

## Silent Mate 121

### Chapter 121 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Damien POV

"How long's it been since you came back here?" asked Langdon with a frown on his face, as we pulled into the driveway of my childhood home. The home stood there, a stark contrast to the others. I'd been expecting to see the grass grown long, sun damaged, prickles everywhere, a sure sign of neglect and the fact that nobody currently lived there. Instead, I was pleasantly surprised to find that the grass was freshly mown, a lovely green colour and even the house itself looked like the outdoors had been painted. Then a moment of panic hit me. Had somebody moved into the house while I was gone? Would I knock on the door to find a stranger answering it?

"Someone's living here" I comment to Langdon, pointing at the grass and the house itself "they've maintained the grass and painted the outside. We can't just walk in there."

I'm disappointed. I really wanted to be able to explore the house in detail, away from wandering eyes and even, to my reluctance, away from my sister Winter. I wanted to spend this time with Langdon. Besides there are no guarantees that I'll find anything of use here anyway. But I can't help remembering the pained look on my mother's face when I announced we were coming here and the suspicion that she was harboring some sort of secret.

"No ones living here" Langdon insists, getting out of the car and walking confidently up the driveway. "I had the lawns mowed and house painted. I wanted you to have someplace to get away to, once in a while if you needed it."

He did this for me? I'm speechless for a moment, watching as he retrieves the key from its little hidey hole rock by the door, opening it and ushering me in before him. I glance around the entry way, my eyes blinking to adjust to the light as Langdon turns on several to light the way.

"Where do you want to start?" asks Langdon patiently. I think for a moment. I shudder at the thought of going into the basement,. That room's getting left till last if I can help it. "Father's room" I muse "maybe there's something interesting in there."

We make our way back to the far side of the house where his room lay, the only room downstairs. I kick aside empty beer cans and beer bottles, wrinkling my nose at the pungent smell of alcohol. Langdon's brows rise in disgust at the smell as well as I force open the bedroom door. I walk in and look around with dismay. There's bottles and cans, all empty, scattered on the floor, window ledge, top of his dresser and even some against the wall in his bed. There's barely any free space on the floor and I have to place my feet carefully as I walk inside. There's not many places to look. His dresser reveals nothing but clothes. His wardrobe the same, a few miserly photos of himself and mother. Nothing of import. The bathroom contains toiletries, very few of them and under the bed is nothing but empty alcohol bottles. What a waste of time. I kick at the cans near me in anger. Just another reminder of how pathetic my father really was. If it wasn't for Winter, I have no doubts the whole house would have been covered in beer bottles and cans.

"What about the attic" suggests Langdon "don't people put important things up there?" he sounded uncertain.

I laugh. "What, you don't have anything in the attic?"

He shakes his head. "No, who can be bothered climbing up the stairs to place everything? Besides all your stuff should be out on display otherwise it's rubbish" he declares.

I can't argue with that logic. It does make me wonder why we have attics in the first place. Still he does have a good idea. I haven't stepped foot in that attic at all. It could be harbouring all sorts of goodies just waiting to be discovered.

"Let's check the attic" I agree with a smile.

We slowly walk out, dragging bottles and cans with us, despite trying our best not to. I frown. I would have to come back here at a later stage and clean up, clear father's room out. Make it into a habitable bedroom that was nice and airy, for visitors. Besides, I really wanted to erase every single part of that bastard. Doing his room was a good start.

"Where's the damn string" commented Langdon as we wandered upstairs. His eyes were shooting everywhere, a look of fascination on his face. I wryly point to the string almost above us and he flushes. I keep my laughter to myself and reach out with one hand, pulling the string down and moving out of the way as the ladder slides smoothly down. The darkness upstairs beckons. I grin at Langdon.

"Want to go first?" I ask politely.

He snorts and shakes his head. "Wouldnt dream of it, after you" he says with a grin.

I just chuckle and begin to climb the ladder, hoping fervently that the light, when I reach out to pull on it, turns on. To my relief it does and I automatically step aside to let Langdon come up, my eyes sweeping around the room in awe. There was so much stuff that it was impossible to know where to turn. Boxes piled up hazhardly, toys piled in a corner, even furniture, sat there, covered in dust. How long had this stuff been sitting here? It was almost sad to see the toys piled lonely in the corner.

Langdon's eyes narrow with curiosity and interest. "This is much better" he says cheerfully "much more stuff to look through. More memories to unlock" he declared. I was moving towards the toys, my hands shaking. There was a bear in the corner, a bright blue one, with a white round stomach. I remembered him from my childhood. His name had been Laylay and I'd carried him everywhere. Then one day he'd disappeared and I thought it was because I'd lost him. I'd been inconsolable, mother doing her best as I cried my eyes out. What was he doing up here? I reached out and took him, feeling the softness of his fur and looking at his beady little eyes. Mother must have put the bear up here, but why? Had father made her? I held the bear to my chest, swallowing tightly. I had loved this bear. It brought back nostalgia to be holding it close again.

"His name's Laylay" I tell Langdon, handing the bear to him "he's coming home with us" I add and watch my mate's eyes sharpes with genuine interest as he nods.

I exhale, coughing as dust rises up from the floor. My eyes water as I stare over at the multitude of boxes. I take one down and begin to dig through, handing Langdon another one. Most of it contains so much junk that I don't understand why they didn't just donate it or throw it out. Who needs spare cups, glasses and plates? We had so many in the kitchen already that it wasn't funny. We didn't need tupperware either. There were paperback books that I suspected were placed there with the intention of coming back down when the bookshelves were put up. Unfortunately, the bookshelves were currently sitting in pieces in the corner of the room. I also noted, rather drily, that there was also an entire box dedicated to wine glasses, beer glasses and shot glasses. No need to wonder whose box that had been.

"I can't believe this. Where are the photobook thingy magigs? The actual memories of us all?" I explode. Langdon grunts and rips open another box in front of me as I take a break.

"This one of them?" he asks me and I rush over and pluck the book out of his hand. I smile with delight. It's a scrapbook. I sit next to Langdon and open it up.

"This is a photo of me on my first day of kindergarden" I breathe out, recognising the uniform on myself.

"You look cute" Langdon teases as I blush.

I pull the page over. This time there's a photo of Winter as a toddler, chasing a butterfly around the garden. Her dress is flying in the air and there's a wide smile on her face. "She looks so happy" Langdon says with a smile, tracing the photo with his finger "like she doesn't have a care in the world."

"She was happy" I say with a lump in my throat "when she was that little, her laughter was infectious. She would spend ages running around, chasing me, playing with her toys. Nothing made her sad. She especially loved mother, was stuck to her like glue." My voice is a little bitter towards the end.

A wedding photo flops out. I pick it up and examine it. Mother's wearing a white dress, like all brides do, standing beside father who's in a tuxedo. While he's beaming with happiness though, a massive smile on his douchebag face, mother looks grim in comparison, a small tight smile on her face, as though she's anything but happy to be marrying this man. Had she realised what he was like? So why go through with the marriage? Why not call it off and run away? Father doesn't have his red eyes and puffy complexion in the photo, so he hadn't been drinking heavily that day or the day before.

"Not the nicest wedding photo" sighs Langdon scrutinising them both. "Your mother looks angry."

"That's what I thought as well" I said leaning into him. "Do you think she knew what she was in for with him?"

"Judging by the expression on her face" Langdon said calmly "hell yes."

I carefully placed the wedding photo back and then flipped the page over. I trace the photo with a smile on my face. It's a photo of Winter and I, in costumes for halloween. There's a massive bowl of candy next to us. Winter is a toddler in this photo too, but adorable in her little princess costume.

"I remember this" I tell Langdon quietly "we weren't allowed to go trick or treating, mother was far too worried about us, but she let us hand out candy to the trick or treaters that came to our door. Winter and I would take turns opening the door and greeting them. We got to stay up later that night and we got to eat some of the candy that was left over by the trick or treaters. Father was home that day, but I don't remember what he did. He wasn't with us, that was for sure" I said annoyed, Still, Winter would like looking at this photo, I decided, and carefully pressed it back in.

"Let's just take this scrapbook home to look at" I suggest, grabbing hold of my bear from Langdon.  
"Were there any others?" I ask him.

He shakes his head. "Not in the box I was digging through. That was the only one. There are still several boxes that have yet to be opened though. Are you sure you want to go home now?"

"We can come back another time" I say assuring him "it's late and I'm tired. I want to look at this scrapbook properly in the daylight. With you."

"If you're sure" Langdon agrees, getting to his feet and dusting himself off. He reaches for my hand with a smile. I reach out awkwardly to take it and look down to see a photo, slowly fluttering it's way to the floor, face down.

"Just let me grab that" I tell Langdon hastily, opening the book and retrieving the photo. I flip the photo over and for a minute or two, what I'm seeing doesn't resonate with me. My whole body goes into shock. Langdon comes to stand beside me. His mouth falls open. This was what mother didn't want me to find, this is what she didn't want me to see. One photograph that exposes all her lies. My whole body begins to shake in anger, my hand clenches tightly around the photo. I feel the urge to wrap my hands around her neck and strangle her to death.

"Calm down Damien, we'll get to the truth" Langdon promises, his own voice filled with meaning.

"She better tell me the truth" I spit out, waving the photo "otherwise she dies Langdon" I say and I mean it, my eyes flashing black as I stare at my mate. For what she's done, she deserves to die. She's no better than my father.

Chapter 122 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

## Damien POV

I barely remember the car drive home, back to the pack. I know Langdon helped me into the car, I remember him putting the heater on to warm my suddenly cold and shivering body. The music droned on in the background during the short drive, my hand tapping uselessly against the window as I stared out into the distance, my eyes not focussing on anything in particular. My other hand gripped the scrapbook tightly, so tight that my hand had gone pale, the photo in question, the one I needed answers from, firmly tucked inside so that it wouldn't flutter away in the wind.

"Damien you need to calm down alright" Langdon said shooting me a half crazed look.

I wonder what it is I look like, that he feels the need to speak to me like that. I look over at him but say nothing, my heart thumping painfully in my chest. I feel detached, like part of me is shrinking away and trying to escape my own reality. The image on the photograph constantly pops into my head over and over again. Like a movie constantly put on repeat. There's no sound but it still seems too loud for my comfort and too bright inside my own head.

"That bitch knew" I snarl at Langdon, turning to him and seeing his jaw clenched and his own eyes flashing furiously, he's just as angry as I am. "She knew Langdon. This is why she didn't want me going to the fucking house. That lying bitch" I shout, slamming my hand angrily against the dashboard as Langdon picks up the speed slightly.

"Still, getting this angry isn't going to do anybody any good" he says tightly.

"It's doing me some good" I snarl, slumping back against the chair. "Because if I don't let some of my anger out, I might end up killing her with my own bare hands" I threaten, my voice shaking. I mean every word. My whole being is screaming at me to kill her. Why should someone like her be allowed to live? I'd known my father was a complete bastard but this, my mother being a sadistic crazy ass bitch, wasn't something I'd seen coming.

We pull into the driveway and Langdon tentatively turns the motor off, before reaching over and grasping my knee, gently stroking it. "I know you're angry" he whispers "but try to get a hold of yourself. If you go in there, screaming and shouting, she won't give you anything. She won't give you the answers you need, she'll shut down and you'll be stuck with nowhere to look or go." His tone is gentle, even as his eyes are grim. His own body is stiff and I realise that he's just as angry and upset about this as I am. Maybe more so.

I take a couple of deep breaths, forcing the air into my lungs, willing my body to relax somewhat. The pack house looms in front of me and slowly, reluctantly, I climb out of the car, retrieving my trusted scrapbook and taking hold of a steadfast Langdon's hand. "We can do this" he tells me, squeezing my hand.

