

Pregnant and Rejected by My Alpha Mate Chapter 76

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Chapter 76

#Chapter 76 Prisoner

Selene's POV

"Mommy." Lila whines, "it's too tight!"

don't relax my arms one bit. As long as my baby is still breathing, I'm going to hold her as tightly as I possibly can, for as long as I possibly can.

Martin brought us to a ramshackle hut in the woods just outside the city. We had to drive for about twenty minutes after docking the boat, and once we arrived the big bully forced us into the odd little shack. Sophie is locked in the basement with Lila and I, both prisoner and accomplice to our predicament.

When Martin appeared and announced his intentions, I hoped he would take me back to his house. Drake will recognize his scent and go straight there, but apparently the foul wolf is smarter than I credited him. We traveled over the lagoon, and unless Bastien and Drake find the boat they won't have any idea we left the city.

My only hope is that Martin is the caller who reported Lila and I to the tip-line. If he is then he'll be in for quite the surprise when he tries to deliver us to my mate. If, on the other hand, he wants us for some other reason or knows about Blaise Denisons real bounty... well, we're in very big trouble.

There's no way to know which possibility is correct, so once I've sufficiently snuggled my pup, my first task is to try to plan an escape. I'm strangely proud of how well I'm keeping it together. If it weren't for Lila I would probably be having a full blown PTSD episode, but my daughter is keeping my head on my shoulders.

Maternal instincts really are the most powerful forces I've ever encountered – far more magical than those of mere shifters. For all the similarities of Martin and Garrick's prisons, I've managed to shut off my memory and emotions, focusing only on the here and now.

"Have you ever been here before?" I ask Sophie, adjusting Lila on my lap. She's been very calm ever since I arrived, and I don't know whether she's in shock or simply too young to realize the gravity of our situation.

“No,” the other woman frowns apologetically, “I’ve hardly ever been out of the marsh. I didn’t know Martin had property anywhere else.”

“Did he tell you what he’s planning?” I press, “Do you know why he took us?”

Sophie looks like she’s about to burst into a fresh wave of tears, “No.” She says again, “He kept saying it was for me. I don’t know why I believed him.” She swipes at a rogue tear sliding down her cheek. “He’s never done anything for me, but his mind is so twisted I didn’t put it past him to think he was doing me some big favor.” Shaking her head forlornly, she drops it into her small hands. “I’m so stupid.”

“You’re not stupid, Sophie.” I answer sternly. Letting go of Lila only long enough to squeeze her shoulder, “Martin only says you are so that you won’t fight back. It’s how his kind control their victims,” I grumble, “they say whatever they have to in order to break your spirit and make you believe you’re powerless. But you’re not.”

“I’m so sorry.” She says for the thousandth time, “I just lost it when I saw you with Drake, 1-”

“I know, Sophie.” I interject, “I can’t say I forgive you. But I understand.” I press my lips to Lila’s hair, breathing in her pure, perfect scent. “We have to move past that, we have to focus on getting out of here.”

Lila snuggles deeper into my arms, content to let me smother her with affection now that she can breathe again. “Let’s dig tunnel!” She suggests.

I don’t know how I find the will to laugh, but I do. I suppose my extraordinary relief at finding my baby safe and unharmed has made me a bit delirious. “That might take a bit too long, Lila bean.”

Sophie’s shaking her head, and I can see my little pep talk didn’t land. “There’s no use.” She says despondent, “He’s bigger and stronger than all three of us combined.” Her next words are so quiet, I almost miss them, “We’re never getting out of here.”

Drake’s POV

It doesn’t make any sense.

I’ve known Sophie my whole life. I can’t believe she was involved in this.

We’re in the apartment she shares with her brother, Martin. He’s been her guardian ever since their parents died ten years ago, and while I can’t imagine Sophie harming a fly, I’m not so certain about Martin. There’s always been something about the wolf I don’t like. On the surface he’s as personable as anyone, but I’ve always sensed a cold cunning underneath, a shifty demeanor I can’t bring myself to trust.

“They aren’t here.” Hugo announces unhelpfully.

“Obviously not.” Bastien grouses derisively, “but Lila was.

We all smelled the pup the moment we entered the house. It was a comfort not to find any cages or rooms that resembled a prison cell, but then again, they probably didn’t need them. Lila knows Sophie, and she hasn’t been separated from her parents for more than a day. It probably seems no different than an un conventional babysitting adventure.

I can only pray that Selene and Lila are back together, because Goddess help us, I don’t know where to even begin looking.

When I express this to Bastien, he veritably explodes. “This is your city!” He roars, “If you don’t know where to find its underbelly, then you aren’t worth anything as an Alpha.” For a moment I fear he’ll throw something. “And you know them. Use your fucking head and think – what do you know about them? How/ do they think? Where would they go?”

