

## Chapter 96

### Sage

I let out a resounding scream as I hear the heavy crunch of metal, peering past the man who has tossed me in the van. I watch in horror as the car backs up and plows into our car again. Sienna screams in my head, and my heart nearly stops as I hear a resounding splash of water. The car is no longer next to the bridge, and I feel agony tear through my chest as the bond goes frantic. Sienna lunges forward, attacking the man as we fight to get free of the van, but it tears out of there. Two other men in the van help my captor, wrangling us to the ground before slamming my head into the floor. I see darkness momentarily when I suddenly feel like I can't breathe. I gasp for air, choking on it.

Pain rattles me, Sienna howling as we feel our bond cracking. Splinters of my soul slowly break apart when I hear his voice filter through my head. "I'm sorry, my Love," he murmurs, and I can feel the deep ache of his guilt like he wronged me, but all that man ever did was save and love me. Before I can respond, he is gone, the bond shatters as it obliterates. Death would have been kinder than the torturous pain that slices through my chest.

In that singular, shattering moment, loss engulfs me, a tidal wave so devastating that it leaves nothing but an echoing void. It's as if the world, once vivid and teeming with life, has suddenly turned monochrome, stripped of its color and warmth. I lay there, an empty vessel, devoid of the essence that once made me whole. I see, feel, and hear nothing as they

move my pliable body back to the seat. My world has turned gray and time moves slower than ever.

I'm lost in that haunting feeling, stunned into blinding and deafening silence. Life ceases to exist around me. Unfortunately, my surroundings don't remain obscured, I feel detached as my vision returns, and I peer around at the three men in the van with me. I hear them hollering and laughing at my anguish. One man clicks his fingers in front of my face, yet I don't react, I just stare off vacantly. The van travels fast, yet my surroundings move impossibly slow. My hearing soon returns, and I can hear the voices of the men, mocking and taunting me when a man slaps my face trying to get my attention. My eyes move to his cold gray ones, a smirk on his lips.

“Satish said to tell you, he can't wait to see you!” the man tells me. Yet, his words seem to echo in the void that is my brain.

I feel absolutely nothing until the bond begins as a mere flicker, a distant and almost unrecognizable sensation that wakes something within me. My heart pumps a hard thud, and I don't recognize it at first until it starts racing.

“Did you hear me, bitch?!” he asks, and I feel Sienna shove forward.

“I can't wait to see him too!” The words sound foreign leaving my mouth, not my own or Sienna's. The man seems taken aback, clearly not getting the reaction he hoped for. With each thud, I feel the bond trickle back to me, like the pitter-patter of the rain after a drought, gradually returning. It fills me slowly until I audibly gasp, like the first breath after being submerged in water for a long time.

“Andrei?!” I shove the mindlink open, feeling him returning. I'm met with silence at first. “Andrei?!”

“I'm here,” he rasps. I can almost feel the wheeze in his chest, as if my own lungs are screaming for air.

“Where are you?!” his voice echoes.

“I don't know!” I tell him, my head turning to the windows. I see a massive warehouse, piles of rock and dirt. At first, I think I'm at a quarry when I notice a huge caged conveyor belt out of the corner of my eye and suddenly the darkness turns blinding, I turn my head to peer out the front windshield.

“We went inside some warehouse and then a tunnel,” I tell him. I feel Andrei's confusion. He falls silent for a second. “Wait!” A light flickers ahead, and the van comes to a stop inside the tunnel. The door is flung open, and I am pulled from the van. I desperately try to take in my scenery. We appear to be underground, metal netting clings to the rocks and concrete of the walls, dirt under my feet and a train track runs directly underneath the van when I am pulled toward an elevator.

“I'm in the old mine shafts at the base of the mountains!” I tell him.

“I'm on my way!” Andrei tells me.

“No! Get the others first,” I mindlink.

“I'm not leaving you in their hands!”

“Yes you are! This isn't some meeting spot or hideout,” I tell him as I am pulled into an elevator. “This is their base, Andrei. You'll need the others.”

“But Sage, Satish is...”

“Wait for the others! I'll be fine, Love.”

“I can be there in an hour, and I'm not alone. You won't believe who found me!” Andrei replies, and I fight the urge to shake my head.

