

Jax POV:

Definitely” I reply immediately. “I will also send 25 warriors along with Florence to provide added reassurance to your pack members. It’s the least we could do.”

“Thank you” Axton replies in relief. A wave of sympathy flows through me as I realise how tough that must have been asking for help, but after signing an alliance with him and him being a worthy mate of my sister I would never have refused him.

“As Alice is pregnant I suspect Theo would prefer to be close to her after she had to go away during the fight, that’s why I’ve chosen Florence to travel to your pack, her mate Andrew is a warrior and will accompany her also” I explain as I hear both Axton and Luca thank me once again as they say they understand. “They won’t be able to travel till

after this evenings burnings though. It is time to honour our fallen warriors.”

“Of course” Axton agrees immediately.

“Sophie and the others can travel beforehand though” I tell them. “I’m sure Luca is eager to see his mate.”

“You have no idea” Luca growls as I see Nova chuckle quietly before palming at her face.

“Great” I chuckle.

“Well that settles it then. We will see you tomorrow”

“Thank you Alpha Jax” they both say before bidding Nova a good night and ending our call.

“Life is so eventful” Nova mutters as I wordlessly guide her to straddle me and she buries her face in my neck, breathing in my scent as I do hers.

“Understatement” I mutter making her laugh quietly against my chest. Staying there for a few moments, I enjoy the peace with my mate held close to me for as long as I can allow us before seeing its time for us to go. “Come on love, its time for the burning.”

“Lets go” she says quietly as she slowly stands and then links her arm with mine. “I havent got nearly as much done today as I wanted” she stresses. “I wanted to speak to the witches and my mother.”

“You can see Lizzie tomorrow before we go love, and the witches will be here when we are back” I reassure her as she leans on me.

“You’re right” she replies with a small smile. “I never feel like I do enough.”

Hearing that I let out a short bark of laughter as she looks up at me in amusement. Trust me love, you do far more than anyone else I know. Don’t underestimate yourself.

Remember there is only so much time in a day.”

“Wise words Alpha” she smirks at me as we step outside of the pack house. Seeing the wooden plinths in front of us, 9 in total, each with the families of the fallen laying their send off tokens on top to be burned, our faces drop as we walk quietly down to meet the pack.

“Nova!” I hear Sophie exclaim as my mate turns to launch herself at her sister. “I haven’t got long.”

“I know” Nova says with a sad smile as she pulls away from her. “One day soon we will spend more time together, but for now at least I can be happy knowing you are going to be with Luca.”

“I’m ready to see him” Sophie admits as I see her eyes glaze over slightly.

“Have you been ok since we’ve been gone Sophie?” | ask her quietly.

“Yes I have” she reassures us both. “The Rogue warriors have been a great help and everything has ran smoothly, some are desperate to get back to their families but I’ve assured them with each passing day we are getting closer to that happening. Father though..we um, we had to perform his burning Nova.”

Hearing my mate’s breath hitch, I hold on to her as her body falls limply into my side.

“I missed it?” Nova sobs.

“I’m sorry, within the Rogue Pack it is custom to perform the burning within a week. Its tradition and as their future lead female I couldn’t break something our father implemented” Sophie says apologetically.

“You should have told me” Nova says quietly as she looks at her sister with tears dripping down her face.

“I didn’t want to distract you” Sophie says with a frown.

“I still deserved to know” Nova counters, her voice calm now but strong in her belief.

“I’m sorry Nova” Sophie says quietly as she takes in Nova’s upset. With a trembling breath, Nova smiles tightly before stepping forward and embracing her sister briefly.

‘Inform us when you have reached The White Mountain Pack Soph, look after yourself” Nova says with a small smile before she turns and begins walking to my mother.

“I messed up didn’t I” Sophie says to me quietly as I hang back.

“I get why you did it, and I believe Nova does also. But she hasn’t had a chance to say a proper goodbye to her father. it may take a little time for that to sink it” I tell Sophie.

“But she didn’t even spend much time with him” Sophie exclaims as I growl quietly in warning and look at her in utter shock..

“He was both of yours father Sophie” I tell him, my voice deep and clear as she takes in my words.

“That was insensitive of me” she acknowledges as she sighs deeply. “I’ll see you soon Alpha Jax, look after my sister.”

