

Trinity of Power

Chapter 5 - Severn

My beautiful mate. One of the two loves of my life. Her beautiful red hair is wild, the smell of ash and smoke clinging to her. She's been trying to burn away her pain in the forest. Her face is flushed and the tear stains on her cheeks pull at my heart. I want to go to her, I want to hold her, to comfort her and wipe the tears away, but she wouldn't want that. For one, we're in front of someone else. For two, she just wouldn't want it. Talking about our pups...it's too much for her.

Even four years later, the pain of losing our pups is too much, too raw. She deals with it with anger instead of facing it and dealing with the loss. It's caused so many difficulties for us. We're not as close as we were when we grew up together or when we were first mated. I lost absolute control with her when we had sex earlier because it is so few and far between. Maybe once or twice per month. I love her, so very, very much. But she's shut both Casen and me out. I think that's why we've gone along with all of her plans. Partly, it's our pain. They were our pups, too. But I think we're trying to do anything we can to help her move on. To get our Rin back.

Brandon stopped when she came in, frozen by her announcement. I see the fear on his face, not of our mate, but of the thought that somewolf would do that.

"What do you mean?" Brandon asks slowly, putting down the knife and turning completely to Rin.

"When I was pregnant, the Black Night Pack in Minnesota figured out that we were all mates. They didn't let us know that anything was wrong, that they knew. But quietly, they called together all of their allies in all the surrounding states. When I went into labor, they drugged Sev and Case with wolfsbane and silver chained me to the bed. They took our pups and broke their necks right in front of me." Rin's voice is choked with emotion: anger, hate, grief, and loss.

"Rin," I say quietly, moving to her. I know she won't like it, but I have to hold her. I have to touch her.

But she moves towards Brandon, not noticing that I'm trying to come to her. "They shot quicksilver into my womb! I can never have pups again!" She screams in Brandon's face.

He stands there, frozen in horror at what Rin just revealed.

“Those packs that we decimated? Those ‘innocents’ that you say we killed? They were the ones that killed our pups.” Rin turns on her heel and heads to the entrance of the cave. “Let me the fuck out, Sev!”

I open the passage and she runs out.

“I’ll go after her,” Casen says with a deep sigh. “Keep going with dinner, though I have the feeling that we’ll be a while.”

I pull him in for a kiss. This grief. This heavy weight has been over us for years and it has never gone away. I worry that it never will.

Case wraps his arms around me, deepening our kiss. Though Rin has retreated into herself, Case and I have found comfort in each other. Our relationship has gotten stronger over the years, where Rin has seemed to fade away from us. We’ve tried. Done everything that we can. But the only thing that seems to work is to follow along with her plans for revenge. Now that we’ve gotten rid of all of the packs that helped with killing our pups, Case and I are hoping that she will be able to heal. That we can move on from this. Hopefully.

“I love you,” I whisper against his lips.

“I love you, too,” he whispers back, a small smile playing on his lips. When he pulls back, I see his love for me dancing in his eyes. His love has been all that’s kept me going all these years. The same is true for him. *I hope that you can help her calm. When you come home tonight, I’ll repay you for the blowjob you gave me earlier.* I link to him. He’s going to need something to help him through the hell that our mate is going to throw at him.

His eyes immediately darken. “Fuck, Sev. You want me running through the woods after our pissed off mate with a hard on?”

I step into him, grabbing hold of the bulge that is showing up in his pants. “Incentive to get back quickly.”

We hear a pointed throat clearing from the other side of the kitchen.

Both of us break out of our heavy lidded gaze to see Brandon standing there, decidedly uncomfortable.

Shit. Forgot that he was here.

We step apart from each other. “Sorry man,” Casen says. “We’re not used to other people being here. Kinda forgot about you.”

"I gathered that," he says, turning back to the vegetables he's massacring. Dude was right when he said he wasn't good in the kitchen.

I'm holding you to your promise when I get back. Casen mindlinks me. He kisses me one last time before heading out of the cave and I close the barrier behind him.

The kitchen is quiet for several minutes, only the sounds of Brandon's knife on the chopping board and the sizzling of the meat in the pan.

"I'm sorry," Brandon says, his voice quiet.

I look over and am taken aback to see that his cheeks are wet. He's crying! For us? I feel amazed that he would have that much compassion. It completely surprises me and I can't stop my jaw from literally falling open.

"Fuck!" Brandon says, throwing the knife onto the counter and using the heels of his hands to rub his eyes. It makes me spring into action, since he was just cutting a jalapeno.

"Don't touch your eyes!" I spring forward, making sure that he keeps his hands right where they are so he can't open his eyes. "You were just cutting a pepper. That's gonna hurt like hell if you get that in your eyes. Keep them closed and I'll wipe them off." He nods and I quickly wet a paper towel and use it to gently wipe his eyes. "Keep 'em closed. I'll lead you to the sink so that you can wash your hands and then you can take care of your eyes better."

I bring him over to the sink that we've set up in the kitchen and hand him the soap so that he can wash his hands. Fuck yeah, we have indoor plumbing. Heat and electricity, too. It's amazing the things that you can learn how to do on YouTube with a generator and some desperation.

