

The Silent Alpha by StephanieLight Chapter 61

61. Soul Binding Part 1

Talia

“Mark me,” I murmur, climbing onto his bare lap and straddling Zane between my thighs.

Zane’s cheeks flush in their cute, timid way, his stutter more pronounced when he speaks.

“A-Ar Are y you sure?” He blinks, a nervous smile curling on his lips as he guides his hands and places them on my hips. “Be Because I can wait”

I press my mouth over his, parting my lips ever so slightly so that my tongue slips between the seams of his mouth. Small sparks tingle across my face, my wolf purring at the sensation of our tongues meeting for a dance.

When I pull away, I cup his cheeks and force him to look at me, his large brown eyes full of love and hope as they gaze back at me.

Desire burns across my heart as I realize he is the only man to ever make me feel this safe and loved before, the only one who does not hesitate to protect me, even from my own feelings. He is gentle when I need him to be and strong when I feel I might break. He is patient with me, even when I have no patience left for myself and he loves me. He loves me... and it feels so good to be loved by him.

I lean my forehead against his, pecking his perfect lips and inhaling his rich scent. “Make me yours,” I whisper, standing up to unzip my jeans and slide them off. His cheeks burn bright red as he blinks up at me, unsure if he should watch or look away. Wanting to make him squirm just a little, I slowly pull my blouse over my head so I remain only in my bra and panties. My eyes flick towards the hardening member between his legs, a smirk spreading across my cheeks as I play with the straps of my bra.

I position my feet on either side of his thighs, Zane timidly sliding his hands up and down my calves. Hesitation flickers in his eyes but he nonetheless leans forward and peppers kisses on my legs, an ache building in my core. Very gently, I lower myself onto his lap, wrapping my legs around his waist so that our bodies are pressed up against each other.

He tries to kiss me but I dodge his lips and shower kisses on his jaw all the way down to his neck, basking in his delicious scent. My tongue slides over his bare flesh while my teeth graze his marking spot, Zane shivering in response.

“Ta-Talia, ar-are y-you sure?” He asks once more, cupping my face to get me to stop kissing him.

His brows are furrowed in genuine concern, his actions verifying that I am, in fact, making the right choice because he cares enough to ask.

“You are the only thing I’m sure about right now,” I murmur, cupping his face.

“And I trust you’ll take care of my heart,” I murmur between kisses. “Won’t you?”

“Y-yes,” he nods. “I-I promise.”

“Then make me yours,” I giggle, pecking him on the lips and reaching for his hands. “Please.”

guide his hands to my bra and notice his hands trembling a little as they grip the clasp.

“Don’t be nervous,” I whisper in his ear, lowering my voice as I nibble on his ear lobe. “You don’t have to be scared. Not with me,” | reassure him, slowly gyrating my hips against his growing member. “I’m going to be yours, right?” I ask, Zane nodding as he swallows the lump in his throat. “Then show me,” | murmur, kissing the tip of his nose. “Show me what it means to be yours.”

Gold flecks appear in his eyes, Grayson and Zane gazing back at me as if their souls were merging for a moment to claim me.

“There you are,” I whisper. “My mate. My perfect mate.”

Zane closes his eyes and takes a deep breath, the muscles in his face relaxing so that when he looks at me again, it’s just him and I.

My mate gently raises his hand to my face, his fingers lightly grazing my skin.

He traces my eyes and nose with the back of his index

finger until his thumb comes to rest on my lips, parting them slightly.

61. Soul Binding Part 1

A kaleidoscope of butterflies flutters in my belly, the word finding new meaning when it leaves Zane’s lips. For so long, I felt

inadequate as I strived for perfection and yet now, in Zane’s arms, I am beautiful despite my tousled hair and swollen eyes. I do not have

to be anything but myself with him, and it makes my heart soar to know I will always be safe with Zane.

I feel his hand slide down my neck, stopping just below my marking spot where he begins to trace a heart shape. Sparks erupt

beneath his lips when he leans over to kiss it, my entire body reacting to him and his touch.

“I-I love y-you,” he hums to himself as he begins to suck on my skin. “Goddess, I-I love y-you,” he repeats with conviction.

He raises his head and looks me deep in my eyes in search of any doubt, his fears and anxieties melting away when he realizes all want is him.

Zane pulls me closer to him, brushing away my hair from my shoulders to expose my neck.

“Ta-Talia,” he murmurs, his voice sending a warm shiver down my spine.

Devina purrs contently, loving the sound of his voice as he whispers my name in my ears.