“Always” I promise as I watch her go.

With a sigh, I walk to where my mate is waiting alongside my Beta at the front. Taking her hand I squeeze it gently before lifting it to my lips and kissing her fist softly.

Turning to face the gathered pack, I raise our joined hands to gather their attention.

“Good evening everyone” I call out, my voice carrying over the stillness of the night.

“Tonight we are gathered for the final stages of our fallen warriors journey with us. Ben, Mark, Calisto, Nirvana, Hiro, Anita, Samuel, Briana and Drew. 9 warriors who died a truly honourable warriors death, fighting to protect those they loved and cherished while

doing us all proud. They were much loved by the pack and their presence has been missed since their passing. Tonight we honour them, we send them to greet our ancestors and from here on out they will be looking down on us and guiding us through life. As their Alpha, I am proud and as their friend I will miss them greatly. We will honour their memory by remembering them daily. The Goddess blesses you.” With that, the pack all repeat my final four words as a member from each family steps forward and sets the wooden frames alight.

Standing, we all watch as the flames quickly take hold, the night silent apart from the crackling of the growing fires.

Watching silently until the flames have taken hold completely, we all whisper our quiet messages to the fallen.

Some whisper memories while others whisper how much they will be missed.

Fifteen minutes later with the fires continuing to burn, Laurence steps forward and gathers everyone's attention, avoiding my confused gaze as he does so.

“A sad but beautiful sight” he calls as everybody turns to listen. “For those lives lost due to this attack we suffered through, our Luna came up with a beautiful idea. If you could all look to the side of the pack house where gamma Flo is currently waiting I'd be most appreciative.”

Turning to look at Nova, I see her nervous gaze as she stares across to Flo where my Gamma pulls away a sheet of plastic to uncover a mosaic wall. One where the names of every fallen warrior are proudly on show, making the pack members collectively gasp and the families of the warriors all smile at the names of their loved one who will permanently be up for all to see.

“You did it” I whisper in shock as I look down at my mate.

“They fought a war that was brought to them because of me, its the least I could do. But I hope it can be a tradition, a way to remember the fallen” she says emotionally as I gather her tightly in my arms, kissing her fiercely as I pour all my appreciation for her through the bond.

As the pack all slowly turn to look at us, shouts of appreciation and thanks are directed at Nova as she holds her heart and offers a teary smile. Seeing Laurence offer his hand to Nova, she moves forward out of my grip.

“Thank you everyone. I knew from the moment I stepped foot in this pack that its where I belonged, I hope you all like my memorial wall. The warriors that fought for me, for us and for our future are on my mind every day. Words cannot express my gratitude for not only the ones we lost but for all that are here today. However, I have one more gift for you all, one which I hope

shows you just how much this pack means to me” her soft voice calls out as the crowd listens to her every words.

Turning to look at me, I look back at her in confusion as she steps forward with a nervous smile.

“Shut your eyes”

she whispers as I hesitantly do as she asks. “Now hold your hands out, palms up” she whispers as I hear an excited chatter start up in the crowd.

“So my gift to you all is this...” Nova calls while I sense her moving to stand in front of me. “Open your eyes...she whispers to me.

Slowly opening them, I look first at my mates nervous yet beautiful eyes before slowly moving my gaze down to what’s in my hand. What I find takes my breath away, i stare wide eyed at the stick with two strong pink lines on show.

“Congratulations daddy” Nova whispers as I move my gaze up to her once more, a large grin spreading across my face.

“You’re pregnant.?” I whisper. Seeing her nod as a smile stretches across her face I lunge forward as I swing her round in my arms.

After a few seconds I lower her down before kissing her lips gently and turning to address the crowd.

“Our Luna has given us the greatest gift we can have” beam.

With a loud roar I lift her up into my arms as the pack bursts into cheers, “AN ALPHA HEIR!”

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Nova POV:

“You’re pregnant” Jax beams as he pulls me into another tight hug. Dropping down to his knees not caring for our company, he lifts

my top before gently kissing my still flat stomach. “We’re going to be parents” he whispers in amazement as his green eyes look up at me.

“Nova!” I hear Alice squeal as she comes running towards me. “I’m so happy for you” she sobs as she wraps her arm round my neck. Feeling her growing bump press against my stomach, I chuckle as I step back.