I close my eyes and nod, traipsing towards the front door and reaching out to knock. Langdon grabs my hand. "What on earth are you doing" he hisses "we don't need to knock, we're pack members. "

Oh yeah. Totally forgotten about that, just so used to being at Langdon and my home.

We open the door, wincing at the large creaky sound it makes. It's late, so I half expect that bitch of a woman who is my mother, to be in bed, frustrating me even more completely, but to mine and Langdon's ultimate surprise, she's in the living room, watching a movie. When she turns her head to see who is there, her eyes widen slightly, but then return to normal. She's been expecting us then. She leans back against her chair. Her eyes widen as she sees the scrapbook I'm holding firmly under one arm.

"You went to the house then" she said weakly "and looked around."

I glare at her with utter hatred. Never in my life, have I wished someone would drop dead right that instant, but I would happily wish for that to happen now. My hand is shaking as I slowly grip the scrap book in my hand and drop it, loudly on the coffee table. She watches my every move, her face pale, her body trembling. I slowly flip through the pages, Langdon behind me, silently offering his support. I know he won't step in unless he feels the need to, that he knows this is something I need to do and say myself. I hear the crinkles of the pages as I search for the photograph, the one that means everything to me, my fingers withdrawing it from the page as I hold it up and then slam it down on the coffee table in front of my now crying mother.

"Care to explain this mother?" I taunt, glaring hard at her.

She swallows. Her face turns ashen.

I look down at the photograph, my heart giving a squeeze. It's a photo of her, dressed in a hospital gown, sitting upright in a hospital bed, clutching two babies to her. One in each arm. Both are boys, both

are dressed in blue onesies, with little hats on their heads, wrapped up in a swaddle. Someone's written an inscription to the photo on the back at the bottom.

Our baby boys. Twins Damien and Drake.

Twins. I had a twin out there. Something I'd never even dreamed of the possibility of having. My mother had giving birth to two boys when she had me. I wasn't a single child she'd given birth to after all.

"Our baby boys, Twins, Damien and Drake" I repeat quietly, watching as she looks away. "Where's my brother? What did you do to him mother? I don't have any memories of a brother with me at all. So where is he?" I hiss.

Her eyes water as she looks at me. "You wouldn't understand" she breathes quietly, heaving a sob.

My eyes narrow "try me."

Her hand reaches out to grab the photo. I tense, but she merely trails a finger down it, looking pensive.

"You were both so beautiful" she said choked up "both exactly identical down to the birthmark underneath your knee."

"So what happened? You decided you only wanted one of us?" I snarl sarcastically.

She flinches. "No" she whispers "I wanted both of you. I swear, it's just. . ." she trails off.

"I didn't know I was having twins when I gave birth in the hospital. We only had the one ultrasound and it showed just one fetus. I was young when I had you and I was terrified" she exhaled "but when I gave birth and there were suddenly two of you, I was even more terrified" she said honestly "all I could think about was that I would have to get up to feed two babies, that I would be cleaning up and chasing after two of you."

She sounded selfish. "Your father had been drinking again, which meant I was going to be all alone looking after you. That was bad enough, but he'd started gambling as well. He wasn't a good gambler and before we knew it, we were in serious debt to some scary people" my mother admitted.

None of this was news to me. My father had always been a deadbeat dad. Langdon was stroking my back as I folded my arms and stared coldly at my mother.

"This is nothing new" I snapped.

"No it wasn't" she agreed readily "but when I'd given birth and we discovered twins, he came up with a solution to the problem. A rich couple had approached him, prepared to pay a lot of money for one of our babies. It was enough to cover our debts and leave us a little bit to get along on. I fought him on it, of course" she snapped looking exasperated "I didn't think it was right to separate twins. But he was so persistent, constantly pushing me and convincing me that the baby would be better off in a rich affluent family. "

My eyes narrowed. "You let him sell my brother" I said incredulous "just like that. Did you even meet the family that father was giving him to?" I said suddenly "or did you just take his word for it?" My voice was dripping with malice now.

She bit her lip. "I couldn't leave the hospital so I just took his word for it. But Damien, he did come back with a lot of money and the first thing he did was pay off his debts" she whispered.

I couldn't even bear to look at her. "So that makes it alright then" I snap "selling an innocent baby to god knows who. You have no idea who it was, where he went to do it?"

She shook her head. "If I could change the past, I would" she said with a cry "but it's too late. We figured it was better if you never even knew you had a twin. I'm surprised he kept that photo" she sobbed.

"How can you live with yourself" I ask her snidely "You sold off a child, left the other two to be terrorised by your ex mate, abandoned them and then suddenly want to be a mother again. Not to mention hooked up with someone else's mate. Do you feel any shame at all?" I ask.

She bursts into tears. "I'm sorry" she sobs "your father was so persuasive. "

I glare "Did he leave any information at all about the family he was selling Drake to" I said lightly "the pack name, town, anything like that? You said influential family, what did he mean by that?" I asked

She sighed. "I don't know, when he said influential family he was quite excited, said they were richer than he'd imagined. But then he also said they would not tolerate him coming for more money, that they would kill him if he tried. So I guess they were powerful as well."

I feel so much anger at her. Part of me want to throw her through a window. I glower. Langdon gently touches my back. "We didnt' finish going through the boxes, perhaps there's something back there" he says quietly.

My mother looks at me guiltily. "I am sorry. "

"You only care about yourself" I snarl "I have a brother out there who I've never met. He's also probably Langdon's mate as well, twins generally have the same mate" I snap. "It's rare when they don't."

Langdon takes a deep breath and releases it. "Come on let's go to bed Damien" he suggests, trying to tug me out of the room.

"You have no soul" I tell my mother hatefully "your'e nothing but a demon that deserves to be killed. All you've brought Winter and I is misery and pain. Do you think Winter will forgive something like this when she finds out?" I spit out "see what you're precious daughter does then mother. She'll hate you, just as much as I do. Just wait and see" I yell out "I curse the fact we met you" I scream out wildly, Langdon fully grabbing me and almost marching me out of the pack house.

"I think some sleep is in order" he says wisely "and then we can go back into the attic and look through some more boxes" he finishes firmly.

"What if I can't find him" I say miserably.

Langdon shoots me a look "we'll find him Damien. He's got to be out there somewhere and Kai has a lot of technical experts that can help. But right now" he says pointedly "I just want to get you away from your mother before you murder her. "

## Chapter 123 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Kai POV

When Winter excuses herself from the dinnertable I'm incensed. We're guests for goodness sakes and she's being undeniably rude. Poor Vanessa. She looks disappointed and even though I offer my apologies, she still seems a little deflated. God she's beautiful. Her hair is so long and silky, her dress clings to her curves in all the right ways. No wonder King Axel hasn't left the castle in so long, when he has a beautiful goddess like this at home to see every day and night. I stand up, reluctantly, to go and find my own mate, who I hope by now has seen the error of her ways and will hopefully apologise for her rudeness tomorrow. Storm makes a protest in the back of my mind but I ignore him.

"Goodnight Queen Vanessa" I tell her, kissing her hand as she smiles widely at me.

She places a hand against my chest and I feel my heart thumping wildly in my chest. It's loud, but she doesn't seem to hear it.

"It's been a pleasure to meet you Alpha Kai" she says sweetly, those pale lips of hers curving into a smile. She kisses the back of my hand. "I look forward to seeing you again tomorrow" she finishes, and I blink, feeling unsteady on my feet. The room almost feels like it's swaying back and forth. How strange.

"Goodnight King Axel" I manage to mutter.

"Goodnight Kai" he answers with a bit of a grunt, his wife kissing him on the cheek.

I blink. I must have had a few more drinks tonight than I'd realised. My feet are unsteady as I make my way back to the bedroom. I knock on the door, loudly, frowning at my hand which is blurry "Winter, you in there" I yell and hear footsteps.

The door is wrenched open and her eyes are blazing pitch black at me as she lets me in, closes the door and stands there with her arms folded over her chest.

"What the hell is wrong with you" I grumble and she snaps, poking me in the chest.

"What's wrong with me" she sneers "what's wrong with you. You ignored me at dinner Kai, acted as though I wasn't even there" she snapped. "The queen was rude" she continued heatedly "and you didn't even notice her little digs at me."

I peer at her. The queen wasn't rude. I hadn't heard her be anything but polite and sweet at the dinner table. I sigh. Winter's in a foul mood.

"Sorry" I mumble, not sorry at all. Winter's being completely unreasonable. I stare at my mate, watching her eyes slowly transition back to their normal colour. She's not angry anymore. Or at least she's managed to calm herself back down to a normal state.

"The ritual or spell can't take place for three days" I tell her quietly "can we just try to get along with each other until then" I finish tiredly. She lets out a huff but gives a reluctant nod. Good. Otherwise it's going to be a very long few days here at the castle, not to mention uncomfortable. I almost, for a moment, wish Damien was here to distract her. Even if I do find him to be a complete pain in the ass.

She goes to go past me and I grab her arm, spinning her towards me, leaning down and capturing her lips. She struggles for a moment and then relaxes, granting me access to her mouth. I dive my tongue inside and caress hers, hearing her moan. It's been far too long since we've been intimate. I lead her towards the bed, peeling off her clothes as we go, touching the softness of her skin with my hands, lying her down ontop of the bed.

"Kai" she moans and I give a grin. I love hearing my name coming from her lips.

I kneel between her legs as she gasps, my hands gripping her thighs tightly. "Don't you dare move" I tell her thickly, my eyes glaring at her. She nods, her hands clenching the bedsheets.

I slowly, gently, run my tongue along her clit, hearing her breathing becoming even heavier as she begins to pant in excitement. She tastes sweet, and I nuzzle against her, circling her over and over again.

"Kai" she cries out "oh god, I can't"

"You can" I growl out "you can take it."

I begin to slowly slide a finger inside of her as her body stiffens and stills. Then another one, slowly thrusting back and forth, as I continue to lick her.

Her head is moving back and forth frantically. "Kai it's too much" she sobs and I apply more pressure. I know she can take it. She's done it before.

Then I feel it. Her body starting to clench around my fingers and stiffen. I begin to flicker my tongue across her clit, furiously pumping my fingers inside and out of her as she sobs and mewls. My own cock is beginning to get hard from the sounds of her voice and the little cries she makes. Then her whole body stills and I hear her scream my name at the top of her lungs "Kai" as she cums, hard, her walls clenching around my fingers.

I give a grin of satisfaction and wait until she's relaxed her body again, before I move, getting off the bed and tearing my clothes off. I'm about to walk over to her when she shakes her head and gets up, sauntering over to me and then slowly sinking to her knees. "My turn" she growls and I suck in a breath when I feel her mouth suddenly take in my cock. My legs shake. Fuck it's intense, she's taking me slowly inch by inch, her hand grasping at the end of my shaft. I give a strangled cry as she begins to move her head back and forth, my whole member inside her mouth.

I clench my hand in her hair and stare down at my mate who looks so fucking sexy right now. Then I blink. Why has her hair colour changed? When did she change her hair colour. Her face looks up for the merest second and I stiffen, my whole body going completely still in shock. It isn't Winter's face staring up at me right now, it's Vanessa's. Her eyes are glinting at me as she sucks me off. I know I'm seeing things, but it seems so real. Am I doing this? Has Vanessa somehow permeated my thoughts this intensely?

I'm paralysed, but then my body begins to move back and forth in time to Vanessa, her lips curled around my cock. I repeatedly blink my eyes but I see only Winter and to my shame, my body responds. It's like I'm in a trance, and then just as suddenly, I'm free, looking down at a slightly confused Winter.

"My turn" I growl.

I pick her up and carry her to the bed, enjoying the way she feels in my arms, the pitchedness of her breathing, the arousal that I can smell. I get up on top of her and hold her eyes for a moment, enjoying the way she's looking at me, before I position myself at her entrance. Her face goes all hazy and then suddenly I'm looking at Vanessa, who's staring wildly at me, her hair dishevelled.