“Don’t speak to me that way.” I snap, I’m just as worried as you are. Your temper isn’t helping any thing.”

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Before I know what’s happened, the Nova Alpha has one massive hand around my throat, and my feet leave the ground, I’m choking and gasping for air, clawing at the hand wrapped around my windpipe. “You could never be as worried as I am.” Bastien claims ferociously, his claws digging into my skin. “Selene is my mate.”

“And Lila is my pup.” | force the lie out through clenched teeth. It’s the only thing I can hold over this overbearing Alpha’s head, and I don’t care that it isn’t true. It’s enough to see the rage on Bastien’s face.

The other man looks ready to snap my neck, and for a moment real fear stabs through my conscious ness. Luckily cooler heads remain with us. “Stop it!” Donovan orders, grasping Bastien’s shoulder, “This isn’ helping anyone – especially not Selene and Lila.”

My feet return to the ground, and I rub my throat with agitation, massaging the sore tissues as I gaze around the apartment once more. “Alright. We know they left in a boat, and we know they didn’t come here.” I croak, “But I don’t think they own property anywhere else.”

“If they had any brains at all, they’ll have left the city.” Aiden contributes, shuffling through a stack of documents on Martin’s desk.

"I think we're going about this the wrong way." Donavon chimes in, "We're focused on the what, not the why. Why did they take them, what's the motive?"

"I still can't believe Sophie had anything to do with this." I insist. The little wolf is one of the kindest people I've ever met. She likes Selene, and my wolf is fervently rebelling against the idea that she could be responsible for such a terrible crime.

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"There are only two possible motives." Bastien replies, "The Volana bounty, or to blackmail one of us." He explains, gesturing between our bodies.

"Given we're dealing with locals, it seems unlikely it would be about you, Bastien." Donavon replies, "My money's on the bounty. Otherwise they would have contacted Drake by now."

As the words leave his mouth, Aiden's cell phone rings, and he raises the device to his ear. He begins turning as if he means to stride away to take the call in private, but then he stops, holding up one long finger to give us pause.

"Give me a minute," he instructs to the person on the other end of the line. When he turns to us, triumph blazes in his eyes. "Martin just called the tip line." Aiden announces, "apparently he has the Volanas in his possession and is ready to cash in the reward."

"Set a meet." Bastien rumbles, "And tell him that if even one hair is out of place on their heads, I will rip him limb from limb."

Aiden purses his lips, suggesting, "How about I say the payment is void unless they're in perfect condition." An edge of dark humor enters his voice, "Same sentiment but way less suspicious."

Bastien is unamused. "I don't care what you have to say, Just arrange the meet." He turns to me, a predatory glint in his eye. "And if you want them to walk away from this, you better give me a damn good reason to let them live."

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#Chapter 77 Injecting

Selene's POV

I don't know how much time has passed since we arrived here. Without windows I have no way of deciphering whether it is day or night, and while it feels like it's been hours, misery always makes time move more slowly

Sophie has finally stopped crying and is manically hugging her knees to her chest and rocking back and forth on the ground. I feel sorry for the poor woman, but I cannot forget that she is partially responsible for our situation. I might be more understanding if she'd only involved me, but endangering my pup was unforgivable.

Lila is sleeping comfortably in my lap, and I am trying my best to hold it together. My head is pounding with stress and dehydration, and if we were anywhere else I would be terribly embarrassed by how loudly my stomach is growling. It sounds like an angry bear out for blood, but I know I can handle it.

I've starved before, I can starve again. Thankfully my daughter has not had to experience that particular hardship – yet. I don't think I can bear to watch her waste away as I once did, and I need to get us out of here before that happens.

Think. I hiss in my mind, there has to be a way.

Attack the bastard. Luna suggests, let me at him!

He's too strong. I remind her, and I don't want to risk pissing him off. He might retaliate by hurting Lila.

I stare hopelessly at the door. If it were just made of wood Luna might be able to smash through it, but Martin was clearly prepared for a hostage situation. Iron bars have been installed in front of the standard oak panel, and we don't have any tools to try and pick the lock.

I don't know what to do, and I hate feeling so helpless with my pup's life at stake. We'll find a way out of this. Luna declares, we always figure something out.

- I know she's trying to be positive, but the fact remains that Luna wasn't around for the most difficult trials of my life. I haven't survived through skill or intelligence; I haven't solved my own problems.

I escaped Garrick out of luck. Bastien saved me from homelessness and starvation. Drake saved me from drowning and being assaulted. Someone I have never been able to identify rescued me from the fire, and kind strangers helped me make it to Eros territory when I woke up. I can't even take credit for building my life in Asphodel – it was handed to me.