“Wow, we wont be able to hug like that for much longer” I say as she bursts into a fit of giggles while caressing her bump. “How are you feeling?”

“I’m great” she assures me. “Being around Theo and the pack has really helped my energy levels in the last few days, I have an appointment next week, I thought if you’re here then you could come?”

“I’d love to” I reply happily as Theo finally catches up with his mate.

“I’m going to be an uncle” he shouts happily as Jax chuckles next to me. Leaning down and wrapping me in his large arms, he kisses my head before pulling away and looking me over. “How are you feeling? When did you find out?” Seeing his eyes a bit watery, I reach my hand out to caress his cheek in a sisterly fashion.

“Are you crying on me Theo?” I whisper playfully as he clears his throat and looks away.

“You always spoke to Flo and myself about the importance of family, we’ve always known how much you’d like pups of your own. Knowing that time is here..it’s made me emotional, he explains as he rubs his neck in embarrassment.

“You’re always the emotional one” Flo says rolling her eyes as she joins us.

“Congratulations sister” she squeals.

“Thank you both” I say quietly as a happy tear escapes my eye. “You’re going to be an amazing father, and now an amazing uncle as well Theo, and Flo you’re going to have double aunts duties now! But back to your questions, I’m feeling good. I have been quite tired, and more forgetful than normal as a result but with everything that’s happening that’s to be understandable. Laurence has spoken to the doctor for me, I literally only found out this afternoon because of him.”

“Laurence knew?” Jax asks in surprise.

“Um...yes” I reply sheepishly. “He offered to walk me upstairs this afternoon for that reason. Laurence and I share a bond it turns out...it explains his fierceful protection of me as his Luna, and his never ending support which I’m unbelievably thankful for. It turns out Ki has known for a few days but didn’t want to distract me or you.”

“Is that why she was quiet?” He checks.

Nodding in answer, I see relief cross his eyes before Zeus moves forward. “My mate is strong, caring and kind” he purrs as I feel Kias happiness flood through me.

“That she is” I agree before Jaxs green eyes return.

“He’s going to be upset he can’t run with her for a while” Alice comments as the others nod in agreement. Seeing Laurence look at me, I giggle nervously.

“About that, I can still shift” I shrug trying to sound casual about it. “Ki has assured me its safe, probably more safe.

So we don’t have to worry about that.”

“Wow” I hear Naomi exclaim as she appears by my side.

“Sorry, I overheard. That’s amazing Nova, congratulations the both of you!” Hugging me sideways to be careful of her protruding

bump, I rest my hand on hers as the pups kick her strongly.

“Still as active as ever” I chuckle as Naomi moans uncomfortably.

“I still have a while” she mutters. “I’m going to be a whale.”

“You’re beautiful and you always will be” Laurence tells her softly as everybody awws at his sweet words.

“Was that the right time to tell the pack about our news” I asked Jax.

Instead of Jax replying, Lawrence does instead. “It was the perfect time Luna, I promise, it has brought new hope to the pack following our losses. Your idea of the memorial wall also went down amazingly, I’ve heard many members tonight express how wonderful of an idea it was.”

Hearing what Lawrence has to say my shoulders slump in relief as I let out a long sigh. “Thank the goddess for that” | whisper.

Have you told your brother the news yet? asks Jax. “Or even Alex and Ophelia? I’m sure they will be absolutely over the moon for us” he says.

“Not yet no” I say shaking my head although a small smile plays on my lips as I think of how ecstatic Luca will be when he hears the news. “Luca will be very excited to be an uncle as well, he has been on about it ever since thinking we were mates. I haven’t seen Alex or Ophelia yet, I will when I see them.”

“Oh my goodness, I’m going to have grandpups” I hear Amelia’s excited voice squeal as she approaches us. “And here I was casually mentioning grandpups to my son this is afternoon when all along you were pregnant!”

“Ma, there was nothing casual in the way you mentioned grandpups” Jax says playfully as he rolls his eyes. With that the group explode into loud laughter which is a welcome sound after the stressful few days we have had.

