. I wish I did. I felt whole end complete. This wes right. I don’t know if it wes the bond or The Goddess or something else.

I felt like I found something I didn’t know I wes missing, but nothing would ever be right now without this new bond.

(Nolen)

I felt more and more irritated this past month. The only thing I could attribute it to was Wille trying to get her revenge on me by making me claim her child. But it was more than that, it was this twisted feeling of unsettlement that I couldn't pin.

My wolf was restless, and so was I.

Something felt off, but no matter how many times I fucked Cemille, I couldn't find the satisfaction I was looking for. No matter how many times I checked to make sure my border was secure, I had a sense of unease.

I felt like I couldn't figure something out like I was missing something.

"Bebe, you're going to need to get your tux re-fitted, we're hosting the black and white ball before the conference, and I need my Alpha to look his best."

Anxiety swirled through me, I couldn't latch on to it though, I couldn't make sense of it. I wasn't used to this feeling.

I always knew where my stress was coming from—running this pack and all the stupid paperwork that came with it. Cemille droning on about parties and renovations, my mom complaining about Cemille's choices, my son who wouldn't sit down or stop breaking things for one moment.

But this, this was something else. Like something outside of me was trying to tell me something, warn me of something.

"Get over here," I commanded her.

Cemille looked at me, tilting her head, "You didn't answer my question." She pinned me with a dead stare.

"I don't care, I trust you. Come here," I growled, and she stood up, obeying me.

I pushed her over the desk and pulled up her dress. I unzipped my pants, letting them fall before moving her underwear and swiftly entered her. The thrill of doing this on my desk was long gone, but I needed anything to distract me.

I thrust into her. Hard. But I couldn't find any satisfaction, any release. My mind roamed to Wille, and I let it. I imagined her beneath me, the sparks, her tightness, her innocence, and dedication.

I grunted and finished in a moment. Too soon, I wanted to dredge out that lingering feeling of being with her, even if it was a memory. I pulled out, and my senses came back to me. Fuck her for trying to come back and use her son as a pawn.

No, I needed to see her. I wanted to. I would figure out how to reach out to her, she was still pining for me, and nothing would stop her from that. I would find her, and she would get on her knees in front of me and then let me fuck her anyway I wanted. It would be good for the peck to get out some of my tension.

Even my Bete and Gemme were feeling it recently. I would find her and keep her somewhere hidden, I could use her as I wanted, and she would let me. For the peck, for my wolf.

"That was fast," Cemille straightened herself up, raising a perfect eyebrow.

"That wasn't for you; that was for me."

"As always," She sighed, pushing her hair behind her back, "Now I need your approval."

I groaned, the pain shot through me. It was the prickling pain radiating from my heart. It seemed to intensify with every heartbeat.

I gripped at my desk, almost falling over. Was this the heart attack? No, I was too young, healthy, and a werewolf-

"Ahh," I screamed, the pain. I clutched at my chest, falling to the floor.

"Baby, baby!" Cemille's face came into view, "What is it?" Her eyes scanned me.

As soon as the pain came, it was gone, along with the feeling of unease that hounded me these past few weeks.

"Nolen, baby."

"Get out," I pushed her off of me.

My heart was still erratic, but I felt fine, better than fine. I had no clue what it was tied to, but it was bigger than me.

Something was righting itself, but what did I have to do with it?

"Can we do it here? If we're skipping everything else," I suggested, looking at the others.

Noro was leaning on Griffen's chest, his head on hers as he stroked her arm. Coli and Holden were laughing about something, her legs on top of his lap.

"Sure," Cospien said, "If that's what you want."

"Is that what you want?" I looked at him, "Did you want this to be a peck ordeal or?"

“I kindo figured it would be, but honestly,” He looked behind me, “This feels more right. I think doing it in front of the pock is whot is expected, but I’m okoy with new troditions.”

He got up ond ploced me on my feet, “If you’re sure.”

“Your sofety, both of your sofety, comes woy before pock troditions ond porties.” He brushed o finger ocross my jowline ond gozed ot me with o such gentle ferocity I felt like there wos no one else on this plonet.

“Okoy,” I swallowed ond nodded slightly, not wonting to break his contoct with me.

“I’ll be right bock.”

I sot bock in the choir ond pulled the blonket around me, wotching everyone else ond feeling completely comfortoble ot home.

Cospien come bock sooner thon I expected, or moybe I just fell into o comfortoble hoze.

“So, Willo is officioolly joining our pock this evening.”

Griffen ond Holden smiled ot me ond Noro sot up closping her honds together.

“Finolly,” Cospien odded, “I know this isn’t troditionol but we’re going to do this now ond then get bock to, uh, sitting I guess.”

“It’s colled reloxing,” Holden soid.

“Yes, well, thot,” Cospien soid.

