

Rejected To Be Your Second Chance: Rejecting My Alpha Mate

Rejected To Be Your Second Chance: Chapter 33-40

Rejected To Be Your Second Chance: Chapter 33

~Layla's POV~

Behind the trees, hidden from the world was a paradise of unknown secrets and free lives that roamed carelessly in their private sanctuary. A five meter tall waterfall came down in the center and children were bathing in the water. Glistening rocks with flowers emerging from in-between were placed around the stream and the grass was greener than I had ever seen it anywhere else. Laughing and squealing they were jumping from the top of the waterfall or going down the slide on the side that had been built by these people.

Rustic benches sat around and patches for picknick blankets and trees for shade on the places where the sun would press through. Walking behind the waterfall was like walking into another world with shops, electricity, booths put up where streetfood was served and wherever I looked I saw nothing but smiles and waves from passerby's.

"Justin, we've missed you!" A few girls waved at him as they walked with their beach bags down to the alley which was covered in concrete and mimicked actual streets.

The giggles of children running around in the park sent a blissful cheer into my ears and the houses were covered in moss and sticks as they walked in through the wooden doors that stood wide open.

"Anyone is welcome anywhere at any time as long as the doors are open." Justin said and I smiled as I saw a man and a woman walking out with trays of food and placed them on the patio table.

I heard a scream followed by a loud growl as a father scolded his child for hitting another. His eyes glowed and the boys shoulders slumped and he lowered his head.

"Sorry," he said and winced.

"How is this place real?" I was baffled by the imagination and work that had been put into this secret place that nobody else knew about.

"They needed a place to be safe, so it was built for them and over the years everyone has pitched in and made it a home. It started out with one house and more was added thereafter."

Justin stopped outside a wicker house with a door made of thick wooden pillars and a handle made of steel. The house was darling with two double hung windows and a bow window in the right corner.

He opened the door and we walked into the cabin looking interior. On the right by the door was a green painted wall table with a mirror hanging over it. A brown leather couch stood next to the fireplace and a tv sat on the shelves by the wall.

A lamp with colored glass hung in the ceiling and a big footed lamp with a bark covered head stood in the corner.

"This is incredible. It feels like those cabins in the mountains I went too with my family whenever we went on skiing trips."

"We did what we could with what we had and on occasion we would bring materials here that were needed. Some places are more modern than others, everyone gets to redo their homes however they see fit."

"Whos home is this?" I looked at Justin and he smiled as he stepped out of the small kitchen where the bow window was a seating place with a table in front of it.

"It's yours. Welcome home, Layla," I scoffed and looked at the wooden stairs. We grabbed onto railing that was part of a tree trunk and wobbled all the way up. the imperfections just made it all much more magical.

On the second floor was a bed and a reading corner as well as a small desk by the table which was painted white with steel handles.

The white fur carpet on the wooden paneled floor looked like snow and on the wall hung lights that went all around the room.

Justins green eyes glistened when he saw the smile on my face and his chest rose high before it slowly fell as he exhaled a deep breath.

This pack didn't have a pack house or training facilities but it was clear that they had an Alpha and as soon as we stepped outside I saw where the Alpha lived. A big house with two floors and several windows stood in the middle. The single door had a lamp attached up on the upper right corner but it wasn't much so to say. It wasn't lavish or extreme like the Alphas home usually was. There were other houses here as well that were only a few windows smaller than this one. It didn't seem like they cared much about hierarchy. Not at first anyways.

"Wait here." Justin said and drew a breath before he walked in.

I was looking around and smiling back at everyone's friendly faces who smiled as they past me. Some waved their hands and some children were pointing to their parents, probably asking question about the new girl.

Justin came back out and his cheeks were flushed as he gestured into the house.

"He's waiting for you." Those words sent the hairs on the back of my head into spikes as thy rose towards the sky in fear.

"Lovely," I said and smiled as I stepped in.

We walked through the hallway and into the back of the house where two double doors stood open and inside the big room was a chair on which he sat. His arms laid on the armrests and his hand held a glass that he lifted to his lips as his dark eyes gazed into mine when I stepped in.

Justin stopped by the doors and placed his arms behind his back. He nodded his head and indicated for me to continue. His eyes narrowed and he brought the glass down and held it at the armrest. He leaned forward and held a high position as he sat there on his 'throne'. Here I was, thinking that this was a pack that didn't care about norms and the regular hierarchy of leader and man but I was severely mistaken. It looked like they took it to a whole other level with him sitting up there like a king, all that was missing was a crown on his head and a woman feeding him grapes. Right on cue the side door opened up and a woman dressed in a hin fabric covering her breast and lower body walked out with a tray of fruit and cheese. She placed it down and looked seductively into his eyes as she stopped in the forward position to allow him a good look of her full breasts.

She leaned up and walked out with her hips swaying and her lips tugged up in a deep smile. He turned his head and released his bottom lip that he held between his lips. His face took on a much more void expression.

"Layla Lecruest, it's good to see you."

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Rejected To Be Your Second Chance: Chapter 34

He stepped down from his chair and took the three steps down from the platform but still as he stood away from me he looked big, huge even.

His arms were like tree trunks and his chest was broad and his shirt clung to his chest.

As he lifted his arms and stretched them over his head his shirt rode up and I saw the deep knitted v that disappeared down his jeans.

"Careful where your eyes wander," I hastily looked up and met his gaze. I still didn't know his name and for some reason it felt anticlimactic to ask him. My nerves were jumbling together and my tongue was twisting in my mouth.