Hearing how happy everybody is for me I can finally relax and think that perhaps a pup at this time might not be as worrisome as first thought. Looking at my mate I can see the happiness radiating from him, his eyes are bright and his stance relaxed, something I’ve been missing since his sister was taken.

“Mila will be so happy for you” Amelia say softly as if reading my thoughts.

“I’m sorry she wasn’t here when I told everyone. Laurence and I agreed that the pack could do with a nice surprise” I say softly.

“Oh don’t worry dear, you most definitely did the right thing.

Can you see all the smiles on all the pack members faces, the future of the Pack is now certain. A child as a result of the true bond from both you and my son will be an incredible alpha one day. Mila would have wanted you to tell the pack tonight, just because she isn’t here doesn’t mean people can’t experience joy. But I can’t wait for her to find out she’s going to be an aunty” Amelia says with a gentle smile.

“We’re going to find Mila, Amelia” I said quietly, yet the seriousness in my voice shows my certainty behind my words.

“I have no doubt about that. When you and Jax put your minds to something, you can achieve anything” she whispers in my ear as she pulls me in for a hug.

“Now I’d like to steal my mate away if I may ma” I hear my mate say as he wraps an arm around my waist possessively.

“Of course son, you two had best go celebrate hadn’t you”

Amelia giggles as she waves us away.

“Ma!” Jax moans as he shakes his head walking away. “I swear if I took her words to heart she would be such a mood killer all the time, nothing worse than your own mom commenting on your s*x life.”

“I can imagine” I smirk. “Now how about we go upstairs and you show me just how happy you are that were having a pup” I say in a low suggestive tone to my mate as soon as we are out of earshot.

Seeing his eyes darken as his gaze turns hungry, I wink at him as he leads me to our suite. Tonight is going to be a long night I think to myself, one that’s far overdue.

Mila POV:

As I sit staring out of the double windows, looking out to the forest stretching in front of me, I sigh deeply. My mood has soured dramatically considering the circumstances, not only did Bruno not come back for the agreed walk, but when I attempted to knock on the door to speak to my guard i was clearly ignored despite my continuous attempts:

As a result, my patience was running extremely thin, my eyes were narrow with the fixed scowl | had on my face and my lips felt sore from me having bitten down on them so much throughout the day in an attempt to keep my annoyance unheard. The only silver lining was the fact Alia was speaking once more, having apologised to me numerous times, I'd eventually told her to not dare apologise one more time to me. I understood why she was struggling, what

she has endured for me since we left Bruno is something I can't imagine carrying the burden of.

As the morning progressed we finally reached a quiet agreement to stop apologising to one another, instead we had to focus on our situation at hand. But what a gloomy situation that was.

As I sit in the darkness of the cabin as the evening turns to night, I stare aimlessly out the double glass doors letting the moonlight soothe my body. The trees surrounding the cabins are dense, and even with my sharp eyesight, I can't see further than about 30 meters past the treeline. As I

continue staring, I catch a glimpse of movement before something silver catches my eye. Freezing as I continue to look at the same spot, I see nothing and with a dark chuckle I shake my head, settling on the fact I must be imagining things in my boredom.

“Or desperation” Alia pipes up.

“Or that” I chuckle.

Suddenly the door slamming open makes me startle as my head swings round to meet Brunos angry gaze.

“Mila” he growls as he stalks towards me.

Frowning as I’m unsure of why he is now angry towards me, I purposefully still and look down, forcing myself to play the submissive.

“Hello, Bruno,” I say quietly, making him hesitate in his advance.

With an exasperated sigh, he sits down on the armchair opposite where I am on the sofa. Glancing up, I see his eyes still trained on me with a look that shows a mixture of confusion, worry and guilt.

“Are you not going to say anything about today?” He finally asks, his voice calmer

than it was before. With a small shrug and a sad smile, I shake my head.

“No” I murmur. “What good would it do? Doesn’t change anything.”

“Smart” he comments as his eyes flit around the cabin.

“You haven’t done much today then?”

With that a small laugh escapes me. “No” I reply, rolling my eyes slightly. “I did do some yoga, that’s it. Your guard didn’t seem to want to open the door.”

“He couldn’t” was all Bruno said as I simply hmm in response. Suddenly he surges to his feet, his broad form towering above my own as I force myself not to react. “We have a visitor tonight, one who wishes to see you.”