Brandon quickly washes his hands and then puts a small amount of soap on the paper towel and cleans around his eyes and on his eyelids. Using his long sleeve shirt, he wipes the wetness off of his face and opens his eyes carefully.

"You good?" I ask, concerned that he might have hurt himself.

He scoffs. "Physically, peachy keen."

I look at him curiously. "What do you mean?"

He looks at me like I'm insane. "Your mate just told me that your pups were killed in front of her and that she was mutilated. Fuck, man! How the hell do you think I feel?"

I continue to stare at him in amazement. "Why do you care?"

His upper body pulls away from me like I've slapped him. "Are you kidding? Who wouldn't care? Of course I care! What kind of sociopath do you think I am?" He seems angered by my question, but honestly, no one in five years has cared about us. It's an unfamiliar feeling. I'm not sure how to react.

I hold my hands up, showing him that I mean no offense. "Sorry, Brandon. Didn't mean to upset you. No one has ever cared. The only people that we've interacted with in the past five years, other than, you know, store clerks, were people that were trying to harm us."

That seems to take him aback. Whatever the Goddess told him, it wasn't this side of the story. I back up and turn the stove off. Wouldn't help to overcook dinner, now would it? I grab the vegetables from the counter, along with the cutting board, a bowl, and the knife and sit at the table. I motion for Brandon to come sit next to me. I begin to finely mince the vegetables that Brandon cut. I typically like my salsa chunky, but I've got to do something to salvage what Brandon did.

He sits at the table next to me and I can tell that he's mindlinking his mates. Tears still gather in his eyes and every once in a while one falls down his cheeks. He swipes at his cheeks before leaning onto the table and putting his face in his hands. He lets out a long and heavy sigh.

Honestly, this is harder for me than dealing with Rin. I know how to help her calm down. I have no idea what to do for Brandon. It honestly makes me uncomfortable and all I can do is keep mincing vegetables.

By the time I mix everything and add the cilantro and lime juice, Brandon has himself together enough to talk. "I get why you did what you did. Honestly, I do. As a father, if someone did anything to either of my pups...If they hurt my Charlie like that..." He doesn't seem to know how to go on. Brandon lowers his hands to his lap and I see them clench and unclench. He stares at me with a haunted expression on his face and I really don't know what to do with it. "I'm so sorry," he says to me.

"Uh...thanks?" I say, squinting at him.

He gives a hollow laugh. "You really haven't been around people, have you? You have no idea how to react to me right now, do you?"

I put down everything that I'm holding and let out a relieved sigh. "Sorry, man. I have no idea what to say to you right now." I kind of shrug my shoulders and look at him questioningly.

He slowly reaches out and puts his hand on my shoulder, telegraphing his movements so that I know that he isn't trying to attack. "I get it. Just know that I understand why you guys reacted the way that you did. I don't condone it. I think you guys were wrong and you have a lot to answer for, but I get it."

I swallow thickly, my eyes stinging with tears. I nod and slowly stand. Brandon's hand falls from my shoulder, but he continues to stare at me with compassion in his eyes.

I go back to the stove to finish cooking the beef. Within a few minutes, it's done and I move it off the stove before starting to fry up the tortillas. Brandon goes to the cupboards and I can see that he's looking for plates.

He finds them, along with a couple of glasses, silverware, and napkins. He sets the table while I finish up the food.

I bring the food to the table and grab the water purifier out of the fridge. We assemble our plates and begin to eat in complete silence.

"Thanks," I mutter.

He looks at me for a few seconds. Just stares at me. "You're different from your mates."

I squint at him. "What do you mean?"

"Corinda wanted them all to suffer. She wanted them all dead. But it won't be enough. It won't get rid of the pain and she's going to lash out again." He takes a bite of his food before continuing. "Shit, that's good. Anyway, Corinda's going to lash out at anyone who doesn't agree with her, mostly those who aren't trios. She's going to wipe everyone out who disagrees with her. Literally burn them to the ground. And Casen? He agrees with her. He's better at hiding it, better at looking like he's able to move on, but he wants them all to pay. He's just letting Corinda's rage pave the way."

Brandon wipes his mouth with a napkin before taking a drink. He looks at me, pinning me with his gaze. "But you," he points at me, "you just want to move on. You didn't want to do any of that. You're just doing it to please them. You're hoping that it will bring them back to you, aren't you?"

How does this fucker know all of this about me? How has he made this split second judgment about me and my mates? And how is he right? I stare at him like I've seen a ghost.

He leans forward on the table, putting both elbows on the top, a new taco in his hand. "You seem like a good guy. If you hadn't of kidnapped me, we might have been friends. Well, minus the whole pack destruction and murdering shit." He waves a hand in the air to push that away. "Can I give you some advice?"

Numbly, I nod my head.

“They aren’t going to change just because you get rid of all of your enemies. You’ll never get rid of all of your enemies. It’ll never be enough. The only way to get them back is to help them come to terms with their grief. Or leave.”