Even Clara was backing away and lowering her head in a submissive stance.

"Let me show you something." He walked over to the massive oak, half-moon shaped, table that stood against the wall. It looked old but nicely preserved just like everything else here.

"Place your hand on the surface." I looked at him and then cast a quick glance back at Justin who was harder to read now than before but I saw that slight twitch in his eyes. The man reached down and softly grabbed my hand, guiding it to the table. As soon as the tips of my fingers touched the table my head flew back and I was gone.

The maroon red of the tapestry melted into the dark walls and the wood that was being hammered against the pillars. I turned and saw a man with a bushy long beard standing over a tree that had just been taken down. He started sawing into the thick trunk and wiping the sweat off his forehead as he went along.

One by one he took pieces of wood and placed them neatly where he would later put them up. Noticing where I was a shock filled me fast. This was the house that I was standing in, the house of the leader. It was the table that was leaning against the wall and the maroon colored tapestry was the same that hung there til this day but the house wasn't finished yet, not even barely.

He came over so close that I thought he had seen me but he just walked past me and looked down at something. I turned and saw his tortured gaze as he dragged his fingers over the surface of the sharp wood of the table. Two others came walking in carrying more wood tucked between rope.

"Where do you want this?" The man tiredly rose his arm and pointed to the pile by what would come to be the left wall in the big hall.

"Drop it over there for now," he said with a grunt and the guys did as he told. A woman came in not long after and smiled timidly as she wrapped her arms around his waist and looked at the table.

"The starting point of an entire history,"

"Let's just hope this all survives long enough to be considered history," the man said and turned his head to look at her.

"It will, we will. What you've done here, you found a sanctuary for everyone. You are going to be the one that keeps us safe and that makes sure that no other pup ever has to live out the horror that those before us had to endure. It will all come together, you'll see," he smiled and leaned his head back as he placed her locks behind her ear.

"You have such faith in me, my love," she cupped his cheeks and smiled widely, revealing her pearly white teeth.

"Always,"

I came to and my head was flung forward and I felt a hand on the low of my back steadying me as I fell back a step.

Turning my head I immediately looked at Justin and saw him walking back into position. The man beside me, the leader, still had his hand on my back and I stepped aside creating some space between us.

"You saw him?" He asked and furrowed his brows.

"I did,"

"Then you've seen how this all started. All of this, the ground you stand on, the houses you see, the people living in peace and prosperity, it all started with him." The information had trouble landing in my head, it was a lot to take in. I could see that the men in my memory meant a lot to this guy standing in front of me but I did want to know more about the history.

"Are you related to him?" I asked and saw him lifting himself up proudly.

"I am. It is his bloodline that has ruled and driven this pack for centuries."

"So you're the Alpha?" He licked his lips and smiled.

"No, I'm the king. We have a different hierarchy here. There isn't a second and third in command, there is you and then there is me. That is all. I am the ruler of this pack and everyone else is on the exact same level." I rose a brow and tilted my head.

"Meaning they're beneath you?"

"Aren't they always? Whether it's an Alpha or a king, aren't the people always under him? It is my job to protect and serve, how could I do that if my people were standing in front of me? At least here we don't have others thinking that they are above anyone else. Everyone is treated equally."

The door opened up once more and two ladies walked in dressed in the linnen fabric with silver trays in their hands. They placed the trays down and I saw the tea kettle and cups along with candies that were placed out.

"Does that apply to them as well?" I asked when the servants walked away. He chuckled and walked over to the table.

"Let me ask you, Layla, did you not have chefs in your pack? Or cleaners?"

"We do,"

"It's the same thing. Them being my servants doesn't alter their position in the pack. They are neither beneath or above anyone else here. It is their job to fulfill my needs and the needs of this house and they do so with much appreciation."

"Why?"

"Because where my bloodline was meant to rule, theirs was meant to service the ruler."

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Rejected To Be Your Second Chance: Chapter 35

"Justin will show you around the grounds and if there's anything you need don't hesitate to ask." He turned around, and I stared at his back.

"I never got your name," I said. He turned back and placed his hands into his ripped jeans. Not something I thought a king would wear.

His white pike shirt was hanging over the waistband, and the diamonds on his golden Rolex watch glistened under the light from three ceiling lamps.

"Nathanial, but mostly everyone here calls me Nathan." I bowed my head and turned to Justin. He was still in that stiff position, much like a warrior standing guard.

"That's your Alpha, huh?" I said as we exited the house.

"King," Justin corrected, with much more pride in his voice than I had heard thus far.

"Right, king. So who are you? What's your position?"

"I mostly oversee so everything runs smoothly when it comes to builds or external affairs,"

"External affairs?" I raised a brow, and he turned and smiled at me.

"Oh, you mean me." He chuckled and bobbed his head up and down.

"Come on," we walked down the paved pathway that led all through this forest town. It wasn't big, and whilst walking in the center, you didn't even think about the fact that you were deep in the forest.

Only when you looked up or we got to the edge of the town did I notice the tall trees and the bushes that made it impossible to see further away.

"The runs here must be epic," I said and looked between the branches that stretched and entwined. Walking closer to the dividing line between pack and forest, I was suddenly grabbed by the arm and pulled back.

Turning my head, I saw his clenched expression and furrowed my brows. What was he not telling me?

"There is plenty of space to run within the vicinity of the borders. We never cross the line, or at least you don't." He let go of my arm I softly pulled it back to my side with hesitation.