“Huh?” I ask as my brows furrow wondering who could be wanting to meet me. “Who?”

“I want you to know, Mila, that you are still safe here. I said you wouldn’t be harmed if it could be avoided, and right now, you won’t be. I think perhaps it would be a good time to remind you of that,” Bruno warns me quietly as I hear the sound of footsteps approaching through the still opened door. Seeing Bruno’s lips set in a tight line, watching for me to acknowledge what he’s said, I nod stiffly as my eyes turn to the door.

Taking a deep breath, I freeze as the fake floral scent assaults my nostrils. “That b***h” | mutter as I turn my furious gaze to Bruno.

“Remember what I said” he hisses before taking a step back and his usual stoney exterior is back in place.

“Mila” I hear the high pitch voice exclaim with exaggerated joy as the person in question sweeps into the cabin as if she owns the place.

Meeting her eyes, my jaw clenches as I take in her wide smile, perfect hair and calculatingly cold eyes. “Rebecca” I say through gritted teeth. Seeing her smirk at my reaction, I allow my eyes to travel over her figure where they come to rest on her slightly swollen belly.

“Ah” she exclaims softly, her hands coming to rest caringly on her stomach as she looks down lovingly.

“You’re pregnant” I whisper as my eyes flit to Bruno’s never changing gaze.

“We are” Rebecca chimes as she glides over to stand beside Bruno, linking her arm with his as she rests her head on his shoulder.

“2months now, its fascinating how quickly time flies.”

“Well. congratulations” I force myself to say.

“Oh did you hear that Bruno? Mila offers us her congratulations” Rebecca coos, her eyes never leaving mine. When I say nothing, her

smile falters slightly before splitting back open into a wide grin, showing off her straight white teeth. “You look terrible Mila, is that why you’re sat in the darkness?”

“No” I reply simply, not letting her insults get to me.

“I just want to claw her eyes out” Alia growls to me.

“Well lets put them on shall we” Rebecca chuckles as she looks at Bruno expectantly. After a few seconds, he walks over to the switch and flicks the lights on as Rebecca gasps dramatically. “Oh Mila, you need a wash.”

“I’ve had one Rebecca” I answer coldly, knowing i look tired but not as bad as she is making out. ‘I’ll survive until tomorrow without another” | tell her dismissively.

“So...” I start, looking between the two of them. “Can I ask why I have the pleasure of this visit?”

“I just wanted to see how you were Mila, after all I haven’t seen you in a while now and I was concerned that our treatment of you immediately after you left may have done some damage. I just wanted to ensure it hadn’t” Rebecca says quietly, her eyes wide as she attempts to look innocent.

“Immediately after?” I ask in confusion.

“Well yes, you know...when Bruno and I were a bit, ravenous for one another. I have to say pregnancy hormones do amazing things for your s*x life, don’t they sweetheart?”.

Rebecca asks Bruno cheerily.

“Does it now” I comment dully as I ponder over her words.

Smiling slowly, I lean forward and ask in an overly sweet voice. “So how has your pregnancy been Rebecca? Has Bruno been treating you well? Waited on your hand an foot?”

“He’s been great” she replies with enthusiasm. Something I always noticed about Rebecca was the easy way in which I could distract her, all I had to do was get her to talk about herself and I could sit there quietly. I’m glad to know some things haven’t changed I tell myself. “Even in his long absence he’s had people there to help me every step of the way, and now I’m back by his side it’s just wonderful.”

Grinning as I snap my fingers, I purposefully don't look at Bruno as he takes a step towards me. “Long absence? Oh how dare he leave you” I gasp dramatically. “For how long?”

“A whole 3 weeks” Rebecca says while shaking a finger at Bruno. “But that doesn’t matter right now, what I’m here to tell you is that my father will be coming in a couple of days. I unfortunately have to be the one to break the news to you, and I have to say how

hard it is for me to tell you” she says, her voice not sounding at all apologetic.

“And?” I ask coolly. “That bothers me because?”

With that Rebecca’s smile turns dark, her eyes glint with her icy stare as she steps in front of me. “Because he’s coming to kill you” she whispers dramatically.

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Mila POV:

“Kill me?” I laugh emotionlessly. “Just brilliant.”