He moves his hands to my back, finally unclasping my bra in one swoop. Having escaped from their prison, my breasts bounce a little, catching Zane’s attention.

He cups one of them, rolling his thumb over my n****e before leaning forward and taking it in his mouth.

A need builds up in my core as he encloses his lips over the little brown peak and suckles on it, a soft moan escaping my lips.

My hips begin to grind over his c**k in circular motions, Zane’s breath hitching in pleasure. I pick up the pace to get some friction but Zane grabs onto my hips to control my movements as he sees fit. My panties dampen as he guides me back and forth along his shaft,

pushing me down a little harder so the fabric of my underwear brushes against my swollen clit with every stroke. He switches between my n****s, his tongue lapping over my areolas and flicking each peak. His touch sets my body on fire, every inch of me craving him with burning need until all I desire is him.

Just as I feel myself about to explode and beg for more, Zane slides his hands between my legs, his fingers pushing aside my panties. He looks up at me and gives me a shy smile, taking his c**k in his hand and lining it up with my slit. I moan as he pushes in his tip, my hands grabbing onto his shoulders to steady myself as I thrust my hips forward to take him in further.

We rock in unison in search of a steady tempo, my body shivering in delight as the all too familiar desire builds up inside my pussy.

He moves his mouth over mine, devouring my cries of pleasure as he pumps slowly and deep into my core. My walls welcome him over and over again in a tight embrace, clenching and unclenching his perfect c**k as each deep stroke brushes past my clit.

My hands slide up to the nape of his neck, my fingers grasping onto his hair and pulling him closer so my body feels every inch of him. He grows annoyed with my panties, pulling them farther away from my slit with two fingers to give him better access when we both hear the fabric tear.

He stops pumping for a moment, looking down at our union to tear the rest of my panties off and toss them aside with a sheepish grin on his face.

“Th-they were in the w-way,” he mumbles, a small chuckle bubbling in my chest. Now having complete access to me, he grabs onto my ass cheeks, pushing himself all the way inside me. My breath hitches at the unbelievable sensation, my head falling back as I cry out for more.

Zane continues pumping forcefully, once again suckling on each of my breasts and lapping his tongue over my wolf tattoo. He breathes heavily with every thrust, moaning softly against my skin.

His fingers lightly brush away my hair from my shoulder, exposing my bare neck to him. He pulls away from my n****s, peppering kisses along my collarbone up to my throat. His lips worship my marking spot, my flesh tingling with sparks as his teeth graze the place where my neck and shoulder meet. Zane slides his hand up my spine, a warm shudder rippling through me as his fingers make their way to the nape of my neck to grab fistfuls of my hair.

My heart pounds in my chest in anticipation of what comes next, the gravity of the situation hitting me full force.

I am about to become his...

The gentleness of his kisses and his slow pumps calm me down, however, reminding me that he will take care of my soul as he cares for my body and my heart.

My toes curl as he pushes himself in a little deeper, hitting a spot that electrifies my body. I thrust with him, wanting to feel the sensation again..

“Zane...” I whimper, feeling as though I might collapse into him.

His canines elongate, the sharpened edges scraping along my skin as he kisses my neck.

"I love y-you, Ta-Talia," he says between breathy whispers. "I love y-you." I gasp when I feel the sharp pain of his canines piercing my flesh, my nails digging half-moons into his back. Tears blur my vision as I hold onto him, pain and pleasure pulsating from my temples to my toes in short bursts as I reach my climax.

"Fuck..." I whimper, burying my face in the crook of his neck as he seals the mark with his tongue, my body shuddering with aftershocks of my orgasm and my mark.

His arms wrap around my waist, the pain slowly fading into pure and unbelievable pleasure.

"Mate!" I suddenly cry out, my voice morphing into rich, sultry tones I don't recognize as my own.

A grayish wolf materializes in my mind, shoving me aside and taking control of my body.

Zane's eyes widen with shock as he stares back at me, his brown irises flickering between gold and earth. A boyish smile curls on his lips, his twinkling eyes oozing with joy and excitement.

"Zane..." Devina purrs, cupping both of Zane's cheeks to look at him for the first time.

In a swift motion, she tilts his head to the side to expose his neck, my teeth itching as my canines suddenly erupt.

They latch onto his neck, Zane groaning from the abrupt pain before letting out a soft growl of pleasure.

"Mine," Devina murmurs as she licks the wound and pulls away. "You're mine now too."