I might feel more confident and sure of myself now that I'm older – now that I'm a mother – but the truth is that I owe my survival to other people and accidents of fate. If I'd been left to my own devices I would have died a long time ago, and I'm terrified that my string of luck has finally run out. I will never forgive myself if anything happens to Lila because I never learned to fend for myself.

My throat itches with emotion, and I try to force the feelings away. I can't fall apart. If I start crying then I'll be no more use than Sophie.

I'm only just getting myself back under control when a loud clanking fills the air. Martin appears as the basement door swings open, followed by the thick black bars. He's wearing his familiar smirk, dragging scornful eyes over his struggling sister and then closing in on me and Lila.

My pulse races as he comes down the stairs, a thousand possibilities racing through my mind for what might happen next. He's got something in his hand, and as he draws closer I realize it's a syringe.

Oh Goddess, I think, that can't be good.

Are you sure you don't want me to attack him? Luna questions.

He's walking straight towards me, and I turn into the wall, placing my body between Lila and Martin. "Stay away from me." I snarl, letting my fangs extend.

"You don't tell me what to do." Martin glares. "And unless you want me to hurt your brat, you'll shut up and submit."

"Submit to what?" I demand, nodding toward the syringe. "What is that?"

"Just a little something to help you relax." He states icily.

"Martin—" Sophie squeaks, not seeming to know what she wishes to say.

... "Shut your goddess-damned mouth." Martin thunders, his temper detonating from a single word.

He begins moving towards me again, and I shake my head frantically, "No!" I exclaim, "You're not putting that in me!" Luna is right at the surface of my skin, but I don't know how to shift and keep hold of Lila at the same time.

Martin lashes out and wraps his fist in my hair, using it to pull me from the ground even as I struggle and fight, trying as hard as I can to keep my pup away from this monster. I'm snapping and snarling, thrashing with all my might – but it's no use. The needle stabs into my neck with a vicious sting, and burning liquid shoots into my nervous system.

The last thing I see before the world goes black, is Martin preparing a second syringe – one headed straight for my daughter.

Bastien's POV

The meet is set.

We're on our way out of the city, headed for a remote location in the nearby hills. Axel is already straining to get out, and I can't wait to get my teeth in the mongrel who stole my family. It's been less than twelve hours since Lila was taken, but this day has been among the worst of my life.

We pull up to the trailhead of a popular hiking path, deserted now in the dead of night. A wolf I don't recognize is standing in front of a parked vehicle with glaring headlights, his hands stuffed into his pockets as he leans against the hood.

I can smell him before we're out of the car, and I immediately recognize the aroma from Selene's rooms and the kidnapers' apartment.

He's alone. I don't see my family or his accomplice, and this is the only reason I don't kill him on sight. I can feel Selene and Lila. I know they're close, but we can't risk some sort of contingency or booby trap. It bothers me that his sister is not visible. Is she waiting just out of sight? Is she holding the hostages in case we try to shortchange him?

Martin's eyes widen in horror when Drake and I step out of the car, and fear instantly muddying his scent.

"Where are they?" Drake growls, taking the lead when he realizes I'm too furious to speak. All I can think about is destroying this wolf in the most painful manners possible.

"I don't understand," Martin replies instead. "What are you doing here?"

"Did you really think you could get away with this?" Drake demands, ignoring the shifter's questions. I've never viewed Drake as a particularly strong Alpha, but it's clear his own people feel differently. I suppose it's difficult to recognize the dominance of a weaker man, but the fact is that Cavanaugh is still at the top of the food chain in his pack.

Martin is apparently even dumber than I realized, because he continues to argue. "The bounty-"

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"There is no bounty!" I explode, unable to stand this a moment longer. "It was a ruse to root out traitors like you. Now, Where. Are. They?"

The same shifter who cowered before Drake now shrinks where he stands, his knees caving as he watches me in abject terror. “If I tell you, you’ll kill me.” He argues hoarsely.

very.

“And what do you think is going to happen to you if you don’t?” I inquire threateningly.

“I’ll make you a deal.” He offers, looking directly at Drake and shaking like a leaf. “I’ll give you Selene and the pup now, but you have to let me leave, if you don’t, Sophie will die.”

Drake looks as if he’s been slapped, and I’m barely able to smother my own surprise. He and his sister were working together, weren’t they?

The color has drained from the Eros Alpha’s face, “What have you done to her?”

Martin straightens ever so slightly, as if growing a fraction of a backbone. “She’s unharmed – for now.” He explains, “But she’s locked up with no way out. Unless I go back and release her, she’ll starve to death.”

“Wasn’t she helping you?” I grumble when Drake doesn’t respond.

Martin snorts, ‘That worthless slag could barely get the pup away from a pair of old crones without be-, ing seen and broke down the second Selene confronted her.’ He rolls his eyes, “I planned for weeks, I wait ed so patiently for the opportunity to arise to grab the Volanas, and she fucked it up within minutes.”