Staring at me in shock at my lack of reaction, I look up at her with a bored expression.

“Anything else or can I be left alone again now? I don’t care if I’m told 5 minutes before being killed or 2 days. But nice try for scaring me Rebecca, it was so very upsetting.” Rolling my eyes I look at Bruno as he watches me conflicted

“Well I hope it doesn’t get to you too much until the time comes” Rebecca says, her voice cheerful as she’s unable to hide her glee.

“Seriously?” I ask her with a cold laugh.

“I’ll be fine. But

thanks for your concern, if you’d like I could give you something that would upset you.? You know, just to be even?”

“Come on Rebecca, funs over” Bruno growls as he comes to hold her waist as Rebecca seems oblivious to my comment.

“How disappointing” Rebecca sighs before spinning on her heel and marching from the cabin.

“Oh Rebecca!” I call sweetly. “Would you be a doll and turn off the light on your way out? After all, I wouldn’t want your mate here to have to see my horrible-looking face.”

Hearing her footsteps pause, I hear her huff in annoyance before leaving without turning the light off. “Worth a try” I mutter before standing myself up and walking over to flick them off.

“So I’m going to be killed?” I chuckle to Bruno as his hardened face gives nothing away. “Well, I’d like to say I’m surprised, but I’m not. I knew it would be a strong possibility, now it could be interesting to at least know why I’m being killed? If it’s just to please your girlfriend then I have to say that’s pretty wasteful. Giving in to her demands despite knowing you’ve been ****g others in your time apart, although maybe that’s why you want to kill me. I suffered through the evidence didn’t I?”

With that Bruno growls before storming over to the door and snapping it shut decisively. “Do not mention that” he orders me.

“I would have already if I actually gave a st*t” I shrug. “as much as I hate Rebecca, im

not going to cause her any more distress that could potentially have a harmful effect on the pup, the pup at least is innocent. Tell me Bruno, is that why you rejected me? Because you knew Alia would be out for blood if we were still bonded and we saw another female pregnant with your pup?”

Seeing his lips pursed, I nod in realization, “it was,” I chuckle.

“Well, im not complaining” I tell him.

“Either way I got the outcome I wanted.”

“You’re taking this awfully well” Bruno comments as he watches me closely

“As opposed to what? Fly off the handle, break some s**t?”

Oh no... I had to BEHAVE, didn’t I?” I ask him innocently. “So are you killing me to get one back on Axton? To make him suffer a great loss? Or are you doing it to get back at my brother? Or simply to make your life easier?”

Firing off the questions at Bruno, I watch closely for any type of reaction. When his expression stays the same, I slump back as I think about what else may be the reasoning. “It’s something to do with Rebecca’s father,” I muse quietly.

Seeing Bruno’s eyes narrow slightly, the movement so minuscule I could have imagined it. “Ah.” I chuckle. “Got to keep the father-in-law happy.”

Seeing another glint of silver over Bruno’s shoulder out the window behind, I freeze as I look around frantically.

“What are you looking at?” Bruno growls, spinning to follow my line of sight.

Recovering quickly, I force myself to talk. “Just how much I wish I had got some fresh air today” I whisper pathetically.

Snapping his head back to mine, he sighs before looking to the sky outside. “Look, Mila, I know it’s too little too late, and for

that, I apologize. But I do want to apologise for my actions, although I cant say I'd change them as I am all too aware of the type of man I am, I would like to acknowledge how hard it must have been for you.”

“You’re saying that before I die?’ I ask him quietly.

“I feel I should...yes” he agrees slowly

“Well don’t” I snarl, my anger returning with a vengeance.” What’s done is done.”

Seeing another hint of silver behind him, I yawn dramatically before glaring at Bruno.

“In fact, I’m quite tired and would like to go to bed. If you could leave, I’d be more than grateful” I say with a sneer.

Wordlessly, he stands up, looking torn as he opens his mouth. But before any words tumble from his mouth, there is a loud thumping on the door followed by shouting.

Storming over and flinging the door open, Bruno snarls loudly, “WHAT?”

“There are a number of unknown approaching, we also have suspicious activity and scent trails a mile south of here Alpha” I hear a male tell him breathlessly and Bruno swears loudly.