“Wait for the others,” I tell him when the elevator doors open to a vast, bright open space. My eyes instantly lock onto Satish who is walking around a figure strapped to a chair. My heart sinks. It's Temperance.. He lifts his head in my direction, as does a woman who stands beside him; someone I do not recognize. Our eyes meet and he smiles.

“This is the base, Andrei!” I tell him, my eyes peering around to see multiple levels as I am dragged down the stairs closer to the man responsible for taking my grandchildren. “You need to wait, you will be outnumbered,” I tell him, taking in the hundreds of faces wandering around down here.

My eyes instantly find Lucas, who is in a cage, and I open the mindlink to him. “Are you alright?”

“Yes, but Vince took Casey!” he tells me. I gulp, peering around for her but I don’t see her.

“They haven't hurt you, have they?” I ask, and I see him shake his head.

“Grandma?”

I look at him. “The moment you get a chance, you are to grab Casey and portal out of here,” I tell him.

“I can't leave you!” Lucas tells me.

“You will, the first chance you get! Do you hear me?!” I mindlink him. He looks uncertain but eventually nods.

“Sage?!” Andrei shoves through the mindlink.

I'm hauled off when Satish orders his men to cuff me in a chair. They do as he says as I take in my surroundings some more before they're obscured by Satish, who grips my face and forces me to meet his gaze.

“Well, don't you still look stunning!” he laughs, leaning in, I fight back the urge to cringe when he licks the side of my face. Andrei goes ballistic in my head, and I can feel Donnie losing control.

“You look so much like your mother,” he taunts, yet his words don't earn him the desired effect he was hoping for. He stands looking down at me, yet I meet his gaze unflinching.

“You still look like the same piece of trash you always were!” The words leave my mouth without so much as a stutter. He tilts his head to the side for a second, watching me, before he backhands me. Blood fills my mouth, and Andrei forces his way back into my head, feeling it.

“Sage!?”

“I'm fine, Andrei. Get Katya and the others,” I tell him.

“Well, haven't you grown bold?!” Satish sneers.

“You're just a man, Satish. Not the monster in my nightmares anymore,” I tell him as I stare him down.

## Chapter 97

Andrei

I regain consciousness to find a blurry dark figure's lips covering mine. My chest feels like it's been compressed in a vice. Panicking slightly, I choke, sputtering and coughing. I lurch upright, and the figure leans back and then stands. A sense of confusion washes over me, my last memory is of the car plummeting off the bridge, the fear of my imminent death, the terror of leaving Sage and my family and then...darkness. Yet, here I am lying on the damp ground, staring up at the night sky, with the silhouette of towering figures looming over me.

“You're lucky we found you,” a deep voice resonates above me. It belongs to a large, imposing man, his features are all blurred. I cough and choke on the water, trying to breathe normally. Once my vision clears, I take in the surrounding men. Squinting against the bright light of the full moon, I take in the shadowy figures standing over me. All I can tell is that they're large, muscular and have broad shoulders, and I'm 90% sure a man just gave me the kiss of life or rather air. I sniff the air, taking in their strange scents, familiar, and I get a strange sense of déjà vu when Donnie speaks up.

“Were-bears!” he growls.

“Chief?!” I blurt in shock, peering around I see two men dripping wet, one shakes out his hair while the other pulls on a huge coat, not bothering to dry himself.

“You saved me from the river?!” I peer at the black water in disbelief and at the two younger men. They both nod before looking down at my leg, my eyes follow theirs to see my leg bent awkwardly from being broken,

the bone jutting out the skin. Pain suddenly ripples through me the moment I notice it.

“Sorry, we had no choice but to break it,” the younger were-bear tells me.

“And your foot” the other tells me, causing me to notice - with a sick lurch in my stomach - my foot twisted the wrong way. As I do, he grabs it, ripping it the other way, causing pain to ripple through my body as a deafening scream escapes my lips. I fight the urge to punch him.

“But how? Why are you even here?” I manage to ask, still dazed. The explanation that follows only adds to my bewilderment.

“Our forest has been destroyed,” Chief says with a somber tone. “We were searching for the Moon Goddess's pack, seeking refuge.”

