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Chapter 131

Chapter 131: Moonshine's Revenge

"We're still getting reports coming in of rogue activity," Santino told Logan. He had stopped by Logan's office to check in in the aftermath of their war. "Have they hurt anyone?" Logan asked. He watched Santino walk casually around his office, looking at the books that Logan had on his shelves. "Nothing serious," Santino reported. "They are causing a but of a fuss, though, and they are making pack members uneasy." "What are they after?" Logan asked. Santino shrugged, running his hand down the spines of one of the books. Logan thought it strange to be looking for similarities between Serena and Santino, but he saw a few. Some of their mannerisms and expressions were the same. They were twins, after all. "Mostly, they just seem to want to get our attention," Santino said with an annoyed sigh. "You mean they want us to confront them and pay for what we did to Damon and Moonshine," Logan clarified. Santino grinned. "That's what it appears to be," he said. "The two of us took out a whole pack of roques already. Yet, they still seem to think they are a match for us." Logan smiled, but he did not share Santino's joviality or optimism. "We still need to handle this carefully and decisively." Logan said. Santino stepped away from the bookshelf and sat down on the chair across from Logan's desk. He sunk down into the chair, a casual and lazy posture. Logan leaned forward, putting his elbows on his desk. "The members of Moonshine that have been relocated to Starseeker territory are definitely on edge," Santino said. "We promised to protect them, and now the rogues have targeted them. Punishing them for the choice they made." "That is concerning," Logan said. "We can't let them think they made the wrong choice. We can't go back on the promise to protect them." "Agreed,' Santino said with a nod. He picked at his shirt eves crossed slightly as he watched his own fingers. "Where are the reports coming in from?" Logan asked, pointing to the map on his desk. Santino stood up and hovered over the desk, looking at the map. "The rogues are coming across the border here," he said, running his finger along the border between the old Moonshine pack and Starseeker territory "*My* patrols have bene running through the former Moonshine territory, but it is still a big territory and my wolves are still getting used to the increased patrol area," he

lined the means lille hiding in marts of Moonshine territory they are

familiar with, areas we don't even know about." "That is a good bet," Santino said. "I can temporarily pull the Moonshine refugees in closer to the village center. They will feel safer and have more eyes on them." "Don't make them feel like they are being imprisoned or that they are under scrutiny," Logan advised. "It is important to keep their trust, even when circumstances aren't ideal." "You're really good at this," Santino told Logan. "I mean, my dad is a legendary Alpha, but you just always know exactly what to do and say. It is like second nature to you. My father always considers things from multiple angles, but it is like you do that in an instant and come up with a solution." Logan grinned at Santino. Getting praise from another Alpha, or future Alpha, was always great. "I appreciate the compliment," Logan said with a smile. "Let me call my dad," he said. Logan nodded. Santino stepped away from the desk and made the call. He explained to his father what was going on and recommended relocating the Moonshine refugees to a safer place. Logan studied his map of the old Moonshine territory. Carson and the patrol wolves had been sending back more updated details about the territory, and Logan had started to update his map with landmarks. He was focused primarily on cave formations on the map. It wasn't an ideal accommodation, but most wolves would be willing to live wildly if there were cave systems to take shelter in. "Alright, my dad is making the arrangements for the refugees," Santino said, hanging up his phone. "Good," Logan said with a nod. "There are a few natural cave formations where the rogues could be hiding out, making camp. Beta Carson and his patrols haven't had the time and manpower to explore the caves extensively, but they have marked where several natural caves exist." "Which one do you think is our best bet?" Santino asked, looking over the map again. "Here," Logan said tapping the map. "This one is one of the largest formations. It is surrounded by dense *f*orest, and there are multiple fresh water sources that are easily accessible." "Alright, so we go there and take them out" Santino said. Logan sighed, leaning back in his chair. "So eager to go into battle again?" he asked with a chuckle. Santino shrugged. "My dad is still running most of the operations in Starseeker. I'm just a little antsy. Since taking down Damon and Moonshine, I been wanting to do more," he said. "Alright, well we aren't going into this just the two nf us Not this time." I onan

explained. "This isn't a rescue mission where your sister and my fated mate are in trouble. This has to be handled delicately and with few casualties." "Few casualties?" Santino asked, crossing his arms. Logan gave a nod. "It would be better to bring them in as captives. I want to send a clearer message to anyone else that thinks rebelling and going rogue is a good idea," Logan explained. "They can see what we've made of their great leader, asserting our own strength and power. Thus, giving them the chance to reintegrate into the packs if they renounce their loyalties to Damon." "You think that's safe?" Santino asked. "We already defeated him, and they still support him." "True" Logan said. "Seeing him imprisoned and mangy is far different than knowing he was defeated. The roques will want a leader. It is in their nature to want to a strong leader and be part of a pack. When they see that you and I, and Thomas, have reduced their leader to nothing, they won't be as eager to follow him." "Again, I say you always seem to know what to do." Santino said with a chuckle. "Let me see where Carson and his patrols are," Logan said. Either way, they had to handle the situation with the rogues as quickly as possible. Carson, where are you? Logan asked on the mental link. Border of the old Moonshine territory, Carson responded. Good, hold your position, he ordered. We will await further instruction, Carson replied. "They are holding on the old Moonshine border," Logan said, tapping the spot on the map so Santino could see. "Alright, let's go," Santino said grabbing his jacket. Logan chuckled at Santino's enthusiasm. Apparently, Serena's need to prove herself wasn't just a trait she possessed. Santino obviously wanted to prove himself as well. Whether it was in strength in battle or being a competent Alpha, he had his own need to prove himself.

"We'll drive out to the border, then shift into wolves and meet up with Carson and the others," Logan said. He grabbed his car keys and swung them around on his finger. "You got it," Santino said. Logan grabbed his own jacket and went outside to where his car was parked. He sped through the streets until they got out onto a dirt road, and then he slowed down. The last time he'd sped down dirt roads with Serena in the passenger seat, he had damaged the undercarriage of his car. It had needed some serious work, and Logan didn't want to damage the vehicle again. He was quite fond of it. When they got to the end of the road, he parked and got out of the car. Logan immediately began stripping down He shifted into a wolf and waited for Santing to

join him. They shared a few wolf-grumbles and then Logan sniffed the air to find where Carson was.

He yipped and let the way to where his Beta was camped. When the patrols ran, they always set up a base camp where they kept clothes stashed so they could change into their human forms and get dressed, speaking more easily to each other. *W*hen Logan and Santino arrived, Carson was already in human form, wearing a pair of sweat pants. The other patrol wolves were in a mix of skin and fur. Carson walked over and set down two pairs of pants. Logan and Santino quickly shifted back to human and put on their pants. "So, what's the plan?" Carson asked.

"I think I know where the remainder of Moonshine's rogues are camped," Logan said. "Remember that cave formation by the stream you told me about? Carson nodded. "That would make sense," he agreed. "We need to hit it with force, as one unified army," Logan said. "I want to hit them at sunset when they will likely be in the caves in their human form. They won't have anywhere to run." "Assuming there isn't a back exit to the caves," Santino muttered. "No assumptions!" Logan insisted. "We will hit them hard and all at once. I want prisoners not casualties."

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Chapter 132: Eradicating the Threat

In his wolf form, Logan led Carson, Santino, and the other patrol wolves to the forest where the cave formation was. The sun was setting. It was low enough that shadows were long, but under the tree cover, the wolves could move undetected by watchful eyes.

With any luck, these rogues would be just as disorganized as the rogues that took Serena. They probably wouldn't be keeping a very good watch, thinking that they were safe in a territory they knew and hiding in the caves, Logan kept his head low to the ground. He could smell them ahead. They had a fire going and he could hear laughs and murmurs. That meant they were mostly in human form. They are in human form, Logan broadcast to the rest of them through the mental link. Remember, prisoners only, no killing. Work in pairs. We outnumber them at least two to one. He received confirmation through the link that the others would follow his orders. They remained perfectly quiet as they approached the rogue camp. The sounds coming from the camp were far louder than any that Logan and his wolves made in their stealthy approach. When they got close enough, he lifted his head and nodded left and right. Two groups of his pat*r*ol wolves split off to the left and right. They went in a wide circle, planning to hit the camp from either side. It would greatly diminish the number of rogues who could escape. With a final howl, Logan charged forward. The rest of the wolves around him all broke out in runs, rushing at the camp. There *wer*e startled cries as the rogues tried to respond to the attack. The clatter of metal sounded like pots, pans, and plates were knocked over, and a bucket of water spilled on the fire, causing it to go out in a puff of smoke. Darkness took over, giving Logan and his wolves a greater advantage over the rogues in human form.