"Why? You have miles and miles of forest to roam through without anyone ever seeing you. Why not take advantage of that?" I smiled and wondered how the wolves didn't itch to go running out there. I know Clara was; she was writhing and whining in the back of my mind at the thought of shifting and taking off among the trees.

"because it is dangerous. This whole entire place was built to protect wolves like us, to keep us safe, and walking outside the perimeter isn't safe. If one single person or werewolf would spot us it would be all over. We'd be hunted down...again." The horror in his eyes was masked by a fierce belief in his own words.

"You don't have to try to see what I'm feeling, Layla. I am scared of the thought of losing what we have. I've seen firsthand what happens to Emberwolves who fall into the wrong hands."

"But nobody ever comes here, I didn't even know this place existed and I don't think anyone would even dare walk this far into unknown woods."

"It's the 'think' part that is dangerous. In a split second every life in here could be put in risk. Just follow the rules and you'll be good." I stepped back and lifted my head.

"And if I don't?" He sighed and pulled his shoulders up to his ears.

"You will, I know you will. Not let's go practice."

We walked to a big green patch by the river where the sun streamed down. It was quiet and empty for a while before people started coming.

"Is everyone ready?" I saw children laughing as they ran down and took their places. A woman stood on top of a smaller rock and looked with a wide smile at everyone. Justin threw me a cheeky smile and I groaned in realization. I was taking a kiddy class.

"Deep breath in, feel your chest and stomach expanding." She said and everyone did it. I flicked my tongue and turned to glare at Justin who seemed too amused for my liking. He mimicked her movement, trying to show me what to do, and I flipped him the finger. Someone gasped beside me and I saw a small boy with wide eyes staring at my hand. I quickly folded it back and turned back around.

Finally giving in to what I was forced through I breathed in and followed the teacher's movement.

"Very good, now I want you to close your eyes." They closed their eyes and started poking each other. It was hard to focus with all this giggling happening.

"Children please, focus." She said and cast them a fierce glare. They pinched their lips together and closed their eyes.

"What is the most important part of using our powers?" She asked.

"Focus!" They all exclaimed.

I opened one eye and peeked around. My head turned slowly and I saw Justin watching me.

'Close your eyes' he mimed and I rolled my eyes.

"Now think of a happy memory, maybe you're playing with your friends or having your favorite food with your mom and dad. Maybe you've seen their wolves and you can't wait until you get your own. Breath in and hold that memory tightly in your mind. You see it, you feel it, you can touch it and smell it."

My mind drifted to a memory and it wasn't what i thought it'd be.

Kade was walking into the bedroom, holding a tray with breakfast and coffee. We sat in bed and talked for hours. That was the memory that came up.

"Feel how it fills you with love and joy. It's warming you like a hug."

He placed a strawberry by my lips and placed a kiss on my cheek.

His fingers entwined with my own.

'How are you?' He asked me and it was like I was there with him, sitting in the bed and talking with my love.

'I'm...I miss you' I new he couldn't hear me but I heard me. It was my voice that spoke but how was that possible.

'I miss you too, come home' what was happening? I tried to open my eyes but each time I closed them and opened them I was still there with him.

'Layla, come back to me' his smile faltered.

'I'm not here, this isn't happening' panic flooded my body and my heart started beating erratically.

'It's real, it's your mind, it's you' he leaned in and placed his forehead on mine. I felt it, the pressure of his head leaning against mine and the warmth radiating from his skin.

'Kade i'm scared' he leaned back, his eyes flickering between mine.

'You should be. You're in danger, Layla, get out' how do I stop this? I needed to come back, this wasn't happening.

His face froze for a second but his eyes held more life in them than I had ever seen and they were growing darker.

'Run'

I gasped and fell down on the ground, my body spasming.

The teacher was bent over me and her hands grabbed the side of my face.

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Rejected To Be Your Second Chance: Chapter 36

~Kade's POV~

"Packing a bag usually means one's going somewhere," Mason remarked as he leaned against the doorframe.

"I am."

"Where?" I zipped up the bag and tossed it down by the door. I brought out another black leather bag and placed it on the bed, packing it with various items I might need including weapons.

The bag was snatched from under my hands, and Mason threw it behind him.

"This is stupid, and you know it. There's no way you're going up against a pack of Emberwolves and survive." I growled and walked up to him.

"I have to try. I'm the reason she's gone—"

"Yes! You're the fucking reason she left, but you don't think that we all take the blows for it? We all were equally shitty when it came to how we handled the situation, and Layla was nothing but compliant and understanding at first. Get your head out of your ass and think for a second!" With his last words, his hands hit my chest and I fell back a step.

"You're upset that she's gone, I get it, but dying won't bring her back. You want her back safely, don't you? I know I do. So we need a plan. One that doesn't involve a bag full of knives." I ran a hand through my hair and looked at the unmade bed. I hadn't been able to sleep in it since Layla left. I hadn't slept at all, for that matter. Danielle was constantly on my tail about talking and starting over, but I was still unsure of her true motive for coming here.

I didn't like being kept in the dark about things, and when it came to Danielle, you never knew what the truth was. In a way, I had kept my distance with Layla because of the same reason—I didn't trust that she wouldn't use her powers to hurt me or my pack.

"You know they're not the same, right?" Mason said and watched me staring out into the hallway. My head turned, and I faced him. He slumped down on the futon in front of the bed and sighed. "Danielle and Layla, they're not the same. Danielle knew what she was doing; Layla was just as scared of her powers as you were. We should've helped her, guided her, not treated her like the enemy." He looked at me with a knowing gaze.

