

## A Secret Revealed

They made the journey in record time, shifting hurriedly behind the trees, patrol surrounding him and his men as they stood, patiently awaiting the Alpha of the Blue Moon pack. It wasn't long and Alpha Samuel came striding in, his beard reaching past his shoulders and making him look even gruffer than normal, his big thick black brows raised in a temper, his brown eyes aching angrily. This was not the welcome he had been expecting thought Julian, his friend looking a little worse for wear than the last time he'd visited.

"State your business" Samuel growled, his voice booming as he used the Alpha tone on Julian's men, of course the tone unable to affect Julian himself being a King.

Julian hastily stepped forward "is that any way to greet an old friend" he joked as Samuel's eyes widened in shock and he stepped back, looking over Julian in surprise.

"You look different" he said with a wide grin "never pictured you with red hair but I have to say it suits you" he teased, shaking Julian's hand and looking around at his men.

"Social call" he said with a raised eyebrow and questioning look, motioning for Julian to walk ahead with him, patrol leading the other men to the house.

"Of sorts" Julian hedged before admitting "I'm travelling in the hopes of finding my mate. I don't want the packs to know who I am" he said indicating his red hair with a wince as Samuel chuckled.

"Gloria will be delighted to see you" he said quietly, leading the way to their own private house away from the main packhouse, Gloria rushing out of the kitchen when she heard the doors opening.

"Whose this then" she said warmly and Julian gave her a genuine smile. He'd always liked Gloria. She was a stunning black haired woman with the loveliest green eyes you could ever have the privilege of seeing. Not only that but she was one of the few women who had welcomed Julian with open arms and kept a friendship that he cherished. She'd helped him when he needed it without question and saved his life once, something he had never forgotten.

Samuel gave his mate a warm hug and kiss on the forehead, a small chuckle letting loose as he pointed at Julian as Gloria frowned and looked puzzled.

"It's Julian honey" he told her as her eyes widened and she stepped closer. She gazed at his red hair and Julian leaned forward and hugged her.

"It's me" he said warmly as her eyes sparkled with delight and she waved him into the kitchen, where he was ecstatic to see a plate of freshly baked apple cinnamon cookies, his absolute favourite.

Gloria rushed to make them all hot cocoa, knowing full well Julian's love for these cookies and the drink he insisted on having with them. It made her smile fondly as she put a mug in front of all of them and joined the men at the table.

"It's been far too long" she said softly, her eyes narrowing in displeasure as Julian gave a nervous gulp, Samuel spreading his hands as if to say there was nothing he could do about his wife's sudden anger as Julian scowled at him.

"I know" he told her "it's just a lot has happened and time slipped away. So much has happened" he exclaimed and began to tell his story, how he had discovered he had a daughter to everything up until now and adding his desire to finally find his mate after all this time. To say that Samuel and Gloria were gobsmacked was an understatement to say the least, the both of them sitting shell shocked as Julian finished explaining everything to them.

"Wow" was all Samuel could mutter in awe "you have been busy."

Gloria was highly amused even though a little saddened about how Serena had been conceived. However the poor girl had had nothing to do with it and from the sounds of it Julian had not only accepted his daughter but seemed to adore her, his entire face lighting up as he described her and her children and mate. Clearly he had nothing but good things to say about them and Gloria couldn't remember the last time she had seen him smile or laugh so easily.

Then Samuel gave a loud exhale and shot his mate a glance, Gloria giving him a subtle nod in encouragement. It was almost fate that Julian had shown up now when he did, for they had been in the process of organising themselves to visit him at the castle and discuss an ongoing problem arising in theirs and nearby packs. One that was chilling and would no doubt raise the ire of the werewolf King, all of them angry as well, not able to fathom why such a thing was occurring. It was unheard of before now for Rogues to be so organised, to work so well and cooperate with a team but they were not mistaken. This was not one rogue acting out or enacting some sort of plan alone. They had a whole group that were deliberately targeting packs and all for the same thing.

"Julian" Samuel said with a frown and a concerned gaze at his friend "we were actually organising ourselves to come visit you at the castle. "

The tone in the man's voice clearly indicated it wasn't for a social visit and Julian braced himself knowing it must be important for his friend to sound so grim and so worried about something, his anxiety visible to the werewolf King as he waited for Samuel to speak.

"It's the rogues" Samuel said meeting his friend's gaze as he twisted his hands and looked down at them with a heavy sigh, worried about Julian's reaction but unable to keep the words from bursting out.

"They've been taking children from packs and killing the parents. We don't know why and none of us have been able to locate any of the missing children" he finished and waited for the inevitable explosion that he knew with absolute certainty would come from his friend.