"Do it" she whispers "fuck me Kai" she begs.

I slam into her, hearing a sharp cry, Vanessa's eyes gleaming as she begins to move back and forth, my own thrusts wild and primal. It's like my body is possessed. A small part of my brain is trying to remind me that it's Winter that I'm having sex with, but it's quickly blocked as I grin down at Vanessa.

Her lips are pursed with cries, sweat drips down her body and down her breasts. Her back arches in pleasure as we fuck. There's no gentleness in the coupling, just raw need, our primal instincts taking over. I feel her body begin to shudder and grin, reaching down and fingering her clit as she writhes and sobs, her body stilling as an orgasm washes over her.

"Kai" she screams "god, more, I want you, fuck I want you" she shouts out.

Spurred on by her words, I flip her over and put her on her hands and knees. I slap her ass, listening as she gives a cry, her bottom rocking back and forth invitingly at me. I thrust inside of her pussy, with one hard thrust and then hold her tight around the waist as I rock back and forth, teasing her for minutes at a time until she begins to beg me. "Please, please fuck me harder, take me Kai" she begs in a guttural voice.

I ram into her hard, without mercy, desperate to feel my own pleasure, become frenzied as I take her as hard as I can. She cries out and whimpers, my hand smacking her ass every so often. Fuck she feels so tight. Her walls are clenching around my cock and it's taking all my self control not to just cum. Her ass jiggles with every movement and it's hot as hell. Vanessa somehow seems to look both wanton and pure at the same time. It's exhilarating. A tiny part of me tries to remind me that it's Winter I'm in love with, but just as quickly that voice fades away. Everything is topsy turvy, nothing makes sense right now. All I feel is the urgent desire to fuck the person I'm with, my body demanding it.

"Can't take much more" I grunt out, feeling my own body beginning to stiffen.

"Cum inside of me" she moans. "I want your seed Kai, I need your seed" she whispers.

"I'm about to cum" I growl and she begins to frantically move back and forth against me, the little minx. Is she trying to kill me? I groan out loud.

"Fuck" I yell. My body begins to tense up and then suddenly I stiffen, gripping her tight as I shoot my load inside of her. Panting heavily I lean over her for a second. Then I slowly withdraw from her and fall next to her in the bed. Vanessa runs her fingers down my arm. I feel guilt for the first time. My god, I've betrayed Winter and Axel and yet, it's like the guilt suddenly just vanishes. As I stare at Vanessa's body, all I want is to be with her again. My cock is already becoming hard.

"I'm just going to clean up" Vanessa purrs, getting up and going to the bathroom. I just stare up at the ceiling breathing hard.

You're disgusting, you know that? You just made love to our mate, believing she was someone else. That's disgusting Kai.

I don't get what you mean Storm.

I mean that's not Vanessa you moron. I have no clue what's going on with you, but that's Winter. You pretended to have sex with someone else. How hurt do you think she's going to be?

Will you shut up. I didn't, I mean, I don't think I did, what the hell is going on? Just leave me be Storm.

Vanessa comes back, clutching a handtowel, slowly, seductively wiping my cock over, which begins to spring to attention again.

"Hungry little fellow" she comments with a laugh "maybe we should feed him again" she says seductively, my cock rock hard now. She gently places her hand around it and I give a gasp, feeling all the blood drain from my head. She bends her head down and licks along the slit as I quiver.

"Oh fuck Vanessa" I moan and just as suddenly the tongue stops and her head pokes up. I frown. Why does she look so angry?"

"Kai" the voice is angry "did you just call me Vanessa?" the voice is incences.

Fuck. This isn't good. I shake my head, trying to clear it. Slowly Vanessa's face, fades away and I'm left with Winter's one. She's biting her lip and looking like she's about to cry, rip my head off or do both. She's pale and furious, her hands clenched into fists.

"Kai" she spits out "did you just call me Vanessa?"

"I don't, I mean, I'm not sure" I mumble feeling panicked. She glares harder.

"Did you think you were having sex with Vanessa?" she whispers harshly.

I don't know what I was thinking. I'm so confused right now, I don't know how to answer or where to turn. But she is pissed. "Wow, you thought I was Vanessa or you were pretending I was. Either way that's sick Kai" she snaps. "I can't believe you."

"Winter I didn't mean to" I begin but she's done, pointing out the door.

"Get out" she screams hysterical "get out you lousy son of a bitch."

I grab my clothes and limp out of the room. She slams it in my face. "Don't bother coming back here" she shouts "find somewhere else to sleep."

Fuck. I put my clothes on in the hallway. My head is spinning. I feel like I'm about to vomit. How did I confuse my mate with another woman? Why was Vanessa's face the only thing I could see in the room? I had cheated on my mate, not properly of course but still, envisioning another woman was cheating. Was Winter ever going to forgive me for this?

Chapter 124 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Winter POV

"Whoa, Whoa, Damien calm down" I say with a whisper, his voice loud inside of my ear, as I hold the cellphone there, my hand trembling. "What did you just say? Repeat it" I order, barely caring that it's way past midnight and very late. After what Kai just did to me, the son of a bitch, I've been way too angry to sleep, let alone even consider trying to rest.

"Mother gave away my twin. I have a twin Winter."

Shit. I had heard correctly on the phone.

"Did she say why?" I hiss, feeling anger on his behalf. There's such a yearning sound to his voice.

"They owed the wrong people money" he said in a dull tone.

I wince. Sounds like father. But still, for mother to go through with it? Disgusting.

"We'll find your twin, Damien. There's got to be some kind of record for it. Where he went with Drake."

"I'm already looking in the attic. But there's nothing and mother apparently doesn't know" he growls.

I sigh.

"After this is all over and done with, I'll help you" I tell him, pacing back and forth.

"How's it going over there" Damien asks, perhaps sensing something is amiss.

I frown. How much should I tell him? Should I be honest or gloss things over?

"Something's fishy" I tell him finally "I don't know what it is, Damien, but something feels off" I tell him honestly "I don't even know if I want to go through with this ritual or spell. Maybe I'm being stupid" I tell him glumly.

"Winter, if something feels wrong, then there's something going on. I'm heading up there, I should be there in time for that ritual" Damien growls. I hear Langdon agreeing in the background.

"Fine, but drive carefully" I tell him heatedly.

"Get some sleep" Damien tells me "See you soon."

"See you soon" I echo back, hanging up the phone. I fight the urge to throw it against the wall and smash it.

Fuck you Kai, I think angrily, glaring over at the bed. He had pretended I was someone else when having sex with me!

So wrong. We could tell him he has to go fuck himself for the next few months.

Not enough punishment Sabriel. I'm about ready to rip him a new asshole.

Well that would certainly work. Might be hard to get him to hold still while you do it.

It was a phrasing of speech. I wouldn't really do it.

Figured. What if we buy a chastity device for him? Means he can't sleep with anyone else and we get to embarrass him.

Sabriel, if it comes to that, then we might as well leave his pathetic ass.

We could make him a slave like in the bdsm stuff.

Sabriel you have a weird kink.

I'm just open minded.

I would call it more than that.

I throw the phone down on the bed and stomp out of the room. There's no sign of Kai anywhere thank goodness. Part of me wants to rip his penis from his body. I decide to explore the castle. I walk absent mindedly, coming across the odd maid or servant who merely bows or curtsies and then lets me be on my way. My legs carry me through to the private dining room area and I tense when I see that Kai is standing there, looking nonplussed and confused. My hand wants to reach out and grab him, throw him against the wall and scream out my anger.

Instead I slowly back away, ducking back out to the hallway and am about to walk away when I hear her voice. None other than Queen Vanessa's. I peek back through. She stands there, clad in a tight nightgown, that is white and completely see through. You can see her bare nipples and white underwear through it. There is a smile on her face. Her hand reaches out to touch Kai on the arm. I keep well back out of sight, my eyes wide in disbelief. What the fuck is going on? Had Kai come out here to sleep with her? I can feel myself simmering with anger.

Her mouth opens in a smirk. "Did you do it" she says, running her hand up and down his arm as he stands there, "did you do as I ordered you to and sleep with her?"

"I thought I slept with you?" Kai's voice is hushed, barely above a whisper and he sounds completely confused. He clutches his head and groans.

"That was part of the spell. I made you believe it was me so that you would sleep with your little mate" she explains to him, like he's a small child, even patting him on the head. "Anyone who comes close to me gets hit by the love spell I have surrounding me. It's the only way to keep King Axel from remembering anything."

I suck in a breath. She must be pretty powerful to have a love spell going at all times or she must have some sort of relic or item that her power is attached to. What did she mean by King Axel remembering? Remembering what? I know they can't be mates, not if she's using a love spell to keep him attracted to her. Something which is illegal by the way. But why did she want Kai to sleep with me? What was the importance of that?

"With the spell I placed on you, you're little mate will conceive tonight and become with child. Don't worry, it won't be for long. Everything will fall into place on the night of the spell. All you have to do, is keep doing what I order you to do" she tells him, almost lovingly.

"But I want you" Kai mumbles. His hands reach out to grip her. Vanessa gives a small chuckle and moves away.

"Later, darling. The King would be very suspicious if I don't go back to him in a minute" she explains tiredly. "He's very possessive of me when he wants to be."

I've heard enough. I quickly turn and go down the corridor, rushing back to the bedroom where I slam the door shut. I hadn't been too sure of the ritual before now, but after overhearing Vanessa, I know that I can't go through with it. My hand unconsciously goes to my stomach. According to Vanessa I would conceive tonight. My heart skips a beat. A smile goes to my lips despite myself. I wanted to be a mother. Wanted a child of my own. But Kai had made love to me, under the impression I was Vanessa, which stung. Even now he was under her spell and I didn't know who to turn to.

Damien was coming, I remembered, glancing over at the cellphone. But he was a man too. Would he be under Vanessa's spell if he came into contact with her? Langdon too? A knock on the door had me tentatively walking over and opening it, prepared to fight if need be. It was Kai. I frown at him suspiciously.

"Winter, I know what happened was wrong" Kai begins, walking inside and running a hand through his hair "I just don't know what happened. It was all topsy turvy, I love you, not Vanessa" he says firmly.

I look at him suspiciously. His eyes look clear, not glazed. There's no sign of hesitation with him. But what about the meeting he just had with Vanessa?

"Kai, I just saw you with Vanessa" I exclaim, sitting on the bed and glaring at him "was there a reason you had to go see her so late at night?" I ask my voice rising "especially since you called my her during sex?"

He has the grace to flush. "I didn't go see Vanessa" he protests "I don't know what you're talking about. You threw me out of the room remember? I've been out wandering ever since."

I cock my head. He really doesn't remember. It's only been a few minutes since his meeting with her. I drop my head into my hands and groan out loud.

"You know I'm not letting you sleep in here with me right" I say sarcastically "you're still in the doghouse."

He nods, looking grim. "That's fair" he comments.

You know we could actually make a doghouse for him.

Sabriel, it's a little insulting to Storm to do that, don't you think?

Oh yeah. Poor Storm. I wouldn't feel sorry for Kai though.

Me neither, but I'm still not doing it.

"So why are you here Kai" I push, sensing theres another reason for his presence. "What is it you want?"

He looks tired. "I wanted to make sure that you want to go ahead with the ritual."

I open my mouth and then shut it. Should I tell him the truth? Am I speaking to Kai right now or Vanessa's lackey? But I'm hesitant. I really want to believe that my mate is capable of breaking a love spell. Shouldn't the mate bond be stronger than a spell?

Life isn't a fairytale Winter, remember that.

Oh I know Sabriel, there's also witches and vampires to contend with as well.

Werewolve's are the best species.

I make up my mind. "Kai I don't think doing this ritual is a good idea. I think we should explore other avenues and ideas instead. It just seems to be dangerous and we don't even know what the ritual involves."