Logan went straight into the cave system with Santino and a couple others as Carson took command to round up the rogues outside. Logan wanted to make sure there was no escape route out the back. Few roques had retreated into the cave, making him think that there wasn't, but he wasn't leaving it up to chance. When they got to the back of the cave system, Logan growled. There was a back exit! He sniffed around guickly, but he couldn't detect where the rogues had gone. Clothing lay around the back of the cave. They must have shifted into wolf form and then scattered From what he could tell, only a few had made it out, but Logan couldn't let them get —- far tonight. They weren't leaving any roques out in the wild! Returning to Carson, Logan shifted back into human form, as did Santino. There were plenty of pants lying around the rogue camp to clothe themselves in. Carson was already in human form, counting off the detained roques. "Any injuries?" Logan asked immediately. "A few of the rogues took some sharp bites, but no one on our side was injured," Carson reported. Logan nodded. "Good," he said. "Did any rogues escape?" "No, we boxed them all in," Carson said. Logan looked at one of the rogues Carson had tied up. He was smiling smugly. Logan grabbed that back of the rogue's head, forcing his neck back all the way. He growled while the rogue sputtered. "What are you laughing at?" he asked. The roque glared. "You'll never be able to kill our spirit," he said. "Alpha Damon will resist all your treatment. He will return stronger and more powerful than ever before, only to dance on your grave." Logan scoffed. "Let's see if you sing that same song after you see what state your Alpha is in," he said. He shoved the rogue's head forward. "Logan, is something wrong?" Carson asked, picking up on Logan's sour mood. "A few of the rogues made it out the back of the caves. Santino and I should track them down and detain them before they get too far," Logan said. "They're already long gone," Santino argued. "We will track them all night if we have to!" Logan hissed. Santino held up his hands in surrender "Yeah, of course," Santino said. Carson gave Logan a warning look. "I can handle things here," Carson said. "I want to ask around, see where the rogues would go, if there is a secondary location," he said. "I'll help," Santino said. He broke off and went to question the rogues being tied up by another patrol wolf. "Good work here, Logan," Carson said.

"Even if a few got away, we have the bulk of the threat right here." "Yes, but the threat isn't gone entirely," Logan said with a sigh. "I need to ensure the refugees can feel safe with the new arrangement before it all falls apart. For that, I want to be able to say, without a doubt, all the rogues are gone." "I understand," Carson said.

an walked around the aroun of roques that his Datahad viadun

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he'd grabbed before wouldn't talk, so he looked for any signs of weakness. Most of them stared at him defiantly, proving they wouldn't give up answers easily. If he needed, Logan could get them, but he didn't want to torture anyone. That wouldn't put him in a position of strength and trust. It would create a further divide between him and the rogues. He wanted to do this in a way that made them see he was strong but not without mercy. One of the wolves glared at him for a moment, but the longer Logan stared back, the more nervous the rogue became. He started darting his eyes away from Logan briefly, until he eventually broke eye contact all together. Logan knew that was the rogue he needed to interrogate.

Logan nodded to Carson.

"Release him," he said. "We are going to chat privately." Carson complied, untying the indicated rogue from the rest.

Logan grabbed the rogue's elbow and led him into the cave where they could talk without being interrupted or overheard. "You'll have to kill me," the rogue insisted. "I'll never talk! I'll never betray my pack!" "I'm not going to torture you," Logan said. "I just want to know where the rogues who escaped out the back would go." "What are *y*ou talking about?" the rogue asked. Logan smirked. Oh, so the escape route out the back of the caves hadn't been common knowledge. That would also work to his advantage. Logan led the rogue to the back of the cave, kicking the discarded clothing. *"A* few rogues came back this way and shifted so they could escape," Logan said. "Why wouldn't our entire company know about this escape option?" "No," The rogue said, shaking his head. "No, we were all told to go to the front, that there was no other way to escape."

"It looks like you were lied to. How is it that an Alpha you see as an enemy is the only one that is honest with you?" he asked. The rogue shook his head. "You're just trying to confuse me," he said, his voice cracking. "Just tell me where they would go, and I will return you to your company," Logan offered. The rogue sighed. "There was a rendezvous point, should anyone escape if we *w*ere attacked," the rogue said.

"Rendezvous point, now we are getting somewhere. Do you know where it is? Logan asked. The rogue looked around nervously. "If you're not going to torture me, what is my incentive to cooperate?" he asked. "I have Damon alive and in captivity," Logan

explained. "If you help me, *y*ou and your gogues will be allowed to see him and be held captive close to where he is. If you 5:50

don't, you won't be allowed anywhere near him. Nor will the rest of your company."

The rogue he had a grasp on swallowed hard.

"Okay," he said with a quick nod. "On the northern edge of the forest. There is a stream and a small cave. It was stocked with supplies in case of an attack."

"Thank you," Logan said. To make good on his word, he returned the rogue to Carson who tied him up again. Logan didn't speak to Carson directly or let the other rogues know that their friend had betrayed them. "Logan," Santino called his name. He waved Logan over.

"What have you got?" Logan asked.

"A cave on the northern edge of the woods We just need to follow that stream" Santino said, motioning to the stream cutting through the trees.

"That is the same answer I received," Logan said with a nod. "We'll follow up on that together."

"Great," Santino said, another smile of anticipation crossing his lips. Logan shook his head and rolled his eyes. Although he was eager, Santino was effective in his abilities. He was a good ally to have

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Chapter 133: Logan and Santino on the Hunt

Logan and Santino shifted back into their wolf forms to track the rogues up the stream. The scent was strong, and they had no problem confirming the direction that the rogues had fled. Logan had considered the possibility that the rogues had been told to lie about the rendezvous location, but the scent on the leaves were told him otherwise.

Furthermore, Logan had considered that the lead rogues had given the rest of the pack a false rendezvous location so they could make a clean getaway while their attackers chased down fake leads. Fortunately, Logan had discovered that the rogues weren't all that intelligent.

Damon was their Alpha, they were loyal to him, but they didn't have the same ability to lead as he did. Not that he had been the most competent Alpha to begin with. Snarling at his own thoughts, Logan dipped his head to the ground, sniffing the trail he was on. He recognized the scent as one of the wolves he'd chased into the back of the cave. They were definitely going in the right direction! The stream led them three miles north to the edge of the forest. The trees were starting to thin out, making it more difficult to find cover. Logan stopped, and Santino stopped beside him. They had to approach from upwind or the wolves would smell their approach. Nudging Santino in the shoulder, Logan pushed him in the direction he wanted him to go. Santino complied without argument. They got into an upwind position and found some underbrush to take cover in. Logan wanted to confirm how many rogues were there before going in. They waited, watching the cave entrance. It didn't take long for the rogues to appear. They were in human form, packing up the supplies they'd stocked in the cave. Logan counted only three wolves. He thought back to the cave where they'd shifted and confirmed there'd been enough discarded clothing to make three outfits, but no more. It was a good bet that there were only three rogues left. Turning to look over his shoulder, Logan nodded at Santino. Silently, the two of them moved in on the rogues as they packed. When they are close enough, Logan launched himself forward at the same time as Santino. They each landed on one of the rogues, knocking them to the ground and knocking them out. Logan bit the leg of the one he'd landed on, ensuring he wouldn't be able to escape if he regained consciousness.

The third was trying to run, tearing at his own shirt as he attempted to shift. Logan growled, pouncing again and landing on the rogue's back, knocking him to the ground. He grunted. Logan put his teeth around the rogue's throat, daring him to move. He whimpered and relaxed. Satisfied, Logan got off of him. He grabbed the rouge's arm in his jaws and dragged

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him back towards the cave. Santino was in human form, tying up the other two. He took the rogue from Logan and tied him up with the others. Logan shifted back to human form. "I'll check out the cave," he said. Santino nodded. Logan went into the cave. It was mostly just piles of old clothes, which Logan helped himself to, some food, and camping gear. There wasn't a lot of supplies, and it was probably only intended to be used by three or four rouges total. It wasn't like they were stockpiling to survive the winter or anything. "Let's get these three back to the others," Logan said when he rejoined Santino. He tossed the other male a pair pants. Santino grinned and put them on. "We did really great today," Santino offered as they walked back to where Carson was with the others. The rogues they had tied up walked behind them and Santino held the rope that tied them all together. "We did," Logan said. "I'd be willing to say that this is the last of the rogue threat." "I'd say so too," Santino said. Carson had gotten the first rogue camp cleaned up and a few Jeeps had been driven in to transport supplies and prisoners. "Got the last of them," Logan said, nodding to the rogues behind him. "Great,"

Carson said with a nod. "Arrangements are being made for detainment, and the gear and supplies they are being inventoried." "Good," Logan said with a nod as Santino handed off the rest of the rogues. "I'm going to return to my office and update our files." | Carson nodded. Logan motioned for Santino to follow him. The other male didn't hesitate and they went back to Logan's car to drive back to his office. "I feel very accomplished," Santino said with a chuckle. "We saved face with the Moonshine refugees, eliminated a threat, and secured large portions of territory." Santino said with a laugh. Logan smirked and chuckled too. "All in a day's work," he said. Santino chuckled. "Is this what it is like everyday for you, to be Alpha?" he asked. Logan scoffed and shook his head. "No, definitely not," he said. "Though, it doesn't take this big of an accomplishment for me to feel like it is a good day." "Really?" Santino asked. Logan chuckled. "Not at all," he said. "Something I hope you'll get to experience one day is the joy it brings you to see the smiles on your children's faces. And an even greater feeling is when you know you are the one who put the smile there." Santino laughed.