“I don’t understand.” Drake still has the strangest look on his face: anger, confusion and fear all rolled into one. “How did you convince her to help you in the first place?”

“Oh that was your doing, Alpha.” Martin announces smugly, “I knew I needed a patsy to take the fall for the kidnapping after I collected the bounty, but I wasn’t sure how to convince Sophie until you decided to declare your love for the Volana bitch. My sister tends to collapse under physical coercion, but seeing you kiss his mate did just the trick.” He explains, nodding toward me with gleeful cruelty.

I’m not sure which comes first: Drake’s realization of what ‘physical coercion’ must mean, or mine, that the other Alpha kissed Selene – after I marked her.

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#Chapter 78 Just in Time

Drake's POV

I could kill Martin where he stands.

Behind me I can hear Bastien's Betas' frantic mutterings, reminding the other Alpha that the scum kneeling before me is trying to distract us, to turn us against each other. They beg him to stay calm, not to react, but I barely notice.

I don't care that Martin told Bastien I kissed his mate, though in fact I failed. I care that he took Selene and Lila, and I especially care that he's been abusing his sister. If you'd asked me this morning who I cared about more, I would have unequivocally chosen Selene – but that was before: Before I heard what this monster did to the sweet wolf I grew up with, before I realized how oblivious I must have been to overlook his cruelty

No one deserves to be hurt by someone responsible for taking care of them, especially Sophie. She's bright and warm, she loves and is beloved by everyone she meets. I had no idea she had feelings for me, and I've never looked at her as anything other than a friend... but knowing she's in danger has changed everything.

It's a strange thing, not realizing how important someone is to you until they might get taken away. Yet that's exactly what's happening now. I don't think I've gone more than a week without seeing Sophie since she was little, and the thought of never seeing her again makes me want to tear the world in two.

I would give anything to slaughter Martin like the pig he is, but I can't. Not until Selene and Lila are found, and not until Sophie is safe.

"Where is she?"

Bastien's POV

Aiden and Donavon are still muttering in my ear when Drake begins snarling at Martin, demanding to know his sister's whereabouts.

More than anything else, seeing how upset he is about the other she-wolf calms my temper. When this is all over, I intend on having words with both him and my mate about the incident, but now is not the time

"I'll tell you once I'm safely out of the territory," Martin suggests.

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“You’ll tell me now.” Drake commands, more powerfully than I’ve ever witnessed before.

“It’s Sophie or the Volanas.” Martin counters maliciously. “You choose who comes first.”

Drake looks to me with rage and desperation, and I try to send him a silent message using eye contact alone. I need him to trust me, not to interfere. I don’t want an innocent wolf starving to death, and I would never abandon her thus. Drake has to understand that for my plan to work.

I’m not sure if I’ve succeeded when I begin moving toward Martin, but I can’t risk extending the contact further and giving away the game. I circle the prone kidnapper and lunge forward, closing my hands around his head and digging my knee into his spine to hold him still. In this position I could snap his neck with the flip of my wrist, and he knows it.

“I don’t give a shit about your sister.” I hiss in his ear. “I care about my mate. I know she’s here some where, so I don’t need to keep you alive. As soon as you’re dead I can follow her scent and have her back within minutes. The only reason you aren’t already lying in pieces is because of him.” I jerk his head to wards Drake, enjoying the strangled whimper that lodges in his throat.

#Chapter 78 Just In Time

“But I’m done waiting.” I lie, “you have five seconds to tell us where Sophie is. If you do, we’ll at least give you the chance to run. Keep quiet, and I’ll simply snap your weak neck now and avoid the hassle of chasing you. It’s no loss to me if your accomplice dies with you.”

Drake’s nostrils flare, and his hands close into fists. “That wasn’t the deal!” He objects, catching on and playing his part.

“Fuck the deal.” I answer savagely, “this has gone on long enough.”

Applying slight pressure, I begin turning Martin’s head to prepare for the snap, and the vile wolf breaks like a twig. “She’s in a cabin in the central valley!” He exclaims, rattling off an address. Drake’s Beta immediately jumps back in his car and takes off, no doubt headed for the location.

“And where is my mate and the pup?” I press, keeping up the stark pressure on his bones. “The trunk!” He squeals. “They’re in the trunk!”

I drop him like a bag of bricks, nodding to Aiden to take over as I move towards the car. I can hear Martin trying to crawl away in the dirt, then unmistakable cries of outrage when Aiden stomps down on his spine, pinning him in place.

Trip the trunk hatch right off the car, throwing it aside and reaching inside to gather up the sleeping bundles inside. They've been bound and gagged, even though both are unconscious. I'm already counting the minutes until Drake's beta calls in to confirm Sophie's safety.