He shrugs his shoulders. "Everything comes with a risk Winter" he says incredulously "we came up here for your sake remember. Now you're telling me it's too dangerous?"

"I just think we need to be more cautious" I argue back "this can't be the only way."

"No, but it's the quickest way" he shoots back, looking miffed. "Other options could take months, I'm not willing to wait that long" he scoffs.

He's not willing to wait that long? I'm the one that's the hybrid! This doesn't affect him at all! What the hell is the problem?

"Kai" I snap "it's not exactly your decision to make, is it? It's not your body, you're not the one being affected" I almost yell, throwing my hands up in the air.

"The ritual is our best bet. What have you got against Vanessa anyway" he demands, shooting me a peeved look "besides me mistakenly using her name earlier. She's been nothing but nice seen she's seen us."

"Why are you defending her so much" I shout, finally snapping. He flinches. His mouth purses in a tight line. He glares at me. His hands go to his hips.

"Winter, please" he snaps "You need to get this hybrid thing taken care of. Why are you being so stubborn?"

"I'm being careful" I say stiffly "not stubborn."

That's when I make a rookie mistake. I stand up and turn around, presenting my back to Kai, lost in my thoughts and my anger. I feel his arm come across my neck, squeezing as I try and push it away, my eyes

bulging, my arms flailing around as I hit out at him. I can feel my vampire side coming to the surface, my fangs popping out and go to push, but something sharp pierces my neck before I can. I feel myself becoming out of it, my body dropping harshly to the floor, my eyes staring directly ahead.

Kai comes into view, bending down to pick me up. He places me on the bed, my vision blurred, my limbs refusing to cooperate.

"Didn't want to do this, but Vanessa needs you to do the ritual" he mutters, placing the bed covers over me. "She won't let you escape or leave" he finishes, his whole body tense. "Don't worry Winter, I'll take care of you, you'll see, once the ritual is done, everything will go back to normal. You just have to wait until then."

My eyes flicker, my vision hazy. Even though I fight it with every ounce of my being, pretty soon I drift into darkness, Kai's hand firmly holding my own, my body uncooperative as I slept with dread rising inside of me.

Chapter 125 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Winter POV

It feels like I'm floating, suspended in mid air, surrounded by darkness and yet, I can distantly hear a voice in the distance, one that is familiar to me.

Winter you need to wake up. Winter, Winter, Winter wake up. Earth to Winter. Hello Dumbass

The voice is annoying. Extremely so. Persistent. But there's something else that is inside of me, something that makes my hands draw to my stomach unconsciously. Images flicker in my mind:

Sitting at a dining table, opposite King Axel and his wife Queen Vanessa. But every time they kiss, a green light appears and fades. What is this light? What does it do? Why am I the only one who can seem to see it? Is it because I'm a hybrid?

Kai making love to me, his hands exploring me all over. Then he utters the word Vanessa and I'm heartbroken. I send him out of the room, angry, confused, scared. Why would he think I was Vanessa?

Wandering around the castle at night, no real destination in mind. I come across Kai and Vanessa conversing. She wanted him to have sex with me. Why? What is her motive in getting me to conceive?

Kai coming back to the room, talking to me. A sharp, painful prick. The bastard dosed me with something, then forced sleep and now this state of nothingness.

I struggle to open my eyes but am not successful. All I can do is float and think, with images popping up in my mind. How could Kai have done this to me? It hurts so bad, but then I realise that Kai didn't do any of this to me. Not really. Not to his awareness. Vanessa has put who knows how many spells on him to make him do this. I think the green light is also a spell she's placed on the King. It would explain his confusion and lapses of memory. But how does a witch manage to seduce more than one man? Unless she's part siren? Is that possible?

Anything is possible idiot. Just because hybrids are dangerous and becoming one can kill you, doesn't mean there aren't other ones around. By the way Kai's a dick. I'm going to insert a needle right up his fucking rectum when I get hold of him.

Is that you Sabriel?

It's me. Alive and kicking. Your mate is such a douchebag. I blame Kai only. Storm would never have done this in a million years, no way.

It's not his fault, he's under a spell.

So I heard. If she's part siren then anyone who comes into contact with her is going to be seduced, you know that right? So Damien and Langdon are going to be just as useless. I hate to say this Winter but. . .

But what?

You really need some girlfriends. They wouldn't be able to be seduced by a siren. Sometimes the male species just seems so pathetic and weak. Like right now.

I would settle for waking up right now instead.

I don't have any suggestions for that. Unless you want me to scream in your head or something? See if that jolts you awake?

I consider it and then wave the idea away. Instead I begin to see if I can move parts of my body, wiggling my toes, my fingers, getting circulation back to my body. Yes, I can feel it working, slowly parts of me are becoming easier to shift. My eyelids flutter open. I'm in the bedroom, tucked under the covers like Kai had done previously. My head shifts to the side, the door is open. Footsteps sound outside the door. I can hear that bitch Vanessa's voice. "Remember just check on her. If she's still sleeping soundly then don't dose her. It's bad for the baby" she tells someone, who I assume must be Kai.

"Don't worry I won't. I will do exactly as you say Vanessa" Kai's voice.

I want to roll my eyes at how lovey dovey he sounds towards her. Instead I move my limbs back into place and force my eyes to close. If he comes inside now, he'll dose me when he sees me awake. I force my breathing to be slow and even, aware that Vanessa is still outside the door.

I smell him come into the room, his footsteps heavy. His hand touches my forehead and my cheek, his eyes no doubt sweeping over my body.

"How is she?" Vanessa calls out, her voice rich and smoky.

"Sleeping" Kai answers, still touching me "she's still sleeping."

"As I thought" she said sounding satisfied "she'll be under until tomorrow at least with the dosage you gave her. Tomorrow night is the ritual. Once that has been completed, she will no longer be needed."

"What about me?" asks Kai.

She chuckles. "I will definitely need you Kai. You're going to keep me company with your friend Axel. A woman can never have too many friends willing to do as she asks."

Slut, I think furiously to myself.

"Now come along" she orders him "King Axel wants to spend some time with you, his friend and that means I can have some alone time" she adds with a sigh. "It really is hard to keep spells going all the time with barely any rest" she complains. I hear their footsteps as they move away from the bedroom and go down the corridor, but I don't dare try to do anything for several long minutes.

I think it's safe now. I can't smell them either Winter.

Why is it so hard to move? I feel like I'm tied up or something.

It's the sedative you were given. I don't know what was in it. I do know she wants you for some reason and your baby. You need to get up.

I'm trying.

Try harder.

I use all my might to move my legs and arms. My eyes open easily but the sedative isn't wearing off, at least not quickly enough for my liking. I take a deep breath and then launch my body onto the ground, hitting it with a large thud, my legs and arms spreading out. I guess I must have shocked my system because I could move, albeit slowly. I use my arms to get up and sway on my feet, glancing back over at the bed. My eyes widen in disbelief. Is that my cellphone? Had Kai left my cellphone for me or had he missed it in the bedding? I don't care. I limp over to it and grab it, my vision slightly blurry.

The battery's about to die. I need to be quick. I bring up Damien on my contact list and press the message button. I know he's coming anyway but he needs to be prepared. Otherwise he'll be under her spell the second he walks through the castle doors.

Queen, witch, siren.

Kai under spell.

I'm in danger

Be careful getting here.

I hit the send button and then hide the cellphone in my dresser. I glance out of the corridors and see that it's empty. Now I hesitate. There's so many servants running around, that anywhere I go, my whereabouts will be reported. I'm screwed.

Not if you're dressed as a servant

I can't just knock some poor innocent girl out and take her clothes

Winter, you don't have a choice. We're in survival mode hun.

I feel bad about this.

A servant girl comes wandering past. I make a motion towards her. "Excuse me" I say politely, backing away into the room "could you please give me a hand?"

She comes inside and with a grimace of distaste, I whack her on the back of her neck, sending her crumpling to the floor. I hastily change my clothes and hers and then with a spurt of genius, place her on the bed, under the bedcovers. With any luck, they'll assume it's me without coming fully into the room.

I head back into the corridor, keeping my head down. I look just like the rest of the servants now, and make my way with ease towards the back of the castle. If I can get to outside, then I might be able to shift and escape. Then I can get Damien and Langdon to help me get Kai back. It's worth a shot. I can't exactly just lie in the bed waiting to be sedated over and over again. I creep down the stairs, hands clutching at the bannisters. I'm still unsteady on my feet.

A voice sounds behind me, dripping with malice. "Oh dear, you're out of your bed. You're meant to be resting Winter, dear. Otherwise you won't be ready for the ritual tomorrow night."

I slowly turn and face her. She's to the side of the stairs, Kai beside her, his jaw tight, his hands clenched into fists. She smiles at me maliciously.

"You think that I'm still going to go ahead with that ritual" I hiss, my whole body trembling in indignation "I refuse. I would rather keep my hybridness. I don't trust you one bit" I snarl, looking over to Kai with pleading eyes.

"Kai let's just go. I don't need this ritual. Just you and me, let's go home, away from here."

His eyes widen for just a moment and I feel the tiniest hint of hope, but just as quickly he looks away. "No" he mutters "we need to stay here Winter."

Vanessa smiles triumphantly. "I really am doing this for your own good" she promises, her voice thick with meaning "you'll thank me later for this. Now how about we all walk upstairs and get you back into your bed?" she asks.

The hell I will. Instead I growl at her. She sighs. "You're going to be pigheaded about this, I can tell" she wails dramatically, wringing her hands together. She suddenly clicks her fingers and Kai goes as still as a statue, his eyes unblinking, his posture stiff and still.

"What have you done?" I whisper.

She doesn't answer, retrieving a large kitchen knife from behind her back. She places it against Kai's throat. "Cooperate or I will kill him" she says bluntly.

I see a drop of blood from the kitchen knife being pressed so hard against his throat. "You need him" I say numbly, my head beginning to scream in panic. "You need him."

"Not really" she muses "I need you more. So I'm prepared to sacrifice him in exchange for you. So how about it Winter, do you want me to kill your mate right here and now?" she pushes.

She means it. She makes a sudden move and I scream out in rage "no don't, I'll do what you want, just don't kill him" I beg.

She throws something down at my feet. I slowly bend down and pick it up, looking it over curiously.

"It's a sedative, but one that won't harm your baby" Vanessa says calmly "drink it."

I eye the sedative, but Vanessa's right there, with the knife, prepared to kill Kai if I don't do it.

"You'll let him go."

"I won't kill him" she huffs, glaring at me "now hurry up. I don't have all day you know."

I flip her the finger. She just laughs at me.

I undo the vial and press it to my lips. There is no smell, it's odourless. Vanessa waits, tapping her foot on the ground, as I reluctantly take one last look at Kai and then drink it down, gasping at the foulness of the taste, the vial dropping from my hand and smashing to pieces on the ground. Vanessa drops her arm with the knife, letting out a short laugh. Kai's body jolts back to life as my own begins to sway and then crashes to the ground.

"Kai honey, your mate needs some help getting back to bed" Vanessa coos, giving him a wink and a kiss on the cheek "get her back there would you and then stay guard. We can't risk her getting free again. Not when this ritual is so damn close. Everything I've ever wanted is almost at my fingertips. I'm not about to let it slip through my fingers now."

Chapter 126 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Langdon POV

I've never seen Damien this morose and miserable before. Repeated trips to the attic, have revealed no new information in regards to his twin Drake. The basement, a cold, desolate, dark and horrible room, has nothing of importance that I can tell, although Damien, refuses to so much as step foot inside of it. The cage, or cell, is something that he fears looking at and I can't blame him, even standing near it is enough to make me uncomfortable.

Elena has been avoiding the both of us, keeping herself holed up inside her room. However, tonight, she's ventured back into the living area of the pack room and Damien wastes no time in asking her, once again, where Drake was taken.