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62. Worthy Opponents

*****Grayson*****

Pleasure pulsates in delicious waves as Talia sinks her canines into my neck while an indescribable joy fills my heart.

She marked us.

Our mate claimed us, bound our souls as one, and declared her undying love for us with a single bite. She is ours and we belong to

her now too.

Devina ... Her name is Devina, it reminds Zane when she-wolf seals the mark with her tongue and pulls away.

"Mine," our mate purrs. "You're mine now too."

Zane stares blankly at the she-wolf who smirks back at him with eyes as blue as sapphires. He's completely clueless as to how to handle our mate's new wolf counterpart and remains silent in her presence.

Step aside, chump, I sigh, rolling my neck and shoving Zane to the back of our mind as I take control. Watch and learn.

As I step forward and gaze into my mate's incredible blue eyes, however, I find myself unable to think of anything to say, too mesmerized by Devina's presence.

Devina frowns, tilting her head off to the side as she looks at me with curiosity.

"Do you not like my mark?" Devina asks, batting her pretty lashes at me.

"No, I do!" I blurt out. "It's just, I thought-"

"So then why am I not cumming yet?" she pouts, leaving me completely speechless.

I only manage to blink, Zane howling with laughter at me.

"H.."

That's quite the extensive vocabulary, Zane mutters. I can't seem to keep up .

Shut up! I mumble back, Zane cackling in return.

"Grayson..." Devina murmurs, leaning over to my right ear and lowering her voice to a hiss. "My clit isn't going to lick itself."

Her hot breath makes my skin erupt into goosebumps and warm shivers crawl down my spine. I love a woman who knows what she wants, especially if what she wants is me, but this woman? She will be the death of me.

"What's wrong, my love?" The she-wolf teases me when I remain silent.

"I was told you liked to play..." she giggles, tracing a finger along my jaw and down my chest where she pinches my n****e. "Do you want to play with me?"

I wince at the slight pain but I find it rather arousing to be at her mercy.

Goddess, this she-wolf already has me wrapped around her finger, and what's worse, she knows it.

She's walking circles around you, Zane chuckles. I'm taking notes.

"You're a man of few words aren't you?" She murmurs, sliding her hand between my thighs and adjusting herself over my c**k."

Perhaps you'd prefer to moan my name instead?"

She slides me inside her, wrapping her walls tightly around my girth with a knowing smirk on her lips and begins to rock her hips in slow but determined thrusts. I, however, don't plan to let her get away with teasing me.

"I'd rather you moan mine," I smirk, the grin on Devina's face faltering slightly.

I pull out, hooking my hands around her thighs and lifting her off my lap so that Devina wraps her legs around my waist. She holds onto my neck as I get on my knees and I very gently set her down on her back and spread her legs apart. Devina giggles excitedly as I lay between her thighs, pushing her knees to her chest and folding her almost in half so her p***y is easily accessible. Lining myself with her slit, I slowly push my tip in, using my knees to thrust myself inside with hard strokes.

Devina's back arches as she cries out in pleasure, her breasts bouncing with every pump I give her. I watch them jiggle, her small peaks begging to be licked and I succumb to their spell, leaning forward to flick them with my tongue. A shudder ripples through Devina. She tightens her walls as she comes closer, her toes curling and her body turning rigid until finally, she explodes, c*m pouring out of her in small spurts. I smirk with satisfaction at having made her squirt for the second time, Devina smiling lazily as she rides her high.

It only takes a few more pumps before I start to see stars, my seed emptying completely inside my mate until I have nothing left to give. I close my eyes and let my head rest on Devina's shoulder, my mate purring contentedly at having made me c*m harder than I ever have before. She kisses my temples as I catch my breath, her fingers gently stroking the sides of my face, leaving sparks in their wake.

“Mate...” Devina murmurs as we lay in each other’s arms, a small smile curled on her lips. “I have a mate.”

“You do,” I chuckle between my pants, rolling over on my side and pulling her to my chest. “A very sexy one, I might add.”

“Can I meet your other half?” she asks, biting her lower lip. “You took him away before I could even say hello.”

“He can hear us just fine,” I pout, unwilling to part with my mate.

“I’m not going anywhere,” Devina says with a sad smile, brushing my beard with the back of her finger. “You’re the one leaving me.”

“What-”

“I can feel my human’s sadness,” she sighs. “She says you’re going to war... and that you’re leaving us.”