I struggle to move, so I use my hands and pull myself toward a nearby tree, propping myself against it while I peer down at my leg when Sage's voice flits through my head.

“Andrei?!” Sage shoves the mindlink open. Donnie whimpers in my head at the sound of her voice, and my heart beats quicker. “Andrei?!”

“I'm here!” I rasp, just relieved to hear her voice.

“Where are you?!” I ask her, pointing to my leg. Chief points at himself, and I nod.

“I don't know!” Sage tells me, and I feel her fear loud and clear when Chief leans down, grabbing my leg. I need it setback in place for Donnie to heal it. Sage falls silent, and I bite my tongue when the two men who pulled me from the river move closer to grab my arms.

“We went inside some warehouse and then a tunnel,” she tells me.

Donnie and I think for a second about what warehouses are around here, but there isn't much besides farmland. “Wait!” she blurts at the same time Chief breaks my leg back in place. My breath lodges in my throat, and I fight back the urge to scream out as Donnie quickly heals the wound.

“I'm in the old mine shafts at the base of the mountains!” she tells me.

“I'm on my way!” I tell her, getting to my feet, using the tree.

“No! Get the others first,” she mindlinks.

“I'm not leaving you in their hands!”

“Yes you are! This isn't some meeting spot or hideout,” she tells me. Meanwhile, Chief helps me hold my weight as I test my leg.

“This is their base, Andrei. You'll need the others.” My stomach drops knowing if that's their base means she is surrounded by hundreds of men who could destroy her, yet I hear the determination in her voice, feel it vibrate through the bond.

“But Sage, Satish is ...”

“Wait for the others! I'll be fine, Love.”

“I can be there in an hour, and I'm not alone. You won't believe who found me!” I reply, and I shake off Chief's arm as I peer up at the bridge and then the mountain, looking for a path up.

“Wait for the others.” She does not expect me to simply sit back and wait, does she?

“No fucking way!” Donnie growls in my head.

“You need to wait, you will be outnumbered,” Sage tells me, and I can feel that she is moving, feeling the bond tugging me toward where to find her. That urge is overwhelming when I spot a path leading up through the mountain.

Chief taps my shoulder. “My mate, they took her,” I tell him, but Sage has suddenly fallen quiet. “Sage!” I snap at her, needing to know what is going on.

“Sage?!” I growl when she doesn't answer.

“I'm fine, Andrei. Get Kat and the others,” she tells me before shoving me out of her head.

I growl, turning to look at Chief. “Your mate, she is in trouble?” Chief asks.

“Yes! And my grandchildren, Lucas and Casey!” I tell him as I climb the path I noticed.

“We come with you, help you find them!” Chief tells me.

“I still don't understand how you're even here! I thought you were confined to the forest?”

The Chief shrugs. “This all used to be forest. We were cursed not to enter areas with human populations. To stay within the forest limits. Once, all this was forest, but now, with our forest gone, we've had no choice but to flee.”

I reach out through the mindlink, connecting with Kat. “I need to get hold of my sister and her mates,” I tell Chief as I climb to the top. Not wanting to be rude, I reiterate everything to them as I do her.

I feel for her energy, loving how we are all linked now, our links all open with her being the Moon Goddess, it makes things so much easier.

“Andrei?!” she breathes, her voice cracking.

## Chapter 98

Andrei

“Kat, I'm here! I'm okay sis,” I start, “But Sage ... She's been taken by Satish's Reaper Wolves. I know where she is, they've taken her into the old mining tunnels.”

I explain to her about the were-bears and their unexpected assistance.

As I speak, I notice the were-bears listening intently. When I mention the reaper wolves, they look at each other, eventually midway through my conversation with Kat, Chief interjects, “Did you say Reaper Wolves?!”

I nod, and Kat, sensing the gravity of the situation, opens the mindlink to include Dominic, Kyan, Jonah, and her mates.

“If you are going after Reaper Wolves, we are coming with you!” Chief states. My brows furrow at the growl in his voice as he mentions them, the way his eyes flicker, and how he seems to grow in size. I nod to him because we'll need all the help we can get.

I relay our plan to head to the mining tunnels. The were-bears, after a brief discussion among themselves.