"Damien, I really don't know" she protests thickly, her eyes puffy and red from crying "I don't know what else to tell you" she cries, leaning back in the chair, her eyes wide as she looks at the both of us.

"I just don't understand how you couldn't have asked where he was taking him. He was your son, mother, your flesh and blood. Did that mean nothing to you?" Damien growled, a look of utter contempt on his face.

"I didn't want to know" she said, her voice trembling "It would have hurt too much to know where he was, that he was with another family who loved him. It was far easier to pretend he didn't exist at all. I focussed all my attention on you and Winter instead and never thought about the other baby I gave birth to either." God even she knew how cold she sounded surely, I thought to myself.

Silence. Elena looks haggard, emotional and overwrought. Damien looks seethingly angry, frustrated at the lack of information and discovering no new clues. He plonks himself down on his chair, frowning. Elena sniffles, running a hand through her dishevelled hair. Part of me feels sorry for her. To have spent the last few years of her life on the run, with a mate who left his own partner behind. Both of them lying to each other and then losing her partner for being a rogue. She's not had an easy life, even if it was one of her own making. But it wasn't my place to persuade Damien of that either.

"Damien, we can contact the other packs, see if we can find him through his adoptive parents" I whisper, kneeling down and taking his hands "but you need to stop getting so angry at Elena. Sure, her actions were wrong, but what good is it going to do, to hold a grudge against her? All it's going to do is keep fueling your hatred towards her."

Damien's eyes rest on me, our hands touching and soften. He glances over at his mother who is now sniffing, wiping her eyes with the sleeve of her shirt, while avoiding our gaze.

"I'll keep trying to think Damien, maybe he said something to me that I didn't fully understand at the time" she offered "maybe he let slip and I didn't realise. Hell, I'll even go and look around the house" she says firmly, turning to look at her son who for once, doesn't snort derisively at her or scoff. It's something at least.

"I think that's a good idea, your mother would know the house and where your father might have hidden something more than anyone" I tell him and his eyes light up with the tiniest spark of hope. "Let her try Damien, it can't hurt, can it?" I press, trying not to be too hard on him.

Elena gives him a watery smile. Damien sighs. He looks defeated. "Fine" he mumbles "but I don't want you getting rid of anything in that house just yet. I still have to clear all the alcohol bottles and beer cans out" Damien grumbled. I stifle my smile at his complaining.

Elena's eyes dimmed somewhat at that comment. "It's mainly your ex mates room that contains the alcoholic rubbish" I tell her hastily and she gives me a grim nod.

"I'll start tomorrow" she says quietly "with your permission of course Damien. I just want you to love me again, like you used to do when you were small."

Please don't say anything cutting, I think to myself, giving Damien a swift glance. Sometimes its hard to read him, especially when theres no expression on his face. I do know that he's a young man, hurting right now, pushing away the love of a parent because he blames them for the loss of another. If Winter was here, I thought to myself sadly, she would know what to do. I know her and Damien have been conversing with their cellphones. She was a stable influence on him, always had been. Damien might not realise it, but I sure did.

"Alright mother" Damien sighs, not noticing the way his mother's eyes light up when he uses that one simple word towards her. "Maybe you can find what we can't" he admits not sounding too positive about that.

"Have you heard from Winter yet?" she asks tentatively, fidgeting with her hands. She's nervous. But desperate for information on her daughter as well, who is currently at the castle, where we are intending to head next.

"Yeah, she seems to be going okay. But she's not a fan of Queen Vanessa" Damien says with a shrug, not sounding worried about it.

"Well the queen isn't the nicest of people. Not to mention even when she's been married, she's been involved in all sorts of different affairs. It's said she's so beautiful that no man can resist her, once he's come into her presense. I don't know how the King puts up with that" Elena said slightly outraged.

Thankfully Damien refrains from commenting about the hypocricy of that statement. Although judging at the way his mouth thinned, I could tell he wanted to.

"Yeah, Winter was a little less specific than I would have liked her to be, when I was talking to her. I think it's nerves and the ritual" Damien said without thinking. I shoot him a glare, but it's too late. Elena's head pops up and she glares at both of us.

"What ritual are you talking about?" she says tightly "I know that the queen is a witch, what is she doing to Winter" she finishes with a growl, standing up and crossing her arms.

Damien cringes. He looks up apologetically, his mother almost shooting flames from her eyes. "Well Winter is a hybrid" he says slowly "so she wants the Queen to take out the vampire side of her and make her a shifter only again."

"What" she screeches "how did Winter become a hybrid. When did she become a hybrid" she demands, flailing her arms around.

"Calm down, we'll tell you" Damien says annoyed, the screeching no doubt hurting his ears. I sigh. I thought Elena already knew.

"It all started with this guy Thomas" starts Damien wearily, telling the sad, sordid tale to Elena, who listens, mouth flattened, her breathing heavy. The only thing missing is steam coming out of her ears.

"I can't believe it" Elena says distraught "your poor sister" she exclaimed "no wonder they were in such a hurry to get to the castle. I suspected something was going on, but this" she says weakly.

Damien just frowns and then we hear his cellphone going off with a message. He pulls it out of his pocket, and checks the contact. I can see it's from Winter from here. He holds the phone out, so that all of us can read the message which is glowing brightly in the dimness of the room.

Queen, witch, siren.

Kai under spell.

I'm in danger

Be careful getting here.

"Queen, Witch, Siren" says Elena bemusedly "who does she mean? Is she saying that the Queen is a witch and a siren?" She gasps in shock.

"It would explain why men seem to fall in love with her so easily" I say under my breath "the siren part of her would lure them in like it was nothing."

"It also says that Kai is under a spell" Damien points out, his brows arching in concern "do you think it's under her spell? "

"Well if that's the case, then he's most likely lost to us for now" I murmur "Kai will be doing anything the queen asks of him. We can't trust him when we get there."

Fuck. So much for Kai keeping Winter safe. But then, neither of us had really known much about the new Queen, other than she was a well respected witch. No where, had we heard about her being a siren, or that she would have ulterior motives. The King was an old friend of mine and Kai's for heaven's sake, we'd been delighted to learn that he'd found his mate and gotten married. Now I was pissed. What if she wasn't really King Axel's mate? Had my friend been bewitched and tricked by this woman? I was determined to find out.

"It says she's in danger" Elena says sounding slightly panicked "we need to go to her."

Both Damien and I turn to look at her in shock. "You can't come" Damien says firmly "you need to stay here, where its safe. Besides you promised to go through the house for answers" he points out to her chagrin.

Her cheeks go bright red in anger. "I can't stay here when we know that she is in danger. You can't make me stay here. I'll just follow the both of you if you don't take me" she says triumphantly.

Damien swears. I merely raise an eyebrow. Part of me suspects that Elena could actually be a help in this situation, but I'm not going to pressure my mate, one way or the other.

"Fine" Damien growls finally "but we don't let anyone know we're coming. I don't want them warned beforehand. Don't even mind-link Winter or Kai. For all we know, she's managing to listen somehow with a spell."

"I daresay that we'll be caught once we reach the grounds" I point out and Damien nods.

"I and mother will be caught once we reach the grounds" he corrects me as I look at him confused "you're going to sneak your way through in the boot of the car."

I groan out loud. "You're going to put the big smelly blanket over me to hide my scent aren't you" I grouse. Damien laughs out loud in answer. "I want you to search for Winter once we've made it to the castle. Something tells me, she's going to be the one who needs your help the most."

"Anyway, let's go" Damien mutters, grabbing his wallet and keys "we can't afford to lose any more time. I don't like the sounds of this ritual either. I want Winter safely gone before the full moon. We can find another way to turn her back into a full fledged shifter. This is not the way."

I agree. I grab my own keys and wallet, Elena grabbing a small handbag. She gives an awkward smile. I reach out a hand and take hers, leading her alongside us, to the garage. Damien eyes his motorbike with longing and I hide a smile, going over to the SUV as he sighs and walks over.

I help Elena into the passenger seat. She smiles tiredly, adjusting herself in the seat as I walk to the back. Damien grins and helps me into the boot of the car, a large smelly, old, blanket placed on top of me. It covers me completely. I also stink and I cough and splutter, hearing Damien's laughter as he shuts the

door. "Try not to cough when we get there" he yells and I flip him the finger. I hear the car start and the murmur of voices, the driver door shutting with a loud bang. The car pulling out, the tires squealing softly. Music playing from the radio, the whisper of Elena and Damien's voices. I relax where I am, lying there, things piled on top of me and close my eyes. There's very little traffic at this time of night and before long I find myself becoming sleepy. But before I fall asleep, I suddenly realise that, Elena, managed to get herself out of searching the house for more clues by coming with us. Was it intentional? I very much suspected it was.

Chapter 127 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Kai POV

"You should have seen Africa, Kai, it was beautiful" King Axel was enthusing at the breakfast table, his arms gesticulating wildly as he spoke, his eyes dancing. "For some unfathomable reason, even the shyest of creatures would approach our tour bus" he said, with a wry shake of his head. "Vanessa even reached out and touched a tiger's head as though it was nothing but a cat" he said chuckling.

My eyes turn to Vanessa, who merely looks at her husband indulgently. "Oh Axel, you make it sound much more exciting than it is" she breathed. For a moment her eyes linger on me and she licks her lips seductively as I watch, feeling desire and lust run throughout my veins. Storm grumbles a protest at me but I block him, not wanting to hear it. In fact, I don't wish to hear his voice at all, annoying and persistent as it is.

A guard tentatively walks in "Your Highness's" he says, bowing deeply from the waist in respect as Vanessa and Axel sit patiently, waiting for them to speak "some visitors attempted to gain access to the castle. Per Queen Vanessa's instructions, we have detained them in the dungeon, until such time as you are able to ascertain they are a threat."

"Thankyou" drawled Vanessa with a coy smile "did these visitors say what they want?"

The guard hesitated. "They claim to be family members of your current visitors your majesty."

Vanessa gave a hiss and looks at me. I know who it must be, Damien and Langdon must have finally made their way down here. Thank fuck for that. I was starting to think they were going to make Winter

and I go through this damn ritual by ourselves. Then it hits me what the guard had just said about them being put in the dungeon.

"They can stay in the dungeon. I want no complications when it comes to tonight's ritual" she decides, resting her head on her hand, her eyes flickering between myself and the guard.

"Queen Vanessa" I quietly say, "these family members need to be set free" I begin and then trail off as my mind becomes smoky, cloudy, unable to recollect what I was going to say, let alone what I had been thinking. I pause confused.

"It's safer for them to be in the dungeon" Vanessa insisted, her eyes blinking at me, her head cocked in annoyance.

"It's safer for them to be in the dungeon" I repeat blankly "they need to be kept away from the ritual" I added with a frown.

Vanessa's eyes gleamed. King Axel merely looked blank as he stared down at the table. The royal guard was confused but smiled at his queen anyway. "I shall keep them locked up then your highness" he said politely.

"Thankyou. Please take your leave" Vanessa said calmly, motioning for the young man to leave. Her eyes sparkled with triumphance.

I feel confused. "I should check on Winter" I mutter, about to stand up, when Vanessa's hand darts out and grabs hold of my arm.

"Winter is safe" she cooes, her voice washing over me, my body feeling relaxed as she speaks to me, my whole body leaning forward in an attempt to be even closer to her. She has such a beautiful smile and that body of hers! Smoking hot.

"You need to let Winter rest before tonight's ritual" she instructs in a husky voice.

"Yes, let her sleep son" King Axel says jovially "tonights going to be a big night after all. Best to get as much rest in as you can."

"But Winter needs to eat" I begin to mutter and Vanessa places a finger against my lips, causing my cock to twitch with excitement.