“-”

“You don’t have to explain. I understand why,” my mate murmurs, tucking her head underneath my chin. “She’s just afraid... but don’t worry. I’ll protect our family while you’re away. You just bring yourself home to me in one piece. I would be terribly sad if something were to happen to that dick-I mean you,” she grins, wiggling her eyebrows innocently.

I can’t help but laugh at her shenanigans, the feeling a little strange and foreign to me. Having spent most of my entire existence locked away in Zane’s mind, I have never had the opportunity to laugh out loud like this, especially not with someone I’ve only just met,

I feel like shitting out rainbows as butterflies do cartwheels in my stomach for I am free at last and I have found a home in my mate.

She goes very still as she leans in to listen to the sound of my heart pounding in my chest, humming to the beat of my life.

Suddenly feeling very vulnerable, I lick my lips and bury my face in her hair so she does not see how nervous I am.

“Will you go on a date with me before I go?” I ask.

Devina

Will you stop with the purring? My human asks. You sound like a cat! I growl in distaste at her and turn my attention back to my mate, trying my best to hide my excitement. I nod in response to his question, Grayson shaking his head at me.

“Words, my love. I need words,” he chuckles. “I deal with enough silence from my human. I want to hear your words.”

“Okay,” I shrug.

“Okay what?” he pries.

Growing mildly annoyed, I smirk and look up at him. “If I threw a stick, you’d leave, right?”

He grins cheekily in response. “If I put my stick inside you, you’d c’um, right?”

Finally a worthy opponent...

“You’re so annoying. I’d slap you but that would be considered animal abuse,” I mutter back.

“You know, you’re quite a b***h for someone who doesn’t have a wolf yet,” he retorts.

“Your ass must be jealous of your p***y,” Grayson smirks as I raise a questioning eyebrow at him. “It farts louder.”

He’s never going to let that go, is he? Talia mutters.

I have a comeback ready but knowing his human already struggles with his own self image, I decide to let Grayson win this round, and kiss the tip of his nose in defeat.

Thank you for caring for my mate’s heart, Talia whispers.

He’s my mate now too, I reply with a purr. I love his heart.

Grayson rolls over on top of me, resting his hands on either side of my face. Pup-like excitement oozes from him and if he were in wolf form, his tail would be wagging excitedly from side to side.

“So date?” he asks, his eyes softening with hopefulness.

“I would love to go on a date with you,” I reply in hushed whispers, sliding my hand down his chest and between his legs until I cup his balls. “But only if you make me cum.”

Grayson groans as I stroke his c**k, his eyes darkening with lust as he accepts my challenge. He completes his task multiple times, even stepping aside to let his human through. Zane is much gentler, but equally as passionate, both of them making Talia and I feel like goddesses.

Completely exhausted, I give Talia back control of her body and after finding their clothes, the two humans walk hand in hand back to the guest house. I watch Talia curiously as she walks just a few steps ahead, as if guiding Zane through a storm, while Zane's eyes scan ahead vigilantly for intruders.

It's adorable how they protect each other without even knowing it and my heart flutters knowing our pup must be equally loved and protected by them.

Our pup.

I'm so excited to be a mom and though he cannot see my inner wolf as Talia can, this does not stop me from licking my fur and grooming myself. I must look my best when meeting my new son.

As we step through the door of the house, we hear loud screaming, an older woman trying to reason with a little boy no more than 4 years old.

"I don't wanna nap!" the little boy screams at the woman, stomping his small foot on the floor while clutching a wolf to his chest. "I don't wanna! I don't wann-"

He stops mid speech to yawn, the older woman chuckling to herself.

"Kota, you are cranky because you have not had your nap," the woman scolds him.

The sound of the door closing draws their attention, the little boy wiping his tear stained cheeks and running over to greet his mother. She gets down on her knees and opens her arms out wide to receive him, the boy nearly knocking her over as he rushes to hug her.

Talia gives the pup a good squeeze and showers him with kisses before the boy pulls away and looks her in the eyes.

T examine him closely, mesmerized by his innocent beauty. His thick brows and tiny nose resemble his mother's but his most striking features are his eyes. One is the color of clear skies while the other resembles the earth, rich brown tones swirling together in his iris.

“Why are you crying? Hmm? Why is my baby crying?” Talia coos, wiping Kota's tired eyes with her thumbs. “Are you sleepy, mi rey{my king)?”

He hiccups through his pout, shaking his head angrily for being accused of being tired.

“Do your eyes feel heavy when you open them?” Talia asks, Kota nodding.

“Come here,” Talia smiles, Kota wrapping his arms around her neck as she carries him.