Chapter 133: Logan and Santino on the Hunt "I'm not ready for that yet," he admitted. "It sounds like things are going well with my sister and the twins, though." Logan nodded. "Really well," Logan confirmed. "I spent the whole day with the twins yesterday. They definitely know how to wear me out, but it was one of the best days I can remember having in a long, long time." "Parenthood really does change everything" Santino muttered. "How about with Serena, things are going well with her too?" Logan sighed. He wasn't sure how much he wanted to say about Serena to her brother. He and Santino were becoming friends. There was no doubt about that, but he didn't want to betray her confidence or give her twin anything to tease her about. "Things are going well," Logan said. "Slow, but well." Santino chuckled. "Yeah, you might need to push her along a little," Santino said. "I don't want to pressure her;" Logan said, creasing his brow. Santino shook his head. "I'm sure you've noticed my sister is pretty stubborn," Santino offered. Logan sighed heavily, pulling his car up to the curb. "Yes, I've noticed," he grumbled. Santino laughed as they got out of the car. "She'll continue to be stubborn," Santino warned. "You'll need to push her a little unless you still want to be living separately and being a part-time dad when the twins are ready to go off to college." "I think her desire to take things slow have more to do with the strings that come with our relationship," Logan admitted, letting them into the office. "Being Luna?" Santino asked. Logan nodded. "That is a smokescreen. An excuse to remain stubborn. Trust me, I've seen her do it a million times." Logan raised an eyebrow at Santino, considering what he said. Before he could respond, his office phone started ringing. Logan stepped away from Santino to answer it.

"Hello?" he asked.

"Logan, you're there, thank God!" Serena said in a panicked voice. "*W*e just got in from the woods," Logan said. "Santino and I were chasing down the rest pf the rogues." "Logan, did the twins come visit you?" she asked quickly. "Have you or Santino seen them?" "No," he said slowly. He looked at Santino and covered the phone with his hand. "Have you seen the twins?" Santino shook his head. "What's going on?" Santino asked, stepping closer to the desk. "The twins are missing." Serena wailed into the phone. "What!?" Logan asked, his temper brewing. *3*/4

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"I can't find them anywhere. They aren't in the yard or in their rooms. Your mother hasn't seen them. If they didn't come find you, I don't know where they went!" "We'll be right there," Logan told Serena. "Don't do anything, Santino and I are on our way." "Logan, are there still rogues out there?" Serena asked, her voice hysterical. "They' off somewhere alone! No one has seen them. What if they got captured or hurt?" "Serena," Logan said firmly, keeping his own voice controlled even thought he felt like he could explode out of his own skin at any moment. "Listen to me. We are going to find them before they get hurt. Before anything bad happens to them." "Okay," she said, her voice still frantic. "Do you believe me?" he asked. There was a long pause on the line. "...I believe you," Serena finally said. *"We're* on our way over, stay put until we get there," he said again. "Okay," Serena said with an exasperated sigh. Logan hung up. "What is wrong?" Santino asked. "The twins are missing," Logan said. Santino's jaw dropped open, his face paling slightly "Let's go!" he said. Logan grabbed his keys again and they went right to the car. The twins were missing!

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Chapter 134: Missing

Logan and Santino pulled up in front of Serena's house. Dana was there and so was Flo. Logan ran inside, wrapping Serena in a big hug. She broke down immediately, collapsing against him and sobbing. "What do we know?" Logan asked his mother while he comforted Serena. He hadn't seen her so vulnerable before, and he wasn't about to let her go. Her hands were clenched into fists around his shirt, and he already felt the damp pools of her tears soaking through the fabric. "The twins were playing in the backyard," Dana said. "I came in to make them a snack and when I went back out they were gone." "Why didn't you call me sooner?" Logan asked Serena who was still sobbing into his chest. "I thought they might have gone to see you or your mother, like they did before," she said in a choked voice before sniffling. "She called me first," Flo said. "I checked the davcare to see if they snuck off to go to the playaround," Dana offered. "We've all looked around at where they might have gone, but Logan, they aren't anywhere," Flo said. "They knew not to leave the yard. Could they have been taken?" Serena asked. Logan rubbed her back soothingly. Holding her against him, calming her grief, helped him keep a lid on his own anger and fear. "Who would have taken them?" Santino asked. "The rogues?" Flo asked. "No," Logan said shaking his head. "We had them all under control, and they were too far to double back. Besides, they wouldn't know that the twins are my kids. They wouldn't target just random kids." "They're not in

the village," Dana said. "I put out a lot of calls, and no one has seen them." "My heart can't take this!" Serena muttered "Come with me," Logan said. "Dana, can you put on some chamomile tea?" Dana nodded and went to the kitchen. Logan kept his arms around Serena, half pulling her up the stairs to her bedroom. He let go of her with one arm and pulled the covers back. He helped Serena into the bed and pulled the covers up to her chin. She sighed, laying back on her pillows. Logan got her a tissue from the table beside her bed. He leaned in and kissed her forehead.

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"I know it is hard," he said. "But try and relax. We are going to put together a pack search and rescue, and we will find them. They can't have gotten far with their little legs. They can't even shift yet."

"Logan, we have to find them. It is getting so cold at night, we have to bring them home before then," Serena said, a fresh wave of tears leaking out of her eyes. Logan took her hands in his.

"We will" he promised. "The whole pack will get on it. No one will be working on anything else until we find them, okay?" Serena sighed again, but she nodded. Logan kissed her hands and then kissed her forehead again. "Do you think you can relax a little?" he asked. "It isn't going to help the kids if you can't think clearly." "How are you being so calm?" she asked him, looking up at him with watery eyes. Logan gave her a humorless half smile. "When my family needs me, I am the solid, steady rock," he said. "Inside, I'm terrified, but I'm here for you, and I'm here for the twins. I'm not going to stop until they are home safe with us." Serena nodded. Dana appeared with a steaming cup of tea. Logan took it from her and Dana backed out of the room.

"Drink this," he told Serena, handing her the mug. She pulled herself up into a sitting position and drank the tea. She wrinkled her nose. "It tastes funny," she said. "It is chamomile," Logan told her. "It will help you relax." Serena nodded and drank the rest of the tea.

Her eyelids drooped a little and she laid back down.

"Just get some rest, please," Logan said, brushing her hair from her face. "I'll check in on you soon, and I will keep you updated on everything we do. You should stay here though, in case the twins come back before we find them." Serena swallowed hard, but she nodded. Logan kissed her forehead again. Serena's eyes *w*ere closed and she was snoring softly by the time he walked out of the room. He sniffed the empty teacup in his hands. It definitely wasn't just chamomile! "What did you put in the tea?" Logan asked when he met with Dana, Flo, and Santino in the living room again. <u>"Some bourbon, from</u> my personal stash" Dana said. "It'll keep her tranquil. "Good" Logan said, "She's asleep now. She's agreed to stay here in case the twins come back,

"We should stay with her too," Flo said, motioning between herself and Dana. "We can keep an eye on things and vou non fill...inen in

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things she needs to know." Logan nodded. "Dana, you're sure that the twins aren't anywhere in the village?" he asked. "I'm positive," Dana said with a nod. "Okay, Santino, come with me," Logan ordered. Santino obeyed, as if Logan was his own Alpha. "What's the plan?" Santino asked, following Logan out onto the porch. Logan didn't answer. He took out his cellphone and called Carson. "We just finished moving the rogues and cataloging the supplies," Carson said. "Drop it," Logan said. "Drop everything. Get the entire pack together and send them to the village center." "Logan, what's wrong?" Carson asked. Logan snarled. Now that he wasn't holding Serena up, his own fear was manifesting as anger. "The twins are missing, we need to organize a territory wide search and rescue, immediately," Logan said. "I want the entire pack involved. Everyone drops what they are doing. This is the only priority." "I'm on it," Carson said. He hung up. "Wow, you are all business, man," Santino said. "My children are missing," Logan snapped. "All we know is that they aren't in the village. That means they are somewhere out in the territory alone. Temperatures drop fast at night these days. Finding them is the only thing that matters." Santino nodded.

"I get it, man," he said. "That is my niece and nephew. I'm not stopping at anything until we get them back." "Good, because I won't accept anything less," Logan growled. Santino nodded. "Get to the town center. I will be there shortly. I want to check the backyard first." Santino nodded and took off. Logan really just wanted to be alone for a moment. He took a deep, calming breath and went around the back of the house. The scent of the twins was really strong in the back. The*y we*re so strong, though, he couldn't determine what direction they had left the yard in. There were so many trails in the yard and around the yard that he couldn't make sense of any one of them. Frustrated, Logan groaned and looked around at the tracks to see if there was any sign in the grass what direction they had gone. Again, he found too many overlapping trails and tracks to make sense of it. The twins probably hadn't intentionally covered their tracks, but it would make finding them more difficult! Logan gave up looking. He went back to his office to get some papers and a map of Night Sky te*r*ritory. This wasn't the first search and rescue operation he had

organized. He sent his mother a text message, letting her know what was going on. He knew that Flo would only tell Serena what was absolutely necessary. It was best to keep her as calm as possible. When they found the kids and brought them home, Serena would need to be there for them. She would need to be well rested.