"Did you think you were the only one?" He asked and smiled.

I shrugged my shoulders, and sat on the chair.

It never occurred to me that my siblings had their reservations as well because of who Layla was. "I was blessed with two mates, and both of them were Emberclaws. Why?" Mason tossed his head, so his hair flew away from his face, and he shook his head.

"Beats me, like you said, it's a blessing. We're the ones that turned it into a curse." He wasn't wrong.

Anna and Cara were downstairs, and Mason and I joined them in the living room.

"How are you holding up?" Cara asked, and no matter how much I tried to focus on the answer, all I felt was the disdain from Anna. She was watching the tv, but I knew that if she turned her head, the hate in her eyes would be visibly evident.

"Anna, can we talk?" I asked. She clenched her jaw and slowly turned her head.

Her eyes were pitch black when she finally looked at me. Anna was a nice girl, and she had integrated into the pack unlike anything I had seen. Everyone loved her, and I had driven away the person she loved the most.

"I'm sorry, Anna," I said. she scoffed and bit down on her lip. Her head shook back and forth, and she was staring at me with heavy eyes and a dumbfounded gaze.

"You don't even know what you're sorry for," Anna furrowed her brows and straightened up, turning her body to face me.

Anna sighed, and I recognized that sigh because I had heard it many times from my sister. "You don't deserve her, Kade." Cara tensed and turned away. she looked down at the floor, and my brother stared intensely at Anna.

"I know what I did—"

"Do you?" Her voice rose, and her previously saddened expression turned angry in an instant. "Because I don't think you do. You invited your ex to stay with you, thinking it was no problem at all, while your current girl and mate sat idly by and watched you two take a stroll down memory lane. That's not just a dick move; that move doesn't have a

name! Layla has done nothing but try and fit in and be a part of the pack and a part of you two, even though the mate bond didn't feel all too strong."

"Wait, what?" Why hadn't she told me?

"The mate bond, it wasn't what it was supposed to be, but I told her to not mind that. I told her that if she loves you, then the bond is just a bonus. And now you've made me regret every single word I said to her. She should've left sooner." Anna seethed.

"Layla didn't feel the bond?" I asked. Her eyes narrowed, and if this was a cartoon, a lightbulb would go off over her head. Something snapped in her mind—I could see it in her eyes, how deep in thought she was.

"You didn't either, did you?" I leaned back and bit down on my inner cheek. Only when I started tasting blood did I stop and stretch my jaw.

"I felt it," I said.

"But not as strongly, not like the one you had with Danielle. Am I right?" Anna's blonde hair fell over her shoulder, and her cheeks turned red from the blood rushing through her head. Her baby pink lips pressed tighter together the longer I stayed quiet. Her eyes narrowed until she was squinting, and the parts of her I could see turned obsidian.

"I don't—"

"Don't lie to me!" She flew to her feet.

"DO NOT RAISE YOUR VOICE. I AM STILL YOUR ALPHA!" I stood in front of her, with only a few mere inches between us, and my sister slowly got up and placed her hand on my shoulder, pressing me back.

"That's enough, Kade." She said calmly, but I heard the warning in her voice.

I looked past her and into Anna's eyes. Her chest was pushed out, her shoulders rolled back, and with her head held high, she stood her ground in front of me.

"Yes," I said.

"You're right. I didn't feel it as strongly either." A light chuckle left her lips, and Mason winced. "Then by all means, Alpha Kade, go and be with your mate." She turned around. My hand shot out and grabbed her arm.

"There's a reason for that," I seethed. Anna's lips parted, and her eyes widened. "You never rejected each other." She whispered.

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Rejected To Be Your Second Chance: Chapter 37

~Layla's POV~

The dark walls brought little relief to my aching eyes as they woke up from their slumber. In the corner was a lamp that stood tall and shed a warming light over the room.

My head was pounding as if it had been pressed under a boulder and just trying to see clearer was causing the pain to get worse.

"You have to keep her away from there,"

"How am I supposed to do that? She doesn't listen,"

"If this happens again we don't know what will happen," hushed voices were speaking in the corner of the room but I couldn't turn to see who it was. I noticed something pressing on my temple and when I tried to shift my head it stopped. There was something keeping my head still. "Keep her away, Justin."

"Right, because it's so damn easy,"

"Nothing worthwhile ever is." It was Justin and a woman. He sighed and I made out some of the words they said but they were whispering them so quietly.

I pressed harder to try and turn around but to no avail. A sudden rage helped me on the way though. Clara growled and stepped to the surface and whatever tool they had around my head shattered.

My head snapped to the side and I saw their shocked faces. The woman turned from shock to a grin as she patted Justin on his arm.

"Good luck," he ran a hand through his visibly sweaty hair and walked over to me.

"Nicely done, Hulk." He joked but I saw the worry on his face.

"What's a little plastic to a werewolf," I laughed.

"Oh nothing at all but metal clampers however, that's something." I looked at the pieces that had fallen on the side of the bed and he was right, they were made of metal.

my jaw dropped and I looked up at him.

"Whops,"

"You're strong," he sat down on a chair that pulled right next to the bed.

"I'm guessing that most of the people here are," Justin nodded his head and looked away with his lip tucked between his teeth.

"They are, but I think you're a bit special," the question was there on the tip of my tongue, and I knew I had to ask. Simultaneously, I sensed his apprehension in answering it.