She looks over her shoulder, thanking the woman named Rionna for watching him in her absence. She takes the boy upstairs with Zane at our heels, whispering loving words to Kota until she gets to his bed where he begins to sob.

“Okay, Kota, you don't have to nap,” Talia reassures him, putting him down and climbing into his bed by herself. “Do you want to come lay with me?” she asks.

Kota wipes his nose and nods, climbing on with her and curling up at her side. He grabs strands of her hair, finding a leaf tangled in her curls.

“Mommy, a leaf,” he whispers, pulling it out of her hair and waving it in her face.

I feel the heat rush to her face and she looks over at Zane who leans against the door frame, his cheeks bright red.

“Daddy, where are your shoes?” Kota asks, using the leaf to point at him.

“And your shirt?”

Zane looks down at his bare feet and chest before looking up at me like a deer caught in the headlights.

“A troll stole them,” Talia explains.

“A troll?” Kota asks.

“Yes,” Talia nods. “A troll because Zane didn’t want to take a nap.”

“Oh no!” Kota gasps, closing his eyes and burying his face in the crook of her neck. “Mommy, will it take my shoes?”

“I won’t let the troll take your shoes,” Talia whispers, pulling off his shoes. “I’ll take them and hide them away. Just close your eyes, Kota. Close your eyes.”

“Can you and Daddy stay with me?” Kota asks, Talia kissing his forehead and coaxing Zane to the bed.

“Of course,” Talia murmurs, making room on the bed for Zane. “We’ll always be with you, Kota.”

Always, i murmur.

63. The Treehouse

*****Agnes*****

smell his scent nearby, my wolf impatiently wagging her tail for him to come inside the house and speak to us. But after finding out who he is to me, I do not wish to see him anytime soon.

There’s a tap on my shoulder and I turn to find Zane watching me closely, his hair still wet from his shower.

“What’s on your mind?” he signs.

I try to brush him off but he insists.

“You’ve been stirring the steak sauce with the stove off for 10 minutes now,” he argues with a soft smile. “What’s wrong?”

“How is Talia handling her wolf and mark? Don’t think I didn’t see it,”

I tease him, changing the subject.

Zane blushes and timidly hides his red face from me, likely mumbling something under his breath. He turns back to me when he calms his blush down.

“Whatever it is that’s bothering you, you can tell me,” Zane signs. “I still have time for you.”

For a brief moment, my heart feels full but I cannot be selfish with his

love. His mate and his pup should be his priority.

“Take care of your family and I will be okay,” I smile, Zane’s eyes growing sad.

“But you are my family,” He retorts. “I can take care of you too.”

His words overwhelm my heart but I know he will not let this go until he is sure I am okay.

“I’ll tell you when I am ready. I’m just not ready right now.”

My reply seems to upset him but as always, he respects my wishes and drops the matter entirely, instead taking the saucepan from my hands and helping me set the table.

I feel the floors vibrate beneath my feet as Dakota stomps down the hall. He’s started to stomp more around me to make his presence known or catch my attention and it makes me so happy he cares enough to do that.

As I reach for the dinner plates, I feel Dakota pull at my pant leg. When I look down at him, he signs the word ‘help’ and holds out his little hands for me to give him the plates. They are much too heavy for him so I give him his own plastic plate and cup to carry to the table and he happily trots along and places them at the head of the table.

No one seems to have the heart to tell him that’s Zane’s place and so the little boy claims the seat. Talia and Rionna help me bring the food to the table and as we all settle at our seats, Tylen appears down the hall. I freeze upon seeing him, unsure if I should run and hide or pretend my heart isn’t racing now that he’s so close.

He’s much more handsome than I last remember, his brown eyes containing speckles of amber and emerald when the light hits them. His dark hair, which is longer at the top and shorter on the sides, is messily combed upwards with a few stubborn strands hanging over his forehead. His clean shaven jaw is sharp and a pair of thick brows frame his large eyes that look directly at me. He wears a black t-shirt, his arm tattoos on full display.

“I invited Tylen for dinner,” Rionna explains. “I hope that’s alright. He just needs his space from his father right now.”

I force a smile on my face and silently nod as Tylen slides into the seat

directly across from me. He signs hello but I pretend I don't see him and pour myself a glass of wine instead.

Dinner chat quickly begins, Zane signing the entire conversation for my benefit.

"So Tylen...tell us about yourself..." Talia asks, Zane giving her a look of misery. "Do you have a mate?"

Tylen steals a glance at me and turns back to Talia.

