

Chapter 101 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

MELIAN POV

I was fearful going into the ritual, and I knew better than to be. I wasn't alone, and I knew I shouldn't be scared, but who in their right mind wouldn't be afraid to hunt a demon? Once entering Callum's mind, I took in the scene that was taking place. His mind was littered with thorny vines and cages. It was definitely Mammon's way of keeping Callum trapped in his own mind, so that the demon could have his way. My uncles and I separated but didn't travel too far from one another. We searched everywhere for some trace of Callum but he was nowhere to be found. Mammon had completely taken his mind and soul from him. Leif called for us all to shift, and we did. Ruby, Lennon and Jester started to run through the vines, destroying them as they traveled through them. Mammon kept trying to throw us off of his trail, but Jester was the first to find him. I could hear Jester fighting with Mammon, and apparently, the noise of the fight led Lennon to their location. Ruby ran like the wind trying to find a path to get through to her uncles and help them end the demon, but no matter what she did she couldn't find a path. It hadn't registered to her that she needed to go through the vines and not around them, because Mammon wouldn't have made it easy for them with a path. She called out to her uncles and she heard Lennon say "Go through the vines, not around them", and it clicked. She started to tear through the vines with her teeth until she could see the chaos that was happening. Her uncles had Mammon in a situation where he had to continue fighting but still tried to escape. Lennon and Jester's eyes had a glow in them, and Ruby recognized that as the signal to Gretchen that they had found him and were trying to contain him in one place. Lennon's were red, and Jester's a bright blue. Once Ruby reached the twins and Mammon, hers started to glow a bright purple. Ruby snarled at the demon every time he tried to approach her. Lennon, Jester and Ruby started to circle the demon, not allowing him to move. He was trapped. A loud roar echoed through Callum's head and the demon disappeared. We were snapped out of Callum's head and collapsed into darkness. The next thing I remembered was waking up in the pack hospital with my mates beside me. They were looking at an ultrasound screen, and I overheard them talking about a third girl.

"Third girl? What are you talking about? What third girl?" I whispered. Loki and Liam snapped their heads at me and were relieved to see that I was OK. Roxy explained to me that we were having a third girl, and that she was smaller than the other two. She had been hidden by baby B, and because she was small, her heartbeat was faint. I think my mates expected me to be in shock or upset about another baby, but I was already carrying two. What was one more? Right? Instead of talking immediately about the babies, I rolled to my side, and stared at my mates. In a small whisper I said, "I almost failed." Loki stopped me from saying anything else, and got down at

eye level with me. "Babe, but you didn't. We didn't. Mammon is one less thing we have to worry about now. Don't dwell on the almost, and let's celebrate that we did it. OK?" I nodded my head and started to drift off again. As I closed my eyes, I said the name 'Asteria Iris'. That was our runts name. Ruby was the one to say it, and I was making it happen. Iris Becker had been there for our pack and us when we needed her, and this was mine and Ruby's tribute to her. I just hoped she approved.

I woke up still in the pack hospital, and my mates were passed out in the chairs that were on each side of my bed. Dr. Flores came in to check on me, and I told him I felt fine. He checked my vitals, and did another ultrasound, and this time baby Asteria was in full view. I woke my mates and told them we could leave, but I wanted to check on my uncles. Dr. Flores informed me that they had already been discharged, and were at the packhouse. My mates helped me off the bed and held my hand as we left, and on the way to the packhouse Liam asked me a weird question. "Baby, where did you come up with the new baby's name? Asteria isn't a common name." I explained to him that Ruby chose it, but wouldn't tell me why. I also told him that it only felt right for the middle name to be Iris, for 2 reasons. The other 2 have flower names, and Iris has always been so good to us. Loki chuckled in amusement, but they both wondered why Ruby was being so secretive about the name Asteria. Either way, they loved it as much as I did and didn't question me any more about it.

We ran into Jason in the foyer, outside the dining hall, and my uncles were with him. He had just come from a meeting with the Royal Council about his bid as Alpha at Dark Star. He shared the news that he had been chosen to take over, and the pack would now be called Starry Moon. He also informed us that Leif and Jorma would be his Beta and Gamma. I was beyond happy for them all, but a sudden sadness enveloped me. Most of my family will be leaving for their new pack soon. Sure, I had my mates, my son and the new family I had found here at Blood Moon. Yet it felt different. I felt sort of alone. I had just found my uncles just a day ago, and now they were going to be leaving within a couple of weeks. I knew it was selfish of me to feel this way, but I had been alone for so long that I just wanted to hold onto something that resembled the good side of my bloodline a little longer. Seeing my shift in mood, my brother took my hand and led me to a nearby room. He pulled me in and closed the door for privacy. "Sis, I know this is going to be hard on you, but we will see each other more than you think. Starry is so much closer than you think it is, and I don't think Rebecca could go too long without seeing you, Grace or the kids. Besides, those little girls will be here soon and we wouldn't miss their arrival for anything in the world." He explained. He also reminded me that they actually had to go in and clear out the rebels who had taken over Dark Star when Callum was captured. "We can't even move until that is taken care of. You will be stuck with us for several more weeks before we can even prepare to move. So no more sadness, OK? It's time to celebrate a lot of happy changes."

