

The Defiant Mate Chapter 16

Jay-la POy

Jay-la leaned away from the door frame, she slid her hand down her body slowly and brushed imaginary dust from the bottom of her skirt.

Jackson's eyes followed the movement automatically, Stephen reached out and cracked him up the back of the head, with quite a hard hit, causing him to growl slightly. His eyes glazed over as did Stephen's for maybe 15 seconds, when his eyes returned to her she laughed out loud and winked playfully at Jackson.

It was time to play. She thought this could be fun. She hadn't played with either of them in a long time, and now she was a fully fledged and un-mated female wolf, she could flirt with whoever she wanted. She internally chuckled to herself. Game on.

Jackson had used to stare at her sometimes, she had caught him a few times and he'd always cleared his throat and turned away or walked away. She'd noticed his interest in her since she was 16, the minute she had gotten Kora, but he'd never done anything about it.

Neither had she, her eyes had already been else where, she wondered if he'd know about her interest in their Alpha and that was why he'd never acted on his interest in her.

She waved them into her office and made sure to accidentally on purpose miss step and bump into Jackson, as he walked past her, her hand landing right on his h!p as if to steady herself, her other hand on his muscular chest "oops, so sorry."

She smiled up at him all innocent like, his entire body stilled, his grey eyes turned to hers, she leaned away from him sliding her hand off of his chest slowly but allowed the one on his h!p to linger a few seconds longer, pressing in to feel the v-line she knew was right there as she stared up into his grey eyes.

She saw his eyes darken slightly and Jay-la knew he was still attracted to her in someway. Stepf!fen the spoil-sport spoiled the moment by pushing Jackson through the

doorway roughly and Jay-la walked in after him. She caught the disapproving frown on Stephen's handsome face, his caramel brown eyes hard on her, almost a warning in them, she thought.

"So what do I owe the honour of your company for?" she asked, closing her office door. "have a seat" she indicated the chairs in front of her desk 'oh how sweet this was' they both out ranked her in the pack and yet here in her office in the human world she could tell them what to do and when, she got to sit behind the desk and they in front of it like good little warriors 'oh such a sweet feeling' she must savour it.

The smile on her face was friendly and the non-nonchalant way she leaned her chin on her hand on her desk told them she wasn't afraid of them.

"Jay-la" Jackson stated flatly, "you can not entertain the idea of going to another pack", straight to the point, she thought.

"Can't 1?" she wondered aloud "why not?" she questioned him.

"You know why!" he shot right back at her, raising an eyebrow at her as if to imply she was faking the reason not to know why.

She got his meaning.

Jay-la allowed herself to lean back in her chair and take in her once childhood friend. He didn't look all that much older, his jaw line was more defined now, his skin was just as tanned as before from years of training out in the open sun. He clearly still worked out, his shoulders broader and his chest was definitely bigger and harder, she'd felt that herself. His V-line appeared to be deeper now too, than when she had trained with him, all muscle and good looks.

His light brown hair was a little longer than she remembered but she decided it suited him, his light grey eyes as clear and direct as ever, she could see Apollo behind them watching her, there was a flicker of green in them now, he was taking her in as she was him.

She winked playfully right at his wolf “Hey Apollo.” she acknowledged his presence with a seductive smile playing about her lips. A light, almost playful growl came from him.

Jackson punched himself in the chest lightly and cleared his throat, pulling his wolf into line. She heard Stephen snap his name and turned her green eyes on him while she chuckled at Apollo’s response to her.

Interesting.

Her smile for him was just the same, quite playful and hinted of teasing seduction, but his eyes were hard and unyielding on her. He too was more defined, not as broad shouldered as the Beta, but still noticeably bigger than when she had been 20, his skin a shade darker in its tan, and his jaw very square and set, his jet black hair, shaved short on either side and longish on top, styled with gel and set swooped off to the right, he had definitely turned into a hot specimen of a wolf, though she could see he was not interested in the slightest, no flirting with this one and Rafe was not near the surface either.

“I can actually. Any wolf can leave one pack for another, if the other pack is willing to take them in.” she picked up the stack of messages Jordan had handed her this morning and waved them at him, returning her attention to Jackson, “and it seems, there are plenty willing to offer me a place too.”

“You don’t know how dangerous it will be for you and your pups, Jay-la.”

“I’ve a fair idea,” she nodded, “but better than the alternative, considering how much my current Alpha hates me.”

Stephen sighed “Jay-la... honey”. His voice -oozed Gamma Charm. She hated it instantly. “He doesn’t hate you, I assure you.” he leaned forward. “Take the chance to mediate with him.” His soft tone now had a sudden slight southern accent and was making Kora practically lay down and roll over. She wanted nothing more than to listen to his every word and fulfil them.

“Stop that crap.” Jay-la shot at him annoyed, knowing full well he was using his goddess gifted, Gamma Charm, to attract all her wolf’s attention. She may not find him attractive

or desirable, but Gamma's could sweet talk any she-wolf. It was a gift to calm Luna's under times of stress, to get them to comply when they didn't want to, to run when their mate was in trouble and wanted her out of harms way, when they were dying or dead and the Gamma had to save their Luna's life from another alpha or his men, to protect her.

They could use all that charm to sway even the most distraught wolf to get up and move. To take their hand and run away from trouble, even when grief overwhelmed them completely, they would listen and comply and Kora was no exception to the damned rule, so it seemed.

Stephen smiled at her, he knew exactly what he was doing and doing it on purpose. Ah, that was why he was here instead of back in the pack protecting his actual Luna. He was here to try and make her comply using the gift the goddess had blessed him with, as*s-hole.

"Jay-la...honey, what harm could it do. 1 meeting on your terms!" he practically drawled with that slight southern accent coming out of him now in deeper under tones. He was really trying to get to her wolf.

We should' Kora whined at her, she was lying in Jay-la's mind all submissive and calm.

Ready to comply with his will.

Jay-la was just as stubborn as he was and forced Kora to the far reaches of her mind with a great effort. Glaring at Stephen she took a long drawn in deep breath, to help steel herself against that goddess gifted Gamma Charm and turned away from him on purpose, losing eye contact with him, hoping to refocus her mind on Jackson and pull herself back to normal or it would be all over for her.

"I will hear all offers and make a decision myself, you will have no say or, influence on my decision." she bit out the last 4 words stilling trying to fight that bloody charm. Not looking at him was better, focusing on something else was better. She could feel herself starting to come back to her normal self.

Or he had let go of her, stopped using his gift on her for the moment. More likely that was it.

Jackson was glaring at her. "Do you even know who our Pack is in alliance with? At war with? Who are our enemies?" he shot at her "how could you be so stupid as to entertain anything any other Pack offers!"

Jay-la was now glaring back at him. She was not stupid and of course, she knew there were many risks to her and her babies, as did Kora, but what choice did they have? He had dragged her back and hadn't even cared about the injuries she'd sustained, just stared at her with those furiously angry eyes of his.

If the FED's hadn't turned up she would probably be dead or in a dungeon somewhere in pack territory. Fortunately, she was fully ensconced into the human world, where the people around her noticed she was missing and cared about her enough to report it and take action for her.

"I should just roll over and comply to the Alpha." she snapped right back at him "After what he did to me?" Jay-la opened the top draw to her desk and pulled out the stack of photo's full of her injuries and threw them on the desk in front of the 2 of them, showing just how bloodied and injured she had been the bruising from being strangled and man handled, the red raw marks from the silver handcuffs, the bruise and puncture wound from the needle that had been used to force-ably inject wolfs-bane into her "the worst of the worst." she shot at him, hurt lacing every word "I made 1 mistake in my entire life and that's all he can think about even all these years later.

I'm sure the Luna healed quickly enough, not a scar would have been left on her face. 1 hit and this was worth all my injuries, the trauma of being kidnapped, drugged and separated from my babies. I bet that wasn't even the worst to come. Just the beginning, I saw how he was looking at me, still so angry for just 1 hit to his mate 6 years ago, not to mention that she hit me first."

Stephen had picked up the photo's and was frowning down at them. She had been running away when he had joined Jackson, coming to help capture her, probably hadn't

seen the full state of her injuries. Jackson, on the other hand, had seen it all. It was 1 slap, was it really worth anything she had been given?

Jackson ran his hand through his hair roughly."Jay-la it wasn't like that, as for the men who hurt you.I had sent them and they were instructed not to harm you at all."

"Did I look unharmed to you Jackson?" she yelled angrily at him.

"You started the fight, I believe, in the back of the van. If you hadn't, you would not have sustained any injuries at all. I assure you."

"Was I just supposed to let some strange wolves drag me away to beat and probably r*e me Jackson, multiple times before being handed over. Of course, I was going to defend myself, any wolf would."

"Jay-la no harm was going to come to you." he repeated firmly.

"But I didn't know that. Worst of the worst. That means that those who come for you, can do as they please, no matter what, and there will be no repercussions because the one who ordered it doesn't give a damn. As long as the detainee is actually alive and still breathing, they don't care about the state of said detainee. Isn't that correct?"

Anger laced every word, she knew she was correct, she knew that he also knew it.

"He was just angry Jay-la, that you were defying his request to come home and the minute he knew you had called, he was very sorry for his words and rescinded them, but wouldn't pick up the phone and let me explain or reassure you. So you need to take some responsibility here too."

"I need to take responsibility! Are you f**cking insane? I was coming in. I'd made the arrangements but did he care? No he didn't. I am not f***g responsible. GET OUT:" she yelled, her anger starting to boil over. Kora was up and f*orefront in her mind, ready for a fight, they had complied and he'd wanted to send the worst of the worst.

She was standing now, her hands on her desk her claws were out, digging into the wood of her desk, Kora pulling forward.

Jackson stood “Calm down.” he said softly, trying to placate her.

“I won’t” she growled, allowing him to see Kora right there ready to fight him.

“Okay, maybe I was wrong.” his hands were raised defensively in a gesture that showed he didn’t want to fight with her.

Stephen got up, dropping all the photo’s and stepped between them. “Out” he said softly to Jackson, “I’ll talk to her.”

Jay-la watched as Jackson pushed something into Stephens’ hand, “make sure she knows” he said, and walked away out of her office and close the door behind him.

That left her alone with Stephen and she could already feel his calming aura radiating off of him. Damn Gamma, she was spoiling for a fight and Jackson could take the brunt of it, as*s-hole. All flirtatious thoughts were now gone, where he was concerned.