Logan piled his papers and maps into the car. He sped over to the village center. It was a building where they held town meetings and certain town events. The main part of the building was set up as an open room full of chairs.

The pack was already filing in and filling the chairs. There was a podium at the front with a microphone, a table beside it with a few chairs where Carson and Santino sat,

and a white board behind the table.

Logan handed Carson the map and Carson hung it up on the whiteboard. It was a special map that split Night Sky territory into different quadrants.

"Has everyone been signing in?" Logan asked. Carson nodded. "I took care of it," he assured. "I know how this goes." Logan nodded sharply. There were murmurs of what the meeting could be about. Carson hadn't filled anyone in on the details. That was better. The whole pack could hear it from Logan. The chairs were almost full. It was time to get started.

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Chapter 135

Chapter 135: Search and Rescue

"Earlier today Serena's children Olivia and Oliver went missing," Logan said into the microphone. All additional chatter died immediately. "We are going to organize a search and rescue operation so that each quadrant of the territory is thoroughly searched."

Logan motioned to the map on the whiteboard. Everyone was listening intently. It was important for them all to listen closely so they understood the plan. Carson and Santino were working on the sign-in sheet, splitting the pack into groups and laying out their search patterns. "As you all know, recovering children is the pack's highest priority," Logan continued. "Carson and Santino will split you all into groups, give you your lead assignment and the search route you'll take in whatever guadrant you are assigned. Does anyone have any questions?" A few hands went up. Logan pointed to a male wolf. "Are you sure they weren't taken by rogues?" he asked. "Positive," Logan said. "The roques have been taken care of and there was no sign of children at their camps, or that children had ever been there." He pointed to a female with a question. "When did they disappear?" she asked. "Sometime this morning between eleven and eleven-thirty." Logan said. "Remember, it is getting colder at nights now, so we need to find them as soon as possible. All group leaders will have a radio, blankets, food, and water. Each group will be assigned a tracker who will search in wolf-form. Thank you." The pack members began to stand up and line up at the table where Carson and Santino began giving them their assignments. Logan had brought mini print outs of the territory map. Each wolf was given a copy of the map, which Carson had marked with their quadrant

and search route, and told what group they were assigned to. The leaders of each group collected their search and rescue gear, which also included a flashlight to alert the twins to their presence so they didn't get scared and run off and a rudimentary first aid kit.

"Remember, if they are hurt or stuck somewhere, they may not be able to come running out to where the search groups are," Logan said as the groups all gathered together. "When you call out to them, pause long enough to listen for their voices so you don't drown them out if they call for help." Logan, Carson, and Santino were paired up in a group together. He wasn't leaving anything up to chance. Carson was his tracker, because he was the one that was out in the woods in wolf form more commonly. The other groups broke off on their assignments and Logan, Santino, and Carson 5:20

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headed back to Serena's house.

"I couldn't find anything about where they might have gone from the yard, but Carson, I'm hoping you can find something more tangible. You aren't as used to their scent," Logan said.

They stood in the yard and Carson shifted into his wolf form. He sniffed the air, then he sniffed the ground. Logan tensed as Carson walked in a circle, which usually meant that there was no clear trail to follow. He looked at Santino.

"Give it a moment," Santino said.

Suddenly, Carson raised his head and gave a low howl. He began trotting off in a specific direction. Logan and Santino hurried after him. Back into the woods the three of them headed! Carson was hot on the trail. The sun had just started setting and it wasn't too dark yet, but Logan turned on the flashlight as soon as they were in the woods. He didn't want the twins to get scared of sounds in the trees. It might cause them to run or hide even deeper in the woods. "Olivia, Oliver!" Santino cried out. His voice echoed through the trees. There was no response. Every few paces, Carson stopped and sniffed around again. As needed, he adjusted his direction. It seemed like he had a good, solid lead, though. He wasn't slowing down, whining, walking in circles, or pawing at the ground. Whatever trail Carson was on, it was a good one. "Olivia, Oliver!" Logan called into the woods after enough time had past for them to listen and hear nothing.

In the distance, Logan could hear the calls of other search groups in various directions. Sadly, this wasn't the first time child werewolves had gotten lost in the woods. Most of the time, they just wandered off or thought they knew where they were going and then got lost. It wasn't uncommon for young wolves to want to play out in the woods and test their abilities. The twins were so young, though! They couldn't even shift yet. He had no idea what they were thinking. "Olivia, Oliver!" Santino called.

It was getting darker. The temperature in the air was dropping. Even though Logan wasn't cold, it sent a shiver down his spine. It concerned him to know the twins were out there somewhere. Carson howled again, a good sign that he had picked up more of the trail. He picked up his pace. Logan and Santino practically had to run to keep up. "Olivia! Oliver!" Logan shouted, waving his flashlight through the darkening forest. He could hear something up ahead. It wasn't the sound of voices. Olivia and Oliver waren't shouting back or calling for help. He smelled something...it smelled like

Chapter 135. Search and Rescue

smoke!

"We need to hurry," he said, starting to sprint. Carson, on four legs, was still moving faster than them. He held the lead, ensuring that Logan and Santino were going in the right direction. Logan waved his flashlight and looked for any sign that the kids were up ahead. If there was fire, that meant the whole woods was in danger! Forest fires weren't common in pack territory, but every now and then they happened! Carson's trail practically led them right in the direction of where Logan could smell the smoke. "Is that smoke?" Santino asked, panting as he sprinted to keep up. "I think so," Logan admitted. "That can't be good," Santino said. Logan nodded in agreement, breathing deep in his belly to keep his human stamina up. "Olivia! Oliver!" Santino shouted again. Logan waved the flashlight back and forth more vigorously. "If you can hear us, let us know!" Logan shouted. In the distance, he heard muffled voices. It was them, it was definitely them! "Hurry," Logan said. Carson sprinted ahead, leaving Logan and Santino behind. They were close enough now that they didn't need Carson as a tracker. He was faster than them and if he could get to the kids and protect them until Logan and Santino got there, that was what he needed to do. Logan and Santino understood that. Logan wished he could shift into a wolf and run to them. He'd curl up around them and keep them warm in the freezing temperatures that were quickly descending. As it was, Carson would be the one to keep them warm and alive until he could get there with the first aid kit and the blankets. "Daddy?" Logan heard Olivia's voice call into the woods. "Olivia! We are coming for you, don't move. Stay right where you are!" he shouted back "Okay," Olivia said. She didn't sound scared or hurt or anything. Logan sighed at hearing her voice. He hadn't heard anything from Oliver though, and that was concerning.

Carson vanished into the darkness. Logan turned the flashlight out. He could see better without it, and now that the kids knew they were coming, he didn't need to use it so they weren't scared.

When Logan and Santino caught up to Carson, they nearly ran into him! He was

standing in his wolf form at the edge of a clearing his head tilted to the side Innan

had to angle around him so he didn't trip over his Beta-wolf!

"What the..." Santino trailed off, panting. He doubled over, putting his hands on his knees as he caught his breath. Logan looked around the clearing, Olivia and Oliver

sitting together completely unharmed and unphased.

None of them had been prepared for what they had come across. Logan was expecting one or both of them to be hurt or scared. He was expecting some raging, out of control fire. Instead, the twins were comfortably sitting around a small camp fire. They *w*ere huddled close to each other

There was a spit over the fire with some kind of woodland creature roasting on it and a shelter behind them that they'd made out of pine branches, logs, moss, and leaves. They even had little tin cups and a bucket of water. The twins had made a fully functioning camp sight. "What are you two doing?" Logan asked. The twins smiled at him with smug satisfaction.

"Camping," Olivia said. "Isn't this great!?" She waved her arms around the campsite. Santino burst out laughing and even Carson made an amused sound in his throat. Logan sighed, rolling his eyes. This was not what he was expecting to find!

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Chapter 136

Chapter 136: Camping

'Camping?" Logan asked. "Uncle Santino showed us how to survive. We wanted to prove we could do it," Olivia explained. Santino groaned, shaking his head. Logan sighed. He went over to the fire and knelt down in front of the kids. "You shouldn't have run off like that," he said in a firm, parental tone. "Your mother is very worried. I was very worried. The whole pack is out looking for you." Both Olivia and Oliver looked down at the ground, their faces sad. "We're sorry," they muttered together. Logan put a hand on each of their faces. "Let's get the two of you home so your mom can relax. Running off like that really scared her," Logan said. "Okay, okay," the twins said. "I'll clean up the camp," Santino offered. Logan nodded to him. "Thanks," Logan said. Carson headed off into the shadows. He would have to go and alert the other search groups that the twins had been found. Logan knew it was a best-case-scenario, they were safe and uninjured, and hadn't been abducted, but they needed to know that they couldn't run off like that. The whole pack had paused everything else and put their resources into finding the twins. Of course, it was a precaution he would take any time children went missing, but it was a waste of time and resources when the kids weren't in trouble. It was the first real parenting moment Logan was having where he had to be firm and get his point

across. "You both did a really great job with the camp," Logan told them. "It looks like your Uncle Santino taught you well."

