

## Scattered Dreams Chapter 9 - NINE | TRUE COLORS

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Gio POV

A few uneventful weeks had passed since my impromptu family dinner, and thankfully, Jasmine was no longer upset about not being invited. She was, however, cold and distant when it came to Jenna, and that bothered me. It reminded me too much of Sasha, and I refused to deal with another irrational woman in my life. We were in my kitchen preparing lunch when she brought up her unhappiness with the relationship Pixie, and I shared.

"I know that we're not exclusive, we're not even dating, but I'm telling you that Jenna has it out for you. Why would she always be here otherwise? I mean, does Demetrius know that his girlfriend spends all her free time at his best friend's house? Alone?"

"Jas, there are so many things wrong with what you just said. The one thing you were right about, though, is the fact that we're not dating, so I can do what I want. I told you about my family curse, I know when women are hanging around to jump my bones, and that's not the case with Jenna. And lastly, she and Demetrius aren't dating. That was something they made up to put you at ease." I admitted.

"So she's a liar? You're freely hanging out with a liar, and you don't see an issue with that?"

That possessiveness over Pixie flared again as I turned around to face Jasmine. "Don't talk about her like that; ever. I don't let her badmouth you, not that she ever has, and I'm not going to let you badmouth her."

Jasmine brushed off my warning and went back to washing lettuce. "Have they slept together? They were pretty cozy at the bar, so they had to have screwed each other's brains out that night," she stated.

"What is wrong with you today, and why are you so focused on Jenna? What has she done to deserve this crap?" I asked.

"She's destroying what I'm trying to build, Gio. Maybe not on purpose, but she's still doing it. Why haven't you asked me out yet? It's been a month; you

don't know if you want to date me or not? What do I need to do? Just tell me, and I'll do it, but stop stringing me along because it's not cool!"

"There isn't anything more for you to do, I'm just trying to take my time so that no one gets hurt. It won't be this way forever, though, I promise. Once we get Sasha out of the picture for good, I truly believe that I'll have a clearer head."

"So I should wait around for you to deal with your ex-girlfriend? That's what you're telling me? How is that fair to me?" Jasmine was cut off by Pixie barging through the back door, wearing a serious look of concern on her face.

"Oh, hey, Jasmine, I didn't know you were here. Would you mind if I borrowed the Captain for a minute? I have a pack issue I need to discuss with him," she said.

"No, it's fine, I was just leaving anyway."

"Jasmine, you don't have to leave. Plus, we really need to finish this conversation; it's important to me. You're important to me," I replied.

"Am I really? I'm clearly not as important as some people in the room; I don't have a key to your cottage," she stated, looking at the keyring in Jenna's hand.

"I'll just come back later; I don't want to cause any problems."

"It's too late for that, Pixie. Gio, once you've dealt with your ex and decided if you want to be with me or not, give me a call." She picked up her purse and calmly walked out the kitchen, then the cottage, gently closing the door behind her.

"Wow, that was awkward. I wouldn't have just walked in if I knew Jasmine was here, Gio. I'm sorry about that."

"No, it's fine; she was already upset before you showed up, so don't even worry about it. What did you need to talk to me about?"

"Uhh, I'll come back later, this probably isn't the best time," Jenna replied, suddenly nervous.

"Come on, just tell me. I doubt whatever it is can make my day any worse, so what have you got to lose?"

"I seriously doubt that, trust me." She grabbed a bottle of water from the fridge then went and sat on the couch in the living room with me following close behind.

"I'm ready, so hit me with it, Pixie. We don't have all day."

"Fine! But you're not going to like it, especially after that uncomfortable interaction we just had. It's about Jasmine; there's something strange going on with her. I'm pretty sure she isn't who she says she is."

"Why do you say that? Besides the dinner and the key issue, you two have always seemed to get along fine, so what makes you say this now?" I asked. With the way I felt about Pixie, I was praying that she wasn't becoming the jealous type who didn't want to see me with other women, Jasmine was playing that role perfectly already; I couldn't function if they both went the crazy route. And since I was still trying to find my destined mate, I didn't want to lose either of them.

Pixie sighed and protectively wrapped her arms around her body. "I'm a witch, that's how I know," she quietly stated.