“Please, Jay-la honey, sit down.” Stephen said softly, slowly walking around the desk towards her.

She could feel her anger starting to ebb away. Her eyes were on his and his directly looking at her. She and Kora both watching him carefully, waiting for something, anything. He technically was the enemy or belonged, to her pissed off Alpha and goddess only knew what his orders were, where she was concerned.

“Please... Jay-la honey, sit down” he repeated softly and she couldn’t help it, her body sank down into the chair “just relax,.... I’m not here to harm you in any way” his voice was barely above a whisper, all his Gamma Charm falling over her in full force, and she realised just how little he had used on her before to make Kora submit.

“I hate you.” Jay-la murmured, as Kora submitted and lay down.

He chuckled, not offended in the least. “That’s okay right now.” his eyes lit with amusement, his hands moved to the arms of her chair and he turned her to face him directly, leaned down and looked right at her mere inches away from her face, his Caramel eyes soft on her, she actually felt like he truly cared about her at this moment.

“Stupid Gamma.” she hissed at him, all the fight going out of her.

“Yes...I’m the Gamma,” he smiled right at her “Your Gamma, so please listen to me”.

“No...” she closed her eyes and shook her head “I don’t want to.” she whispered, knowing it was a losing battle but still trying desperately to fight it.

“Jay-la... honey. Yes you do” his mouth was right there against her ear. “please don’t make any rash decisions.” he placed a piece of paper in her hand “read this, take it very seriously.”

She nodded her head, opened her eyes and he was right in front of her, staring right into her eyes. It felt like her very soul. “I know you’re hurting right now Jay-la...and need time, take the time.. just please give us a chance too. That is all I am asking of you.”

Tears filled her eyes “I hate you.” She whispered again, she was drowning in his Gamma Charm aura.

He smiled softly at her, placed a light kiss on her forehead “Just breath.” he said softly and stepped away from her, dropped his Gamma Charm, he walked towards the door, his hand on the handle and turned to look at her “have a nice dinner on Friday.” he winked at her and then was gone from her office.

She felt the weight of his Gamma Charm lift the minute he stopped using it and was starting to feel better and more her normal self with every minute that he was out of her office. Her eyes hardened and she glared at the door where he had been, ‘have a nice dinner on Friday’. He was just letting her know that he knew exactly where she was going to be, and would likely be reporting as much to the Alpha.

She took several minutes to recover her composure from the effect he’d had on her. She felt real sorry for his mate. The poor creature never stood a chance against that power, she was never going to be able to stay mad at him.

Her eyes turned to the paper in her hand, she unfolded it, read it. There was a list of pack names at the top were the words ‘None of these’ Enemies she guessed. Along with the pack names were the names of the Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta of each

pack. Jay-la guessed that was just in-case they tried to fool her. She didn't quite understand why they had given it to her, and stated 'none of these' almost implied she was going to be allowed to get a new pack.

Were they actually starting to believe she was going to be able to find a new pack? Preparing for it, she supposed, she could reject her pack any time she liked, and go rogue. Perhaps he would rather know where she went with his children than just disappear with them, which she could. She guessed.

3 of those packs were right out there in her waiting area. She would take it seriously, she did not want harm to come to her, babies, or her and Kora either. She got up after putting the paper away in her desk draw. Walked over and brought in her next appointment.

He introduced himself, smiling politely and sat down, seemed nice. He didn't even look her over, as most male wolves would, could be mated, but his mark spot was currently covered, so she didn't know. He handed her an envelope. It had the Eclipse Pack seal on it. "My Alpha sends an offer of friendship and an invitation into our pack" Delta Ryan Jay-la opened the letter and read it. It was addressed directly to her and offered sanctuary and protection to her and her 3 pups until they were to turn 18. He offered her a position in his pack's legal department along with a nice-sized salary attached. And accommodation in the Pack House itself on the Gamma's floor.

A full suite for her and the children. All she had to do was pledge allegiance to him and swear her loyalty and her children's as well, and then he would take her in and protect her from her current Alpha and all threats from the Blood Moon Pack.

It was a nice offer, but all she saw was the deadline for the protection of her children at 18. After that he could simply do as he pleased and harm her and the children. Do whatever he wanted to them. No she was not so stupid.

She looked up at Delta Ryan "only til my children turn 18? why?"

"I didn't write it." Ryan stated with a simple shrug, "I was only instructed to deliver it and await your reply."

"I'm currently fielding many offers" she indicated the stack of message slips on her desk, "you should return to your Pack. Tell your Alpha, thank you for the offer. I will consider it. However, an expiry date on protection and sanctuary is a turn off. I want complete assurance no harm will, ever, come to me or my children."

"I seriously doubt you'll get that from any Pack." He nodded and stood up "My Alpha, however does have a son about 3 years older than your girls. Perhaps a mating bond alliance could be a better offer."

'Hell no' Kora roared in her head. Jay-la agreed totally, she would not sell off one of her children to any man or wolf. The goddess would gift her children Mates and only then would she allow any of them to be bonded to another. There would be no chosen Mates for her babies. Certainly not one from an enemy Pack.

"Perhaps" she bowed her head slightly, showing respect, she did not want to offend this man or his Alpha.

"I will let my Alpha know," was all Ryan said before leaving her office.

Jay-la shuddered, she felt as though grubs were crawling all over her skin. Are all offers going to be like this? She hoped not.

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Nathan POV

He was disappointed to hear how Jackson had handled Jay-la, Jackson was usually very diplomatic in his business dealings. He thought sending him to deal with her was a good idea, due to the man's feelings towards her.

Not that he had yet to say anything about having feelings for her, but Nathan was sure if he didn't have them then, once he had done, which should have made him handle her gently, not try and get her to take some responsibility for her injuries.

He had been totally disappointed and hurt by her words about him, but at least now he understood why she ran away, she believed he hated her, how she felt about him at this

current moment didn't sit well with him. Havoc was pissed off about it, but again Nathan reassured him that when they came face to face everything would work out. It would all be okay.

Havoc muttered something about mating Kora, whether she liked it or not, until she submitted to him completely. Nathan didn't totally approve of that, but wolves would do what they wanted.

The human counterpart couldn't always control them, and he doubted very much Havoc would be relinquishing control the minute he spotted Kora. She was his Mate and nothing was going to stop him from mating her.

It also gained him some insight. She was still unaware that his mating bond was broken, so she was indeed in for a shock when she laid eyes upon him.

Thankfully, Stephen had been there, he had handled her very well indeed. She was very susceptible to his Gamma qualities. That was good, though he had mentioned she put up quite a good bit of resistance to it. On his first use, forcing her wolf away to try and beat him at his own game, he had relented and let go. He'd just been testing her.

But, had used all of it to stop what was going to be a full-blown wolf-on-wolf fight between her and Jackson, right in earshot of three of their enemy packs.

He had even called her His Gamma, not something he should have done without permission, but she hadn't thought anything of it, as far as Stephen could tell. Just presumed he meant it in a round about way due to the fact that he was the Pack's Gamma though Nathan knew that was not what Stephen meant, he literally was, her Gamma and he obviously wanted her to hear it, know it maybe even sense it.

Those enemy pack members would have heard the heated discussion between the 3 of them and now they all understand she does not want to have anything to do with their pack. He had no idea of what they made of Stephen's little fopar, he could only hope they took it the same way Jay-la did.

Hearing the oscillation from her office with he own pack Beta, they will be likely to make better offers to entice her. It was clear his most hated rival packs were the first to come

out of the woods to try and win her. They were indeed trying to get to him via his children.

He could only hope they never found out she was his Mate. That Stephen hadn't let it out of the bag and endangered her.

Stephen had advised that they leave after the meeting, so Jay-la didn't get into it again with Jackson when coming out of her office.

They had stayed close by though, with enemy pack members right there, they would not leave her alone, and he had ordered tighter security on the triplets and her apartment building.

They had been a little on the reserved side during the video call and he knew something else had happened but they were holding it back. He knew it, asked them what it was.

Jackson had literally looked guilty and not been able to make eye contact with him, dread had filled him almost instantly. Had he actually hurt her he'd wondered.

Stephen had sighed and muttered "I'll tell him then, shall I". And proceeded to inform him of Jay-la's flirting with Jackson and his wolf, Apollo and Apollo's reaction to her. Havoc had not liked it at all, but Nathan had burst out laughing.

He had not expected her to play that tactic, but when he thought about it, why wouldn't she try to throw them off guard.

If she had any idea that Jackson had any kind of feelings for her, of course she would. She was a she-wolf and a very beautiful one, with mischief built into her genes. She'd always played games with them.

Hell, when he and she had been in their casual relationship she would run and hide behind Jackson to get away from him when he was stalking her playfully, looking to bed her, sometimes climbing on his back and begging him to save her from the big bad Alpha who was trying to rape her and steal her virtue, lol that had been lost long before.

Cheeky minx. Jackson had played along sometimes and ran off with her on his back. Leaving Nathan to chase after the 2 of them, very playful banter, he'd always catch them, toss her over his shoulder and run off with her towards his room, growling out in playful tones 'your mine now little she-wolf'.

His laughter had surprised both of them. He simply explained that it was no different to her behaviour when they had been going out, running to Jackson to have him save her. She was trying to appeal to his nature to help her out.

He was not concerned at all. He actually wasn't. He didn't think Jackson would do anything to hurt him or enrage his beast. Let alone something that would get him kicked out of the pack or killed.

His friend might like the future Luna, but Nathan was certain the man would not act on it. She was his destined Mate. If she was he would have claimed her long ago, hell before she had seduced her Alpha with those jewel green eyes of hers, that night when she'd been 19.

It had crossed his mind as to whether Jackson had been hoping she was his fated Mate at one point. She was one of their closest friends and it had surprised all of them that none of them had wound up Mated to her.

The day she had been presented on her 18th birthday he could recall her beauty. None of them had seen her dressed like that make-up on either. Most of the time they saw her in jeans and tee-shirts or training clothes, covered in mud, they'd all seen her na**ked.

Nothing unusual about that. She was a fierce fighting machine, as were they, and so when there had been rogue attacks, she had joined in on the fighting against them. And so they had all seen her shift and be na**ked.

Jackson had actually been wearing nice clothing. On the day of her 18th birthday, he recalled dark blue slacks and a pale blue short-sleeved dress shirt, though he had still been leaned back casually against the wall next to his parents-table, looking bored as usual, playing it cool, Nathan had wondered then if it was due to wanting to be her Mate. she had looked very uncomfortable that day, being presented as all pack members were at 18 to see if their fated Mate was within the pack.