“Don't you go in there alone, Andrei!”

“I have the were-bears with me,” I tell Kat when Kyan chimes in.

“Were-bears?! Tell him, if they want the curse broken, they need to help us with the Reaper Wolves!”

I relay that to Chief, who nods once as they push me along.

“We passed the mines, we know a shortcut,” Chief tells me and I nod, trying to focus on the mindlink and what Chief is saying as we start

walking through thick shrub. When we come to a road, I cross it, but the were-bears keep walking along before coming to the bend. “Where are you going?!”

“It's man-made. We told you already, we can't go where humans have been,” Chief tells me. “So we go under it. Can't cross it.” He suddenly disappears and one by one they all do, seeming to fall into the earth.

“Fuck! Don't lose them!” Donnie urges, and I rush after them, trying to see where they went. Before I know what's going on, the thick grass under my feet suddenly gives way, and I shriek, sliding down the tunnel, appearing on the other side of the road and running into the back of one of Chief's men.

“This is some Jungle Book shit, this is!” Donnie grumbles.

“Don't you enter that mine until we get there, Andrei! I have watched you die once tonight! Not again!!” Kat warns.

“No promises, but get here fast,” I tell her before cutting the link when I see Chief and his men shift. I waste no time stripping my clothes off, and Donnie shifts instantly, grabbing my jeans in his mouth before we chase after them.

The journey to the mining tunnels takes about an hour. The old structure looms before us, a relic of an old coal mine, its entrance dark and foreboding. We scout the area cautiously, aware that Reaper Wolves are probably on guard somewhere or there might be cameras.

We stop by the old mine as I wrestle the questions burning in my mind. “We need to lure them out! We can not enter!” Chief growls, stalking the edge of the forest.

I curse under my breath. “So what happens when the curse is broken? Where will you go?”

The Chief gives a melancholic smile. “We'll finally be free.”

“Free? But isn't the forest gone? Your home....”

He chuckles softly, a sound filled with a hint of amusement. “Oh, Andrei, you misunderstand. When I say 'home', I mean we'll finally be free to die.”

His words hit me like a physical blow. The finality and the acceptance in his voice reflects a lifetime of confinement and yearning for release.

I nod once, looking at the warehouse. “So now what?” I mutter, knowing the were-bears can't enter.

Chief looks around. “We wait for your people, then lure them out,” he tells me, yet I can tell he wants nothing more than to rip through the place. They all do as they stand at the edge of the dirt, eyes watching, chests rising and falling heavily.

“Exactly how are you linked to them again?” I ask them, and Chief looks at me, his teeth long with venom dripping from them and his eyes have taken on a different color, no longer like that of a bear but something far more sinister.

“Don't worry, we are only toxic to them. I could bite you and nothing would happen to you. We were created for one purpose, and tonight we will be seeing that purpose through!” he tells me, casting his gaze back to the mine.

“I'm tired, and I can't wait to see their faces again,” he murmurs, and the men with him all nod.

“Whose faces?” I ask.

“Our families. They say when you die, your entire life flashes before your eyes. I hope that is true, I want to see the faces of my wife and children again,” he tells me and I swallow, not knowing what to say. I grip his shoulder, and he looks at me with understanding in his eyes.

“Our families... they are the echoes of our past and the promise of our future,” I reply, my voice steady despite the uncertainty that lies ahead.

Chief nods solemnly, his eyes reflecting a depth of sorrow only centuries can carve. “When you’ve lived as long as I have, Andrei, every memory becomes a treasure. Tonight, we reclaim a piece of what was lost.”

I understand his longing, the ache for a home that exists only in memories. “Home is where the heart is, Chief,” I say, trying to offer some solace.

“Yes. And my home... it died with them, long ago. Tonight, we go home,” he says, his voice laced with a blend of sadness and resolve.

I nod, feeling the weight of his words. “Then let’s get you home,” I affirm, turning my gaze toward the mines.

As we approach, Chief hesitates. “But your family? They're not here yet!”

I nod, a plan forming in my mind. “Nothing wrong with picking them off. We just need to draw their attention.” I step forward, leaving the safety of the shadows.