"We hunted and cooked dinner too," Olivia said looking up at Logan happily. He took each of their hands and started walking through the woods. Logan didn't smile at them, because he wanted them to realize it was serious. Olivia's excitement faded. "Look, I know you two were just trying to have fun, and you are *v*ery capable of taking care of yourselves, but you can't run off like that," Logan admonished. "We wanted to survive, like Uncle Santino showed us," Olivia protested. "I understand," Logan said firmly. "But running off like that without telling anyone where *y*ou were going was not the right thing to do. Your mother is very upset and worried about you. I was very worried about you. The whole pack is out looking for you, away from their jobs and their families. If you want to go out in the woods to go camning vou've got to tell your mother or me first and tell us where you are aning."

Chapter 136: Camping "But..." Olivia started to say. "No more excuses, Olivia," Logan said sternly. "It is never okay to run off without telling anyone. It is never okay to worry your parents like that, and it is never okay to make the whole pack worry." Oliver had been quiet the entire walk, and now that she had been reprimanded, Olivia stopped talking too. Logan really didn't like playing the firm father, but while Serena wasn't there, he had to be the parent.

He was trying to be stern but not yell at them or punish them severely. It was about responsibility and understanding the trouble they'd caused for everyone else Logan texted his mother ahead of time to let her know that the kids were safe and uninjured and he was bringing them home. He hadn't told her about the camping, thinking that would just freak Serena out more. He'd wait until she had seen them and hugged them before that came up. Serena was awake when they got back to the house. She was on the couch, her face still stained with tears. Flo and Dana were still there too.

Logan opened the door and let the kids in. Olivia and Oliver ran up to their mother and hugged her. Serena hugged them back, tears of joy filling her eyes as she held them

close. "Where were *y*ou two?" she asked. "Why did you leave the yard?" "We wanted to go camping," Olivia said.

"We wanted to survive," Oliver added. Serena looked at Logan he shrugged.

"I already gave them the 'responsibility' talk," he told her. Serena nodded. "Mom, can you help Carson bring in the search groups and make sure they are all accounted for? Carson will manage the gear retrieval."

"Yes, of course," Flo said. She headed out the front door.

"I'll make myself scarce," Dana said, realizing that Serena and Logan needed a family moment with the twins. Dana headed down into the basement where her apartment *w*as.

Logan sat on the coffee table. Serena was still curled on the couch and the kids were sitting one on each side of her. She had her arms around them, but her tears had stopped and she was starting to look irritated.

"Tell me why you left the yard without letting Dana or me know first," Serena said more firmly. *"We we*re trying to survive, like Uncle Santino taught us," Olivia said. "We already talked about going camping as a family. Why did the two of you run off? || want a real answer," she said. Olivia said. "It wouldn't be surviving if you knew where *w*e were," Olivia said. Serena closed her eyes. Logan shook his head.

Chapter 136: Camping "That was not okay," Serena reiterated Logan's statements from before. "The two of *y*ou are grounded, do you know what that means?" "No, what?" Olivia asked. "It means that you aren't allowed to go out with friends. When you're home, you have to stay in your rooms separately unless you are having breakfast, dinner, or a snack, and you aren't allowed to play in the backyard," she said. "Mommy, that's prison!" Olivia wailed. Serena shook her head. "You made a bad decision," she said. "You made your father and me very worried, and you got the entire pack involved. That is irresponsible, and the two of you have to accept the consequences of your decisions." "We wouldn't have done it if you were going to lock us up!" Olivia wailed again. "Then you'll know never to do it again," Serena said. She glanced at Logan. He nodded. He hadn't known how to punish them, but Serena was more experienced. At least he'd been able to impress upon them the seriousness of the situation. "That's not fair, mommy," Oliver argued.

"You scared us today, that's not fair either," Serena said. "When you aren't grounded anymore, you're not going to be allowed to play outside unsupervised until you both understand that you can't run off again."

"Mom, that is torture!" Olivia cried, tears springing to her eyes. "I don't want to hear it," Serena said. She stood up off the couch and opened the door to Dana's apartment. "Dana, can you come up and put the kids to bed?" Dana appeared moments later. She led the kids upstairs. They did not look pleased. Logan stood up and Serena ran to him, throwing herself against him. Logan wrapped his arms around her and kissed the top of her head. "Thank you for bringing them home," she said. "I promised I would," Logan reminded her. He kissed the top of her head again. "I hate being so hard on them but I can't ever go through that fear and worry again," she said. "Serena, you don't need to explain yourself to me," he said. "I understand why you're upset, and I wanted to make sure they understood that I was disappointed in them too. At least they weren't hurt, or lost, or abducted. Bringing them home safe was the best we could ask for." "You're right," Serena said with a sigh. She collapsed against Logan entirely. "Thank you for *ev*erything today." "I'm here for you," he said. "You don't think the punishment was too harsh, was it?" Serena asked. She lifted her head enough to look into Logan's face. He grinned at her.

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"Compared to my mother, no," he said, shaking his head. "They have to learn responsibility. I just didn't want to choose a punishment that you weren't okay with." Serena bit her lip.

"I should have asked you what you thought," she admitted. Logan shook his head.

"That's not what I meant," he said. "Look, the kids are safe, and I'm confident they won't do anything like this again. Let's celebrate that as a victory."

"Okay," Serena said. "That sounds like a good idea."

Logan leaned down and pressed his lips to Serena's. She sighed, leaning into the kiss with incredible passion. Logan was almost swept away. After her day, he wasn't surprised that she was emotionally needy. He was glad he could be there for her and for the twins.

Even though they'd scared him half to death, he couldn't be happier having them home safe and sound. And he definitely wasn't going to complain about how warmly and hungrily Serena kissed him. Logan slid his hands down her sides, pulling her closer.

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Chapter 137

Chapter 137. Fall is Here

Fall in the pack was a

big event. There were several holidays throughout the fall, and **as the leaves began t**o change color, the pack started putting together a big fall **fe**stival. It was a long weekend of parades, events, costumes, and harvest **celebrations.**

Serena was looking forward to experiencing it with the kids. It was the first time that the y were around for a pack holiday, and the first time they'd get to be so involved in a big pack event. The festival kicked off with a fall parade. Through the daycare, the twi ns were participating. Their group was the pumpkin patch, and they had to dress up as pumpkins. Dana had hand sewn them costumes. "Come on, you two, let's put on your costumes." Serena said, bringing the puffy orange outfits into the living room where the twins were playing. "Where is daddy?" Olivia asked.

"He is going to meet us at the parade," Serena said. "I know he wants to see the two of you as pumpkins, so let's get these costumes on." Olivia and Oliver stood still, mostly, a s Serena got them into their clothes. The costumes were adorable! They had green pant s with felt vines and leaves curled around them. The shirts were orange with a puffy felt roundness around their bellies for the pumpkin. They each had a little brown pointed had for the stem. "You two look adorable!" Serena gushed. "Dana, come look at your handy work." Dana appeared from the kitchen and sighed as she looked at the kids. "Absolutely perfect," she said. "Alright, go with Dana to the parade and I'll see you there. I'll be there with your dad," she said. The twins headed out of the house with Dana. Serena got her purse and headed over to Logan's house. She passed the village center along the way where pack members were setting up a hay maze and some fun f all games for kids and other pack members to play. There was a real pumpkin patch gr owing near where the hay maze was set up. It had been decorated with some festive, f all decorations. Serena was absolutely delighted to see the events coming together. Th e kids were excited too, because Logan had promised to spend almost the entire wee kend with them. That meant Serena would be spending the entire weekend with him too. She hadn't spent that much time with him since they started seeing each other. She was a little nervous, but she felt so much more secure in their relationship sinc e he helped bring the

twins home. The night he had, she had been so affectionate to him and she realize d that she didn't

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Chapter 137: Fall is Here

want to take things as slow as she thought Serena knocked on Logan's front door. Sh e waited a few moments and then he **appeared.** "You don't have to knock," he told her. "My mom rarely locks the door. Serena, *y*ou are **wel**come to just come in." "Thanks, " Serena said. "I can't wait until you see the twins. They are so cute in their pumpkin cos tumes." Logan chuckled. "Great, let's go," he said. He held his arm out for Serena and s he looped her arm through his. They walked to the main street

where the parade was going to happen. Already, the majority of the pack had assemble d. Serena wasn't sure what to expect from the parade, but a lot of the onlookers had str eamers and pompoms. "Here, let's grab these," Logan said pulling a few ribbon dancers from a nearby bucket. He handed one to Serena. She waved it back

and forth, smiling. "This is a big event," she

said. "It isn't a masquerade party," Logan said. "But these are the

kinds of events the whole pack gets involved in, kids and all. They are the best." Serena chuckled, rolling her eyes. "Are you ever going to stop teasing me about the masquera de?" she asked. "Probably not," Logan admitted. "Here is a good spot. We'll be able to s ee everything and have **front row seats.** Serena and Logan stood on the

edge of the street. From the distance Serena heard pack members starting to cheer and the sounds of drums, bells, and other instruments. "We got here just in time," she said.