Actually, she hadn't looked around at all simply stood next to Alpha Blaine and stared directly ahead into the forest, not searching the crowd as many id looking for the one they were hoping to be their Mate, praying to the goddess that they too would be looking at them.

Nope not his Jay-la, stubborn always. Defiant even to the Goddess, it seemed. Well, she had a fated Mate now, she just didn't know it yet. But would soon enough. He had to find a way to get her to willingly come home to the Pack.

Or into the state where his pack was or he was going to have to breach the human restrictions placed on him where she was concerned, and he was truly trying to abide by them so she could see he respected her.

This was the only reason he had stayed put. He wanted her to come to him on her own terms. He was hoping the mediation would work, but no, she had stubbornly refused it.

The next thing Jackson had relayed to him had shocked him but also was going to go in his favour, or at least he hoped so. He was now patiently waiting for the outcome. And they had snapped a few shots of her coming and going from the office.

She looked stunning in her s**xy little skirt though he was still unhappy about her wearing it where all eyes were on her, especially while she was entertaining offers from his enemy packs. He was going to have to have a serious talk to her about her dress code when she came home.

S**xy for him was one thing, but in front of the whole pack, hell no.

He had also received new pictures of the triplets at their school. His son was very protective of his sisters, just like a good Alpha, though he was a little concerned about the anger he displayed when anyone hurt one of the girls, even accidentally. His men watching the triplets had reported that one of the twins had been bumped into by another child running past playing with other children and fallen off her seat.

His boy had picked her up off the ground, made sure she was alright and then ran after the children and shoved them over quite violently and yelled at them to watch what the heck they were doing or he'd beat them up.

Apparently, the twins hadn't reacted much to it, just watched him, probably normal behaviour that they always saw, coming to their defence, but it would have to be curbed. Did Jay-la even know about it? He wondered, and if so, did she discuss it with him and try to discourage it.

In a pack school, you could expect it from a male Alpha child that had a twin sister or brother even, which ever was the more dominant would become the protector and display such behaviour, but in the human world he didn't think it would be acceptable.

He could have Jackson or Stephen bring it up with her later this week and see how she was handling it. Though how she would take him, trying to give parental advice, when he'd never had anything to do with them, when she had raised them all by herself, was another matter.

Was he overstepping his bounds in this matter? Was it too early?' No. Havoc stated 'Ours.' Yes, they were his, but he'd never even known about them and if the rolls were reversed would he want someone who he thought hated him giving parental advice, he doubted it very much. Even if it was out of Concern, it would be like an intrusion. He was in 2 minds about interfering at this point, but he was worried about the boys' aggression, did he have Havoc's temper. Nathan felt Havoc snort?

'Ain't nothing wrong with me.'

'No, let's just go around ripping heads off at will buddy'

'Only one time,' he snarled right back 'hmm and the ripping and tearing and killing of things when you're mad.'

'Normal I'm the alpha wolf.' Nathan shook his head, there was no reasoning with his wolf. He hadn't always been destructive, yes aggressive and forceful, but that was normal for an Alpha wolf.

His sudden change of temperament had come from a betrayal that had hurt him so badly he had not known how to cope with it.

That thought made him wonder just how Kora felt, if she was too an angry wolf at this point, and what would it take to subdue her if that was the case. She would have been just as hurt as Jala that dáy, though he was certain now Kera had reacted to protect her pups.

He had no idea if Jay-la had known about them at the time. She would have told him he was certain of it, they had been in bed together enjoying each other very much, they very day before he had met Sophia. So he could only presume Kora had just figured it out but had yet to tell Jay-la.

He called Jackson and asked him to bring it up with her. Jackson was quiet on the subject but didn't decline altogether, so Nathan told him if he was uncomfortable to have Stephen do it, but it had to be done before the boy actually hurt someone. He also requested a copy of their birth certificates so he could get them enrolled into the Pack School here right away.

He had yet to tell his pack about Jay-la or his pups, but he knew some had figured it out, mostly the ones that worked in the human world and had seen his press conference, though none of them had come to him or passed it around the pack, they all knew better than to piss off his wolf. Who had a very short fuse and an explosive temper.

When he half-shifted, the place wreaked fear. On the bright side, that he could half shift and maintain it was currently keeping the attacks on his Pack to a minimum. It seemed even his enemies had become weary of him.

He hoped Jay-la and Kora wouldn't get to see it any time soon. He didn't need either of them anymore, afraid of them than they already were.

Havoc snorted 'just makes us look stronger.'

'Is that what you think?'

'Kora will like it.' Havoc rumbled 'wolves like strong mates all the better to protect them, huh.'

Nathan smiled at Havoc's thought process. He really believed Kora was going to love him no matter what, that she would have no problem with his temper, dominant behaviour, halt-shifting ability, or reputation. He has some serious faith in his Mate.

Considering how he thought he was going to mate her, by force without permission, until she completely submitted to him, Nathan had some serious doubts that it was going to go smoothly, probably a massive wolf fight out in the woods, hopefully in the woods and not in the Alpha suite. Where everything would get destroyed.

He, on the other hand, was going to use every seductive tactic he knew, where Jay-la was concerned, he would tread carefully and make sure she was completely willing, it wasn't like they had never been in bed before. But this time would be very different, it would have a completely different meaning to it, not just a fun romp between the sheets.

But a meaningful lifelong commitment to fun romp between the sheets. But a meaningful lifelong commitment to each other, it would also feel very different, be way more heated and both their arousal levels would be higher and their need for each other would increase at some point and the desperate need to mate furiously would take over and his dominant need to possess her utterly and completely would get the better of him, and he would just pound the living hell out of her, marking her at the height of their org**sm.

'We'll mark deep' Havoc murmured.

'We will indeed, everyone will know she is mine, ours'. Nathan agreed he would bite hard, his venom burning into her so much she would never get away from him. She would mark him back the same way he hoped.

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Jay-la POV

She was standing in front of Jordan's desk staring at the message in her hand. It read "Winter Moon Industry CEO Austin White would like to personally discuss affiliation. Approved by your grandmother, Clara."

Clara was her mother Vera's mother, and she did actually reside in the Winter Moon Pack. Jay-la recalled visiting when she was little girl with her mum and brother. It was probably the only honest offer she had received so far.

Her grandmother must be worried about her, not only that she had just learned she was a great-grandmother as well. This could be the thing that saves her." Jordan, call Mr Austin White back and make an appointment with him. If he's not available to come here I will go to him. I'm free next weekend." "Yes Jay-la" he nodded.

"Let me know right away and give me the number too." She watched him write it down and took it, added it to her phone right away. Was about to walk into her office when she smelled them. She had been so involved in her thoughts that Jackson and Stephen were able to sneak up on her. Well, walk they didn't sneak, took great pleasure in reminding her they were watching her all day every day.

Jay-la may we speak to you?" Jackson asked almost politely.

"About that? I'm expecting Eric Stanton any minute now and he won't take kindly to the 2 of you being here, considering who you work for."

"I really don't care". Jackson shrugged "I wasn't charged or court-ordered to stay away from you. What can he do? Really!" his smile was smug.

"Add a harassment charge to Nathan's list of crimes. For sending you."

Jackson seemed unfazed. "It'll all get resolved when you come home Jay-la. Which you will do."

She looked right at him and laughed softly "Well, considering I just got a real valid offer of affiliation, I don't see that happening."

She felt it, anger filling the air around him, it was coming off of both of them now and she stared at them a little wide-eyed. Why were they so surprised or even angry about that they had to know it was coming sooner or later? They were aware she was entertaining offers after all.

“What Pack?” Jackson practically snarled at her, forgetting he was not in wolfen society but the human world, she guessed, Apollo was right there on the surface. She saw Jordan shrink back in his chair in an effort to get away from him. “Austin White will be calling himself to make an offer in person.

He was thinking, his mind ticking away. Did he know Alpha Austin, she wondered. Jay-la couldn’t recall much about him.

She had only been little. Jackson was frowning deeply at her and she wondered if he knew of her blood relation to the Winter Moon Pack, or if the Blood Moon Pack was aligned with her grandmother’s pack.

Breaking into her chain of thought was Jordan “Jay-la Mr White is on the line for you now, I put it through to your office, line 1.”

“Oh thank you Jordan.” she nodded to him, completely surprised that he was taking the time to personally speak with her on such short notice, and turned to walk into her office, she went to close the door only to have Jackson force it open and step right through, followed by Stephen. Whatever she thought, she had more important things to sort out than them.

She picked up the phone. “Alpha Austin, thank you so much for taking my call on such short notice.”

“My pleasure, dear Jay-la. Your grandmother was very concerned and brought your plight to my attention, and has asked me to extend an offer to you.

“Thank you, she was surprised by his straightforward and direct remark, probably very busy and needed to get to the point, to attend to other business for the day.

I was going to drop by, but seeing as you called back so quickly, let’s just get this sorted out right away, shall we. I’d like to offer you protection for you and your pups. I was more than disappointed by the treatment you received from your current Alpha. I will certainly never treat you in such a manner.”

“I’d appreciate that, truly I would,” she said in all honesty.

“Seeing as you already have a blood connection to my pack and Clara is offering her home to you and your pups. I don’t mind at all. You may come and see the Winter Moon Pack at your convenience and, if you like it, I’ll initiate you and the pups in.”

“That simple?” she was more than shocked now, and a little relief was flowing through her. Perhaps she should have just gone right to her grandmother when she had been banished, but being too distraught at the time, she hadn’t thought about it, just pushed it all down and tried to focus on her degree and then raising her pups.

“Yes. I will not try to sway you, as I’m sure others are doing at this moment. I will also never hurt you or your pups. That is not what I am about, I assure you. You will all be safe here for as long as you are here with us, protection guaranteed. We are a strong pack, 80% warriors and well respected by other packs. I am also on the Alpha council, so my word may be trusted. Think it over. It is an open invitation to come if you want to. If you choose me.”

Wow, he was very direct and Jay-la didn’t hear a single ounce of anything other than honesty in his voice. “Thank you again Alpha Austin, I will visit very soon.”

“Anytime.” he repeated, and then disconnected the line.