I'm going to enjoy killing Martin almost as much as I enjoyed killing Garrick.

Ripping the ropes off of Selene and Lila, I cradle them both, carrying them back to Drake's car and setting them into the back seat. As I try to revive them, Aiden follows my mental instructions and continues interrogating Martin. "What did you give them?" He interrogates.

"Nothing!" Martin insists desperately.

Selene is breathing easily, but Lila's pulse is very slow and her skin is pallid. I don't like the look of her, and I'm very afraid that something is wrong.

"They've clearly been drugged." Aiden persists, "Tell us what you gave them!"

"It was nothing," Martin groans, clearly in pain. "Just a little Starlight."

"What?!" Drake exclaims, seeming suddenly panicked, "You gave them Starlight?"

I'm not sure why the information concerns him so much, Starlight isn't a dangerous drug – almost every hospital on the continent prescribes it as a sedative. Nonetheless, another glance at Lila makes my heart plunge below my navel. She's at least two shades paler than Selene, and a sheen of sweat has formed on her forehead.

"Yes!" Martin wheezes, equally confused. "They'll wake up soon."

"Bastien." The other Alpha's voice is sharp as a knife. I jerk my head up, pausing my attentions. "Lila is allergic to Starlight."

"How allergic?" I immediately clarify. It's a stupid question, I can already see the damage the drug is doing to the tiny pup.

"Very." He answers gravely, "We need to get her to a hospital right now."

I'm already moving, adjusting the she-wolves in my lap and pulling the car door shut as Drake returns to the driver's seat. "Does Hugo have Sophie?"

"He just got there." Drake nods, turning the key in the ignition. "Martin was telling the truth."

I'd planned on killing Martin myself, but Lila comes first. As we pull out of the trailhead, I issue my orders to Aiden through our link. Kill him – and make it hurt.

Martin's screams follow us as we race off into the night, and I don't regret delegating the job. The sound of his torment is satisfying enough, I can only pray that we reach help in time.

Selene's POV

I'm in Bastien's arms when I wake.

I don't know how he found us. The last thing I remember was Martin stabbing me with the syringe. It seems impossible that we're safe. Yet Bastien is here, so I know we are.

My mate's handsome face is peering down at me intently, his brow furrowed with concern. His features soften briefly when he sees my eyes open, but even as he welcomes me back to the waking world, the tension doesn't leave his body. "Hello, little wolf."

"What happened?" I ask hoarsely. "Where's Lila?"

Belatedly I realize we're moving, bundled into the back of a car with the world whizzing by at dizzying speed. Bastien is frowning deeply. "Martin was the tipster." He explains grimly, turning my head toward his other arm. "Lila's here." My eyes land on my pup, and ice floods my veins.

Why does she look like that?

"We're on the way to the hospital baby." Bastien explains, "He gave you Starlight."

Everything is still very hazy, a thick fog clouding my senses and slowing my brain.

"What?" I ask dumb

"Starlight." He repeats, stroking my cheek. "Lila's having an allergic reaction, but we're almost to the hospital."

Understanding clicks much too slowly. Last year Lila was stung by a bee and her little hand swelled to the size of a melon. It took a massive dose of steroids to counteract the reaction, and I decided to have her tested for other allergies.

Other than bees and wasps, there was only one other substance that returned a positive result on the test: Starlight. The doctors told Drake and I that if she ever injected the drug, it could kill her.

"No." I whisper frantically, trying to move and realizing that my body is still too deeply under the influence of the drug. I can't make my limbs work. "Give her to me." I beg, tears welling in my eyes.

Bastien does so immediately, settling her on my chest and holding her steady, "It's alright sweetheart, we're going to get her help."

I stare down at her sweet little face, fear unlike anything I've yet experienced consuming me. It's not alright. Even if we get to the hospital in time, there's only one antidote for Starlight allergies. The doctors offered to prepare an emergency dose for us when she tested positive – in case she ever needed it – but it wasn't possible at the time.

The antidote requires blood from both parents, and we only had mine. Bastien is here now so we might have time for them to prepare the potion, but there's no way around it now – I'm going to have to tell him the truth. Lila is his daughter.

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#Chapter 79 The Truth Comes Out

Selene's POV

When we arrive at the hospital I'm on the verge of hysterics.

My mind is still foggy from the Starlight, and my emotions are all over the map. I feel as moody and sensitive as I did when I was pregnant, like my feelings are a surging river dragging me along and I'm powerless to stop it.

More than anything else, I'm afraid for my pup's life. I'm terrified we're going to be too late and furious with myself for not protecting her better. I should have shifted when Luna wanted to, I should have attacked Martin – no matter the risk.