"What happened to me out there?" The air shifted around us, and both Justin and I turned and looked at Nathaniel, who stood by the stairs. His imposing figure looked like a shadow until he stepped out in the light.

"No need to worry. Harnessing the powers of our memories and thoughts is not an easy task. That's why we start training the young ones early. It will be a little harder for you given you age and experience out in the world. For them, it's all fun and games, but for you, who has truly lived, it will take some time to adapt.

"But you think I'll be able to do it?" I asked, the warm light accentuating Nathaniel's features. While waiting for his response, I stole a quick glance at Justin, who seemed restless and fidgety, tapping his foot against the floor.

"Of course, I will work on it with you personally," Nathaniel assured me, his captivating eyes drawing anyone in. His hair looked slightly ruffled, with strands hanging in front of his eyes. The shirt clung to his body and his tattoos began on the back of his hand and slithered all the way up under his sleeve.

"Great," I replied with a smile. He stood there quietly, observing me, before casting his gaze down on Justin, who understood his unspoken request. Justin looked at me and with a strained smile he got up from the chair and placed it back in the corner. The dark wooden chair had a wicker seating that blended into the wall.

The entire place had a dark, wooden ambiance, reminiscent of a ski resort.

I glanced up and noticed the lights that hung across the walls.

"Wait," Justin turned around.

"Is this my room?" A genuine smile spread across his face. "It is. Rest up, and we'll continue practice later."

That night, I slept like a log and the sun didn't reach my house as it did back home. Speaking of home...i missed it.

My feet touched the cool surface and I rubbed my eyes. I made myself a cup of coffee, and stepped outside. My neighbors greeted me with friendly smiles and waved as they passed by. The atmosphere was so welcoming, it felt like being in Disneyland.

It was strange that I hadn't heard a single bad word about anyone. In every town, there would usually be someone grumpy or unpleasant. However, here, everyone seemed to get along.

A couple walked past me with a basket in their hands and laughed as they crossed down the streets. "Did you sleep well?" Justin came up on my side, and it was good to see him, even though he looked a little worn out.

"Like a log, but I can see that you didn't," he raised his to-go cup up to his lips and downed the last sip of coffee.

"There's more inside," I said, laughing, as he followed me back in.

I filled his cup and handed it to him. Justin's fingers lingered on mine as he grabbed the cup from me and took a sip. His face contorted in a grimace, and he winced.

"You do not make coffee very often, do you," he remarked somewhat rudely, prompting the back of my hand to slightly slam against his arm.

"How are you?" We sat down on the couch, facing each other. "I'm good, sleeping really helped with the pain."

"I'm glad," there was a moment of silence, where neither of us uttered a word, and the sound of our breathing was barely audible

"How about you?" His eyes snapped to mine attentively, and he cleared his throat.

"It's been busy." Looking down in my cup I felt my lips twitching up in a smile and I lifted my eyes. "That's not what I asked," I said.

Justin's lips parted, his eyes flickering between mine, and he let out a nervous chuckle. He looked up at me through hooded eyes and tossed his head.

"We should get going. You have a lot to practice."

We walked to the water, just like last time, but instead of stopping where the kids were, we walked past their condensing gazes and continued up the river.

I scoffed and glared at them.

"She passed out," I overheard one of the kids whisper.

"It's hard!" Justin grabbed my arm and pulled me along while laughing.

"Who's he to judge? He doesn't even have his wolf." I whined as I pulled my arm free from his grip. "Sure but he's not wrong—" Justin gave me a side eye.

"—you did pass out." Jackass.

After walking for another fifteen minutes, we finally made it to where I was going to practice. However, it wasn't going to be just me and Justin, as I had initially thought. Nathaniel stood with his hands in his pockets, gazing out over the land.

"It's good to see you up on your feet again." He said, his back still turned to us. I glanced at Justin, feeling a sense of worry creeping up my spine, and I clasped my hands together. Justin's sudden tenseness and posture wasn't making it easier either.

Nathaniel turned around and looked at Justin. He raised his head and gave a slight nod. "Thank you for bringing her here. You can go." Justin looked at me and without thinking, I reached out and held his arm.

"Why can't he stay?" I asked, seeking an answer from Nathaniel. However, he remained silent. I felt Justin's hand gently remove mine from his arm and he bowed his head to his king.

A quick glance was all I got from him before he turned around and left.

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Rejected To Be Your Second Chance: Chapter 38

"Keep your head low," Nathaniel advised.

"Why?" I asked, raising an eyebrow.

"because you don't need to react to anything, but your wolf does. Keep your face away from anything that may disturb your focus, and then deep breaths." No idea why that was revilement at all but decided to trust him. I closed my eyes, shook out my arms, and before lowering my head, focusing on my breathing.

Deep breaths, in and out. My chest expanded as the scent of the water and the forest filled my lungs.

I jumped and opened my eyes when Nathaniel's hand suddenly rested against my stomach. He stood behind me, I looked over my shoulder and saw his eyes were closed.

"Close your eyes." He ordered. How did he know?

I listened, taking a deep breath, and exhaling slowly. His hand remained there softly pressing against my stomach, following my movements.

"Do you remember the waterfall?" He asked me. His voice took on a much nicer and calmer note that was more pleasing to listen to.

"I do,"

"visualize it." It didn't take long before the image of the waterfall appeared before me.

The water streaming down, and the children laughing as they jumped down from the top. The sound of the water breaking the surface of the river and the sun reflecting off the wall.