Jackson was staring at her practically fuming, he looked as though he was about to launch himself at her and forcibly drag her away and back to his pack. She felt Kora push forward at the threat they were feeling. Stephen was suddenly between them, a hand out stretched to each of them “Everybody calm down,” he said softly, flooding the room with his Gamma Charm.

He knew there was about to be a full-blown wolf-on-wolf fight right here in her office, in the human world, things were rapidly getting out of hand.

Right at that moment, Eric Stanton chose to open her office door and walk in. He took stock of the situation and snapped “Who the hell let you in here?” and walked towards Jay-la.

Jackson’s reaction was instant. He spun on his heel and stepped right into the man’s face, still all anger and aggression.

Apollo right there on the surface and Jay-la thought he was going to rip into him her eyes wide, "Back off." he grated out, his Beta aura forcing Eric to actually step backwards several steps.

"This is private."

Jay-la sighed with relief Jackson was still in control enough to realise this was not the time or place. Kora backed down. "It's alright Eric, I'm fine. Can you please give us a few minutes?" she asked calmly.

Eric didn't take his eyes off of Jackson, but nodded slowly "5 minutes then I am calling security." he stated flatly, only a trace of fear he must be feeling showing in his voice. Then he left the room.

Jackson banged the door closed behind him and she watched him turn towards her. "I asked what Pack Jay-la, and I expect an answer." he snapped all Beta aura flowing out of him.

She steeled herself against it and said "I'm not giving you one. I have the right to protect myself."

"Yes you do." Stephen nodded, his eyes were also on Jackson, though not on hers. He was trying to control the situation at hand, she thought, control the Beta. Unlikely, she thought. Jackson outranked him, if it was a physical fight, Gamma Beta Jay-la was betting on the Beta.

Besides, she had trained with them all, she knew Jackson would win. Only Nathan could take him down." It's fine Jackson, she is not going anywhere today...got that dinner on Friday night and has court Monday to Wednesday. Calm down..Also, I do not think her own grandmother would mean her any harm, the offer is likely genuine."

How did he know she had court next week?.. So they were not only watching her, they were spying and prying on her as well, not just at home but in her working life too.

Bastards.

Jackson seemed to regain some of his composure and Apollo receded. "Fine, then we need to discuss why we actually came today. You go ahead. If I loose it, blame the she-wolf"

Jay-la sighed, she-wolf. She had a name and he knew it.

Her eyes moved to Stephen. "What did you come for?"

"There was an incident at the triplets school. Young Nate pushed over another boy and threatened him!"

"So! He was protecting his sister's is all."

The school had called her, she had apologised and told them he was just a bit super sensitive due to her recent killing and attack, that he needed an adjustment period.

The school had complied and given him leeway this time but stated that it was not to happen again. She had promised them she would talk to him.

Jay-la had, had words with him, but he'd folded his arms across his chest and told her he would protect them no matter what. Such a good boy, typical alpha genes. She'd had to remind him that, due to what he was, he was naturally stronger and needed to remember he could easily hurt a human child without trying if he wasn't careful.

Also, told him he needed to learn the difference between an accident and an on-purpose bump or running into of his sister's. She had not chastised him, just gently reminded him one day he would be like her and Kora and have a wolf with enormous strength. That she wanted him to be careful and responsible for his actions. Not to let his anger get the better of him.

He had huffed at her and she had reminded him to breathe and count to 10 before charging off in anger, to look at the situation and determine the right course of action, think about what the outcome would be if he was to solely act on his anger.

She didn't want him to be like his father, filled with rage and anger over the smallest of things.

"That's it! You're not going to do anything about it?" Stephen asked, seemingly concerned by her lack of Concern.

"What's it to you how I deal with MY son?" she spat at him.

"The Alpha is concerned about the amount of aggression that has been reported, is all."

"So.." her anger building "he thinks he has the right to stalk my children, does he, to tell me how to raise them. He knows nothing about them. Has no rights as far as I am concerned," "and whose fault is that Jay-la?" Jackson snapped from where he stood, still over by the door.

"His." she shot back. "It was him Jackson, who Alpha ordered me to leave and never, ever come back."

"You should have told him before you left." he stated flatly, still implying it was her fault.

"Hmm, tell him something I didn't know, how is that possible? I didn't find out until after I had left the pack." That was technically true. It might have only been minutes after she left, but still after she had left, after she had been banished.

"You still could have called and told him. Or Alpha Blaine at least."

"Oh could I and what would the then future Luna have done to me, to my pups?"

She watched as he ran his hand through his hair but said nothing. She knew she was right. Sophia would not have been happy about it or supported it, she and the pups would have been in danger.

"Your Luna would never have accepted them and I would have been in danger every day of her knowing. I did what I did for their very safety. And I will continue to protect them from your Alpha and Luna. Even if it means changing packs."

"Jay-la look." His voice softened.

"Enough." Stephen interrupted, glaring at Jackson.

That was a bit odd. She thought, especially when Jackson actually stopped talking, taking an order from the Gamma.

Stephen turned to her, "Do you need a hand with the triplets Jay-la? Is Nate too much to handle? That is all we need to know.

"No, he is fine and I did talk to him. He's just protective of his sisters is all, even more now, since I was kidnapped and..." she left the statement unsaid.

"Right. If you need a hand just call one of us, okay, we'd be happy to help you out." he held out a pack card with all their details on it.

She took it but knew she would not be using it, just a courtesy to make them leave peacefully, shrugged as if to say whatever and dropped it on her desk.

Stephen turned to Jackson, "Let's go, we came and did what was asked."

Jackson was still frowning but nodded. "I want to know when you intend to visit Alpha Austin's pack Jay-la, a protective detail will be organised so no harm will come to you or your pups."

I don't want your protection," she replied firmly. "Tough," he stated and walked out of her office.

Stephen nodded to her, "Please consider it Jay-la, every time you're not with them they are at risk, even if it is small."

Then he was gone, out of her office as well. Well, whose fault was that, who put them in the spotlight for all of wolven society to see. Not her, that was for sure. She had kept them safe and sound and out of wolven society for their entire lives. His high an almighty. I'm all powerful, I can do as I please. Your Apha, that was who. So do not blame us for that, a*s-holés. she thought, annoyed.

Eric walked in the minute they walked out. "what were they doing here? I'm not wrong, they were two of the men at his press conference, right!" he sounded very annoyed with her.

“Yes, there are his men, his right and left hands respectively. They are here on his request to check up on the triplets, now that he knows about them.”

“Why all the yelling?”

“It’s normal, they work for him. Why would I be nice to them?” she shrugged.

“Jay-la, what is going on? It looks like you’ve been communicating with Mr Browning without your lawyers present. Have you?”

“No! He did try to yell at me over the phone, so I hung up. His men are here trying to convince me to do the mediation and keep an eye on his children. As far as I know, there is no actual threat at this point.”

“Is that what they are telling you? If they are here watching your children, that is a problem.”

‘I Grew up with both of those men that were just here. They were once my best friends. I don’t believe either one of them would hurt me or my children, just watching is all.”

That is called stalking Jay-la and you know it. I can have them arrested and charged.”

Jay-la sighed, this was the very reason she didn’t want them here when Eric turned up to check on her. “Perhaps it’s better to just let them be for the time being. Placate him by letting him think he is getting what he wants... I will need to go away next weekend. Eric to visit my grandmother, she caught wind of all that is going on and is worried about me. She is with the Winter Moon industry’s”

That got his attention. “Does everyone you know?” Jay-la cut him off. “Yes everyone I know, from my past works or lives within the confines of some of the biggest corporations” she sighed, it was getting too close to the truth, and before you ask, No I won’t be trying to bring them in as a client for you, they have their own Law Firm.”

He stared at her for a long minute.”This is not a simple thing is it Jay-la, did he really take you over a monetary debt?”

"I honestly have no idea. I was only in his presence for maybe 3 or 4 very uncomfortable minutes, he was completely fuming with rage. It is all I got. Then his father interrupted. With your press conference and I took the opportunity to run away, and got away, that is it, he never actually spoke to me other than to demand I look at him." she shrugged, she wasn't about to tell him she had been dragged back to be punished for that 1 slap to his Mate's face.

He was no fool and was starting to think money was not the motivation. He'd never find out the real reason, he was human and they wolfen and if he did and tried to out them he would be slaughtered before he could and his body would likely never be found. He would simply just vanish without a trace from the human world. She had no idea what to do with him.

Alpha Nathan, she knew if she dropped the charges, would have her and her pups taken instantly and brought to him with just 1 phone call. So for now, the charges will have to stay in place.

Once she was safely initiated into another pack, she could drop them.

'It's a losing battle' Kora piped up. He'll come at some point.

Jay-la knew this, it was just a matter of when, but probably not until he could assure his pup's safety from his current Mate.

Their very existence was a threat to her and her heirs, to his throne, so to speak, it's likely the triplets would be probably 6 to 12 months older if he and Sophia had pups right away.

'I know, we just need to wait. Next weekend we'll go and see grandmother and her pack. If all goes well, we'll simply stay.'

'You sure?' Kora sounded worried.

'Yes, and you'll finally be able to run free and at will.' Jay-la smiled at her.

'Mm okay' though she still felt a little reluctant to Jay-la.

'We might find our Mate!' Jay-la offered, hoping to cheer her up "and you'll be able to let the pups ride on your back."

Kora chortled at that 'Deal'. It was something she always wanted to do. Her demeanour picked up right away.

'Good, let's think positively about our visit to grandmother's pack, okay.'

'Okay' Kora settled down in her mind, but Jay-la felt the lingering thought of Havoc. She pushed it aside. Since his wolf had called to her, Kora had been having odd feelings, uncertain of what it was herself but it was concerning. Jay-la had tried to tell her it was just the Alpha calling her to come home, for his pups, nothing more, but there was a feeling of uncertainty within Kora and it was still with her.

She knew as well as Kora that Havoc was not her fated mate. If he was, they wouldn't be in this situation, they would have marked and mated on her 18th birthday and their pups would have been born in the pack. She gently reminded Kora of this now. Kora agreed, but still that lingering thought of Havoc, stayed with her. It's just because he's the pup's father, Jay-la reassured her now.

The Defiant Mate Chapter 19

Jay-la POV

Again they were waiting for her at her office. You know one day I might not come to the office. "We'd know," Jackson replied lazily. He was leaning up against the door to her office, appeared bored, this was how she remembered him from her days in the pack, laid back and easygoing, his normal stance.

