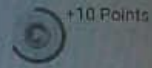


ASAP



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Nathan POV

Nathan hadn't been able to stop thinking of Madison. She was the CEO of one of his biggest rival companies. How the hell did he not know this?

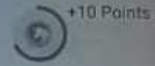
Nathan had asked his secretary to make another appointment with her. He definitely wanted to see her for himself. And, he also had a business proposal for her. Or him.

Though Madison claimed to be the CEO, she could possibly be the wife of the actual CEO.

That was also something that kept playing up in his mind. Was Madison married? And did she have a child? For some reason, this bothered him. A lot more than it should. A lot more than he cared to admit.

Nathan had taken the day off work and now found himself pacing the sitting room of his penthouse, as he waited for his unit to arrive with more information. They had called to let him know that they were on their way.

Well, Robert and Zachery were on their way. Christopher was still working from the Arizona office and taking care of the pack and Luna in



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Nathan's absence.

Nathan took his phone out of his pocket and checked if Lauren had responded to his message yet. It was very unlike her not to answer. He had sent it four hours ago.

Nathan sighed. Lately, his relationship felt off. He

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really needed to take some time off work and go on a holiday with his mate. He needed it. They needed it. Maybe the stress of being unable to conceive was too much for Lauren? Nathan didn't dare bring it up around her anymore. He didn't want to upset her. But damn, did he want children of his own.

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+10 Points

The only consolation he had was that none of his unit had found their mates yet, so he didn't have to worry about his child growing up without his unit. But what if they simply couldn't conceive? What if the problem lay with him?

The front door slamming shut brought Nathan out of his musings.

A few seconds later, Robert and Zachery entered the sitting room, a file in hand.

"Well?" Nathan asked.

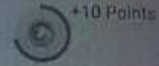
"Well, good news and... other news." Robert began, opening the file on the table. The first thing Nathan saw was a stack of pictures, the first one of Madison. He took the pictures out of the folder and started scrolling through them slowly.

"She doesn't have a husband. At least not on paper. She changed her surname to Matheus, three and a half years ago, when she moved here. Before that, she resided in the Shadow Rock pack, with her sister, Mackenzie."

Nathan had always had a suspicion that Madison was hiding out with her sister, but Antonio, the Alpha of the Shadow Rock pack, had assured him that Madison wasn't there.

Nathan stopped going through the pictures when he got to one of a man. A tall man with brown hair. He could be considered handsome, by human

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+10 Points

standards.

"Who's this?" Nathan asked, as the echo of the burning hot jealousy he used to feel when he thought of Madison with another male, resurfaced. Like the crackle of distant thunder after the storm had already passed.

"That... Is Colton Vanderbilt. Yes, he's from *that* family," Robert added, confirming Nathan's suspicions, before continuing, "They've been dating for nine months now."

Nathan continued going through the photos, carefully looking at each one. He froze when he saw one of Colton and Madison kissing. They seemed to be out on a date. Nathan's eyes darkened as he let them linger on Madison's bare legs. He had always loved her toned legs. He loved the feel of them and how they would wrap around him when...

Zachary's cough brought him back to the present. *Why was he thinking of her like that?*

"You alright there, Alpha?" Zachary asked, with a knowing smirk as Nathan threw the pictures down on the table, running a hand through his hair.

"So, I think I've seen enough. Nothing special to report." Nathan nodded, ready to stand up.

"Actually," Zachary placed a hand on his shoulder, pushing him back down as he exchanged a glance

with Robert. "You might want to keep scrolling."

"Why?" Nathan asked, his brows furrowed.

"Well, Madison does seem to have a child. Two, to be precise," Robert explained.

"And?" Nathan asked as a pang of pain stung his heart. Why was he feeling this way about Madison? He had a mate for Goddess's sake.

"Just look at the photos. Trust me." Zachary passed him the pictures, while Robert nodded at him. An unsettling feeling settled in the pit of his stomach. Why were they so persistent?

Nathan took the stack of pictures from Zachary and started going through them again. He saw pictures of Madison waiting at a school. The next picture was of her with two children. She was smiling at them. *She was even more breathtaking when she smiled.* Nathan thought to himself.

His breath hitched when he saw the next picture. Madison's little boy... was a carbon copy of him. He started flipping through the pictures faster.

"The boy... he's definitely yours," Robert stated, "The girl, she looks like Madison though, and she's slightly smaller. She might be younger."

"No," Nathan said, "she's mine too. Twins." His wolf, Nyko, agreed. "Pups. Our pups." His wolf chimed in.

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"So she was cheating on you, but still managed to get pregnant with your pups?" Zachary stated out loud what Nathan, too, was thinking. But he quickly shook those thoughts away. He had seen the pictures. And Lauren wouldn't lie to him.

"Hmm," Nathan hummed.

"Come on, Nate, you've got to admit that that's strange," Zachary pushed. Nathan could feel anger starting to build inside of him. Zachary had never liked Lauren. He had always been a die-hard Madison advocate.

"She could have used protection with the others." Nathan ground out.

"Nate... think about it. What wolf stops to use protection? We're animals of passion!" Zachary started arguing. Just when Nathan was about to lose it, Robert cut in.

"So, what do you want us to do now, Alpha?"

"Why would she have my pups and not tell me?" Nathan mused, "Having an Alpha's child and not reporting it is a punishable offense."

He looked up to see Robert and Zachary sharing a nervous look.

"Those pups are heirs to the pack. They belong in the pack." Nathan voiced his thoughts out loud.

Robert chuckled nervously, "You're not just going

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to take them, are you?"

"I could if I wanted to. It's the law." Nathan started saying, making the other men in the room go silent, "But I wouldn't want to scare the children. So... we go talk to Madison. If we can't get her to come back, then we won't have a choice."

Long after the other two men retired for the night, Nathan sat at his desk in his penthouse office, looking at the pictures of his son, daughter, and his once-contracted mate. And for the first time in what felt like forever, Nathan cried. He cried for what he had missed, he cried for what could have been.

Why? Why did Madison leave?

He knew why she would *want* to leave, but why would she sneak out in the middle of the night and never return? He had tried so desperately to contact her, to find her. Even going as far as to grovel in front of her brother, the Alpha of the Blue Mountain pack. But they had all claimed not to know where Madison was.

He knew that he had hurt her. And he felt bad every time he did it. But the pull between him and Lauren was too strong. His wolf kept whining for his mate. But Nathan fought it. He fought so hard. He didn't even give in to the bond until months after Madison was gone.

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He redirected his focus back to the pictures of his pups. *His pups*. He was in love with them the moment he laid eyes on them.

But what was he going to do? And how would Lauren respond to this? *Goddess, Lauren!* He

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hadn't even thought about her during all of this. Knowing that he had pups with another woman would crush her.

Nathan didn't know how he was going to handle all of this. But he did know one thing. He needed to speak with Madison **as soon as possible**.