“Stay here, you’ll have guards” he orders me as I throw my hands in the air.

“Where the f**k do you expect me to go Bruno? I’m bolted in for goddesses sake. Just f*****g leave” I snarl.

His eyes flash at my attitude, but hearing more shouting from outside he growls loudly and steps from the cabin.

Hearing the bolts slide loudly against the door, I slump back down on the sofa, embracing the quietness of my cabin once more.

“There’s still hope Mila” Alia tells me quietly. “Do you think that’s Jax coming to us?”

“I doubt it” I whisper dejectedly. “Unknown scents, they would know if Jax, Axton and Alex were after us.”

“But Nova can hide scents” Alia says hopefully.

“Can she change them?” I ask her.

“I..I don’t know” she answers me.

“Well settle in Alia, for now. We aren’t going anywhere” I mutter, not letting my hopes rise only for them to fall and upset me further. Standing slowly, I wander to the fridge and get out some juice, robotically pouring myself a glass and then making some toast. Sighing loudly as I take a bite, I turn to walk back to the sofa but movement catches the corner of my eye. Snapping my head up, I freeze as my eyes meet those of a man stood directly outside of the glass

doors. His hair long and silver, his body tall and lean as his pale skin stands out brightly in the moonlight. But what has me frozen is his eyes, his bright red eyes that are staring directly at me.

“Vampire...” I breath as I make no effort to move. As he moves his arms upwards, his eyes glance around before focusing back on me making me flinch. Holding his hands up in a peaceful gesture, he offers me a small smile before slowly pointing to the door.

Not relaxing my posture, I slowly shake my head, indicating I can't open it. “Can we trust him?” I ask Alia.

“I don't know” she huffs back, her hackles raised in my mind as she watches through my eyes. As I'm debating if trusting a strange vampire or waiting for the death that Rebecca's father has promised me, I see the man bring his hand down to rest on the handle as a soft gold light envelops his hand. A second later I hear a quiet click as the door

unlocks. Swinging it open, he silently steps into the room. His movements slow and deliberate as his hands return to his peaceful gesture.

“Who are you?” I whisper as he continues moving closer.

“You’re Mila?” He asks, his voice velvety and smooth as his expression stays relaxed and gentle.

Nodding slowly, he smiles widely. “Always remember that life moves on, when times get tough..look up to the stars” he tells me quietly as my body slumps in relief.

“Jax” I whisper before the world turns black.

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Jax POV:

I wake up early, as the first rays of the morning light begin to filter through our curtains. Looking down, I see Nova still sleeping as her long hair fans out on the

pillow behind her, her warm breaths even against my chest.

“So perfect” Zeus purrs as his chest puffs out in Alpha pride, the both of us still basking in the joy of knowing our mate is pregnant with our pup.

Checking the time, I see its approaching 6am, the time we agreed we needed to be up for. First on our agenda was visiting the pack hospital, Laurence had linked me last night after we had shared our news saying he had agreed with Dr Norton for us to go in early so Nova could have a check up before we visited Lizzie. But first, we had to find Alex and Ophelia. They had been noticeably absent last night, I presume it was because they were perhaps visiting the witches and spending some much needed time together while our pack gathered for the burnings. I couldn't fault them for either, after all Alex still has his pack back home to think about, although its in safe hands I'm well aware of

how involved both his mate and himself are despite the distance.

“Nova love” | whisper as I gently kiss her forehead. “I hate to wake you, but we have to get ready. We have our hospital appointment remember.”

With that, her eyes fly open as a wide smile spreads across her face. “Our pup” she whispers, her voice hoarse from sleep as she stretches adorably. Seeing the swell of her breasts peak above the sheet, my breath hitches as I struggle tearing my eyes away. “Did you not get your fill last night?” Nova teases as she peaks up at me through her lashes.

Breathing out slowly, I force my eyes to look away as I ignore the throbbing of my hardened member. “I’ll never get enough” I answer gruffly as I gently remove my arm from under her head and swing my legs off of the side of the bed. “If I didn’t know you were so tired and we didn’t have such a busy

day, I would most definitely be keeping you busy in the bed a while longer.” I chuckle as I turn and give her a cheeky wink, loving the way her cheeks still flush lightly from my words.