"Get some, did we?" she laughed. He was so relaxed he must have, she thought to herself.

He raised an eyebrow at her but said nothing.

"What do you want?"

"You're out for dinner tonight! Stephen and I thought we could watch the children."

“no.”

“Yes, Jay-la,’ he said calmly, “anything could happen to them while you’re out for hours.”

“Is that a threat, Jackson?” she queried.

He sighed, and shook his head. “ Jay-la, you have known me your whole life, do you think I would hurt your children, Nathan’s children? For that matter. He is my...best friend.”

She noted the pause he’d clearly been going to say Alpha, but had thought better of it with Jordan right at his desk.

“I was, to once” she shot back, “but you sent those men after me at his command. she shrugged, “you might take them.”

Stephen sighed heavily “please don’t fight, I hate getting in the middle of the two of you. One day I am gonna get injured if I can’t control the pair of you and talk you down.” He held his hand up to stop them both from replying to his comment. “Look, let’s call a truce just for tonight. Jay-la, you go out and have a nice dinner with Anthony and Lauren and Jackson and I will assist your nanny. A win win.”

Jay-la stared at Stephen for a long minute. Could they be trusted, she wondered. A truce. She had no idea if that would even work, but she did know that they would never hurt her pups. “Fine, but my rules and no arguing about them, period”.

“Good, state your rules,” Jackson said simply.

“I haven’t thought about them yet” and she hadn’t, had barely had time to think past them wanting to watch her children in a babysitting capacity, but she would think some up at some point.

He pushed off of her door and walked past her. “We’ll be at your apartment at 1830, half an hour before you get picked up.”

“Fine.”

They were prompt. Jimmy buzzed her at exactly 1830 to let her know they were in the lobby. She had him send them up. Looked at Suzzy "Don't let them in. Not even to use the bathroom. If they try to take the children, call the police right away and give them the address I gave to you and the names I wrote down. I wouldn't advise talking to them, especially Stephen. He will be all charming and be able to sweet talk the hell out of you.

Suzzy chuckled at that, thought it was funny. Jay-la sighed, poor Suzzy. If they did get her to open the door she was doomed to be attracted to both of them, and Jay-la was certain Stephen would use his Gamma Charm on the girl to get inside the apartment for some reason. She just hoped they weren't going to do anything to her human nanny. It wasn't uncommon for wolves to fool around with humans if they weren't mated.

Jay-la waited outside her apartment, saw them get out of the elevator, both dressed very casually in jeans and tee shirts, shirts that were stretched and straining at their muscles. Hell no, they were not going anywhere near her sweet Suzzy. She'd never survive either one of them.

They both walked over smiling at her. She did not smile back at them "rules", she stated.

"1. you will not go inside, you stay out here on door detail
you will hand over your phones and I will put them inside the apartment, no photos of my children for him. if you have to use the bathroom, there is one in the lobby, don't ask Suzzy to let you in. when I get home you leave without issue. Do you both understand?"

They were both frowning now, but Stephen nodded in agreement without hesitation. He even reached into his jeans back pocket and handed over his phone to her. Jackson seemed reluctant but did comply after 10 seconds and an elbow from Stephen.

"This is not assisting" Jackson stated flatly.

"No, its guard duty." she smiled at them sweetly, but did not say what she was thinking just what watchdogs are for'.

Kora snorted at her 'good one. Jay-la returned to her apartment, reminded Suzzy of the rules and not to let them in for any reason, then went and pulled on the dress she had laid out for dinner.

A soft mint green silk dress that fell just below her knees, it was a fit and flare dress, hugged all her curves perfectly and then flared out from the hips to the hemline, she pulled on her white high heels and a white Bolero jacket and headed out the door.

Both Jackson and Stephen were leaning on the wall across from her door and openly stared at her. She saw as they both looked her up and down. Jackson gave a low whistle "Take a photo, it'll last longer." she shot at him.

"Can't you took away my phone. But please take one before you give it back. I'm sure I know someone who would love it. Make darnned good use of it, if you know what I mean.

Stephen laughed and punched him, then as Jay-la walked away, "Oh Jay-la, you, have a nice dinner now, won't you." and she heard them both laugh.

They all walked into Nilanway and as coats were being collected, Jay-la's phone rang, her heart skipped a beat, please Goddess don't let me have trusted them just to have them kidnap my babies. "I'll be just a minute, go on ahead," she told Tony and Lauren, and they, were taken up stairs to their table.

She answered the phone which was indicating Home on the screen, "hello."

"Mummy, can we have ice cream?" Lilly practically yelled down the phone at her, Jay-la's heart settled instantly, they were all okay. "Yes, of course you can, sweetheart" she heard Lilly yell 'Mummy said yes', and then the call was disconnected. Jay-la chuckled to herself, Kora chortled, typical of her babies getting what they want and run away. So cute though.

She handed her bolero jacket over to the man patiently waiting for her to finish her call. She headed up the stairs after Tony and Lauren. Frowned the instant she got to the second floor, she could smell wolves and a very familiar scent at that.

Glancing around the room she saw Tony and Lauren just sitting down at a table across the other side of the room and there at the table with them was Micheal Browning and his parents, Alpha Blaine and Luna Darla.

‘Just freaking great’ she walked over to the table and looked at Rae-Rae. Oh goddess, the way she was looking at Micheal, she was his mate, a human mate. He had his hand in hers on the table, Jay-la frowned right at it and it suddenly dawned on her.

The amused looks on Jackson and Stephen’s faces when Tony had left her office that day, the comment about her going out to dinner and, tonight when she’d left her apartment again, the comment have a nice dinner’ and then them, laughing. They knew she was going to be having dinner with her Alpha’s extended family. A*s-holes. They would pay for this.

She was also willing to bet that Nathan himself knew about this, probably thought it was funny, getting a real kick out of it, she imagined.

She did not, however, sit down, her eyes glared at him, she honestly had nothing against any of the wolves there at that table, but Tony had told her Micheal had heard of her that his parents were happy for her to work on Rae-Rae’s prenup.

Which meant she would have to deal with his family in person and you can just bet they would be putting Nathan in charge of dealing with it, which meant not just phone calls, but in person meetings, and with him currently not allowed to leave his state, she would have to go to him. To the Pack.

“You son of a b***h!” she snapped at his smiling face.

“Jay-la.” she heard Alpha Blaine gasp at her tone.

“Honey what’s wrong?” Lauren asked worriedly.

“Do you know who they are?” she turned her eyes first to Lauren and then Tony. They both looked confused at her anger.

“Jay-la.” Again Alpha Blaine, but this time she heard the clear warning in his tone, making sure she knew he wouldn’t stand for her getting in the way of his son’s Mate Bond.

“This is the Browning family,” she pointed right at Micheal. “This is Nathan Browning’s younger brother and those are his parents.”

She heard both Lauren and Tony gasp in shock, saw Rae-Rae’s eyes widen, it surprised Jay-la to see Rae-Rae suddenly pull her hand from Micheal’s and stare at him wide-eyed. This was completely new to her. He should have told her, given her some warning, but it seemed he had not.

“Jay-la, that is quite enough.” Alpha Blaine stated and she heard his tone loud and clear, he was ordering her to shut up.

Micheal’s eyes had moved to his suddenly empty hand and Jay-la registered the instant distress in his expression as Rae-Rae edged away from him, fearing she was rejecting him, when less than 30 seconds ago she had been blissfully in love with him. She could also smell a small amount of fear coming off of her. Rae-Rae was like a little sister to her and she had seen Jay-la’s state when she had been brought home and had cried and sobbed all over her.

Babbling about how anyone could do that to a person was inhumane, that she hoped Nathan would be sentenced. to prison and locked up for a long time, beaten to within an inch of his life, so he knew how it felt. Now she was just realising she was in love with that man’s brother, it didn’t appear to be going down so well with her.

“Sit down.” Alpha Blaine ordered her and she sat with the weight of the order on her. She could not help it, no choice in the matter You will apologise. Micheal has never done anything wrong. And Nathan never laid a hand on you.”

He was angry. She could feel it now, she was ruining Micheal’s chance with his fated mate and Alpha Blaine wouldn’t stand for it.

He could see Rae-Rae’s reaction to the news as well as her parents, both Lauren and Tony were reaching for Rae-Rae to move her away from Micheal. Jay-la knew if she did

ruin this Alpha Blaine and Luna Darla would never forgive her. She had thought Alpha Blaine could be trusted, but she guessed not. He was, after all, Nathan's father. What more could she expect from him, other than taking his own son's side.

"This is not about you Jay-la, this is about Micheal and Rae-Rae's Bond and Marriage to each other".

Don't screw it up, I am warning you he shot at her through the mind-link. It hit her like a hot knife searing into her brain. She hadn't even known if she still had the ability to use it anymore, being gone for so long. Clearly he could and with great force. Her head was actually now aching from the force he had, used on her.

A Mate Bond was sacred, especially a goddess-gifted one. She didn't want to be here, couldn't be here, would only screw everything up royally and she wouldn't be able to help herself.

She stood and left almost at a run, heading for the ladies' room. She couldn't breathe, felt suddenly smothered and completely overwhelmed. She really honestly didn't want to hurt Rae-Rae or Micheal's Bond at all, it was just such a shock to her that they were all there, and trying to arrange a Bond between her surrogate human sister and her Alpha's brother. She really needed a moment to compose herself and get it together.

She heard the door open behind her, she could smell Luna Darla immediately and her hands gripped the basin tightly.

"It's okay Jay-la." she sighed softly "I understand, a bit of a shock to see us all here."

"That's an understatement." Jay-la bit out, trying to ignore her tone.

First, it was Stephen with his Gamma Charm and now it was Darla with her Luna Calm. She had to get out of here, Jay-la stood up and tried to step around Luna Darla, but the woman blocked her way.

"No Jay-la," she said calmly, confident in her ability to be able to get her to listen. Luna's were supposed to be able to make the packs feel safe and give advice, be wise and fair.

It was their gift from the goddess to be able to calm her pack members and engender trust, "Please just hear me out."

Jay-la shook her head. "No, you'll trick me."

Darla chuckled and stepped closer to her, placed a hand on her arm. "Everything is going to be just fine Jay-la. You can come home now. It's all safe and you're welcome, I assure you."