"I've met her...but she doesn't trust me," Tylen replies both audibly and in sign. "I can't say I blame her."

"You met your mate and didn't tell me?" Rionna glares at Tylen, hurt flickering in her eyes. "How could you?"

"It's not for me to tell," Tylen argues. "I am respecting her privacy."

"If it makes you feel any better, I didn't trust my mate in the beginning either," Talia says as she pours juice for Kota. "I refused to let him in but he slowly tore down my walls and gave me his heart," she adds with a smile. "Whoever your mate is, don't give up on her. She might just be afraid of her own feelings. Give her time and patience and you'll find a way to show her you're worth opening up to."

Tylen eyes the necklace on my neck and I ignore him once more, concentrating on cutting my steak.

The silence which has always been my refuge is now uncomfortable and I find myself drowning in my memories. I miss my Damon and my Archie every day and that fact will never change, no matter who forces their way into my life.

Not wanting to go down the painful road of my past, I look up again and find a new conversation taking place, Zane still translating

for my sake. From the corner of my eye, I notice Tylen translating as well, the kind gesture filling me with a warm fuzzy feeling,

"I hear my father has offered you his pack, Zane," Tylen signs, Talia sitting up straighter to give him her undivided attention. "I assume you have questions."

"Yes, I'd like to know why an Alpha would give up his pack?" Talia

explains. "I've never met an Alpha, or wolf, to be honest, who would, so why would you?"

Tylen does not answer right away, taking his time to formulate an answer. "I've been on a battlefield from the time I could shift," Tylen finally responds. "All my wolf and I have ever known is war. I live it, I dream it, I breathe it. It's in my veins. Even my gift makes me a weapon of destruction. Rionna tried her best to keep me off the battlefield but my sense of duty always dragged me into battle. I had to be a warrior for my pack because that's what they needed me to be. A soldier who could kill a man today and not lose an ounce of sleep over it. That's what I became...and that frightens me. I fight because I have to....but I fear the day I fight because I want to. That's not a good leader. That's a monster in the making. My pack may need a ruthless soldier now, but it will not need another ruthless Alpha later on. You may think it selfish for me to choose to abstain from my position when there is no heir left to take the title, but I think I've earned the right to walk away after all my years of service. My pack deserves a good Alpha...and unfortunately that is not wholam."

"That's very mature of you," Talia replies. "It takes a true Alpha to realize his or her own limitations and I admire your courage to step away and create your own destiny."

Tylen's eyes meet mine one more time, loneliness and fear darkening them and he looks away before anyone else notices.

"Will Zane be accepting my father's proposal?" Tylen asks when there are no more questions for him.

"I don't know," Zane signs. "How do I know I can trust him?"

Tylen and Rionna exchange glances and it appears they share a few words via mindlink before Tylen has an answer.

"My father is...complicated," Tylen signs. "And while I have not forgiven him for what he did to Rionna and I...I am trying to understand him. He lost everything because of this war, his mate, his best friend, his throne. I imagine he feared losing everything again and kept Rionna's past a secret for that reason, but he makes it very

difficult to trust him sometimes. I don't know. I can't think of a reason for him to lie but I also wouldn't put it past him to hide his true motive and have something up his sleeve."

He settles back in his seat with a shrug, but it seems the entire situation has left him unsettled. My wolf, Cynthia, becomes restless as she senses Tylen's turmoil and I struggle to restrain her.

"Excuse me," I sign, quickly getting up to leave.

In desperate need of some peace and quiet, I take a walk outside with no destination in mind. My thoughts begin to race and I break into a sprint as I try to outrun them. Not long into my run, I stumble into a clearing and find a large tree house perched atop a majestic oak tree. It has a wrap around deck and steps built into the trunk for easy access to the house. A tire swing hangs from one of the tree's sturdy branches and I carefully climb onto it, swinging my legs to and fro while inhaling the fresh air to soothe my turbulent mind.

I have not felt butterflies in my belly since Damon stole a kiss from me the day he went off to war. I was so angry at him for leaving that I refused to kiss him back. It's been 20 years and I have still not forgiven myself. Had I only known it would be the last time I'd see him, I would have savored his last kiss and told him how much I loved being his Aggy.

Now it seems the universe is mocking my pain, sending my son off to the same war that took my family and mating me to the son of the man who started it all.

edge of the clearing, his eyes following me when I jump off the swing onto my feet.

"This is a nice little space, isn't it?" He signs, taking two steps into the clearing while I take two steps back and nearly bump into the tree trunk. Seeing my reaction he stops moving but continues speaking.