Logan grinned and nodded. He took his arm from hers and started clapping as the first parade float went by. **There were seve**ral large floats, all made to reflect the time of yea r. Between the

floats **there** *were* **m**usicians playing instruments, pack members walking on stilts, and **o thers per***f***orm**ing tricks like juggling. Everyone on the streets clapped and cheered **and waved t**heir ribbons

and pompoms back and forth. Serena quickly got caught up in the excitement, clappi ng and cheering along with everyone else. "There it is." Serene said bouncing on the balls of her feet and pointing to the float that the twins were on. They whole daycare was dressed up like pumpkins the kids were holding hands in a circle and dancing arou nd. Serena laughed, waving her ribbon dancer even harder. "They look great!" Lo gan said near her ear. He pulled a camera out and started

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Chapter 137. Fall is Here The parade continued far down

the street with more floats. There was one with big **turkeys** on it and another with pack members dressed up as leaves. As the floats and music **came to a**n end, the pack me mbers crowded into the street to follow along. **Logan grabbed Serena's ha**nd and pulle d her along. She laughed, cheering along with everyone else and holding

Logan's hand tightly. When they caught up to the twins, the float had come to a stop. "H ey you two," Serena said. She hugged them each. They ran over to Logan after and hug ged him too. "Did you see us?" Olivia

asked. "I did," Logan said. "I took a lot of pictures." He held

his camera up. "I want to go see the hay maze," Olivia demanded. "Me too!" Oliver said excitedly. "Okay, okay," Logan said. Serena took Oliver's hand and Logan took Olivia's. The parade had ended and the participants were dispersing to enjoy some of the other activities for the

fall festival. Serena didn't want to do too much in the first day. She wanted to make sure that the twins had plenty of fun the whole weekend especially since Logan was going to be with them the whole time. The hay maze was designed for kids, but Serena and Log an went in with them. "Don't help us," Olivia insisted. "We can do this alone." "Okay," Se rena said. "Lead the way." Logan said, holding his hand out. Olivia laughed and

took Oliver's hand. "This way," she said, pointing ahead. **Loga**n took Serena's hand aga in as they followed

the twins through the maze. The **two of them were good** puzzle solvers. Each of the m aze dead ends were marked

with a different symbol – a pumpkin, a **turkey, a leaf, a** witch, and other seasonally appr opriate pictures. That way, the kids could tell if they'd hit that dead end before. "Over he re, Olivia," Oliver said, tugging his sister down another path when they hit a **dead end.** " **The pack does this every year?" Serena asked.** "**There are severa**l annual events li ke this." Logan explained. "We like

excuses for celebration and having fun." Serena laughed. "Does that mean after the kids go to sleep, there are some adult-

like celebrations going on?" she asked. Logan grinned at her.

There is a pumpkin mead truck, some dancing by jack-o-lantern light, was that the

kind of thing you had in mind?" he asked.

"That sounds nice," Serena admitted. Logan put his arm around Serena's shoulders and gave her a nice side

hug. She giggled and leaned into him." "I'm sensing you had other ideas?" Logan asked . Serena shrugged, biting her bottom lip. "I guess we'll just have to see where the weeke nd takes us," she told him. Logan chuckled and Se**rena's**

stomach squirmed with delight. "Mommy, mommy, come quick!" Olivia's voice called fro m up ahead and around a corner. Logan and Serena both ran to where Olivia was screaming. Serena

automatically thought one of the kids had hurt themselves. When she rounded the corne r, she found Olivia and Oliver standing at the exit of the maze. "We did it!" Olivia said. "We found our way out," Oliver said. "We are real survivors," Olivia said, spinning around . Serena chuckled. "You two did great work," she said. "What do you want to do next?" "Oliver, *y*ou decide," Olivia said. Serena liked to see Olivia sharing with Oliver, letting hi m take the

lead. "I want to play some games," Oliver said. "Let's go, then." Logan said. He took Oliv er's hand and Serena took Olivia's. The rest of the afternoon, the twins tired themselves out playing fun carnival games like ring tosses and darts. They each won a couple smal I prizes, which kept them very happy all the way back to the house as the day wound do wn. Dana was waiting for them. "I'm here to take over with the kids," she said. "The two of you should go out and enjoy each other's company." "Thank you," Serena said. Dana winked at them as Serena and Logan headed back out of the house.

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Chapter 138

Chapter 138: Pumpkin Harvesting

"What do you want to do now?" Logan asked Serena as they walked off the front porch. Serena bit her lower lip. "Pumpkin mead truck?" she asked. Logan smirked. "Alright," he said. He took her hand and led her back towards the festivities. The carnival games had shut down, but Serena could still hear sounds of celebration from the pack. Beyond the hay maze and pumpkin patch, there was a dance floor set up. String lights were hung around it up high and then there were jack-o-lanterns carved with candles

flickering in them around the edge of the dance floor on the ground.

Live music played, and there were already several couples dancing. There was an old pickup truck parked near the dance floor. It had a massive barrel built over the bed of the truck and there were taps coming out of the side. Many pack members were

standing around the truck with metal beer mugs, drinking and toasting. Beside the truck was a huge table full of all kinds of foods and desserts. "This is amazing," Serena said. "Here, try the mead," Logan said. He went to the truck and got them each a mug. "There are a couple different flavors, but the pumpkin is the best." Serena sniffed the foaming drink and then took a sip. She moaned appreciatively. "Wow, this is incredible," she said, taking another big sip. "Be careful," Logan warned. "It is pretty intense. You'll get drunk way too fast off this stuff. I don't think either of us are ready for a repeat of our last drunken party."

Serena creased her brow at Logan. She wasn't sure what he meant by that. Was he saying he wasn't ready to take their relationship to a physical level or was he saying he didn't want more kids?

Serena sipped her mead a little more slowly.

The next day marked the pumpkin harvesting event. It was another event geared *t*owards kids, but Serena planned on getting her own pumpkin too so she could carve it with the kids.

They arrived at the pumpkin patch where Logan was waiting for them. He had a pair of garden Clippers for when the kids found the right pumpkins. "I'm going to pick the biggest," Olivia said. "I'm going to pick the roundest," Oliver insisted. They ran off into the patch looking for their perfect pumpkins. "Serena, last night.." Logan trailed off. After his comment about getting drunk, Serena

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Chapter 138: Pumpkin Harvesting

had finished her mead and made an excuse to leave. Logan had caught on to her change in mood, but she hadn't let him address it then. "I told you, it was nothing," she assured. Logan grabbed her arm as she tried to walk off. "It was a joke, you know, about the drunken party," he told her. Serena smiled. "I know that," she said. "But something about it still bothered you," he said. Serena sighed, glancing up at the kids who were patting pumpkins and lifting them to test their weights. They were chattering with each other about why certain pumpkins were better than others. "I was just thinking about the progression of our relationship," she admitted. "I mean, I don't think either of us are rushing to have more kids, but.." she trailed off. "Mommy, I found the biggest pumpkin," Olivia said waving Serena and Logan over. Logan snipped the pumpkin off the vine. He tried to hand it to Olivia. "It is too heavy for me," she said. Logan chuckled and tucked the pumpkin under his

arm.

"I found one too," Oliver said. Logan went and cut that pumpkin too. He held it under his other arm. "Now we have to find a pumpkin for mommy," Olivia said. "We'll find you the best one." Oliver said. Serena laughed. "Okay, go find me a pumpkin," she said. "But what?" Logan asked, picking up their conversation again. Serena smiled shyly. "Does that mean everything is off the table?" she asked. Logan raised an eyebrow at her. "Oh," he said. He chuckled and smirked. "No, absolutely not." Serena bit her lower lip. "Okay," she said, her cheeks flushing. "Mommy, we got you the best pumpkin over here," Olivia said, getting their attention again. Serena and Logan went to the twins again and Serena cut the final pumpkin. She held it in her arms and the four of them left the pumpkin patch. "There's a cart over there," Logan said, nodding to where there were some pumpkin carts lined up. Se*r*ena put her pumpkin in the cart and wheeled it back over to Logan so he could set the twins' pumpkins down too.

Logan started pushing the cart. "What can we do now?" Olivia asked. "I can run these pumpkins back to the house if you want to go play some more

games," Logan offered. Serena nodded.

Chapter 138: Pumpkin Harvesting "You can't leave!" Olivia argued. "Yeah, you're supposed to be with us the whole time," Oliver pointed out. Logan chuckled.