"Winter is fine, stop worrying about it" she breathes, standing up and pulling me up beside her, Axel looking away and completely oblivious, apparently, to it all. Either that or is this something he's used to. I feel like I should protest or move away but then just as quickly the thought flickers from my mind.

She's so close to me. I can smell her perfume in the air. an intoxicating scent of lilies and roses. I take a deep sniff in appreciation. I can feel tingles where her hand grasps my own.

"Kai, I can feel your heart racing in your chest" she whispers, placing a hand against my breast "I can smell your scent, I can feel the love you have for me" she continues as I look directly at her. Her voice washes over me, my body stays close beside her, but part of me wants more, even knowing that Axel is still in the same room, I don't care. It's like a compulsion, one that I cannot resist, as my head slowly lowers itself down and my lips softly touch hers.

She tastes divine, like ambrosia or what I figure ambrosia tastes like. Her lips are like velvet honey. She kisses me with a fervor, her cheeks flushing as she finally pulls back.

"Kai, what has come over you" she gasps.

I should care that Axel was there, but when I glance around the room, my friend has long since disappeared. There's no sign of him anywhere and I wonder, slightly guiltily whether he left as I started kissing his wife. Why don't I feel even remotely bad about it? Am I that much of a bastard? Because rather than leave, my eyes are sweeping over Vanessa's pert breasts and slim figure, my body craving to take her then and there on the dining table.

"Save that for later" she purrs, coming over and shucking me under the chin. There's a satisfied smile on her face as she studies me. "I think you'll make a much better King than Axel, by my side" she whispers thoughtfully.

I give her a nod, taking in her skin tight dress with a sigh. She laughs. "Go and take a walk my pet, work off some of your frustration" she says sardonically. I should take offense to that but my whole body just responds, whether I want it to or not. In fact, I bow before her, then turn and leave the room, very aware of her watchful gaze as I do so.

Kai will you snap the fuck out of it already. You're an embarrassment.

Storm what is your problem? Vanessa is everything we've ever wanted in a mate.

She's not our mate jackass, Winter is. Can you get that through your thick skull?

I can't fight my feelings for Vanessa. Storm what do you think it is? I just can't move my body when I want to and all I can think about is her.

It's because you're under a spell you nitwit. How thick are you? Think about Winter. Think about the way she smiles when she's happy, the way those big eyes of hers widen when she laughs, how her laugh sounds. All the stuff that makes Winter unique and special to us.

I do. I think about Winter and how she lights up whenever she spots me coming. The way her hugs feel when she hugs me, her body so warm and toasty. The sparks that fly between us and what her lips taste like when I kiss her. Even the way her body feels like beneath mine, the sound of my name coming from her lips, the way she shudders as she cums.

The more I manage to think about it, the less confused I feel and the less clouded my mind seems to be.

She needs us Kai. That gorgeous woman, upstairs right now, needs us and you need her. I swear to god when all this is over with, if you don't put a ring on it, I'm sticking your sorry ass in confinement. God knows any man would be lucky to have that girl and you're being such a douchebag when it comes to marriage. For fuck sake, getting married isn't like your contracting an STD.

I know that Storm.

Well, the way you act, I'm beginning to think you have serious issues when it comes to getting married. Are you afraid of priests? Because I can work with that.

It's not priests you jackass that scares me.

Then what is it?

I'm afraid of disappointing her! There, I said it. I don't want her to be disappointed and regret marrying me. So it's easier to just not do it.

Um, you've disappointed her so many times, why would it matter if you were married?

What the hell Storm. Can't you just be sympathetic for once?

No. You'll get sympathy when I think you deserve it.

Damn mutt, you could be nicer to your human you know. At least try to be a bit respectful.

I'll think about it but don't hold your breath dumbass.

I give a slight huff and shake my head. Leave it to Storm to be so bloody blunt right now. I sigh and look around at the desolate castle, with the servants moving back and forth, chatting amiably to each other. What do I do right now? If I go to the dungeon, then Vanessa will know instantly and there's every chance I'd get thrown in there as well. I scowl, looking towards Winter's bedroom. I can already see several guards in the corridor, no doubt they will inform Vanessa should I choose to go back up there as well. The grounds seem to be the safest bet.

I walk off, slow, trying to appear as though I'm still unsteady on my feet and under whatever spell she placed on me. The front door is just as heavily guarded, the guards giving me a nod as I leave. I sigh. I can hear the sounds of shifters sparring in the distance, no doubt training to keep themselves fit and prepared for battle. My feet unconsciously turn towards the direction and I walk, the sun shining down warmly on me, my feet crunching over twigs and leaves, the grass soft and lush. Shouts can be heard as well as a small crowd cheering. They sound just like a pack would, I think with a smile.

The training ring is large, not unexpected considering the location, two large shifter's in the ring. I can only see the back of them, but they look fit, with muscled abdomens and bulging arms. They are grappling in human form, much to my satisfaction. You should be able to defend yourself in human form as well as in your wolf form.

"Go, you can do it" screamed a person from the crowd.

"Make him drop" screamed another.

I stayed behind the crowd, watching pleasantly, distracted, from my problems, for a minute at least. The warriors leapt apart and began to circle each other, as I watched the crowds reaction.

Thump. The taller one is swept to the floor, hitting the ground hard as the crowd roared in disbelief. The shorter one, immediately took advantage and gave a hard kick, before performing some sort of wrestling move, that had the poor bastard on the ground quickly tapping out.

"Drake is the winner" yelled out a member of the crowd who had been acting as the referee.

"What a surprise" scoffed a person.

"Yeah, like you couldn't see that coming" another laughed, elbowing his friend.

The crowd began to disperse and I start to move to the front, my eyes on the young lad still in the ring, his back to me. I can see the sweat glistening down his shirtless body, a half sleeve tribal tattoo on his right arm. His hair was shaggy. But something, something about this boy seems familiar. Like he reminds me of someone. He's busy talking to a friend as I slowly circle around and come up towards him.

I inhale in shock. Those features. Those eyes of his, the hair, the lips, so much of it was the same and yet there were subtle differences. The hair was slightly longer. He had ear piercings up and down his right ear. The tattoo. A small scar across his eyebrow as though he'd been hit with something. His lips were slightly twisted. But there was no denying who he looked like. For, despite the small differences, he was exactly identical. I was standing there looking at the very same image of Damien, right in front of my eyes, my mouth gaping open in shock.

"I better go before mother finds out I'm here" the boy called Drake said to his friend with a sardonic twist of his lips "she hates it when I spar."

"Your mother probably already knows" his friend said with a grin "Queen Vanessa knows everything. Poor bastard" he said laughing and walking away.

Then Drake looked at me. "I'm sorry, Can I help you?" he asked in a hoarse voice. No doubt from the fighting.

"You have to go to the dungeon" I whisper urgently, even as I hear her voice yelling for Drake in the background. I can't believe Queen Vanessa is his mother. How was this possible? A twin. Did Damien know? Before Vanessa reached us both, I take another shaky breath and tell him "go to the dungeon. Trust me."

Chapter 128 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Drake POV

I stare at the man who stepped forward to speak to me, aware of my mother's presense and her harried footsteps towards me.

"You need to go to the dungeon" he had said, like there was some great mystery awaiting me. It's intriguing though, like there's something he knows that I don't. I give him a small smirk. As if I'm going to fall for it though. It could be a trap.

"Drake" the voice is sharp, angry, annoyed. Ah mother, so nice to see you again too. I turn towards her and raise an eyebrow, annoyed at her already.

"What are you doing out here" Vanessa hisses, coming closer. She's waving her arms around like a lunatic and frowning fiercely at me.

"I was training" I tell her abruptly and she sneers at me.

"How many times have I told you to stay away from the training ring" she snaps, "It's below you, to train with the royal guards and what not."

There it is, the superiority complex she seems to have. That we, for some unfathomable reason, are better than everybody else, because she married King Axel, an extraordinarily nice man that really deserves far better than my mother as his wife. Part of me wishes I wasn't such a coward, because then the man would actually be free of this witch instead of stuck with her.

Her eyes slide over to the man who has scars on his face. "Alpha Kai" she says in a sugary sweet tone of voice "I didn't see you there, I thought you were just going for a walk" she adds looking suspicious.

He seems to pale slightly or is it my imagination. Uh oh, had he gone against my mother's orders. Poor bastard. He really should know better.

"I was going for a walk when I came across the training ring and decided to investigate" he said quickly.

That seems to satisfy her.

"I was looking for you" she seems to purr "Winter will need another dosage soon. Shall we go to her room and provide it."

I frown. Who the hell is Winter?

"Certainly Queen Vanessa" Alpha Kai responds, holding his arm out to her. My mother willingly takes it and they turn to walk in the direction of the castle.

"Drake" Vanessa says as I look at her, "I expect you to join your father and I for lunch shortly. Is that clear?" she says haughtily.

I scowl at her. Miserable bitch, already back to micro managing my life. I bite my lip however and give her an insincere smile. "Certainly mother" I snap. She glares at me then shrugs and walks away with this Alpha Kai man. God how I hate her. I'm under no illusions that she's not my real mother. I've known

since I was tiny that I was adopted. Shame that the man who adopted me with her died. He was nice, from what I can recall. Whereas my mother is a coldhearted bitch who goes through men like they're nothing. She doesn't even care if they are already married. I know she's a witch, but there's something else to her because men throw themselves at her without her even trying. It's annoying and embarrassing. I suspect she's part siren but I've never been able to prove it. But it would explain a hell of a lot.

"Screw this" I mutter once they are a safe distance away "I'm going to go and check that dungeon out." Trap or no trap, I can't get the look of desperation on that man's face. It wouldn't hurt to have a quick look would it?

I put my joggers on, I hate fighting in shoes for some reason and head towards the building towards the far end of the castle. If I'm in luck, and to be fair, it's a pretty safe bet, then Jared is going to be the one guarding, because it's the most hated job out there and it gets given to the dumbest guard out there. Hence, Jared.

Yes, I almost cheer loudly in my head. It's him. With his dreadlocks and nose piercing, dishevelled clothing and general air of boredom, it's none other than my stoner friend Jared standing out front.

"Drake" he crows when I come into view, fist bumping me with a grin "long time no see man. How have you been?" he exclaims.

"I've been better. I only came back because I ran out of money back packing" I tell him sorrowfully.

"Ah man, that sucks. Would have been nice though yeah, backpacking through europe" he says excitedly "better than being stuck here at any rate" he says sadly.

He furtively checks the grounds but nobody is interested in us, let alone cares what he's doing. He rolls a joint and lights it, smoking it with an appreciative look on his face.

"That's the stuff" he moans, handing it to me. I take a drag and then pass it back.

"Don't get caught" I warn him and he just laughs, chugging away.

"I won't nobody cares enough to come here anyway. This is the job given to the lowest of the lows" he laughs "I'm not complaining though because I can smoke and not get pulled up."

I sigh. He's never going to change, but then why should he have to? He's a genuinely nice guy with a heart of gold, even if he does like to get stoned or high as you call it.

"Hey what's going on tonight?" he asks me suddenly.

I frown. I've no idea. "Nothing as far as I know, why?"

"There's some talk about your mother doing a ritual or something" Jared mutters.

"I got nothing" I say with a shrug of my shoulders. "Hey listen Jared" I ask him as he peers at me blearily "can you let me inside? I hear you have some prisoners in there?"

He blinks, caught off guard. "There are prisoners in there" he says with a grin "You want to go in there man, go ahead."

I hesitate. I don't know why, but something makes me ask it anyway "have you got the keys to the cell?"

Now he looks a bit anxious. "I do, but why do you need them. "

"I don't" I say quietly 'but why don't you come inside with me? You can still smoke your joint then" I add, watching him think it over. After all you can guard inside just as well as outside I want to shout at him, but he needs to come to that rationale himself.

"Yeah ok man" Jared says and both of us slip inside.