"I found it the day you left me."

I want nothing more than to run and hide but I remain still and frozen in place.

"Is my family name the only objection you have for accepting me as your mate?" he asks bluntly.

I pinch my fingers at him, anger burning inside me at the audacity he has to think that that is my only objection.

“I already had a mate,” I sign furiously. “And he was more than enough.”

His brows furrow in anger, creating a shadow over his eyes and his lips press firmly into a frown.

“So you refuse to accept me over something I have no control over?” He responds with annoyed enthusiasm. “That doesn’t seem very fair to me.”

“Well neither is being mated to you!” I retort. “I did not ask to lose my family. I did not ask to be forced into exile. I did not ask to start a new life in the pack of the man I hate most in the world. I did not ask for any of this!”

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What just happened ?

The Silent Alpha by StephanieLight Chapter 63

63. The Treehouse

Agnes

smell his scent nearby, my wolf impatiently wagging her tail for him to come inside the house and speak to us. But after finding out who he is to me, I do not wish to see him anytime soon.

There's a tap on my shoulder and I turn to find Zane watching me closely, his hair still wet from his shower.

"What's on your mind?" he signs.

I try to brush him off but he insists.

"You've been stirring the steak sauce with the stove off for 10 minutes now," he argues with a soft smile. "What's wrong?"

"How is Talia handling her wolf and mark? Don't think I didn't see it," I tease him, changing the subject.

Zane blushes and timidly hides his red face from me, likely mumbling something under his breath. He turns back to me when he calms his blush down.

"Whatever it is that's bothering you, you can tell me," Zane signs. "I still have time for you."

For a brief moment, my heart feels full but I cannot be selfish with his love. His mate and his pup should be his priority.

"Take care of your family and I will be okay," I smile, Zane's eyes growing sad.

"But you are my family," He retorts. "I can take care of you too."

His words overwhelm my heart but I know he will not let this go until he is sure I am okay.

"I'll tell you when I am ready. I'm just not ready right now."

My reply seems to upset him but as always, he respects my wishes and drops the matter entirely, instead taking the saucepan from my hands and helping me set the table.

I feel the floors vibrate beneath my feet as Dakota stomps down the hall. He's started to stomp more around me to make his presence known or catch my attention and it makes me so happy he cares enough to do that.

As I reach for the dinner plates, I feel Dakota pull at my pant leg. When I look down at him, he signs the word 'help' and holds out his

little hands for me to give him the plates. They are much too heavy for him so I give him his own plastic plate and cup to carry to the table and he happily trots along and places them at the head of the table. No one seems to have the heart to tell him that's Zane's place and so the little boy claims the seat. Talia and Rionna help me bring the food to the table and as we all settle at our seats, Tylen appears down the hall. I freeze upon seeing him, unsure if I should run and hide or pretend my heart isn't racing now that he's so close. He's much more handsome than I last remember, his brown eyes containing speckles of amber and emerald when the light hits them. His dark hair, which is longer at the top and shorter on the sides, is messily combed upwards with a few stubborn strands hanging over his forehead. His clean shaven jaw is sharp and a pair of thick brows frame his large eyes that look directly at me. He wears a black t-shirt, his arm tattoos on full display.

"I invited Tylen for dinner," Rionna explains. "I hope that's alright. He just needs his space from his father right now."

I force a smile on my face and silently nod as Tylen slides into the seat directly across from me. He signs hello but I pretend I don't see him and pour myself a glass of wine instead.

Dinner chat quickly begins, Zane signing the entire conversation for my benefit.

"So Tylen...tell us about yourself..." Talia asks, Zane giving her a look of misery. "Do you have a mate?"

Tylen steals a glance at me and turns back to Talia.

"I've met her...but she doesn't trust me," Tylen replies both audibly and in sign. "I can't say I blame her."

"You met your mate and didn't tell me?" Rionna glares at Tylen, hurt flickering in her eyes. "How could you?"

"It's not for me to tell," Tylen argues. "I am respecting her privacy."

"If it makes you feel any better, I didn't trust my mate in the beginning either," Talia says as she pours juice for Kota. "I refused to let him in but he slowly tore down my walls and gave me his heart," she

adds with a smile. “Whoever your mate is, don’t give up on her. She might just be afraid of her own feelings. Give her time and patience and you’ll find a way to show her you’re worth opening up to.”

Tylen eyes the necklace on my neck and I ignore him once more, concentrating on cutting my steak.