"Feel it," I imagine putting my hand in the waterfall, feeling the water flowing down either side of my hand. "Smell it." His soothing voice eased my nerves as the scents of cedar, grass, earth, and rainwater filled my nose.

"You're going to learn the basics—how to see a memory and make it real in your mind." It was an odd feeling. As if my feet were truly walking on the tickling grass and the wind that blew softly against my skin felt like tender caresses.

He took a hold of my hand and positioned it over his own.

I wasn't sure about the reasoning behind the move. Was I supposed to feel or see something, as it had when I touched the table?

He intertwined our fingers, his chest pressed up against me as he breathed and I felt him growing tenser behind me.

Nathaniel's hands suddenly pulled away from me and I turned around.

He had stepped back and observed me.

"You didn't see anything?" He asked. I shook my head.

"I didn't, what was I expected to see?" He took a deep breath, expanding his chest and causing his shirt to stretch, revealing the contours of his pecs through the thin fabric

"Never mind. It seems to take longer than I anticipated to teach you our powers." In the blink of an eye, Nathaniel bent down and swiftly picked up a rock that was tossed at my face. Staring at him with wide eyes I circled my fingers around the pointy rock and threw it aside.

"What the hell is wrong with you!" The blood rushed to my head, as I stepped towards him. "Is this how you teach the pups, by throwing rocks in their faces?"

"Are you ten?" He retorted, raising an eyebrow.

"No, I'm not." I seethed, taking a step back.

"Then don't compare yourself to those who are. Your training will be different because you are different. Our plan has to be tailored to your abilities." He scanned me up and down and clicked his tongue.

"You're fast, we can use that. How about your strength?" Before I knew it, he stood in front of me. Nathaniel gripped my arm and twisted it behind my back, causing me to grit my teeth in pain. I faced the water, with him pressed against my back holding my arm in a painful position. "Let's play a game. Let's see if you can break free before I break your arm." He pressed my arm further up towards my neck, and I growled. My other arm grabbed a hold of his arm and I spun on my feet, ducking under his arm and pushed at his chest so he fell back a step.

The pride shimmered in his eyes, much like the sun itself.

"Nicely done," he cooed and grinned.

"Let's head back, you're done for today."

"That's it? That's the whole practice?" I asked as my arms shot out. All he had done was have me breath and then nearly break my arm.

"That was it. I need to plan out a new schedule for you, and once I do, your training sessions will be three to six hours a day for the foreseeable future."

"I'm sorry, what?"

"See it as a full time job-" he said and started walking back but he paused for a second and turned halfway.

"-only you're not getting paid, and it will be physically and mentally brutal." Lovely.

I was thrilled to see my fridge and freezer were fully stocked with both meats and veggies as well as snacks and ice cream. Taking out some chicken breasts and pasta I decided I'd make a delicious dinner. I've never cooked before, as it was always my parents or the pack chef who handled the kitchen duties, so I figured it was time to learn.

"Parmesan chicken," I said, mouth watering as I read the recipe and looked at the pictures.

'You've never cooked in your whole life' Clara said, sounding worried.

"I know that but how hard can this be? The recipe is step by step"

'Alrighty' Clara was eagerly watching everything I did and smelling the chicken had her salivating.

'I smell something. It smells burnt' She commented. I turned around and cursed when I saw the onion turning black in the pan.

"It's fine," I said, quickly rinsing them under water.

'Imagine if you just got this house for free and within a week, you burn it to the ground' Clara remarked sarcastically.

"Thanks, Clara"

'Anytime, Layla'

"Ahem," I turned around and saw Justin clearing his throat behind me, displaying a cheeky grin and a guilty look on his face.

"I knocked, but I don't think you heard me, and then I smelled fire and invited myself in." He leaned over and peered into the pan.

"It looks good, but you know, I think cream would make the sauce tastier than water." I playfully nudged him with my shoulder and rolled my eyes.

"I'm learning here, it takes time. Nobody can expect perfection on the first try,"

"That's very true." He said, bobbing his head.

"Um," I turned with a glare, noticing his hand was held out over the pan. "You might want to add some oil to that first,"

"...great, now pour in the onions." I was walking away to start cutting the garlic when he called me over.

"You can't just leave the pan unsupervised. The onions will burn if you don't stir them,"

"Oh," I started stirring and sighed. Never did it occur to me how boring cooking food would be.

I added the chicken and was about to add the cream when his hand shot out again. There was certainly nothing wrong with my visualization skills because I could clearly imagine his hand on top of that cutting board and a knife slicing down on his wrist.

"The chicken has to cook first," he said, tryin to hold back hid laughter, hid face turning red.

"I knew that," I gently placed the cream down and waited patiently.

'Patiently?' Somewhat patiently...

Justin took over and flipped the chicken like a pro, tossing it in the pan. I leaned back against the counter, sipped my coffee, and enjoyed the delightful aromas that were filling my house. "Voila, dinner is served," he smiled as he filled a plate and garnished it with some parsley and shredded parmesan. I returned the smile, walked over to the cabinet and grabbed another plate. "You can't cook and not eat," I said and loaded up a plate for him.

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Rejected To Be Your Second Chance: Chapter 39

~Kade's POV~

The vase came flying at my head and broke into shards that scattered in every direction. The TV had a big hole in it from the clock that took a hit and, and a chair was currently being smashed against the table, which surprisingly remained unscathed

Only when the chair was completely demolished did Anna fall back a step. Her eyes glowed, and her canines were extended. She lifted her arm and slammed her fist down on the table, breaking it in two. Cara leaned back against the wall, arms crossed over her chest, and her gaze fixed on the floor.