I took a step back and frowned at her. We'd been hanging out for weeks, spoke to each other about everything, and shared some pretty dark secrets, and in all that time, she never once said anything about being a witch, even though she knew the shit Sasha had put me through. "And why are you just telling me this now? Were you trying to hide it? Also, how can you be a witch and a member of the pack? We don't have any witches here," I questioned.

"I'm adopted. My parents are wolves who couldn't have children, so they went to an orphanage and took whatever kids were available; I was three months old when they brought me home. My biological parents were just kids themselves when they got pregnant with me, hence the adoption. The coven they belonged to only practiced light magic, and because of that, I was allowed to be adopted out to any shifter family who wanted me," she explained.

"And your parents let you practice light magic now?" I asked.

"They want me to know where I come from, but I don't actively practice. That doesn't mean that I can't sense when magic is being used, that's in my blood."

"Okay. So what do you sense with Jasmine? She's been amazing, and after the talk we were just having, I'm strongly considering asking her out on a date soon, a real date, unless you know a reason I shouldn't."

"As I said, I know she isn't who she says she is. I can feel it; I can see it. I know she's not a witch herself, but she knows one," Jenna stated.

"Well, I know a witch now, too, so what's wrong with that?"

"I'm pretty sure she's wearing a mask, like she's using a cloaking spell. When you see her, you just see the image she wants you to see with no flaws or imperfections. But a witch can spot someone using a cloaking spell a mile away. Why do you think I was looking at her so hard that night we first met? I didn't understand why I was seeing her the way I was at the time, though; I had to look it up in a book my parents gave me on my sixteenth birthday. I mean, come on! It's insane that you can't see that chick is all kinds of fuzzy! Like if you draw one picture with a fine point pen and the same picture with a blunt point. Or a 4K Ultra TV versus one in 720p, one is much crisper than the other, and only witches can notice the difference," she explained.

"So...she's fuzzy?" I asked, clearly confused.

Jenna threw up her short little arms and let out an exasperated sigh.

"Yes! The bitch is fuzzy, Gio! The facade she's putting on is visible to me, I don't see the perfect image as everyone else does! I can see the cloak she's hiding behind," she yelled.

I tilted my head and stared at her for a minute. Jenna didn't seem like the type to make something like this up, but her story was pretty extreme. I wanted proof; no, I needed it. I refused to be fooled by a woman again; I'd never recover from something like that.

"Can you show me? Or prove it somehow?" I asked.

"I'm not a practicing witch and only know a few simple spells. And as a 'good' witch, I'm not allowed to practice any spells that could harm another being in any way, but I can make them suffer consequences," Jenna replied. She appeared to be deep in thought, then jumped up from the couch.

"I'm sure a high-level witch is helping Jasmine, it could even be a dark priestess for all I know, so there's no way little old me can break the spell. But

I have a potion I can give you to put in her drink that will make her sick if she's deceptive. So you can invite her to dinner or something and ask her questions, if she's lying, you'll definitely know."

"Like a truth serum? Really?"

"Well not exactly, those make you tell the truth, my potion just makes you sick if you lie. Like Pinocchio and his nose, if he tells the truth he's golden, if he lies, he's fucked. Same for your girl."

"I can deal with that. If Jasmine is being honest, she won't feel any difference at dinner, and I can move forward with asking her out. If not, then I'll know something is up and take steps to uncover it. When can you get the potion to me?"

"I need a few days to collect the herbs and some crazy-ass mushroom you can only find deep in the woods. Why potions aren't made out of everyday herbs and spices, I'll never know. Anyway, yeah, give me a few days, and I'll have it for you," Jenna advised.

"Thanks. I can't tell you how much I appreciate this; it means a lot."

"Don't worry about it. You're a good friend, and I don't want to see you hurt. If I can help, I will."

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"For someone who said they don't want to date, you have a lot of female drama going on. I don't see how you manage," Matt said with a shake of his head.

"I don't manage, which is why I'm FaceTiming you at 2:00 AM. Tell Taylor I apologize, by the way, but I need some help, or advice, maybe some guidance? Anything would be appreciated right now."

"Well, how about I fill you in on where we were with Sasha and the ring, then go from there?"