"I'll be right back," he assured. "I want to get your pumpkins home so no one accidently takes them. These are very special pumpkins picked out by you two." "Good idea," Olivia agreed, shooing Logan away. Serena took the kids back to the carnival area. There were several more games they hadn't played the day before, and there was a table covered in yummy pastries, like apple tarts, pumpkin cupcakes, and cranberry Danishes. The twins were happy to indulge in some sugary sweets between their games. True to his word, Logan returned quickly, bringing the pumpkin cart back for another family to use. "How's it going?" he asked. Serena was sitting on a bench watching the kids bob for apples. "They're bobbing for apples," she said, nodding to them. A usually messy game, the wolf that had organized the bobbing for apples had enough foresight to provide plastic ponchos and shower caps to keep the kids and their clothes as dry as possible. Logan sat on the bench beside Serena and slipped his arm around her shoulders. Serena leaned her head on him and they watched the kids together. "I'm so glad you got the whole weekend to spend with them," she said. "I know there are a lot of demands for your time, especially during a pack event like this." "Not this time," Logan assured. "Carson was kind enough to offer to handle it when I told him I wanted to spend the weekend with my family." He leaned over and nibbled Serena's ear lightly

Serena felt the ticklish tingles all the way down to her toes. She giggled and squirmed pleasantly against Logan. "I thought..." Serena trailed off until Logan wasn't teasing her anymore. "Thought what?" he asked.

"Well, yo*u never see*med like you were willing to let Carson take on more responsibility *w*hen you *were* with Holly," she pointed out. "Well, sometimes with Holly, work was a good excuse not to deal with her drama," Logan admitted with a chuckle. Serena giggled, shaking her head. "That should have been a red flag," she teased.

"Probably," Logan admitted. "But I think these things happen for a reason. If I hadn't put up with Holly for so long, we might have missed our timing, again. It was, after all, her fake pregnancy that really allowed us to come together."

Chapter 138: Pumpkin Harvesting

"True,"Serena agreed. "Then again, aren't we fated mates? Maybe we would have come together regardless." "Maybe," Logan said. Serena giggled. "Look, mommy, look," Olivia said running over. She held an apple out with big teeth marks in it. "You got one!" Serena said excitedly. She sat up and leaned forward a little. "Oliver too," she said pointing behind her. Oliver walked over slower, but he held up his apple with the bitemarks in it too. "It was really hard," Oliver said. "I'm proud of you two for sticking with it," Logan said, ruffling each of their hair. "Can we play another game now?" Olivia asked. "Why don't you sit here with us for a minute and eat your apples," Serena said. "I want a cupcake," Olivia whined.

"Eat your apples first, then we'll play more games, then you can have sweets before we go home," Serena said. "Okay," the twins said together. They climbed up into the bench, Olivia sitting beside Serena and Oliver beside Logan. *"Are y*ou two enjoying the pack event?" Logan asked. "It is so much fun," Olivia said. "Can we do this ev*ery w*eekend?" Oliver asked. Logan chuckled. Serena sighed happily

"I wish we could" Serena said. "This is a special event, though. I think we'd get very tired if this happened every weekend." "Maybe you would," Olivia said sassily. Serena chuckled.

The twins finished their apples and ran off to play another game. Serena sighed and leaned back against Logan again. "They are so happy," she said. *"Are* you happy?" Logan asked her. Serena creased her brow. She hadn't been expecting him to ask her that. Seeing the twins happy always made her happy, but Logan was asking beyond that. He was asking about her specifically. "I am," she said with a nod. "Things finally feel like they are going smoothly, for the first time since I joined Night Sky." "That's probably because you don't have any more secrets," Logan teased. Serena rolled her eyes, but Logan could be on to something. The weight of those secrets had bothered her.

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Chapter 139

Chapter 139: Jack-O-Lanterns

Serena and Logan corralled the kids away from the games early. They wanted to have enough time to carve their pumpkins. At the house, Serena covered the kitchen table with newspaper. She got a big bowl out for the pumpkin seeds and insides and got come big spoons and knives. She also grabbed markers so they could draw designs on the pumpkins to carve out. "I'm going to carve a wolf," Oliver said. "Mine is going to be super scary," Olivia said. They sat down and got right to work. Serena sat and stared at her blank pumpkin. She wasn't sure what she wanted to do. "C*r*eative block?" Logan asked, taking a seat beside her. She nodded. "Oliver is covering the wolf and Olivia is covering scary, so what should I do?" she asked. "Make a fairy, mommy." Olivia suggested. "*A* fairy?" she asked. Olivia nodded.

"A fairy sounds good," Logan said with a nod. Serena shrugged. She picked up her marker and started drawing the outline of a fairy. *"Ar*e you going to car*v*e a pumpkin?" Olivia asked Logan. "Not today," Logan said. "I'm going to separate the seeds out so I can make roasted pumpkin seeds."

"Gross, you're going to play with the pumpkin guts," Olivia teased. Logan reached his hand into the bowl and pulled a handful of seeds and pumpkin goo out. He pushed his hand forward at Olivia.

Squealing, Olivia jumped out of her chair and ran away. She laughed as she ran back to the table.

Logan grabbed a second bowl and started separating the seeds out into it. The twins chattered away as they carved their pumpkins. Logan kept a close watch on them when they started using the knives. He didn't want them to hurt themselves. He finished separating the seeds out long before the kids and Serena were done carving. Logan put them out on a baking sheet to dry.

"Have *yo*u ever had roasted pumpkin seeds before?" he asked the twins. "No," they said. "Oh, you're in for a treat then. They are very yummy," he said. He chuckled and patted the seeds as dry as he could with paper towels. He sprinkled them with salt and cooking oil and then put them in the pre-heated oven. It wasn't long before the kitchen was filled with the warm smell of roasting seeds. "Smells very *y*ummy." Olivia admitted.

Chapter 139: Jack-O-Lanterns As they were wrapping up the pumpkin carving, Dana came in. "Oh, it smells great in here," she said. Logan smiled at her and pulled the seeds out of the oven.

"The best fall snack there is," he said, setting them on the counter to cool. "Can we light our jack-o-lanterns on the porch?" Olivia asked. "Yes, of course," Serena said. She went to a drawer in the kitchen and pulled out candles and matches.

Dana stayed in the kitchen cleaning up while Logan, Serena, and the kids went outside. They put their jack-o-lanterns out and Serena lit the candles. "*Wow*" Oliver muttered, stepping back to look at them. "They are so pretty!" Olivia agreed. Logan smiled, putting his arm around Serena's waist. "Think I can sneak you away to dance by jack-o-lantern light tonight?" he whispered in her ear. Serena smiled and nodded. Dana took over care of the kids and Logan waited while Serena changed into something that was better for dancing and adult socializing. She kissed the kids goodbye and met Logan on the porch. Logan held his arm out to her and she looped hers though his. "Let the dancing commence," he teased. They went back to where the dance floor was set up and Logan got them each a mug of the pumpkin mead again. Serena got herself some snacks from the table of food and picked at them absently. *"Are you* worn out on fall yet?" Logan asked her. Serena sighed and shook her head. "No, this has been one of the best weekends ever," she admitted. "Not just for me, but for the twins too." "I really wanted it to be special" Logan said, "You succeeded," Serena said. She had something on her mind, but Logan couldn't figure out what. He liked seeing the kids happy and he liked seeing Serena happy. She was holding something back, though.

When the live music started up, Logan took Serena's hand in his and led her onto the dance floor. There *were* several other couples dancing too. The candles in the jack-o-lanterns flickered from the air displacement of the dancers.

Logan pulled Serena against him, one arm around her waist, the other holding her hand up. Serena put her free hand on Logan's shoulder. He gave his arm a little squeeze, pulling her as close as possible. She gave a little squeak of surprise and then smiled. He pressed his cheek against hers, leading her in a slow, casual dance. The heat from

ChapterJack-O-Lanterns her skin against him warmed the moment quickly. "Does this take you back?" he asked her playfully. Serena giggled. "I prefer being able to see your face," she admitted. Logan kissed her cheek quickly

and kept dancing. "Though that night is a bit hazy, I recall you being an excellent dancer," Logan said, letting an alternative meaning slip into his words. Serena moved her hand on his shoulder so her arm was around his neck. It brought them even closer together. Her breasts pressed against his chest. Logan smirked, enjoying the not-sosubtle hints Serena was dropping. He moved his hand to the small of her back, feeling how she shuddered from the caress. "What are you thinking about?" Logan asked her. Serena gave a nervous giggle. "I'm not going to answer that," she said. "Why not?" Logan teased. "Or do you want me to guess?" "No, I don't want you to guess," Serena said, giggling again. "I'm pretty sure you can figure it out." "Oh?" Logan asked. He stepped forward, lowering Serena in a dip. She gasped. Logan smirked, leaning in and kissing her throat and then the base of her neck before pulling her back into an upright position. "You are quite the charmer," Serena teased. Logan shrugged, pressing his cheek to hers again. "It is too bad you want to keep taking things slow," Logan murmured in her ear. Serena sighed, leaning against his body more heavily. Holding her in his arms, Logan knew without a doubt that she was his mate. It hadn't surprised him when he found out, like a part of him had always known. But now, on the magical night around them, holding each other so close, he felt it into his bones and into his soul. "Now you're being mean," Serena whispered in a breathy voice. Logan felt the skin of her cheek warm even more. Santino had told him he might have to push her outside her comfort zone a little. He hadn't intended to push much, but she was clearly receptive to his teasing and suggestiveness. "Maybe a little" Logan admitted with a chuckle. They danced together until the end of the song and then Serena stepped back. She was flushed and breathy. Logan smirked at her, watching as she walked off the

dancefloor. He liked the way her hips swayed in the dress she was wearing. Logan followed behind her. She returned to the mead truck and started to get herself another mug of beer. Logan reached out and stopped the tap. "What?" Serena asked. "Not this time," he told her. Serena creased her bro*w.* "Come with me." Logan took the

mug from her hand and laced his fingers through hers. He pulled her away from the dancefloor and the night time festivities. "Where are we going?" Serena asked, her voice giddy with excitement. Logan jogged into the woods, pulling Serena along.