I blink, the darkness overwhelming in such a small confined space. I can hear voices coming from the last cell and I walk quickly, Jared unconcerned as he walks behind me, inhaling his joint. The marijuana smells disgusting but theres this most beautiful scent coming towards me. It's hard to put a handle on it. It's like chocolate mousse, my favourite dessert in the whole entire world. Not only is that perplexing

but my wolf is going crazy in my mind, prancing around and growling like a possessive bitch. I want to know what the hell his problem is.

I stop in front of the prisoners and gape. I swear that Jared has dropped his joint in surprise. There are three of them. One older woman and two men. The older woman is beautiful in a way, with her pale skin, longish hair and beautiful blue eyes. But its the other two which make me want to go insane. Standing directly in front of me with his own mouth wide open, is a mirror version of me. Sure, my hair is slightly longer, I have a tattoo on my arm and I'm a little more tanned than him, but the other man is me.

"Holy shit, there's two of you" exclaims Jared from the back as his eyes dart back and forth in shock.

"You're me" I whisper to the man. "You're like my twin" I add in disbelief. There's no mistaking it. He'r right there in front of my very eyes. I never even knew he existed.

The other me stares. "You're Drake" he bursts out "I've been wanting to look for you."

"How do you know my name" I murmur, trying not to touch the silver bars, but desperate to reach in and touch him. To make sure that he is in fact real. After all Jared is not the most reliable of people to ask, especially when he's under the influence.

"It's a long story."

My wolf however is growling at me and I turn to the third prisoner in the cell, the one who is regarding me steadily, his arms folded across his chest. I've never seen such a perfect man. His eyes are black, showing his wolf is close to the surface, his whole body is toned and muscled. He reminds me of a greek god with his hair all mussed up. The other me is standing close to him, one hand on his shoulder.

"Mate" I growl the word without warning, causing the man to stiffen where he's standing. His eyes dart to me.

For a moment I feel desolute and then he softly says it back "Mate" as other me just smiles grimly.

"Holy cow" Jared shouts, "my god man. This is unbelievable. Two of you and your mate. My god, oh my god" he continues to mutter to himself.

"I'm Damien" other me says "your twin brother and this is our mate Langdon" he indicates the gorgeous hunk next to him. The woman has remained silent all this time, a hand to her mouth, tears welling in her eyes.

"This is our mother Elena" Damien says quietly and I regard her, wondering how I ended up adopted but Damien apparently didn't. There's a story to be told there.

"I'm more interested in why you all got tossed inside a cell" I say quietly, my hand itching to grab hold of the key and open the door.

"We came here because my sister Winter is with her mate inside the castle. I think she's in danger. She's supposed to go through some kind of ritual tonight and we came here to stop it. We haven't done anything wrong."

"I have a sister" I say quietly, awed and overwhelmed, and Damien nods.

"Queen Vanessa is my mother" I tell them and hear them all inhale in shock.

"We're screwed then" Damien says bitterly "was this just a joke to you?"

I shake my head. "I can't stand my mother and I've always known I'm adopted. So no, this isn't a joke for me" I growl "I only just learned of your existence, give me a freaking break for gods sake."

"Will you help us?" Damien asks desperately "Winter is in there" he continues.

I cock my head "is her mate Alpha Kai?" I ask and they nod.

Shit. I glance down at my watch. I need to hustle and soon before mother comes looking for me again. She ordered me to have lunch with them and she meant it. I want to scream in frustration. My mother,

my real mother, my brother and my mate are all locked inside a cell. It's almost too incredible to be real. I eye Jared who's disposed of his joint and is smiling widely at everyone. I sigh. He's not going to be much good. At least he looks like a happy guard.

"Look I can't let you guys out right now" I say firmly "your sister's just been dosed which I think means she's been put to sleep. My mother is expecting me any minute and will come looking if I don't go. Your best bet, is for me to release you later, when the ritual is about to start" I finish, my heart pounding wildly in my chest. I'm completely making this plan up as I go along.

"How do we know if we can trust you" Damien says thickly. Ouch, that hurts, but I don't blame him for asking it.

"Drake is the most honest person I know" Jared chimes in out of nowhere. "If he tells you something he means it."

Damien deflates. "But it means going against the woman who raised you" he says suspicious.

I give a bitter laugh "trust me, I mainly raised myself. I wouldn't worry about loyalties right now. Just wait here and be ready. If I know my mother she's doing the ritual when the full moon is completely up in the sky" I say. I point to Jared "he'll get you anything you need for now. Trust me, you get let out earlier, you end up getting caught and then Winter is a goner. This is the only way" I tell them and then eye my mate "you and I are going to get a chance to know each other better later. It hurts me to leave you in here" I tell him, meaning every word. He nods in understanding. I turn and begin to walk away, yelling over my shoulder "be ready, because I will be back for all of you, you can count on it."

Chapter 129 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Winter POV

It's so dark and so cold. It feels like I'm floating, in mid air. I can feel my hair hanging down, the clothes on my skin, the air on my flesh. I open my eyes and it feels like I fall for a moment, landing on what looks like nothing, just darkness for miles. I frown. Why can't I feel anything between my feet? What's preventing me from continuing to fall? Have I finally died after all this time? I feel a pang at that. But if I'm dead then what is this? Is it hell, because it certainly isn't heaven.

Winter, Winter, do you hear me?

Come and find me, if you can.

The voice is taunting. Eerie, like an echo from somewhere far away. I turn around in a circle wildly but there's no one there. I can't even tell which direction the voice is coming from. In the end, I give a shrug and begin to walk, feeling like I'm in quicksand, each step a difficult manoeuvre, my feet slipping as I do. I curse under my breath but what would standing there, doing nothing do for me? As it is, I'm remembering the drug I drank to save Kai's life and ponder the possibility that this is just a horrific dream.

So weak Winter. Is this all you have? You're little more than a pathetic human, struggling to walk when you should be able to run, to fly almost. What a waste.

Fuck you, I think to the voice in my mind, flipping the bird even though there's no one there. I try to speak to Sabriel but for the moment, she's completely silent and I know the voice in my head isn't her. It's nothing like her. Even if it is sassy. Sabriel's sassiness is different. I fall and my hands slide around frantically. The floor feels cool, almost like glass even. It takes a minute, but I get myself standing again and this time, I notice, my feet don't seem to sink and I can walk normally, albeit slowly, the floor slippery.

That's a little better but you're still nothing but a weakling. Someone who relies on others to save her, content to be a nobody. Who feels the need to change herself but not for the better. You're so slow Winter, can't you see? Come and find me.

The air seems to crackle around me and my hair begins to frizz and stand up all around. Lightning and thunder all around me, water pouring down and soaking me to the skin. I can feel every single droplet as it hits me. It stings. This isn't just water, or is it? The coldness hits me hard and I can feel it in my bones, my whole body trembling as I begin to walk, slowly, the floor even more slippery and hazardous. What is the purpose of this? Why is the voice tormenting me so? Who does this fucking voice belong to and what does it want from me?

A strike of lightning hits me and I scream out loud, expecting myself to spontaneously combust or something, but instead all I feel is the tiniest bit of pain run through my entire body and then nothing. The thunder is so loud that it's almost impossible to hear my own thoughts, let alone concentrate on anything else. I grit my teeth, shivering violently and continue to walk in the same blasted direction. With all the pain I'm feeling and the sounds I'm hearing, I'm almost a hundred percent certain this isn't a

dream, but who knows. Maybe it's that fucking drug I took willingly. Seriously messed up, that's what this is.

Did you feel that lightning hit you? Barely left a mark, didn't it? As though reminding you of the strength you possess? Aren't you tired of always being the victim Winter? Of people hurting you for their own nefarious purposes? Aren't you sick of these evil people? Wouldn't you like it to be different? You know you do. Somewhere inside of you, part of you wants to hurt them, like they hurt you. Don't lie to yourself anymore Winter. Come and find me.

Now the voice is coaxing me. The thunder disappears and I give a loud sigh of relief. Warm air blasting around me. Within moments my clothes and my hair is dry and my body stops trembling. Then the wind becomes harsher, revolving around me, my clothes flying around me wildly as I put my arms up, every step now torture as I try not to slide back in its web. I'm starting to get seriously pissed off now.

"What do you want" I scream out, it fading into the wind "what do you want from me? Why are you doing this?."

I don't know what I expected, but there was no reply. Nothing but my words being bitten and tossed away by the harsh wind. I grit my teeth and force myself forward, feeling fatigued, drained. This, whatever it is, is torture of its own. Maybe I am in hell. If that's the case, it's a lot different than anyone ever envisioned it. It's also fucking annoying. My hands clench into fists as I stride forward, Right now I would love nothing more than to get my hands on whoever the voice belongs to.

Would you Winter? What would you do? Fight me? You don't have the guts or the power. I'm far more powerful than you. You wouldn't stand a chance against me. You would lose your life within an instant. Do you know that? Are you ready for death? You seem so eager to die? Pathetic little girl. Come and find me, if you dare.

The wind dies down and I inhale greedily, but the warmth is gone as well. Then the ground beneath me gives a loud cracking noise and I see shards falling down, before larger bits follow, my whole body slipping and sliding as I try to run, to no avail, as the ground vanishes beneath me and I fall, down, down, down, my body kicking and screaming, until finally I stop. I open my eyes, looking around curiously. There is a hard stone floor beneath my feet, the walls the same material. I can't see a door, as I explore what seems to be a room. In the middle of the room stands an item, covered with a sheet. My eyes go to it. Should I pull the sheet off? There is nothing else to be found. I walk to the front of it, or what I assume is the front of the tall round item and ponder what to do.

Winter, Winter, are you there?

Pathetic girl standing there, so scared.

Are you going to come and find me?

Because there's no leaving this place until you do.

So what's your decision going to be?

I wonder. . .

The voice is coming from behind the sheet. I stare at it, my hands trembling, before I reach forward and quickly grab hold of the starched fabric and in one fell swoop, before I change my mind, rip the sheet off and toss it to the side. I stare in shock at a large oval mirror with legs that was hidden beneath it. It's as large as I am and my feet move closer of their own accord before I can stop them. My reflection stares back at me, but different. Her hair is lighter, a whitish blonde, her eyes are a cool clear blue, her skin is pale as porcelain and her lips are a ruby red colour. She stands tall, no blemishes on her whatsoever. As I stare she lifts her t-shirt and moves around in a circle, her skin completely clear of any scars, unlike my own which has plenty. She smiles at me triumphantly, her fangs glistening in the light. I reach out to touch the cool surface of the mirror, in awe despite myself.

"Who are you" I whisper and the girl chuckles as I cringe.

It's her, the voice I've been hearing. She cocks her head and studies me. "I'm you, but the you that you haven't embraced yet" she says with a hiss "you still hold back when you should be embracing me" she says a tad bit sadly and I feel a moment of guilt.

I know who she is now. There's no denying it. But still, I say the words out loud to be sure. "You're the vampire side of me, aren't you?"

She reaches out of the mirror and I almost scream as she steps outside of it, the mirror going dark and blank behind her. "I am the other half of you that you stifle out of fear. The part you wanted to be rid of" she sneers, glaring at me as I back away a few steps.

"I don't fear you" I protest, but even I know that's a lie. After what I did to my son of a bitch father, I have feared the vampire side of me, not going to lie.

"I'm not a monster" the other me says sadly, circling around me as I watch her wearily "I merely want to survive. You can control the urges. Is it really so bad to have blood every few days in exchange for strength and speed that is far superior to shifter's."

"It is when you're taking it from people" I hiss.

"But you don't have to. Heck, you could get it from the hospital" she points out and I fall silent. Because she's right, I could.

"You need me" she points out, with a smirk.

I narrow my eyes at her "what makes you think that?"