The crunch of gravel beneath my feet feels like a declaration of war as I move toward the warehouse. The Reaper Wolves emerge from the darkness, their eyes glinting with predatory intent. I maintain my calm, pretending not to notice their approach.

Glancing back, I see the were-bears merge with the night, their presence almost ethereal. A surge of adrenaline courses through me, and Donnie’s presence in my mind grows stronger. “I love a good game of cat and mouse,” he growls, echoing my anticipation.

The Reaper Wolves edge closer, unaware of the trap we’re setting. In a sudden burst of motion, I shift, my body contorting as I give Donnie control. The transformation is swift, a seamless blend of man turning to beast as Donnie takes over.

I dart toward the forest, the Reaper Wolves hot on my heels. Their howls fill the night air, but they’re too late to realize the deception. The were-bears, hidden in the shadows, spring their ambush.

The forest erupts into chaos, the snarls, and growls of battle filling the air. I weave through the trees, the thrill of the hunt coursing through my veins. The Reaper Wolves, now caught between us and the were-bears, scramble in confusion.

“We’ve got them now,” Donnie exults. More Reaper Wolves pour out of the warehouse, drawn by the sounds of their friends in distress.

“Let's see how long it takes for them to pick up on our little game,” Donnie says as more come running from the warehouse, hearing their friends’ screams.

## Chapter 99

### Temperance

I am once again trapped, confined. Strapped to a chair, my heart racing, half in fear, half in defiance. The cold, metallic touch of electrodes against my skin sends shivers down my spine. My lifelong tormenter, Satish watches me, a flicker of concern in his eyes. But I've dealt with him plenty of times before; I know who he is. So it's Lorelei's smug satisfaction that truly unnerves me.

The basement door swings open, and in comes Sage, forcefully dragged in. I've only met her once, but the fierceness in her eyes now is unmistakable. "Well, don't you still look stunning!" Satish laughs, leaning closer to Sage, I fight back the urge to cringe when he licks the side of her face.

"You look so much like your mother," he taunts, yet Sage meets his gaze head-on.

"You still look like the same piece of trash you always were!" she spits back at him. Satish tilts his head to the side for a second, watching her, before he backhands her, and I can't help but flinch.

"Well, haven't we grown bold?!" Satish sneers.

"You're just a man, Satish. Not the monster in my nightmares anymore," she tells him as I watch her glare at him.

"And you're still just used goods!" he spits back at her. Sage spits in his face, and he growls, her rebellion and the defiance in her gaze speaks volumes.

Lorelei begins her twisted game, her voice oozing malice. “Temperance, bring your second wolf forward, or both you and Sage suffer!” she hisses. Anger courses through me, fueling my defiance.

Sage’s eyes dart around the room. Eventually, her eyes find Lucas's, and I watch as they glaze over, hinting at her using the mindlink, but it’s Satish’s revelation that chills me to the bone.

“Are you sure this is a good idea, mother?” he asks, looking at Lorelei. This truly terrifies me. How could someone so cruel be uncertain about an act of cruelty?

“Awakening her Gemini will allow us to extract their power,” she declares. Her ambition is nightmarish, little does she know the Gemini is awakened already.

“Now I want her in the chair too. Strap her down!” Lorelei orders and men rush forward, dragging another chair next to me. Sage is all but tossed in the chair.

Lucas's cries echo through the basement, his small voice filled with terror. “Leave her alone!” he yells, his voice cracking with emotion.

Lorelei, with a cruel smirk, orders them to strap Sage into a chair beside me, electrodes and all. “Now we are going to play a game, Temperance. You have two choices: bring your second wolf forward, or you'll be electrocuted. And every time you're electrocuted, Sage will be too.”

“You sick bitch!” Sage growls at Lorelei, her eyes blazing with fury. Lorelei's response is a sharp slap across Sage's face. Sage just laughs, a dark, menacing sound. Her lip bleeds, but her eyes shift, signaling a change.

“You're fucking with the wrong family!” Sage snarls with a dangerous edge in her voice.

Lorelei chuckles, seemingly amused by her defiance. “They shouldn't have messed with ours first!” she retorts with a smug grin.

“Let Lucas and Casey go! They're fucking children! They have nothing to do with this!” Sage spits out, her voice laced with desperation and anger.