"On a night light this, wolves should be out under the stars, don't you think?" he asked, repeating something similar to what she said to him the first night they met. Serena chuckled and rolled her eyes. "You're not wrong," she said. When they were far enough from the rest of the pack, Logan released her arm. He started taking his clothes off and shifted into his wolf form quickly. When he turned around, Serena was also in her wolf form. He approached her, nuzzling his head under her chin and along her neck. Serena 'nuzzled back. Their fur seemed electric as it brushed together. Logan turned and began to run. Serena ran right behind him. He felt her more than saw her. He ran in the direction of his house, luring Serena to exactly where he wanted her. She wasn't going to get away from him this time! He challenged her with a low howl, and Serena met it with a howl of her own. She wasn't backing away from him. She would follow him all through the night. When they made it to Logan's backyard, he turned to face her again. He pounced on Serena, shifting back into his human form. Serena shifted to, her back against the grass. Logan hovered over her, leaning in and kissing her lips passionately.

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Chapter 140

Chapter 140: Taking the Next Step

Logan's lips were hot and hungry as he kissed her. Serena moaned into the kiss, wrapping her arms around Logan's neck, pulling him down on top of her. Her entire body hummed with desire and unfulfilled need. She'd wanted to be closer to him for a while, and he'd set up the perfect scenario. Logan's weight on her felt good. Something she'd missed since their first night together, but she hadn't even known she missed it until that moment. He kissed and nipped at her neck and throat. Serena's head fell back in the grass. She moaned again as he kissed her breasts and then moved back up to her lips. She wrapped her legs around his waist, urging him to take her completely. Logan gave a pleased grunt and sank down to Serena. Breaking their kiss, Serena cried out in pleasure. She arched her back off the damp grass, sliding their naked bodies together. Logan grabbed her wrists, pinning her arms into the grass as he kissed at her

neck and shoulder. Serena rolled her hips up, increasing the speed of the motions that brought them together. Every fiber of her body flooded with pleasure. She surrendered to him, and he took her to pleasurable heights she had never reached before!

With a heavy sigh, Logan collapsed on top of Serena. She cradled his head against her breast, running her fingers through his hair. "You were right," Serena muttered. "Better not to be intoxicated." Logan chuckled. Slowly, he got to his feet and helped Serena up. He pulled her against him and she sighed, wrapping her arms around his neck. The feeling or bare skin on bare skin tickled her wolfish instincts. She kissed Logan's shoulder and he kissed the side of her head. Without a word, Logan pulled her in the direction of the back door to his house. "What are *y*ou doing?" Serena asked him. Logan looked over his shoulder at her and smirked.

"The night is young, yet," he teased. "It occurred to me that we've never had a bed before" Serena's cheeks flushed in the darkness. She looked away from Logan as he laughed at her "What about your mother?" Serena asked when Logan quietly let them into the house. Logan shrugged. "We could go back to your place with the kids instead," he said. Serena shook her head,

"I need to call Dana and let her know I'll be out late," she hissed. Logan hadn't stopped. He was pulling her through the kitchen, down the hall, towards the stairs. "I already told her you'd be gone all night," Logan assured. Serena raised an eyebrow

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at the back of his head. "What?" she asked in a harsh whisper. Logan chuckled again. "I had plans for tonight," he said. "And you obviously did too." Serena rolled her eyes as they went up the stairs. She hadn't really spent much time in Logan's room before, even when she was staying there temporarily. His bed was far more comfortable than hers.

Logan crawled across the bed towards her, a hungry, predatory smirk on his lips. Serena's stomach twisted. It was hard to resist someone who desired her so strongly. It made her feel special.

Logan wrapped an arm around her waist as Serena leaned back on the pillows. He kissed her lips again. Serena smiled against his lips. She nipped at his lower lip, causing him to grunt in surprise and pleasure. "Did *y*ou forget, I like control too?" she teased. She pushed at Logan's chest, forcing him onto his back. Logan grinned as she straddled him. He held her hips in his hands. Serena leaned forward, kissing his lips as he positioned her to slide onto him. She moaned, moving her knees to take control of

the pace and movement. Logan put a hand on the small of her back and the other on the back of her neck, keeping her body pressed against his chest. It had been a long time coming, but Serena was glad she had decided it was time to take things to the next step. After an exhaustive night of lovemaking, Serena blissfully curled up in Logan's arms, pressing her head against his chest. She listened to the steady thump of his heart as she drifted to sleep. Ticklish kisses against her neck and face woke Serena up. Giggling and groaning, she turned away from Logan. She grabbed the comforter and pulled it over her head, trying to hide her eyes from the bright sunlight shining through Logan's windows. "Time to get up," Logan told her. "Why?" she groaned. "Well, we still have a day of the fall festival to enjoy with the kids," Logan reminded her. Serena chuckled, pushing the blanket off her head. She turned on her side, looking at Logan. He was propped up on his elbow, the blankets hanging loosely around his hips. Serena bit her lower lip and looked him up and down. "Do we have to go right now?" she asked. Logan chuckled. He put a hand on the side of her face and slipped closer to her. "I think we can spare a few minutes," he said, licking his lips and bouncing his eyebrows. Serena slipped her leg over Logan's hip and tightened her knee to pull him closer. He gave a pleased grunt and kissed her.

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She didn't want to get out of bed. It had been the first time since the twins were born that she'd had a night completely to herself. She knew she had to get back to them, but she wanted to enjoy every moment of her time alone with Logan. Up until the night before, she had felt like their relationship was incomplete. He was courting her, taking her on dates, and being romantic. He was spending time with the kids and bonding with them. But most of their relationship had been about the kids. Even on their dates, they talked about the future and the kids. It was the first time that Logan and Serena had been truly alone together and been able to focus on their relationship with each other, not the relationship with the kids and the family "Umm...I sort of left my clothes out in the woods," Serena laughed when she got up. Logan chuckled. He was already dressed. "You can barrow some of mine for the time being," he offered. Serena shrugged. "I guess I don't really have a choice," she laughed. Logan tossed her a plain t-shirt and a pair of sweatpants. Serena put them on, pulling the drawstring on the sweatpants as tight as she could. Logan slipped his arms around her waist. "You're still beautiful," he told her, kissing her on the forehead. Serena giggled. "Thank you, for pushing me last night," Serena said. Logan shrugged. "All good things are worth the wait," he said. "But I think at some point, waiting is just boring." Serena smiled at him. "Well, I guess we should get back to the kids," Serena said. "I should call Dana and see how things are at the house." "Everything is fine," Logan assured. "I texted her already." "You really took care of everything," she told him, her voice impressed. Logan nodded.

"I told you I wanted this weekend to be special for you and for the twins," he reminded her. Serena nodded. She was really impressed with the initiative that Logan had taken. Not just with the kids, but with making sure Serena could step away for a night and not have to worry about anything. "I think it was special for you too, and for us," she pointed out. Logan nodded. "Absolutely," he said. "I should really get home and shower before we take the kids out again," Serena said. Logan nodded.

"I'll clean up here and meet you guys out there," Logan offered. Serena nodded. She kissed him quickly headed out of his house. The sun had risen, but it was still early. The whole walk home, Serena kept smiling giddily. She had a bouncy skip in her step. She was glad that Logan had talked her out

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of drinking. Being fully in her body, in the moment, present with him completely, she thought it was a much better experience then their first time. She could remember everything, the way his lips felt, his skin and hands on her. The closeness that it had created between them. Logan was her mate, and even though they weren't mated in the ceremonial sense, yet, Serena felt like they were emotionally and physically.

Serena sighed to herself, the smile on her face permanently attached. She slipped through the front door quietly, tiptoeing up the stairs. First, she peaked into the twins' rooms to make sure they were asleep. They both slept deeply and soundly. Then, she got herself a fresh outfit and hopped in the shower.'

She didn't want to wash Logan's scent off of her, but now that they had taken the next step, she was sure she would have it on her again.