"Because without me" she says lowly "we will both die. Do you think Vanessa is doing the ritual for your benefit" she hisses, her eyes going blood red "she wants the power that we possess. She's not going to just take our power. She got us pregnant for heaven's sake or have you forgotten?"

I had forgotten. I inhale sharply as I remember. But what would Vanessa's motive be for something like that? I stare at the vampire in confusion. "I don't understand why she needed us pregnant" I say helplessly, no longer moving away from her.

"Because the King wants an heir. She plans on taking our child and inserting it into her during the ritual to trick him. A half witch, half siren struggles to conceive and she's too impatient to wait years for it to happen. She cannot have our child Winter, I will not allow it."

"Nor will I" I snap.

"Then be honest. You are too weak as just a shifter to save yourself, let alone our child and Kai. You need me, or will you take the risk of failing?"

I wouldn't take the risk. It was far too great. Neither was I going to lose my baby, even if I hadn't liked how it was conceived. Kai and everyone else, including my child, was too important to me. I look at her helplessly.

"What do I need to do?" I ask, making my decision. Vanessa was going down. I didn't care about the consequences.

She smiles at me. "You need to embrace me fully" she says calmly. "Walk into me child, close your eyes and become one. A mark will appear on your forearm if you do it right."

We didn't have time to lose. She was beginning to look concerned. "We must move, they are taking you outside for the spell. Hurry up Winter" she urged.

I gather up my courage and move forward. Once I'm right in front of her, I take a deep breath and walk into her. It's not an easy process. Every step or movement is indescribable pain as our bodies meld together. Something she failed to tell me, I think a bit sourly. Eventually though, after using all my strength and fighting for it, there is but one of us standing there.

"Close your eyes" the voice comes to me unbidden and I do, imagining us as one, myself as both shifter and vampire. No longer repulsed by the fact. No longer horrified by the vampire aspect of me. Because I need her. I need both sides of myself and I was realising that now.

I feel a burning sensation on my forearm. My eyes flutter open and I watch wide eyed as a celtic, tribal tattoo appears on my arm, glittering slightly before becoming a dark black that was very prominent on my pale skin. My fangs popped out with ease as I flexed my arm. It was time to wake up.

Chapter 130 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Damien POV

"Well he seems nice" Elena commented from the cell, her voice dripping with sarcasm "he could have at least let us free."

I roll my eyes. Langdon is quiet, hard to read, a grim expression on his face as he regards us all. The other boy, or guard, Jared is still staring at us all in disbelief, my twin having walked away now.

"Langdon" I say quietly, "are you going to keep him as your mate?" I ask tentatively. I won't blame him if he says yes, after all it's relatively normal for twins and triplets to have the same mate but it stings to think of sharing him with another person, even if that person is my brother. I scold myself for being jealous especially right now. But I can't help it. After all I've had Langdon to myself up until now.

He hesitates for a moment. "It's a weird situation" he says finally "I know it's a normal thing but I find that I'm really attached to you and don't want to be shared" he admitted "but I also don't want to hurt your brother's feelings either" he says with a frown "I need time to think about it."

"That's fair" I say quietly.

I turn to mother who looks pensive now, staring off into the distance, thinking about god knows what. "Mother, any chance you want to explain how Drake ended up here?" I ask sarcastically.

She looks up. I frown. She genuinely looks mystified. At a complete loss if I'm being honest with myself. Maybe she's been telling the truth this time. Either that, or she's a hell of a good actress. I suspect the latter.

"No idea" she says calmly. Too calmly.

"You're so lucky to have Drake as a brother" the stoner says. You can smell the marijuana drifting off his clothes from the cell and his eyes are so glazed over, I'm amazed he can see at all. Let alone carry on a conversation.

"Is that right" I say drily although, I'm curious about Drake. My twin looks so much harder than myself, like he's had a rough upbringing as well and that tattoo well, it's awesome. I'm considering getting one myself now.

"Yes" enthuses Jared "he's so nice even if he doesn't look it. Trust me, he'll do anything for his friends. Shame about his mother" he comments "he really hates her. Which is strange because everyone else loves her."

"I don't suppose you are willing to let us out" Langdon speaks out, moving forward but avoiding the bars.

Jared looks apologetic. "I promised I wouldn't but Drake will be back soon, don't worry. He wouldn't lie to you" he assures us.

We have to trust him. Elena sits on the ground and makes herself comfortable. "Is there any chance of getting something to eat and drink?" she asks politely.

"Of course" Jared says cheerfully "I'll get someone to bring some good stuff down. You like chocolate?" he asks my mother who looks horrified at the very idea. Why do I have the feeling he has the munchies? I fight back a grin as he almost races outside. Mother looks offended. "He didn't even ask what I wanted" she says with a groan "he'll probably come back with junk food and soft drink."

"Well it won't kill you" I tell her with a shrug "be grateful he's fetching anything. He could just let us starve."

"I am grateful" she protests "but he's stoned, and I don't want lollies and chips."

"Tell him that when he gets back then" I say with a sigh. God, does she have to complain about everything? Why can't she just leave well enough alone?

Langdon grabs hold of my arm and drags me into a corner, "Leave your mother alone" he sighs "we have bigger fish to fry."

I look around the cell and the dungeon. We're the only ones in there.

"What do you suggest we do?" I ask mystified "we can't exactly break out of here" I point out wryly.

He huffs impatiently. "I know that, but it's not like we have a plan either" he points out impatiently "what do you think we should do when we get out?"

"Save Winter" I snap like it's going to be the easiest thing in the world. Even I wince when I speak those words and I look at Langdon sheepishly.

He merely rolls his eyes and folds his arms, arching an eyebrow at me "you know it's not going to be that easy, don't you?"

"Well what should we do? The queen is a witch and a siren according to Winter, how exactly do you fight someone like that?" I snap with a shrug. "Men can't fight against sirens, we're lucky she's only a half siren, but combined as a witch?"

"We can still win, we just have to be cautious" Langdon says quietly. He looks determined, I'm just not as optimistic as him.

Elena must have been listening because she turned her head and chuckled at the both of us. "You men will be like putty at her fingertips" she chortled "don't you see, the only people unaffected by sirens are women. You are both goners as soon as you see her. Drake is only immune because he's grown up with it. This whole plan was stupid to begin with."

I turn on her angrily "well do you have any suggestions then mother" I spit out "or are you just going to sit there and tear everything we think of down."

Langdon grabs my arm. "She said women are immune" he hisses, gesturing at a wide eyed Elena "so she must be immune to her charms. Why don't we get her to take charge in a way. Be a vital part of the plan?"

"No way" Elena says weakly "she'll kill me before I can do anything."

"You are still a shifter" I point out angrily "and it's your daughter she has. Don't you care mother, about Winter?"

She falls silent and goes pale. I stare triumphantly. She's feeling guilty and rightly she should. Finally she slumps her shoulders and leans against the wall, muttering under her breath. "Fine, tell me what to do" she says weakly.

We sit down with her, facing the door. The door bursts open, startling us all as we jump in our skins. Jared comes in wheeling a trolley and smiling with a look of success on his face.

"I brought food and drink" he says crowing proudly.

I glance at the trolley and almost burst out laughing. As I'd predicted he'd brought all sorts of sweets and chips, lollies, soft drink and water thank god, not to mention a copious amount of chocolate. Langdon makes a strangled noise and my mother's mouth has dropped open in shock.

"Thankyou Jared" I say politely "that was really nice of you."

He beams. He manages to hand everything through the bars as I pass the stuff out. My mother wrinkles her nose and accepts a bottle of water but nothing else. Snob I think with amusement. Jared is inhaling his own food.

"Drake says eat up, you need your strength" he comments, placing a potato chip in his mouth and munching loudly as mother winces in disgust.

I grin. I can't help it. I like this kid. Even as a stoner, he's nice.

"What else did Drake say?" I ask as he selects a jelly snake and opens his mouth, dropping it down into his throat with a slurping sound.

He glances at me meaningfully. "That at a certain time, I'm to unlock the cell door and then slip away, leaving you guys to your own devices."

I inhale. "Drake will keep his word then" I check, still awed by the fact I've seen my brother in person and that I didn't have to go on a personal quest to find him.

Jared looks insulted now. "Of course he'll keep his word. He would never back down from it. He's your brother, you should at least know that about him. Don't twins have a special bond or somethin?" he says with annoyance.

Twins most likely had a bond, but only when they grew up together I thought with a pang of sadness, my chest feeling heavy. I would have loved to have grown up with a brother by my side, someone to have adventures with and get into mischief with but it was not to be. Perhaps it was better that way, because at least he wouldn't have grown up with an alcoholic piece of shit for a father, but would things have been different if he had been around? Would father have been more hesitant in regards to the abuse if he'd had two sons to stand up to him and say no? Life could have been so much more different, I blame him and my mother for everything that's occurred in my life up until now. Thank god for Langdon who shows me love and affection every day, who guides me when I'm steering in the wrong direction and who is there for me in every single way he can be.

"I wish I had a special bond" I whisper to Jared, who's eyes soften as he looks at me.

"Sorry man" he apologises gruffly "didn't mean nothin by it. Heck, Drake is a brother to me, the only family I got. I guess I'm a little jello" he says sadly.

"You're a good brother to him" I say, watching the young man's face light up. "I guess that makes us brothers too" I add and he beams. His entire face is glowing.

"Really" he says "tha's so cool."

He yawns. I'm betting the effect of the marijuana is making him sleepy which makes me nervous. We don't want him to fall asleep and forget to open the door to the cell. Mother however speaks up quietly, standing abruptly and making eye contact with Jared who blinks at her bemused.

"I need the bathroom" she says hurriedly.

"You're going to have to hold it" Jared says awkwardly "I can't let you out, not yet anyway."

She glares at him and then blushes to my surprise, what on earth is the woman up to now.

"I can't hold it" she argues.

I see Jared glance over to the small bathroom in the corner. It's not far but he's weighing up his options. After all there is two men in the cell who are more powerful than him. My mother is beginning to bounce up and down on her toes, cheeks beet red.

"Please" she pleads softly.

Jared looks awkward now, as he shakes his head. She doubles over and clutches at her stomach as though she's in agony. "You don't understand" my mother says beginning to shake and sob, her voice full of -pain "I need the bathroom. I'm getting my period."

Stunned silence. Jared's mouth drops open. Langdon and I glance at each other uncomfortably. Was there a reason she needed to blurt that out for everyone to hear? Nonetheless my mother continues "I'm bleeding, I'm uncomfortable and I need to use the facilites" she howls. Everyone is feeling awkward now and Jared is completely speechless. I guess he's never had to handle a situation like this before.

Jared is blushing profusely now and he almost completely bowls over the food trolley, searching frantically for something as we watch quietly. He finally brandishes a key at us. "Don't tell Drake" he babbles at us as we all nod, my mother clutching her stomach for all she's worth.

He inserts the key into the lock as we stay back. "Stay back" he advises Langdon and myself, and we press ourselves back against the wall.

The key turns with a loud ominous creak, Jared pulling the door half open as my mother lets out a screech of pain. The tips of his ears are red. "Sorry, Sorry" he mumbles, letting my mother out "the bathroom is over there" he advises, pointing at it. My mother takes a step, then another towards the facilities. Jared starts to close the door again and I tense, prepared to rush the poor guy when my mother whirls around instead and hits him hard across the head. Langdon and I are incredulous as he drops to the floor with a loud thud, the eyes rolling to the back of his head. He's unconscious as she pulls the door open, hissing in pain from the silver and we walk out. Langdon picks up Jared carefully and gently places him inside the cell, shutting the door and locking the young man inside. I feel a stab of remorse. I don't like that we're leaving him like that but we have no choice. Drake would let him out, I was certain of it.

"Well done mother" I congratulate her and she just eyes me.

"See I am good for something" she says harshly "now let's go find that blasted Kai and your sister. "

She heads towards the exit, Langdon and I in tow.