The guilt is crushing, not only for failing my daughter, but for the secret which is about to come to light. I've already caused Bastien so much pain, and I'm about to cause him more. I don't know how I'm going to tell him – he's going to be so angry. I know Bastien would never hurt me, but his temper is still a dreadful thing to behold.

His anger is only the tip of the iceberg. Once the truth comes out, my life in Asphodel is going to be over. The future I imagined, everything I've been working towards since arriving here, disappears. Losing those things will hurt, but not nearly so much as losing Lila.

There's no doubt in my mind that I'm doing the right thing. I just wish I'd never told this damned lie in the first place. Bastien loves me, he's claimed me, and all the things I thought I knew turned out to be wrong. It's hard not to feel like everything I went through trying to survive these last few years was for nothing.

My knees buckle when I try to step out of the car, and Bastien catches me before I fall. He tries to hand Lila to Drake so that he can carry me, but I cry out in protest, latching onto my pup even as I hang in his arms.

"Shhh," He croons, carefully prying my fingers off of Lila. "We're not going to take her from you, little wolf. We just need to get situated." With that he hands off the pup, sweeping his arm behind my knees and lifting me into the air. Afterwards Drake returns Lila to me, and Bastien carries us both inside.

Donovan is already in the lobby, rattling off orders and clearing the way for us. No one raises a single objection when the two Alpha's storm inside, stalking straight past the admissions desk and triage station and into the treatment area. Nurses and orderlies jump out of the way to let us pass, and before I know it I'm being lowered onto an upright stretcher,

A doctor is already standing at the foot of the bed, her sharp eyes scanning Lila and me. "Just the pup, or Mom too?"

"Just the pup." I sniffle at the same time Bastien replies, "They're both patients."

I shake my head stubbornly, "I'm fine, my daughter is having an allergic reaction to Starlight."

"They were both kidnapped." Bastien interjects sternly, "She needs to be checked out after you've stabilized the pup."

I'm glaring at Bastien, but both he and the doctor seem unfazed. "May I?" The strange woman asks, pulling on a pair of gloves.

"Of course." I immediately adjust Lila, arranging her so the physician can examine her more easily.

Luna is growling as the unfamiliar shifter begins measuring Lila's pulse and vital signs, but I fight back my protective instincts. My daughter might be in mortal danger, but this woman is a doctor. She's going to help.

I can see Bastien fighting the same impulses, though he's not quite as successful at quelling them. He moves around to my other side, reaching out to rest his hand on my nape. His calloused fingers begin mas-

saging the sore muscles, and I wish I could climb back into his lap.

“How long ago was she given the drug?” The doctor asks, lifting Lila’s eyelids and shining a stark white light into her pupils.

Confusion assails me. I don’t know the answer. How much time passed between Martin administering the Starlight and his meeting with our supposed buyers? How long did they talk before Bastien found us? “I don’t know.” I admit frantically.

“Was it already dark out?” She presses, still poking and prodding my pup.

“I don’t know, I couldn’t see outside.” I reply, beginning to get impatient. “Does it really matter? We know what’s wrong with her, we just need an antidote.”

“The timing matters, I’m afraid.” The doctor answers. “The antidote will take about half an hour and we need to keep her stable until it’s complete. Knowing how much time has passed will help inform the treatment plan.”

My lower lip begins to tremble, “I don’t know.” I repeat pitifully, looking to Bastien for help.

“It hasn’t been more than a few hours.” He supplies, stroking my neck comfortingly. “I don’t know exactly when he did it or what dosage, but Selene woke up about five minutes ago.”

The doctor makes a note on the chart in her hand, and I think I might explode. How can they possibly be moving this slowly? Doesn’t she understand that my pup is dying? If it weren’t so frustrating I might find humor in the irony – moments ago I was in a tizzy over telling Bastien the truth and now I’m practically chomping at the bit to get it over with.

“This is a pre-existing allergy?” She continues blithely.

“Yes.” I confirm, my heart beating a little more loudly. “But we were never able to get an antidote made.”

She nods, making another note. “We’ll need blood from both mother and father to make it, is that going to be a problem?”

“No.” I answer immediately, My heart beginning to beat a little louder.

“In that case there shouldn’t be any cause for concern, but I’m afraid we are going to have to separate

is gently, “We need to get Lila set up with an IV and start her on some fluids. We’ll keep her going with epinephrine until the antidote is finished. In the meantime, a lab tech will be by to take your blood.”

nod, pressing hurried kisses to my daughter's sweet-smelling hair before tearfully relinquishing her to the nurses. Bastien too leans over to kiss her soft cheek before they take her away, and I feel a deep pang of longing and remorse. He doesn't even know she's his, and already he loves her like a daughter,

The doctor helps me lean back against the flimsy pillow, 'Your pup is in good hands, Selene. We have **every reason** to be optimistic.'