Satish's expression hardens as he moves closer into her view. “I had no intention of taking the boy. His mother is who I wanted, but she put up too much of a fight, but the boy will do just fine!” he growls.

“As for Casey, you need to take that up with Vince. She's his daughter,” Satish tells Sage coldly.

Sage's eyes flare with rage. “You know she's not!” she hisses back at him.

“He raised her, makes no difference to me,” Satish shrugs dismissively, his indifference chilling.

From my restrained position, I feel helpless, witnessing the unfolding horror. The threats, the cruelty, the impending torture – it's overwhelming. The realization of what Satish and Lorelei are capable of, the lengths they're willing to go to for their twisted revenge, sends a wave of dread through me.

Lucas bangs against his cage, the sound rattling around the vast space as they attach the wires to something that looks like a battery.

“We've done nothing to warrant this!” I snarl at her angrily, and my heart races faster.

Lorelei freezes. “At least let Sage and the kids go, you want my wolf to come forward? Then let them go.”

“She'll come forward, don't you worry”.

Yet, she looks at Sage and the venom in her gaze I don't understand. “She is just as guilty as the rest of them. All of you deserve what's coming to you!” she spits.

Sage appears genuinely confused at her words. “What have we done to you? I've only just met you!” I nod at Sage's words.

“Yet you still stole from me!” Lorelei growls. My eyes turn to Sage, who is glaring at her.

“Just like her mother stole my chosen mate from me, you also took something. Only far more valuable,” she adds, turning to glare at me.

“But you and my father were married, mated and marked? How was he able to run off with his true mate?” I question, genuinely confused on what this mad woman was getting at.

Lorelei straightens, then replies: “Yes, that was when I learned what your mother was. A Gemini. Did you know Gemini's can remove a mate mark?” Lorelei asks me.

I think about that. Well, no I didn't. My surprise must be showing on my face because she continues as if I had answered.

“Well, then I guess you can imagine my horror when your mother destroyed mine. She was going to kill me until she learned I was pregnant.”

My eyes dart to Satish, who is drinking in her every word. He winks at me, and I yank my gaze away.

“It wasn't long after that when I met Dior. My Reaper Wolves and I stumbled into the Blue Mountain Pack. Dior, thankfully, didn't care that I was up the duff. He just wanted his mate. Yet, his father didn't approve of me, some rogue woman he was forced to take in. Dior took care of him, of course, allowing him and me to take over the pack.”

She motions for one of her men to come over, whispers something to him, and he runs off.

“However, Dior and I had a son when Satish was just four. We loved Blue Mountain Pack, we finally had a home and I raised my sons there.” She looks off into the distance wistfully as she speaks. Then continues, “Yet, when Satish turned 12, his father asked for visitation rights. Claimed his conscience got the better of him, and guess who signed the parental rights

over to your father, allowing him to change Satish's last name?" She looks between both of us, but I'm clueless.

"Any guesses?" Lorelei asks. Sage and I look at each other. But Sage is the one that answers.

"Only an Alpha of Alphas can do that."

## Chapter 100

“Correct! Mr. Gabriel Octavian signed the papers,” she says, making sure to emphasize each syllable of the name. “Not that it stopped Satish from running away and coming back home, but your father was always chasing after him, and dragging him back.”

“Your father thought he could fix Satish. Stop him from becoming a Reaper Wolf, yet Reaper Wolves aren't born pure Reaper Wolves. Though he has a longer life span, his senses are more heightened than that of an average wolf, and he is faster and deadlier,” Lorelei explains proudly as she glances at her son and smiles.

“But it turns out all those things don't matter when you have a huge pack and alliances with prominent people. We once had an alliance with the Black Creek Alpha.”

I look at Sage, but she doesn't seem to notice. Is Lorelei talking about Eziah's father?

“Some of our scouts went looking for more women. When we wandered into Blue Mountain Pack, I was shocked to learn Dior was my mate. I thought he would reject me when he learned about Satish. Yet, I was even more shocked to find that over half the women there were also mates with my men. Had to keep business running, elites wanted women and were willing to pay for them, yet most were off limits.”