Mason was watching from over by the couch, and none of us said a word. We just let her get it out of her system.

"How are you feeling?" I asked. And Anna took a deep breath, growling as she turned to me

Anna's eyes slowly went back to their former shape and color and her canines were retracted. Drops of sweat pearled on her foreheads and her hair was hanging heavy in a tussle at the back of her head.

"Better. I still want to kill you, but I'm feeling better." I nodded, unable to do anything but agree with her.

"Is everything alright in here?" I closed my eyes and hung my head. Anna growled loudly and grabbed a stick from the broken chair, flinging it at Danielle who was standing behind me.

My hand shot out, catching it, and I slowly lifted my head and stared at her. Anna charged towards Danielle, but I reached out, the stick fell from my hands as I grabbed Anna's shoulders to stop her.

"Calm down." I growled.

Cara approached and pulled Anna to her.

"Danielle you should leave," she placed some hair behind her ear and looked up at me through her lashes.

"Sure, I just heard a lot of loud noises and growling so i though I'd check up on you and make sure everyone was okay."

"We're fine." Mason said coldly from over by the couch. She nodded her head and pinched her lips together.

Cara had her hand on Anna's wrist and I was hoping she wouldn't let go, not because I was afraid of what she'd do to Danielle but what Danielle would do to her.

"I think I'll leave then," I bowed my head and kept my eyes locked on her as she turned and walked away.

"Fuck," i clenched my fists, struggling to restrain self from breaking any additional item in his room.

"Who's coming?" We heard tires screeching on the gravel up to the house.

A black sedan stopped with the gold plated lion head shining on the hood.

The door opened and Cara ran down the stairs in glee. Mason tapped my shoulder and chuckled before following after her.

"Who are they?" Anna stood beside me and ogled the passengers that stepped out when the guard opened their doors.

"Our parents," I said, and her eyes widened a fraction. she discreetly covered her bloody knuckles behind her back. "Kade, come down here!" Nodding my head I walked past Anna and stepped down to meet my parents who had been gone for almost a year.

"Son, it's good to see you,' my father exclaimed, slapping his hand down on my shoulder. He stood a few mere inches taller than me but oozed authority and power without even trying. He was the man I always wanted to make proud, the one I worked for when I stayed up nights and days for weeks to prove myself ready for the privilege and role of Alpha of the pack.

"It's good to see you too," I replied, clapping his shoulder and pulling him in for a hug.

"Kade," my mother pulled my father aside and cupped my cheeks.

Her brows furrowed, and her emerald green eyes bore into mine, scanning my face. She tilted my head back, and dragged her fingers over my stubble.

"What's wrong?" She asked softly, while pulling my head back down again.

"What happened while we were gone?" Nothing ever went past her. She was the one that would force me to go to sleep after having stayed up for days. She was the one who saw when i hadn't eaten because i was wrapped up in the office and there was no discussion either she tell you me and my siblings to sleep or to eat and that would be it.

"A lot," Mason spoke up on my behalf, relieving me of the burden of explaining the events that had unfolded during their absence.

"Maybe we should take this inside, yes?" I suggested. My father nodded his head and placed his hand on my mothers back.

The door to my office closed, and my father strutted around looking at the little changes I had made in his absence.

"It looks good, much more suited for you now." He said in a chuckle but I could detect a hint of envy and sadness in his eyes.

My father didn't want to step down, but every leader must know when their time is up and he did. "Tell us what happened, son."

"I was mated to another, a- a second mate." I sighed, and shook my head when I thought about telling them the story of what happened while they were gone.

My mother removed her jacket and hung it over the chair. Normally, when she received good news, she was louder and happier than anyone in the room, regardless of whether or not she knew the person but especially so when it was one of her children. But this time, she remained void and calm because she knew that what was meant to be happy news had taken a bad turn. She could read us like open books and knew more about our pages than we did ourselves. "What did you do?" She asked in a monotone voice as she crossed her arms over her chest. "I fucked up."

"Language." She scolded and lifted a brow.

I nodded my head and looked around the room.

"Sorry. Her name is Layla, I found her during the Meeting of Alphas at Alpha Sebastians pack. She, apparently, was mated to him first but they rejected each other." My mother looked might unimpressed and lifted her head with a scolding gaze.

"It's a lovely little history lesson you've given us here but why don't you skip ahead to how you ruined it." Cara shrunk in her seat and Mason tried looking anywhere but at us. It didn't matter how old we got, parents were parents, especially our mother.

"Danielle came back." I confessed. My mothers chest heaved, and her jaw dropped to the floor. My father shifted in his seat and placed his hands on his knees as he stood tall.

"Please tell me you did not invite her back." My mom whispered. At that moment, there was a knock on the office door, and I saw Anna staring at me through the glass. She had showered, clearly not wanting my parents to see her covered in blood and sweat.

I nodded my head, and Anna stepped inside. My parents turned their heads and carefully looked between us.

My mom, in her usual poise, got up and walked over with a soft smile.

"I'm Elisabeth and who may you be?" She greeted Anna, extending her hand. Anna shook her hand. "Anna, I came here with Layla," Anna replied. That seemed to pull my mom back to the conversation. She turned with a scowl that seemed to carry a lifetime of disapproval, and I instinctively pressed back against the desk.

"Maybe we should continue." She suggested.