"Thank you." | hiccup, jolting slightly when she reaches for my wrist. "Easy now, we need to have a look at you too."

"I'm fine." I say again, feebly resisting her.

Bastien is back by my side, fingers twitching like they watch to reach for me but he holds himself back. When I continue squirming he growls gently, encouraging me to behave, but Luna rears up, snarling right back. One thick brow arches, his silver **eyes hard as steel**, and I suddenly feel very small indeed. I lower my gaze and sullenly settle, submitting to the examination.

The lab tech arrives just as the doctor is trying to convince me to be admitted overnight for observation. She's already set a nurse upon me with an IV bag and is wielding a horrid hospital gown, but I don't

#Chapter 79 The Truth Comes Out

want to be admitted. If I'm stuck in a hospital bed then I won't be able to stay with Lila, and I refuse to leave her.

I jump at the diversion, brandishing my arm for the young man to do his work and extract the life-saving liquid from my veins. I focus only on him as he carries about his work, drowning out the scolding voices around me. The worst is about to happen, but the sooner it does, the sooner my daughter will be well.

The tech finishes up promptly and deposits the crimson vials into a biohazard cooler before turning to Bastien, "Now you, sir."

Before I can say anything Bastien shakes his head. "I'm not her biological father. He is." He announces, pointing to Drake.

The tech turns to the Eros Alpha, but I put a staying hand on his arm. "No." I croak, my mouth suddenly feeling like it's full of cotton, "you were right the first time."

The young man furrows his brow, clearly confused, and I swing my gaze to Bastien. 'They need your blood, not Drake's.'

All the men in the room go very still, but none more so than Bastien. His molten eyes are boring into me like a thousand daggers, and I want to crawl under the bed and hide. "What?"

"They need your blood." I repeat anxiously. "She isn't Drake's."

Bastien looks back and forth between us, a riot of emotions already playing across his countenance. "The DNA test was negative." He reminds me.

"It was wrong." I state, as calmly as I can. "I don't know how or why but it was wrong. Lila is yours. I've never been with anyone else..." Sucking in a deep breath, I share the final damning details before I can lose my nerve. "I was already pregnant when I met Drake."

Pregnant and Rejected by My Alpha Mate Chapter 80

Pregnant and Rejected by My Alpha Mate

Chapter 80

Selena's Pov

Shock, fury and betrayal war for dominance in Bastien's imposing features. He's looking at me the same way he did when he first discovered I was alive, as if he's realizing he doesn't recognize me at all. Tears have been rolling down my cheeks since I woke, but a fresh surge rushes forth as I wilt beneath his scrutiny.

"Bastien, they need it now." Drake interjects.

As if in a trance, Bastien shoves out his arm toward the lab tech, "Take it." He orders coldly.

The poor tech is shaking as he tries to draw the enraged Alpha's blood, and he's not alone. Every lesser wolf in the room is positively quailing in the face of the apoplectic energy Bastien is putting off, myself included.

When the young man completes his duties, he practically sprints out of the bay, heading off for the lab. No one says a word. We're all waiting with bated breath to see how Bastien will respond, even the doctor.

When Bastien finally finds his voice, he says just about the last thing I expected. "Put on the gown." He commands, nodding toward the ugly garment at the end of my bed. "You're being admitted."

I blink, my limbs frozen in place. What?

This isn't good. Luna whines, her tail between her legs, His wolf is really mad, I can't bear it.

It'll be okay. I think back, trying to convince myself as well as her.

I don't know where I find the courage to protest, but I do. "I need to be with Lila."

Bastien's eyes flash dangerously, and he finally acknowledges the other people in the room. "Leave us." He orders, scanning the small group.

One by one they file out, abandoning me. Everyone but Drake. The Eros Alpha stands stubbornly inside the curtain, not looking at my mate. Instead he watches me carefully, waiting to follow my cue. I really don't want to be left alone with Bastien, but I know that Drake staying will only result in a fight between the men. Drake will lose and I'll still end up alone with Bastien, only he'll be in an even worse mood.

"It's okay." I promise Drake. He nods and slips out of the bay, ignoring Bastien's low growl of disapproval.

Bastien prowls to my bedside, towering over me while I sit defenseless on the gurney. "You've been through something very traumatic today. You're disoriented, weak and dehydrated. You need to be admitted."

He may be right, but I don't care. My pup comes first. "But—"

Arguing was a mistake. Bastien growls so savagely I flinch away from him, cowering against the pillow. "My decision is final, Selene." He thunders, his deep voice never rising in volume, but carrying the force of a brutal storm.

The huge wolf reaches toward me, ignoring my fright and yanking my dress off over my head. He snatches up the hospital gown and removes my bra, bundling me into the scratchy garment while I sit there too shocked to move.