“So, I sent my men out to scout, usually we picked off rogue women, looking to feed their children, we'd offer them shelter, and food in exchange for their bodies. If they refused, we simply took them. That is how I met the notorious Ezra Pierce.”

“No way would Ezra do business with the likes of you,” Sage sneers.

Lorelei holds a hand up. “Yes, he didn't have the stomach for it like his father. He is weak!” she growls.

“This wasn't long after Satish turned 19. He had returned to the pack to visit his brother; his father couldn't stop him now because he was an adult. However, our reunion was short-lived when our pack was attacked by the Black Creek Pack, after my scouts kidnapped a few of their women. Turns out, pack is family to Ezra, and he made sure we knew it.”

“Most of our men were killed. We knew we couldn't stay because a pack rising from the dead is a little suspicious. Dior and I managed to escape with our son, and Satish introduced us to a rogue commune. Of course, we took it over, the women were rather easy to capture, especially once the rest of my Reaper pack had reawakened.”

“For a time, we went underground and went into hiding. Satish would visit when he could, but part of him taking over his father's pack was that his father had to train him to replace him. So we had to bide our time, we started up operations, rather successfully I might add, made alliances with Alpha Jackson. Business was booming, and while Satish was training to take over your father's pack, I was training my youngest son to take over the business. Dior and I wanted to retire, we were sick and tired of having to watch over the rogue camps, and I wanted my mate away from temptation.”

“So it was you working alongside Alpha Jackson?” Sage asks, causing Satish to chuckle.

“Who else? Most rogues fear their own shadow. You should know Sage, you were one,” Satish flashes a cruel smile, his hands dropping onto her shoulders.

“That was only the beginning, you'd be surprised at what people will do for money. People die for it, I know that all too well,” Lorelei says, unable to hide the emotion from her words at whatever thought choked her.

“A few years later, one of our girls was called out, her name was Lilith. One of our pimps lost three girls in a week. Lilith was to help replace them, he wanted a girl to work the corner of the Casino. So I chose Lilith, she had pissed me off when I learned she was fucking my mate. See, Dior had a weakness for pretty girls, it was part of the reason I wanted my son to take over. And oh did he pitch a fit, he even mutilated her, thinking I wouldn't send her! He was mistaken. Lilith was sent to the city, and I was glad to be rid of her!”

“I'm failing to understand what this has to do with us?” Sage says dryly.

“Oh, I'm getting to that, don't you worry,” Lorelei tells her. Suddenly a man comes out pushing a TV on a cart. Another brings an extension cord and handheld camera. They set it up while Lorelei keeps speaking.

“A couple of days went by, and I got a call from one of my men saying Dominic Octavian wanted to buy her, and he offered a hefty amount for the bitch too. Curious about the man knowing his father was responsible for me losing Satish, I told him I wanted to double the amount. He refused, and said if I wanted her back, I had to come get her. Of course, Dior demanded I retrieve his little whore! To which I obliged, intent on killing her if I did.”

“Dominic Octavian bought her?” Sage asks.

Lorelei nods her head. “So I decided to look into Dominic a little, and learned he was a prominent man in werewolf society, the Alpha of Alphas, just like his father. He challenged me to come get her, and I stupidly took the bait, I will own up to that mistake. See, Reaper Wolves can't be commanded, so I knew it would come as quite the shock for him to meet a woman that could withstand his aura. I saw it as an opportunity,” Lorelei explains.

“Stupidly, I walked into the casino intent on blackmailing Dominic and threatening to expose this Alpha that everyone looked up to for what he was; a man who wanted to buy used goods. I was planning on publicly

challenging him if he refused to pay. See, back then, the Alpha of Alphas only remained the Alpha until challenged. I knew I could withstand his aura, what I didn't realize was that he was a descendant of the original Octavian witches, and I walked into a trap!”

“Lilith was Kyan's mother!” Sage confirms my thoughts. Lorelei nods.

“Good, you're keeping up then,” she chuckles. “Lilith was Dominic's mate, he had no intention of paying for her. He wanted blood!” Lorelei grits her teeth and the first glimmer of emotion from the woman shows. She truly did love her mate. Which is frightening to know this woman is capable of love, knowing the things she has done and the lives she has ruined.