The silence which has always been my refuge is now uncomfortable and I find myself drowning in my memories. I miss my Damon and my Archie every day and that fact will never change, no matter who forces their way into my life.

Not wanting to go down the painful road of my past, I look up again and find a new conversation taking place, Zane still translating for my sake. From the corner of my eye, I notice Tylen translating as well, the kind gesture filling me with a warm fuzzy feeling, “I hear my father has offered you his pack, Zane,” Tylen signs, Talia sitting up straighter to give him her undivided attention. “I assume you have questions.”

“Yes, I’d like to know why an Alpha would give up his pack?” Talia explains. “I’ve never met an Alpha, or wolf, to be honest, who would, so why would you?”

Tylen does not answer right away, taking his time to formulate an answer. “I’ve been on a battlefield from the time I could shift,” Tylen finally responds. “All my wolf and I have ever known is war. I live it, I dream it, I breathe it. It’s in my veins. Even my gift makes me a weapon of destruction. Rionna tried her best to keep me off the battlefield but my sense of duty always dragged me into battle. I had to be a warrior for my pack because that’s what they needed me to be. A soldier who could kill a man today and not lose an ounce of sleep over it. That’s what I became...and that frightens me. I fight because I have to....but I fear the day I fight because I want to. That’s not a good leader. That’s a monster in the making. My pack may need a ruthless soldier now, but it will not need another ruthless Alpha later on. You may think it selfish for me to choose to abstain from my position when there is no heir left to take the title, but I think I’ve earned the right

to walk away after all my years of service. My pack deserves a good Alpha...and unfortunately that is not wholam.”

“That’s very mature of you,” Talia replies. “It takes a true Alpha to realize his or her own limitations and I admire your courage to step away and create your own destiny.”

Tylen’s eyes meet mine one more time, loneliness and fear darkening them and he looks away before anyone else notices.

“Will Zane be accepting my father’s proposal?” Tylen asks when there are no more questions for him.

“I don’t know,” Zane signs. “How do I know I can trust him?”

Tylen and Rionna exchange glances and it appears they share a few words via mindlink before Tylen has an answer.

“My father is...complicated,” Tylan signs. “And while I have not forgiven him for what he did to Rionna and I...I am trying to understand him. He lost everything because of this war, his mate, his best friend, his throne. I imagine he feared losing everything again and kept Rionna’s past a secret for that reason, but he makes it very difficult to trust him sometimes. I don’t know. I can’t think of a reason for him to lie but I also wouldn’t put it past him to hide his true motive and have something up his sleeve.”

He settles back in his seat with a shrug, but it seems the entire situation has left him unsettled. My wolf, Cynthia, becomes restless as she senses Tylen’s turmoil and I struggle to restrain her.

“Excuse me,” I sign, quickly getting up to leave.

In desperate need of some peace and quiet, I take a walk outside with no destination in mind. My thoughts begin to race and I break into a sprint as I try to outrun them. Not long into my run, I stumble into a clearing and find a large tree house perched atop a majestic oak tree. It has a wrap around deck and steps built into the trunk for easy access to the house. A tire swing hangs from one of the tree’s sturdy branches and I carefully climb onto it, swinging my legs to and fro while inhaling the fresh air to soothe my turbulent mind.

Thave not felt butterflies in my belly since Damon stole a kiss from me the day he went off to war. I was so angry at him for leaving

that I refused to kiss him back. It's been 20 years and I have still not forgiven myself. Had I only known it would be last time I'd see him, would have savored his last kiss and told him how much I loved being his Aggy.

Now it seems the universe is mocking my pain, sending my son off to the same war that took my family and mating me to the son of the man who started it all.

edge of the clearing, his eyes following me when I jump off the swing onto my feet.

"This is a nice little space, isn't it?" He signs, taking two steps into the clearing while I take two steps back and nearly bump into the tree trunk. Seeing my reaction he stops moving but continues speaking.

"I found it the day you left me."

I want nothing more than to run and hide but I remain still and frozen in place.

"Is my family name the only objection you have for accepting me as your mate?" he asks bluntly.

I pinch my fingers at him, anger burning inside me at the audacity he has to think that that is my only objection.

"I already had a mate," I sign furiously. "And he was more than enough."

His brows furrow in anger, creating a shadow over his eyes and his lips press firmly into a frown.

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"Well neither is being mated to you!" I retort. "I did not ask to lose my family. I did not ask to be forced into exile. I did not ask to start a new life in the pack of the man I hate most in the world. I did not ask for any of this!"

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