Afterwards I eye him warily, painfully aware that his anger has absolutely nothing to do with my resistance to staying in the hospital, and everything to do with my lie.

"Bastien," I murmur meekly, "I'm sorry. You have every right to be angry with me, but deflecting it this way won't help anything."

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"It isn't fair for you to punish me by making me stay here for treatment." I insist. "Lila is more ill than she's ever been before, I can't be apart from her until I know she's going to be okay."

Bastien steps back, rubbing his jaw and eyeing me like I'm a bug he'd like to smush under his bc "You've got a lot of fucking nerve, you know that?"

Bastien's POV

Selene is staring up at me like a deer in the headlights, her beautiful eyes wide and bloodshot. It's amazing that I can be so unbelievably furious at a person, yet still want nothing more than to hold them in my arms and kiss away their tears.

I was livid when I discovered Selene had let me believe she was dead for three years. I was outraged when I learned she didn't think we were mates. I was irate when I thought she'd taken another man for a lover. But none of that is anything compared to what I'm feeling now.

My heart is torn between joy and betrayal; between relief and wrath; between worry and bitterness..

Finding out that Lila is my pup is the greatest gift I've received since finding my mate. I've loved Lila from the moment I met her, and I got over it when I learned she belonged to another man. I hated the idea of sharing her with Drake, but he didn't seem to want to be involved in her life, so I made my peace.

Even as my protective instincts rally and rail knowing she's not out of the woods yet, I'm elated and ecstatic that she's mine. Axel is still howling exuberantly in celebration, and I can't blame him.

Of course, all this happiness is tainted by Selene's betrayal.

I wouldn't be feeling it so keenly if we hadn't reconciled, if I hadn't finally claimed her or we'd been on rockier footing. I can almost get past the fact that she never told me – that she didn't come back to Elysium when she found out she was pregnant. After all, Arabella was trying to kill her and she believed I was in love with her attempted murderess.

I may have had a right to know, especially given Lila's vulnerability as a Volana, but I know Selene thought she was protecting her pup. She thought she was doing the best thing for them both. I can even excuse the first lie, to a point. Things were chaotic and challenging in the extreme when I first arrived in Asphodel, and she was still operating under her old misconceptions.

The true crime is that she never came clean. We resolved all our old issues. Selene realized how horribly she'd been misled by Arabella and accepted how deeply I love her. We cemented our bond and are finally together the way we were always meant to be. We agreed to start fresh and move forward with no more lies – and still she said nothing.

And to top it all off, the stubborn little creature just accused me of taking my anger out on her by separating her from our pup.

Our pup... that's the first time I've thought the words, and I'll be damned if I'm not going to be chanting it over and over for weeks to come.

"What?" Selene squeaks, drawing my attention back to our conversation.

I stalk back to the bed, catching her chin between my thumb and forefinger and tilting her head up so she'll have no choice but to meet my gaze. "You're my mate, Selene." I rumble harshly. "Do you really think I wouldn't be making you stay if you'd told me the truth? Do you really believe I care that little about you?

That I would risk your health to appease your will?"

"I..." She's scrambling to find a logical reply, yet she can't seem to conjure anything but half formed stutters, "It's... that's not... I don't..."

"I know you're worried about Lila." I continue, trying to cool my seething blood, and I'm offended you

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believe I would ever keep her from you out of spite, especially at a time like this." Tears hover on Selene's dark eyelashes, and it takes all my willpower to remain strong and not coddle her. "You're being admitted because the doctors need to keep an eye on you. It's for your own damn good, and shame on you for thinking otherwise."

Those precariously placed tears spill over, running down her pale cheeks in a steady stream. "I'm sorry." She professes pitifully.

"As soon as you're both settled, we'll have them bring your beds together." I promise, taking her face between my hands and brushing away her tears with the pads of my thumbs. "But I expect you to rest and do as the doctors say."

Selene nods fervently, "I promise." She's already looking over to the closed curtain concealing Lila's bay, anxiously hoping for a glimpse of the pup.

"And Selene," I say, pulling her attention back to me. When she sees my expression her features become wary. Smart girl. "When Lila is healed and you're both well enough to be discharged, you are in big. big trouble."

She visibly gulps, looking so vulnerable I can't help but tease her – just a little. I press my lips to her crown, lingering tenderly and thoroughly confusing the poor little wolf.

She's flushed and fidgety when I pull away, and I flash her a lethal grin. As I watch the anxious emotions flickering behind her eyes, I realize there's one more thing to be very, very happy about. Now that Lila is mine, there is nothing stopping me from taking them both back to Elysium where they belong.

An Alpha's pup belongs with his pack, and his mate belongs by his side. Selene has no more excuses to make – at least, not any I'll accept. She's lost, and we both know it.