Kora was listening intently. Jay-la, too, couldn't help it. This woman was a Luna, a former Luna, but once a Luna always a Luna. Her power still seemed so strong, shouldn't it have lessened when the next Luna took over? She was sure it should have the minute of transfer to the new Alpha and Luna, when they took over the pack, but here she was right in front of Darla and her Luna powers seemed just as strong as ever. Very odd.

"I'm not safe there.' she shook her head in denial. She could never believe she or her pups would ever be safe around the Luna, no matter what.

Yes, you are. I will vouch for your safety. Just come home. Nathan wants to see you. Wants to meet your pups too. We all do Jay-la.' she was rubbing Jay-la's arm, stepping closer to her.

Jay-la knew what she was doing, same as Stephen trying to sway her, influence her into going home to the Pack, a place too dangerous for her babies to ever be. She stepped away and shook her head. "No, stop it." she was using all her strength to resist the woman before her, hell bent on convincing her to go home and take her babies with her.

"Jay-la, please sweetheart, all is just mixed up, it will be okay. I promise."

"No..." she whispered, squeezing her eyes tightly shut.

Closing her eyes and not looking at her, when she had stopped looking at Stephen it had worked. Perhaps she could do the same with Darla. Kora was whimpering now, wanting to go home. That bastard had too many people, too much power and he was

throwing all he had at her. He didn't even have to do it himself, everyone around him would do it for him and when he got his hands on her, then what? Fear crept in.

Take her babies away from her for sure. To punish her even more for not going home, not taking them back to him once he knew about them. He was going to destroy her. Make her suffer the worst punishment, to bare the loss of her pups.

He'd probably imprison her for the rest of her life and never let her see them ever again. All the worst scenarios were popping into her mind, bombarding her, increasing her ear tenfold.

She could feel herself filling with distress at just the thought of it. Kora was whimpering now with her, now also trying to fight their former Luna's power over them. She did not want to be separated from her pups. Not for a single minute, let alone the rest of their lives. It would be better to die than suffer that.

But his anger and fury would make him want to punish them, to make them suffer an eternity of pain away from their babies, and he had the power to make it happen, a simple word, a snap of his fingers and boom her world over, her babies gone from her forever, and the torture of her and Kora's very souls would begin.

Jay-la's whole body was rapidly filling with dread, so much so she knew it was outweighing the Luna's Calm and she could feel it. Luna Darla's power was weakening over her.

She yanked herself away from Luna Darla, staring at her. She registered Luna Darla's shocked look that she could fight off the Luna's power, then read sadness in her eyes, watched as tears filled her former Luna's eyes and distress started to pour out of the woman as she stared at her, almost as much distress as Jay-la felt herself, could she feel Jay-la's fear, it was possibly she knew it was coming off of her in uncontrollable waves right this moment.

Jay-la shoved past her, her pain too great just thinking about the punishment that would come. She couldn't even bare the thought of it, it was too disturbing, she had to get out of here, away from them, all of them, back to her babies.

Luna Darla called her name as she ran from the ladies' room, she pushed through the door only to run right into Alpha Blaine. He looked at her worriedly, then his eyes moved to his Mate behind her, who had rushed out of the ladies' room after her.

His eyes glazed over and Jay-la took the chance to run, though she only got a few steps before his hand landed on her wrist, too fast even for her and Kora, other than Nathan, Blaine was the only wolf in the pack that could catch her.

"Jay-la wait." he practically begged her.

"No, leave me alone."

"It's really okay" he stated "No harm will ever come to you or your babies."

"She'll never let them live," Jay-la whispered, pain ripping through her and Kora alike at the thought of someone hurting their pups. They were so tiny and defenceless and didn't deserve that fate, just because she had born them. It wasn't their fault.

"About Sophia honey," Luna Darla said softly, trying again to use her Luna Calm.

"I don't care about her!" Jay-la snapped "I don't care she is mated to him," and she truly didn't. She just desperately wanted to keep her babies away from her, keep them safe.

It's what she lived for, their safety and only she could provide it. She was their mother.

"Jay-la honey, she's gone. He has no Luna" Alpha Blaine rushed out, trying to stop her from leaving as she was pulling at the hand he had on her wrist which was preventing her from getting away from leaving the restaurant.

"I still don't care," she yelled at him. Jay-la could still recall their last encounter. He hadn't even known about her, babies then and the anger and fury coming off of him directed at her was clear to her, and now he did know, more reason for him to be furious at her.

'Kora' she begged her wolf to help her, to help them to She felt Kora push forward in a rush so fast, like she had done that fateful day that led up to this very moment, their defiance was bound to get them in more trouble, but what more pain could she suffer

than being separated from her pups forever by him, by the man she had loved with everything shed had. Pain was pulling at her every fibre, she would never let him take them away, even if it meant defying every alpha in the wolfen society, she would do it for them.

We're strong Kora, do it' she sobbed to her wolf, unable to cope anymore with the pain inside of her.

Alpha Blaine's whole body went rigid, he knew it was about to get very real, even though they were here in a human restaurant, Kora growled at him deep and viscous like Jay-la had never heard her do before.

All animalistic and primal, the days of her being a law-abiding pack member were long over, long dead. They might as well be rogues.

Luna Darla shot in front of her Alpha, suddenly yanking his hand off of Jay-la's arm. She heard a chair tip over and heavy footsteps coming this way fast. Micheal was coming.

'Run' Jay-la told Kora, there were no hands on her at present, 'we can't take all of them' and Kora turned and ran from the restaurant at the top of her wolf speed, not stopping for anyone or anything in her way. People were knocked over and she didn't care. They ran non-stop till they were a good dozen blocks away and certain no one was following them. Then they just stopped and stared at nothing, into the darkness of the night. Didn't know where they were.

Looking around, she saw a bus bench and went and sat down on it. Kora had receded now, to the back of her mind, control handed over.

They just sat for a long time not knowing what to do, then called a cab, unable to make sense of much of anything.

Both their minds were more than a little chaotic with many different thoughts from both of them crashing into each other, confusion ebbing in them both, for the first time in a long time they were both at a loss, and needed to pull themselves together.

Then their thoughts aligned for a single moment Pups' and she was in a cab headed home, and had no idea what was waiting for her to be honest. She wanted to go home desperately, but knew it was probably going to be a death sentence. They had just sized up Alpha Blaine and were ready to tear him apart or try to in order to get away.

To be honest, she wanted her mum right now, to hold her and tell her everything was going to be okay, but that wasn't going to happen. She headed for her apartment, stopped the cab a block away and made her way on foot behind the building, careful to watch for any other wolves patrolling her building. She knew they were there.

It took a good 20 minutes to find a gap in the patrol and slip through it, used her key card to access the stairwell and climbed the flights of stairs to her floor. Would they still be there? Of course they would.

Suzzy hadn't called to say anything was wrong, and she would. They would not leave a bloody mess in her apartment when killing her children.

It was likely they were either unaware of the situation, she had removed their phones from them, or they were waiting for her to come home to take her in.

Jay-la stood by the fire door to her floor, biting her lip nervously on the fact that she wasn't ready to be brought in, so she turned and continued to the roof.

The weather was turning cold, winter was almost upon them, how she missed the snow-filled winter days, the snowball fights with her brother, the snow drifts to hide in, pounce on and generally play in. A sigh came from her, with many wolves around her making her very nostalgic.

No wonder Kora had been off lately. Jay-la stood and looked out over the city, this had been her home for so long, but deep down inside of her and Kora, they knew it wasn't home, no forest to run in. No wolves to socialise with, no other pups for her pups to play with.

She had gotten so used to being alone. Was this how it felt to be a rogue, she wondered, overwhelmed when you could smell other wolves, stressed at knowing they were all about you, fear always on the edge of your mind, always deep down wondering

when they would come for you, her fight or flight response constantly on alert. Adrenaline is never far from the surface. She had thought she was fine, but tonight proved her wrong, she was anything but fine.

Had probably never been fine in all honesty. It was probably the reason she was fighting so hard not to go home.

Her flight response was activated and maybe it had always been, but she had just gotten so used to it being there she'd forgotten about it. It had become the norm.

She took a deep breath, trying to calm herself, returned to her normal state of being. It took several deep breaths but she managed it, but yes, there in the corner of her mind was that constant nagging feeling of run' even though she wasn't going to right this minute, it was there within her.

She pushed it down hard, but now that she understood herself better, her response, she knew that one feeling had always been in her mind just so far back, she had learned to live with it. They could never go rogue, she did not want that overwhelming feeling of fear to be embedded in her children for all their lives. It was a hideous feeling, the Winter Moon Pack was looking much more appealing to her now than it ever had before.

She walked down the stairs to her floor and pulled the door open and walked down the corridor to her apartment.

Both Jackson and Stephen were still there, they were staring at her intently, they knew something had happened, she could tell from the way they both leaned off the wall, their bodies tense and ready for anything. She thought she could see concern in them, both of them, faked she imagined.

She had no idea what time it was, or how long she had spent out on the street, or up on the roof top for that matter.

She was a little numb right that minute, just wanted to shut the world out and go back to being on her own with her babies. She wished they would all just go away and leave her alone, like she had been for the last 6 years. Jay-la ignored their looks and went to her

apartment, unlocked the door, retrieved their phones, and tossed them out the door, she didn't care if they caught them or if they shattered on the floor, then shut the door and locked it.

Suzzy was asleep on her couch, she covered her with the cream throw rug hung over the back of it, and let her sleep.

She would pay her for the whole night. Then she walked through her apartment and looked at the girls. They were sound asleep safely in their beds. She walked to Nate's room and checked on him, it was like he knew.

His eyes opened and he sat up bleary eyed "Mummy, what's wrong?"

"Nothing, go back to sleep," she assured him and watched as he stared at her for a minute before lying down and closing his eyes to allow sleep to reclaim him.

She walked to her bedroom, stripped off her dress, and lay down on her bed. The clock read 0137. She was utterly emotionally worn out. How were they going to survive this?

The Defiant Mate Chapter 20

Nathan POV

His phone was ringing, he was aware that Jay-la was about to come face to face with his parents and his brother, he was hoping it went well, that there was no trouble, that Jay-la could handle it, knowing that this was not about her but Micheal and Rae-Rae and be able to differentiate between him sending people to corner her and the reason for the dinner. She being affiliated with Rae-Rae had come as a complete surprise to them all.

Rae-Rae had talked about her like a sister to Micheal, this dinner could go one of 2 ways, Jay-la would remain calm and let them work on their Bond, or she could turn it into a nightmare causing trouble for his brother and his mate. He was praying for the first, not just for her sake but for his brother and Rae-Rae too.