"Please tell me you've figured something out! I'm sick of living in limbo."

"We've got a few things. First off, no one has seen Sasha in a while; the last time she was on the territory was over twenty days ago. Do you want us to try

and find her? I'm mean, she's not a vampire, but Aires can probably get her location in a matter of days if you want."

"Nah, not yet. A missing Sasha isn't necessarily a good thing because she's probably up to something, but I'm currently not dealing with her, so leave her where she is for now. I can't handle another woman at the moment," I replied.

"That's what I thought you'd say. Second, Sasha Stephens isn't her real name, it's Sasha Lewis. Her and parents joined the pack when she was three; apparently, her dad was into some shady business dealings on the east coast, so he packed up and moved cross county to save his ass. We weren't so security conscious back then as we are now, so Uncle Xavier let them join with no questions asked. We only found out now because of Tyson's program compiling criminal data on all the pack members," Matt stated.

"What kind of business was he into? Do we know?" I asked. I'd never expected anything like this, so Matt had my full undivided attention.

"Tyson is still working on the details, but it looks like trafficking. Drugs, weapons, and people."

"People?! Sasha's dad is a human trafficker? What the fuck, Matt? Does Xander know? He's being dealt with, right, I mean, come on! We can't have a human trafficker as a member of the pack!" I screamed. I'd spent time with Sasha's parents plenty of times, and never once would I have thought that William could be this evil.

"Stop yelling and calm down. Not that this is any better, but he's not a human trafficker, he dealt with shifters and other supernatural beings. And of course, Xander knows. He's trying to decide the best course of action. William has been clean ever since he joined Blue Moon, or so it appears, and he's never caused any problems for us. We're looking into it." Matt calmly replied.

"What is there to look into? Banish him and his psychotic daughter now! Do you understand how bad this could be for us if it got out?"

"Gio, we know what we are doing, okay? And besides, one of our high ranking members is a former world-renowned hitman; Blue Moon believes in redemption and always has."

He had a point there. If we could accept Tyson, aka, Hades, as one of our own, then banishing William for his past wouldn't be fair.

"But what if he's been dabbling in his old life since coming here? What happens then?"

"Then he will be dealt with accordingly. We believe in redemption, but we also believe in consequences."

"I'll bet you anything that William is dirty, but whatever, I know you guys have everything handled. What else have you found out?" I asked.

"I saved the best for last; I promise you that. It looks like Sasha probably gave you a parasite or-"

"What the fuck?! You cannot be serious right now; please tell me you're kidding!" I screamed.

"I can't tell you anything if you don't shut the hell up and listen, Gio. I know this is a shock, but if you want to put all of this nonsense behind you, you need to chill out."

"How can I be chill when there's probably a six-foot worm swimming around inside me? I think I'm going to be sick," I replied. My stomach began to roll, and I started to dry heave and sweat profusely. I couldn't handle this.

"Stop acting like a baby; there aren't any worms inside you. Why are my brothers so damn dramatic?"

"How do you know that? How can you be sure?" I asked, still uncontrollably dry heaving.

"Are you done now? Because if not, and you'd like to keep having your nervous breakdown, you can just call me back later."

"I need some water." I crawled out of bed and made my way to the kitchen then proceeded to chug glass after glass of cold water until my stomach had finally settled. "Sorry about that. Okay, I'm listening now, tell me about the parasite," I finally said.

"First off, this is just a theory. Second, it's not a worm; it's more like a chip or transmitter that works with the ring she wore. She probably fed it to you around your eighteenth birthday. Have you recovered any more memories of that night?"

"I can remember most of the party, but there are still parts of the night that are a blur. You think it happened then?" I asked.

"It's possible. I remember you introducing Sasha to the family about a week after your birthday, and I couldn't believe you'd found your mate so easily. I would guess that whatever it was she did, happened in that week," Matt replied.

"Okay. So how can we verify this theory of yours? What do we need to do?" I asked.

"Well, we need to find a witch, but that's easier said than done with most of them being in hiding."

I chuckled at my good fortune; finally, my luck was changing, and things were looking up. I couldn't believe it.

"Actually, I happen to know a witch. And she's pretty damn cute too."