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Rejected To Be Your Second Chance: Chapter 40

"Where is she now?" My mother asked after I had encountered everything that had happened in their absence. My father stood there, massaging his temple with his eyes closed and his head bowed. "That's not all," I said. I pinched the bridge of my nose and looked up at my mom. "Layla's an Emberclaw, and we believe that she's with them right now." My father's head flew up and he and my mother shared a worried look.

"What?" I asked. She didn't turn her head but instead she looked down on the floor.

"Honey, this is much worse than you realize," she said, avoiding eye contact. Her eyes finally rose and my father went over to the bookcase and opened a hidden compartment. He took out a thick book that was unfamiliar to me, and I stepped away from the desk as he came to place it down.

"Why do you look so guilty?" I asked him.

He sighed and shook his head.

"because you should've known about this a long time ago, but we didn't know how or if to tell you." "We hoped—due to the silence, that they had either been unsuccessful or given up.—We know now that we were wrong." He looked at my mother and opened the book. "They were just waiting."

The first page showed a wolf ending down and warning other men who stood in front of it. They were holding spears and their eyes were black.

"What is this?" I flipped the page and read the initial lines at the top.

'Regning in the beast in blue, they walked for miles, but few were left. Why did they come? Why did they hate so abundantly and why could they not live in peace away from those who did not wish to be subordinates?'

"Subordinates?" My father nodded his head.

"submissive," he explained and I nodded my head.

"No, I know what it means but I don't understand the implication. In all stories, it is said that the Emberclaws were the victims—captured, killed, and used for our gain. They left to seek a sanctuary, where they have been hiding ever since!" My voice grew louder, and my eyes narrowed as I looked at my father's gaze. I could feel my wolf trying to come out, eager to be let out. My eyes were narrowed on him and I felt my wolf stirring trying to get out.

I dug my nails into the palm of my hand.

"This book is bullshit. Why is it full of lies, and why the hell is it in this house?"

"They are the ones spreading lies!" Anna took a step back and my brother and sister both lowered their heads as his voice rose over mine and filled the room.

A soft hand circled its fingers over his shoulder and my mother stood by his side.

"They have been playing their own agenda for centuries, wanting their story out in the world for pity and protection. They never wanted peace and quiet, they were never hunted or used, they were the hunters." Anna stepped up beside me and looked at my mother in shock.

"What do you mean? How are they the hunters?"

Another few pages were flipped over and Anna started reading it.

"A superior species born with more strength and less heart. What is this that mother nature believed our world to need? Was one beast not enough? Was the numerous creatures walking on this earth not enough? Was the hatred amongst werewolves, vampires, humans and all others that know of and know of not, not enough? With lesser heart and cravings for power they want to overthrow us; to take over packs and become the new, improved and superior race of werewolves. The Emberclaws are dangerous alone but together they are a threat. A threat that we do not know if we can go up against and win...no, we can not go up against them and win. Brewing in silence and hiding in the dark we have little idea of what they are planning but a plan there is. To protect my people, how do I do that when I do not know what I'm protecting them from? How to keep a pack safe when mighty Alphas call in wonder of the threats we are facing and I can not give them answers nor can they advise me..." she stopped reading but stared at the paper.

Her head quickly turned and her tear-filled eyes glistened.

"You have to find her. She doesn't know any of this and if she's with them they will be telling her their own story."

"Their own truth," my mother added. She looked at my father and nodded her head.

"There is more, son." I groaned and grabbed my shoulder.

"Of course there is."

"The leader, his name is Nathaniel Parkin. He is the latest in a line of leaders all from the same bloodline leading back to the first, and he is..." He pauses briefly, searching for the right word, but when he looked at me with darkened eyes I saw that there was no sugarcoating word that would make it sound better than it was. "...a matter of manipulation who will do whatever it takes to continue this legacy."

"And we think he has found the last piece of the puzzle." I looked at my mom and got dizzy from looking back and forth between them whilst simultaneously trying to grasp the information that was leading me more and more into a dark pit of anger. My girl was out there oblivious to what was really happening, and I needed to find her.

'Which girl?' Zeke was furious with me. He had barely spoken to me since Layla left, and though both him and I had two mates, the same mates, it was easier for him to know what was real.

"What do you mean about the final piece?" I inquired.

"It was said that the last Emberclaw wasn't born yet, but when they were, the line would end. We don't know if it's true or a myth, but there hasn't been a single Emberclaw born in decades. Not in regular packs. Now you're telling us that Layla, your new mate, is an Emberclaw, and if they have her in their claws, then I think we'll find out why very soon."

"Will they hurt her?" Annas voice hitched as she cried out the words.

"As long as she plays her part in their machine, no."

"And if she doesn't?" I asked.

"They will do anything to assure their victory, including taking out those who stand against them or their fate."

My fathers brows furrowed, and he looked quizzically at the book.

"What is the last name of your mate?"

"Lecruet, Layla Lecruet."

He flipped through the pages whilst whispering incoherent words.

"There is...something should be... I know that name..."

"Here!" He called and pointed with his fingers to a name written in the litteral stars of a picture. "Lecruet," i said.

"How is that name in there? Her family aren't Emberclaws." I exclaimed.

The atmosphere shifted, and my mother took a sharp breath. Mason and Cara stepped closer and stood around us, and my mother looked around at everyone before landing her narrowed gaze on mine.

"Perhaps not her parents, but a bloodline extends much further than that. There's an Emerlcaw in her bloodline, a strong one, who left their mark in history and passed on the legacy to your mate."

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