The time of the call was barely midnight so only 9ish over there. Father flashed on the phone's screen, this was not going to be good, he thought, taking a deep breath before answering the call.

"Yes" he stated, leaving all pleasantries aside. "Get on your plane and get over here now" his father stated, in that no-nonsense tone, meaning there was to be no arguing period.

Then he simply hung up.

Nathan was sitting in his office, patiently waiting a call on the outcome of the dinner. Clearly, it had not gone as planned. He called the family pilot and organised the plane be ready for take off within the next hour. Making sure they had a direct flight to a private air strip, he could not be detained by the human police for leaving his state and breaching the current human world court order.

Not if it truly was bad, it would only make things more difficult. He wondered just how bad it had gotten, Havoc was worried too, prowling around in his mind like he was stalking his favourite prey, his ears flat against his head and his tail swishing furiously, though he was quiet on the thought front, never good, the calm before the storm.

It was a 5 hour flight, there was a car waiting at the air-strip, it was just after 0130 in the morning when he arrived. He'd already had a bunch of messages, she was missing, no one seemed to know where she was, she had run from the restaurant and no one knew where to. His father had simply said it was bad." and he had been able to hear his mother sobbing in the background.

Ethan was with him, he'd left Abbey in-charge of the Pack, for the first time ever. Wow, her head had nearly exploded with the power. Bloody she-wolf loved running things. She was a bossy bitch at the best of times, hot-blooded and loved giving out orders, a typical alpha.

Ethan drove them straight to the hotel suite Jackson and Stephen were using to run things from. He was surprised to see them both sitting calmly on the couch, a drink in hand, apparently waiting for his arrival. They bloody well should be out there looking for her, He was about to let Havoc loose on them, the snarl that came from him as a warning shot them both to their feet.

Jackson quickly spoke “she’s at home.” He reigned in Havoc, and his beast went willingly knowing his Mate was safe. “what the hell happened?” he snapped.

“Your guess is as good as ours.” Stephen sighed, shaking his head. Apparently, they were also in the dark. Was it really that bad?

Mate needs us, we go now’ Havoc growled at him. He was determined to get to her and being this close was keeping him on the surface. The not knowing of what had gone down was keeping their adrenaline high, his wolf was feeding off of it, it seemed.

“So father hasn’t informed anyone of what happened then?”

They both shook their heads, sitting back down again. He watched Stephen drain his glass and frowned. The man liked to sip his bourbon, liked to savour the taste, unlike him to drain a glass like that, he didn’t like it, that meant he was stressed which likely meant so was his Mate.

‘Mate needs us’ Havoc reiterated.

Nathan pushed him away for now. He needed more information, ignoring his beast was not a good idea. But if he let him loose in a city, it would only be bad for everyone, humans and wolves alike.

Not to mention he would probably scare the living hell out of their pups and her too.

He called his father, he did not care what time it was.

Alpha Blaine picked up right away. “We’ll talk later, we have another problem to deal with”. “What the hell could be more important than my mate?” he practically roared down the line. His anger at his father ignited.

“Micheal’s human Mate’s fanmily yanked Rae-Rae from the restaurant the minute Jay-la ran and no calls are being picked up.

Not even Rae-Rae is taking Micheal’s calls. Micheal is at a loss. I’m sorry, son but you may have to handle Jay-la on your own for the moment”.

Nathan sighed. He couldn't blame them. human Mate's were hard to deal with, especially one as prominent as Rae-Rae, she was an heiress to the Hill Foundation and just couldn't disappear without a trace. It would be noticed by a lot of people especially her family.

On the bright side, when Micheal did manage to bring her in, she would have Jay-la for comfort in her new environment and to help with the transition to being a ware-wolf.

"It's fine, sort out Micheal's Mate. 'Il sort out my mess...what's wrong with mum?" he finally asked.

"She is distressed about everything, we'll discuss it in the morning son" the line disconnected.

Nathan turned to Jackson and Stephen "How was she when she got home?" Not only did he want to know, he knew Havoc did to, his need to be with his Mate was boarding on obsessive. At some point there would be no stopping him and anyone who got in his way was going to be ripped to shreds in all likelihood. He sat himself down across from them, knew Havoc was watching assessing their every move, would be listening for every inflection in their tone of voice, he knew they knew Havoc was right there on the surface.

There was a slight roughness to his voice that implied they were both speaking at the same time, their thoughts aligned completely.

"Quiet" Stephen said.

Nathan raised an eyebrow. That meant absolutely nothing to him "normally quite chatty. Narky chatty...but nothing, she didn't even look at us really, just a glanced at us, tossed our phones out the door and closed and locked it. From what I heard, checked on the children, Nate was either still awake or woken. She had a quiet word with him, reassured him everything was fine, then went to bed."

Jackson informed him calmly.

"Didn't even wake the nanny to go home." Stephen piped in.

Everyone was staring at Stephen now. Why mention that?

Nathan thought he didn't care about the human nanny. None of them would, she was non essential. He'd vetted her nothing out of the ordinary, 24 had been a nanny since she was 20, normal human family.

Jackson, however turned, looked at Stephen with a sly smile Is that where you've been sneaking off to, to bang the nanny?"

"No" Stephen shot back, "just monitoring her to make sure she's not being paid by another pack to spy on Jay-la and the pups is all." he sounded quite defensive actually, like he didn't like having to justify his actions where the human was concerned.

All of a sudden, Ethan jumped on him, knocking him off the couch and onto the ground, holding him down "you lie." he was grinning at his friend liar liar: "Not lying" Stephen stated, trying to fight him off.

"You're so doing the nanny." Jackson burst out, leaned down and started shaking him "spill it" he was laughing at his friend they were playfully pummeling him, trying to get the truth out they knew a lie when they heard one.

Nathan watched on, his mood lifted a little, he knew his mate was safely tucked up in her apartment with their pups for the moment, and to be honest, he needed a break from all the stress, even Havoc chortled in his mind 'he's so mating the nanny.'

Nathan got up and jumped into the harassment of his friend, and suddenly Stephen was being rolled around and pummelled by all of them, his efforts to get away were futile. He spilled it, Suzzy was his human Mate and he was sneaking off to watch her. He'd scented her that first day they'd gone to Jay-la's apartment. When she had Come out to go home Rafe had gone nuts Screaming Mate over and over in his mind.

So, yes, he'd been sneaking off to watch her each night. No actual contact yet, Stephen told Rafe she would have to wait. Jay-la their Luna would have to take priority. Rafe was annoyed but understood, it was his duty as much as Stephen's to protect Jay-la.

So when Jay-la was safely tucked up for the night they'd sneak off to watch their mate for a few hours, it placated them both.

Jackson had laughed the most and punched him "No wonder you were instant on us baby sitting the, baby sitter while Jay-la was out for dinner. I did think it odd"

Stephen just smirked "What can I say,"

"Nothing" Ethan shoved him about "lucky bastard, when are you gonna mate and mark her. I bet you're itching to."

"Don't know yet:" he shrugged ignoring the rest of the comment.

"Bring her back to the pack with Jay-la" Nathan offered up "'ll give her a job. Heck, if she wants she can stay their nanny, that would be fine with Jay-la I imagine, and being the Gamma's mate, it's fine with me", Thanks boss.' Stephen nodded "I'd also be fine with her being their nanny too, but..."

They all laughed at him, knowing he was thinking about not just mating her but impregnating her as quickly as he could, and another round of pummelling started on him. They were all rough housing, teasing him, poor bastard was going to be tormented no end for trying to keep it a secret.

His father arrived at 7am. They were up, only managed a few hours' sleep. Surprisingly, Nathan had gotten 3 and half hours sleep himself. The most he'd had in a row in weeks. He could occasionally nap on and off but actual decent sleep was now a mystery to him. It was like he just didn't know how anymore, he knew it was because he was worried about his Mate Bond and how to fix it, that she and his pups were out there in the human world in danger of being snatched, or harmed every second of the day and night.

That she was right, he'd turned the spotlight onto them. It was his fault, they were in danger and his guilt, havoc's guilt would eat at them when they tried to sleep. Only actual exhaustion of his body and mind allowed them to get a few hours sleep each night. The rest was just tossing and turning because their minds wouldn't shut off.

His father looked tired, not something that you would normally see. He was strong and dependable, rational and currently so laid back nothing phased him. He must be utterly emotionally exhausted and worn out, Nathan knew it wasn't because his mother had bedded him all night long, that gave his father a happy tired nature, a constant lazy smile on his face. This was something different.

He sank down onto the couch and accepted the cup of espresso "Jay-la and Kora..." he sighed "are not in a good state son... made your mother's maternal instincts c***k to breaking point. Your Mate's emotional state around you is dreadful to be honest."

Nathan frowned "What do you mean exactly?" Havoc was up and intently listening 'go to mate now' just wait a bit hear father out'

"She actually believes you mean harm to her or that you are going to separate her from her pups. She and Kora's distress levels during a conversation with your mother flowed out of her so much it physically affected your mother... brought her actual pain which in turn I felt, and got me out of my chair, damn fast. I thought she was injured that Jay-la had physically harmed her.

"Is mum alright?" Nathan now had something else to worry about, the worries were just piling up more and more.

To be honest.. No...she sobbed herself to sleep, I have never seen her do that in all the years I've known her:" he drained his espresso "sobbed something about Luna ability in overdrive. Jay-la can't control it, so her distress flowed like the Luna Calm, but Luna Distress, it actually overpowered your mother altogether. She was hit with everything that girl feels, her anxiety, fear, distress, it's all very nreal and deeply embedded into them."

Nathan was leaning forward now. "How is it possible that Jay-la has Luna abilities, she doesn't even knowl am her mate."

"And in reverse, flowing distress" Stephen frowned.

"I don't know.' his father shook his head, "I'd suggest asking your mother, but I doubt you'd get a coherent answer out of her at the moment" he ran his hands through his

hair, pulling on it as he did when frustrated “What I do know son, is why she is fighting so hard against you. So hard not to come home, why she is so very defiant.to protect her pups from your Luna”

“What?” Nathan’s frown deepened “Sophia has been gone along time.”

Yes son, you and I know that, but she didn’t know that. I informed her last night, I did it in the hope that it would calm her down and bring her stress levels under control a bit.”

“Did it work?”

“Not at all” he shook his head and sighed heavily “you want the kicker?”