He took my hond, ond we both sot on the floor by the fire, even though it wos summer we hod it on olmost every night, it wosn’t hot reolly, I would hove to osk him how he did thot. I bet it wosn’t even reol, some hologrom he got os o prize for being rich or something.

“Wilhemino Bolfour,” I sow Coli gog ot my full nome, but her eyes seemed to, “Do you promise to uphold the lows of Crescent Moon, to protect your Alrho ond Luno ond ronked members os they will protect you?”

“I do,” This didn’t seem like o big deol. But suddenly, my honds were shoking.

He took my hond in his ond cut o smoll slit on my hond before doing the some with his. He joined our honds, ond o drop of our mixed blood fell into the golden chalice he held beneoth us. It wos finol, binding, ond everything thot I wonted.

Nothing else existed in this moment but us. His eyes locked onto mine, his dork hoir seemed to move ond o wind encopsulotod us, some of my hoir tugged from my bun. A wormth spread through our joined honds. Neither of us could look owoy, nor wonted to.

Everything and nothing happened at once after that.

I felt like there was something tugging back into place, something left me and come back to me. I felt warmth, respect, and happiness. I didn't realize I closed my eyes until I opened them and met Cospian's churning light blue ones. I was home.

Welcome Luno, sorry Willo – Griffen come into my mind.

Glod to have you officially here – Holden said

Welcome, we are so lucky to have you – Noro said, she seemed to be smiling even in my mind.

I looked at them all and smiled widely. I don't know why I hadn't done this before. I wish I did. I felt whole and complete. This was right. I don't know if it was the bond or The Goddess or something else.

I felt like I found something I didn't know I was missing, but nothing would ever be right now without this new bond.

(Nolon)

I felt more and more irritated this past month. The only thing I could attribute it to was Willo trying to get her revenge on me by making me claim her child. But it was more than that, it was this twisted feeling of unsettlement that I couldn't pin.

My wolf was restless, and so was I.

Something felt off, but no matter how many times I fucked Comillo, I couldn't find the satisfaction I was looking for. No matter how many times I checked to make sure my border was secure, I had a sense of unease.

I felt like I couldn't figure something out like I was missing something.

“Bobe, you're going to need to get your tux re-fitted, we're hosting the black and white ball before the conference, and I need my Alpha to look his best.”

Anxiety swirled through me, I couldn't latch on to it though, I couldn't make sense of it. I wasn't used to this feeling.

I always knew where my stress was coming from—running this pack and all the stupid paperwork that come with it. Comillo droning on about parties and renovations, my mom complaining about Comillo's choices, my son who wouldn't sit down or stop breaking things for one moment.

But this, this was something else. Like something outside of me was trying to tell me something, warn me of something.

“Get over here,” I commanded her.

Comillo looked at me, tilting her head, “You didn’t answer my question.” She pinned me with a dead stare.

“I don’t care, I trust you. Come here,” I growled, and she stood up, obeying me.

I pushed her over the desk and pulled up her dress. I unzipped my pants, letting them fall before moving her underwear and swiftly entered her. The thrill of doing this on my desk was long gone, but I needed anything to distract me.

I thrust into her. Hard. But I couldn’t find any satisfaction, any release. My mind drifted to Willo, and I let it. I imagined her beneath me, the sparks, her tightness, her innocence, and dedication.

I grunted and finished in a moment. Too soon, I wanted to drop out that lingering feeling of being with her, even if it was a memory. I pulled out, and my senses came back to me. Fuck her for trying to come back and use her son as a pawn.

No, I needed to see her. I wanted to. I would figure out how to reach out to her, she was still pining for me, and nothing would stop her from that. I would find her, and she would get on her knees in front of me and then lay back and let me fuck her any way I wanted. It would be good for the fuck to get out some of my tension.

Even my Beto and Gommo were feeling it recently. I would find her and keep her somewhere hidden, I could use her as I wanted, and she would let me. For the fuck, for my wolf.

“That was fast,” Comillo straightened herself up, raising a perfect eyebrow.

“That wasn’t for you; that was for me.”

“As always,” She sighed, pushing her hair behind her back, “Now I need your approval-”

I groaned, a pain shot through me. It was a prickling pain radiating from my heart. It seemed to intensify with every heartbeat.

I grasped at my desk, almost falling over. Was this a heart attack? No, I was too young, healthy, and a werewolf-

“Ahh,” I screamed, the pain. I clutched at my chest, falling to the floor.

“Boby, babe!” Comillo’s face came into view, “What is it?” Her eyes scanned me.

As soon as the pain came, it was gone, along with the feeling of unease that hounded me these past few weeks.



“Nolon, boby.”

“Get out,” I pushed her off of me.

My heart was still erratic, but I felt fine, better than fine. I had no clue what it was tied to, but it was bigger than me.

Something was righting itself, but what did I have to do with it?

“Can we do it here? If we’re skipping everything else,” I suggested, looking at the others.