“Don’t give me ideas” she whispers quietly as I smell the whiff of her arousal.

Stiffening, I turn to her with darkened eyes, “Nova” I growl.

“You’re not helping.”

“I’m sorry,” she whimpers. “It’s pregnancy hormones, I’ve heard all about them. I’ll go get ready.”

“Temptress,” I mutter playfully as she giggles before gracefully rising from the bed.

“It’s your fault” she retorts as she slips into the bathroom.

Shaking my head at her playfulness, I quickly head to the closet and get myself

dressed. As I busy myself waiting for Nova, my thoughts wander back to Mila. Axton hasn't reported feeling any pains suggesting any mistreatment of her by Bruno in that manner, but it doesn't fill me with confidence that she isn't suffering elsewhere.

"Do you think we are doing the right thing, Nova?" I ask her quietly as I hear her walk into the closet behind me.

"With Mila?" She asks knowingly. Nodding at her, I wait for her to reply as she pulls on a pair of leggings and a relaxed jumper. "I don't know" she admits looking troubled. "I don't like the fact we aren't chasing after her, but at the same time I understand how unpredictable Bruno is. I want Mila out of danger, but I don't know how we can do it quicker without risking her."

"Yeah" I sigh as pulls my shoes on. "If you go though, surely we could just command them all or something."

“Then let’s find them, we will figure this out Jax. I still don’t understand Bruno’s game plan” Novas admits. “I’ve been thinking it over and I just can’t understand a plausible reason. Everything seems a bit far fetched, even with him wanting to become the next Alpha King...is Mila necessary for that?”

Pausing as her words suddenly make my mind race, my eyes widen as I come to a realisation. “Is there any way that Bruno would know of Alex planning to put me forward as a candidate for the next Alpha King?” I ask her slowly.

Frowning as she brushes her hair, Nova looks conflicted. “I have no idea” she admits. “I mean, on paper you are a perfect candidate so I imagine that’s not too hard to figure out. But the timing? Noone knew Alex was planning on stepping down before he informed Elder Martin shortly before speaking to us. that I’m aware of that is.”

“You’re right” I admit. “But if he did know, then perhaps the combination of Axton being her second chance mate and her being my sister is the reason.”

“We could guess and guess and guess, let’s figure that out once we have got Mila home” Nova says softly, her eyes sympathetic as she understands my need to understand.

Lifting my phone, I call Axel as I had sent him a text last night saying I had to tell him and Evan some exciting news.

Listening to it ring, I frown as I realise he didn’t even text back last night. For a tech geek who normally has his phone glued to him whenever he’s not in wolf form, that’s unusual.

“Ma, you awake?” I link her quietly.

“I am,” she replies instantly. “Struggling to sleep these days.”

Blowing a shaky breath, I pause before responding. “I know, perhaps you would fancy joining Nova and I for the check up this morning if you’re up already, we are going in 45minutes?”

“I’d love to,” she replies, her voice sounding more enthusiastic than previously.

“We will meet you there,” I link her. “Have you heard from the twins at all? Ive seemed to miss them whenever they’re free, and I’d like to tell them our news.”

“Oh they said they wouldn’t be free until this afternoon dear, something about helping Henry” she replies.

“Ah that explains it, well we will see you shortly ma” I chuckle.

Turning, I see my pregnant mate waiting patiently by the door, a mixture of excitement and nerves on her face. “Are you ready?” She asks eagerly.

“Let’s go” I chuckle. Taking her hand, I all but drag her down the stairs, carefully still though as my protectiveness is kicking up a notch. I want to find Alex quickly so we can get to our appointment. “Where are you?” I link Alex, happy that my ability to link anyone is coming in handy. “You better not be sleeping” I joke.

“I’m here man” his deep voice chuckles as he appears from the downstairs lounge looking tired. “I’ve heard your news...congratulations!”

“Thank you” Nova beams as Alex lands a kiss on her cheek before pulling me into a big hug, the happiness clear in his eyes.

“I actually was looking for you” he admits as he steps back.

“Oh yeah?” I ask intrigued.

“Yeah.” he says quietly.

“So..?” I prompt.

He looks at me with an unreadable expression as I wait impatiently, when finally he opens his mouth, the words that he says take our breath away.

“We have Mila”