“Probably not.but go ahead” both he and Havoc knew they were not going to like what was about to come out of his mouth.

“Kora... sized me up... I have not heard such a viscous threatening sound like that, she was ready to try and take me on, to be honest even Storm my wolf wasn’t sure he could take her, she sounded all primal and her demeanour. he shook his head I couldn’t understand it, we always got along, never had any issues no animosity between us, it was very concerning to say the least!

Nathan’s eyes were wide now. “In public?” he asked.

“Yes, Kora didn’t care at all, was definitely going to attack me. I think your mother understood, all I and Storm got was a s**t load of pure aggression radiating off of her and then my instincts kicked in, I was ready to shift in less than a second all my Alpha blood boiling and pumping through us ready to fight her.”

“She was challenging you?”

“I don’t know if it was a challenge, so to speak, but a fight it was going to be. I can only imagine a very bloody one and the outcome either you or your mother, would have been mate-less by the end of it.”

“F**k” fear was creeping into him and Havoc.

“Indeed.”

“I’ll go talk to her.” Stephen was on his feet instantly.

“I’ll go with you.” Jackson piped up.

You two can’t even stand to be in the same room together at the moment” Stephen shot at him.

“I’m fine, trust me, she just knows how to push my buttons, I’ll be fine”.

Nathan let them go, but as they got to the door “wait, maybe she just needs some space...watch her but don’t get close, back all the wolves off to a safer distance, close enough to help if trouble arises but far enough away to give her breathing room.” he needed her to calm down.

‘Mate strong’

‘Appears so!’

‘Good, I want a strong Mate.!’

Nathan, however, was worried. If she truly wanted away from him at all cost, nothing was going to stop her, if Kora was willing to take on his father, would she do the same to them?

‘No, Mate will want us!’

‘Mate appears terrified of us Havoc’

‘Mark and Mate’

You think that is the answer to everything’ Nathan frowned.

Havoc snorted ‘Mark and Mate.’ he repeated firmly.

It was impossible to Sway his wolf, Havoc wanted his Mate and would have her whether she liked it or not.

“perhaps after all this time on her own, she can’t handle all the wolf attention she is suddenly getting”

“Or perhaps she has lived in fear, for all these years, that it’s all she knows now.” his father replied, sadness etched into his words.

We did this to her. His chest ached with pain. He sighed he had really f****d things up “i need to get her on to pack territory where I can contain her.”

“Hmm could possibly help..though if I were you son, I’d be bring out the big guns.”

“What exactly are, the big guns father?” he was confused, “there isn’t anything more powerful than you or I?”

His father laughed at him, “still learning, I see. Oh yes there is son.” he let it hang in the air a full minute before realising Nathan had no idea what he was talking about and continued “aren’t you always aiming to please your mother on all accounts.”

“Mum’s already tried, got broken from my understanding” he frowned at his father.

“Not you’re mother son. Her mother...Children, no matter how old always want their mummy. Even you...”

Nathan snorted in disbelief.

“Come on son, I’ve seen that fear when she stalks into a room and you know your about to get it,” his father smirked at him “Even the mighty Alpha before me, backs down to his mummy.”

Ethan barked with laughter, but stopped dead when Nathan shot him a death glare. Unfortunately, they had all seen him raise his hands defensively and submit to his mother on occasion, not often but certainly where Jay-la was concerned.

“So you want me to bring Vera out here?”

“Couldn’t hurt son.”

"I'll think on it." he nodded, Vera and her Mate Jody and their son Bradley had not talked to him since he'd banished her. Jody had even stopped training the Alpha team. Stated point blankly to his face "Respect will be given when it is earned" and he had simply walked away from the unit, a unit he had been training all their lives.

The loss of his daughter had hurt him and he now only trained the junior wolves, and would not be swayed. Not even his father had been able to convince him. Nathan hadn't been privy to the conversation between the two of them and his father had not relayed it ever.

Her brother Bradley, an excellent warrior, trained and in line to take over his father's position had also walked away from the position when it was offered to him. Now he assisted his father with the juniors. Though that had worked out quite well for the pack as all the youngsters were well trained, hand to hand before they even got their wolves, made them better and more efficient fighters, his pack was actually stronger now than it had been 6 years ago.

Vera was still running the pack Creche but avoided him, even when his mother had asked him to pick up his baby sister Halley from the creche, Vera would see him coming and turn and walk away leaving one of the other she-wolves to get her. When usually the drop off and delivery was done by Vera herself as the lead wolf running the Creche, but not where he was concerned.

He was actually totally surprised they hadn't defected back to her original pack. That thought brought his mind to his conversation with Jackson about Alpha Austin's offer to join the Winter Moon Pack.

"Father, do you know of Alpha Austin?"

"From Winter Moon Pack?"

"Yes"

"Yes, why?"

"He's personally offered Jay-la a place in his pack, and she is actually entertaining the idea, I believe"

That grabbed his father's attention, a frown appeared on his face and he looked directly at his son 'Hmm..why him?"

"Apparently her grandmother is from there" he elaborated,

"Oh.." he seemed to think about it for a long time, several minutes went by without a word "I wouldn't allow it. Not that he would harm her or your pups. Quite the opposite, I think. A good pack for her to go to, if you weren't her Mate, that is."

"then why not allow it?" He was very curious. If this pack could make her feel safe, then he should let her, perhaps good for them to calm down and feel safe. He could always call Alpha Austin and explain she was his Mate and get permission to visit, much better circumstances then now and it wasn't that far from his pack just a 2 hour drive. She didn't have to be told he was coming, just let her smell him and hunt out her Mate, that might actually solve the issue at hand. Havoc huffed. He was unhappy but it could work.

"The man is un-mated son. For nearly a century, he has women falling all over himself to be the future Luna of his pack. He's considered one of the best looking wolves there is. He's on the Alpha Council, is well respected and liked by most, not many enemies to be honest, and his pack is exceptionally strong. Everyone trains even the Omega's rank up to warrior status if they so desire. He is fair and honest. Treat's his pack with respect and they give it back in spades."

"So?" Why should this bother him? If he was fair and honest, that meant hearing she was his Mate just meant that the man would allow him to come for her.

"Might be an ulterior motive in there somewhere. He is very strategic. Jay-la is very easy on the eye, her wolf is stunning and fierce. It'll undoubtedly attract him to her and she has 3 pups already. So fertile. He has no heirs that I am aware of. If he takes them in, he might decide to choose her as his chosen mate, and if she says yes for whatever reason 'protection most likely';, he'll likely bleed your pups into his line and BAM he has a male heir instantly and one with Alpha blood. You'll have no claim to them at all after that."

"I'll call him first and make sure he knows I'm her mate."

"He might not care, son. If he's offering a place he has likely seen the battle going on and is on her side. It will appear to the council you harmed her and if they find out you harmed your Mate they may take her side...you never know with them and he's on the council."

No-one takes our pups, Havoc snarled

I know buddy' Nathan tried to placate him 'I agree'I don't think Jay-la would accept a chosen Mate. She was always a big believer in Fated Mate's. It's one of the reasons when I met Sophia, she stepped back and didn't even get mad."

"Mm, a good wolf she is," his father agreed, "just something else that will attract an Alpha male in search of a good Mate."

"Could you call him then?" "Yes son, I will give him a call and alert him to the nightmare that is your Mating Bond. See what he says. Perhaps he'll bring her in and you can go there to find her!"

"That's my thoughts exactly. If she needs time to calm down and feel safe, then I owe it to her to give it to her"

'Mate needs us' Havoc sighed. He saw the logic but didn't like it.

'I know but..'

'Distress and fear overwhelms our Mate, Kora needs me! Havoc grumbled.

Just wait, I promise just one week and we'll go and get her ourselves.

What if not there? he huffed.

It's likely she will go there, her grandmother is there.!'

He could feel Havoc's resistance to the idea, he was not patient in the least and he was doing his best to be at the moment, something Nathan really appreciated. Especially with them being so close to their Mate, maybe 35 to 40 minutes away. But from what his

father had told them today, it might not go down so well. His mum was broken by her distress.

If her distress poured out in front of Havoc, it could set him off into a raging uncontrollable beast here in the human world and neither of them needed that. Nor did HavoC need for Kora or the pups to see how uncontrollable his anger could get, might just frighten her even further, even if they recognised them as their Mate she might reject him on the spot.

"I'll go and call him..I should get back to your mother...whose in charge back home if we are all here?"

"Abbey."

"Goddess help us all" he half laughed " Hopefully it's still your, Pack son, when you get home."

"it will be, I threatened her mate if she so much as thought about trying to take over while I'm away."

"Did you now?"

"Nathan waved his hand dismissively and leaned back in his chair. It's fine."

He watched his father leave.

Ethan was staring at him You did make her believe you though right? "Of course I did" Nathan laughed. Everyone was terrified something would happen to him and she was going to take over. He rubbed a hand over his face, he was feeling tired again, needed a proper sleep, but doubted he would get it, just one more possible issue piling up on him and his Mate Bond. Would he ever be able to Sort it out.

"We need to research anything on Luna powers that could indicate a reason why they would be in reverse."

“Yeah and how she got them in the first place... you know she was such a happy wolf, so full of life and playful all the time, how did it come to this? Has she been so full of fear all these years that she can’t comprehend anything else?”

“I don’t know Ethan, I hope not” What if the pups are also affected just like that? He didn’t want to think about it to be honest.

Neither did Havoc. Nathan felt him suddenly recede to the back recesses of his mind. Not a good thing, not when he did it willingly, he was probably planning his own agenda back there, and when he enacted it Nathan just knew he was not going to be able to stop him.

“So much pain and distress it broke mum, that can’t be a good thing at all”

“How are we going to bring her in?”

“Carefully, perhaps let her go for now altogether.” he didn’t like it but it might be the only option.

“What? Havoc will never agree to that.”

“Havoc will understand, her mental state needs to come first.”

We know she thinks I want to punish her for that hit to Sophia.

We know she thinks or blames me for her injuries that day.

We know she felt all our anger and fury and couldn’t scent us because of the drugged state she was in.

She just found out last night that Sophia and I are no longer Mates, and so maybe some of that fear will go away, worrying that your Luna would hurt your pups, a legitimate fear, would have always been a constant fear for her. That can go now. He thought to himself, perhaps things might start to get better now We need to wait and see what will happen over the next day or 2, give her room to breath and calm down”

“lets start researching then Boss.”