A King's Decision

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JASON POV

It had been a long night, and I was so ready to get some shut eye. I knew it wasn't possible yet, because I had to meet with Iris and the Royal Council. This time it was more than just her, Declan and Jasper. There were 3 others who held a higher rank than Iris. Bosko Daniels, Yvonne Markum, and the King himself, Alpha Dezmond Michaels. Royal security flooded the packhouse, and Liam and Loki were unaware that the King had decided to attend the meeting. They were still at the hospital with Mel. Leif and Jorma weren't out as long as Mel was, and left shortly after waking. I asked them to attend the meeting with Rico and I, and they graciously agreed. I was so nervous and I thought it would help to have family with me, even if I barely knew them now. On the way to the conference room, Rico popped into the kitchen to ask Mildred, the cook in charge that day, to send in lots of coffee, juice and water. He also asked for simple breakfast items like danish, toast, donuts and fruit bowls. She said she would make up a good selection and send it in when she was done. When we entered the conference room, Iris and Declan were already there. Jasper had gone to fetch the king and others. Iris guided us where to sit in accordance to where the king and his associates would sit. I nervously took my seat, which would face the King once he was in the room. I kept glancing over at Rico, who would only give a slight nod and wink to let me know I would be fine. All kinds of different scenarios ran through my mind and they all weighed down to one thing. The worst that could happen would be that I would be denied the position, and I would stay here in Blood Moon and work where needed. Either was honestly fine with me. The door opened and the most regal man walked through the door. He was probably the biggest wolf I have ever seen and carried an aura of pure authority, but also a kind demeanor. We stood as he walked past us, and only sat once he was comfortably situated in his seat. I asked us to sit, and leaned forward to speak.

"Good morning, thank you for meeting so early this morning. I heard you all had an eventful night, and I congratulate you on taking care of that situation so thoroughly. Beta Rico, may I ask where your Alphas are?" He asked. Rico replied, "Apologies, your majesty. The Alphas are with their mate, who is still in the hospital after the ordeal last night. She is pregnant and is taking longer to come around after the black out. I was asked to sit in on the meeting as we were unaware you would be attending." The king accepted Rico's apology and sent his condolences to my sister. He then asked for the documents listing my qualifications and bloodline information. He took a moment to read through them and then placed his elbows on the table and rested his chin on his fingertips. Sighing to himself, he looked at me and said, "Well, Mr. Carter, I do have some questions, as well as some concerns. Let's get started, shall we?" I sat straight in my chair, and placed my hands on my lap. I acknowledge that I was prepared to answer anything he needed, and had nothing to hide.

"Good, good. I see you are Beta David Carter's son. This concerns me, considering how David and his other sons turned out. What makes you so different from them?" he started. Hitting a hard one right off the bat. "Well, sir, I wasn't always so different. I too allowed my father to manipulate my head at his bidding. I was just as guilty as they were of contributing to beating and degrading my sister. I never took it as far as the rest, and eventually refused to do it anymore. I never thought it was right. I was also abused sexually, mentally and physically by my

brothers and father, and when I started to stand up for myself and my sister, it only got worse. So I stopped, and participated at the bare minimum. It's not something I am proud of. I will never let anyone ever hurt her again. It was me who found her the night she almost died and brought her here. I just wish I would have been stronger earlier on for us to escape before that happened." I answered. I wanted to look down, so that he wouldn't see the shame in my eyes, but I held eye contact as a sign of respect. I took a deep breath before he could speak and continued, "You see, your majesty, I loved my father and brothers, as you should love family. However, I didn't respect them and hated them even more because of the people they were. The days they died, I felt no sadness, no remorse. I would have wanted them to die over and over for the heinous crimes they committed towards my sister. She was innocent in all of it, and never deserved the severity of her punishments." After I fully answered, he sat back in his seat and whispered something into Iris' ear. She nodded her head and whispered something back, and he nodded to her. He then turned his attention to Rico. "Beta Rico, has Mr. Carter showed remorse for his actions against his younger sister, your Luna?" Rico stood to answer the question, and replied, "Yes, your majesty. Jason had not only shown remorse, but also used to beat himself up daily for ever harming his sister. The two of them now are extremely close, and it was her who suggested that he be nominated for the position in question." Rico sat back down, and the king clapped his hands one time.

"Wonderful. Not only are you truthful about your faults and misdoings, you are showing that you are willing to grow and learn from your mistakes. That shows promise. As you know, however, sometimes, as an Alpha, you have to do things that need to show a little mercy. It's not always easy decisions. You can't just fold because you are being pressured by others. Given your history of giving in to your brothers and father, this concerns me," the king stated. I quickly stood to defend myself, and said, "Your majesty, in all due respect, I was a child then, and had been brainwashed for years. It was hard to break that cycle and mentality, but I did it without help from anyone. My mindset isn't weak any longer. I not only helped carry out the executions of my family, but helped eliminate the threat of Mammon. If you choose me for this position, I vow to not only run the pack with confidence and compassion, but also with a stern and just hand. I will not let you down, and that is a promise. My only interest is taking care of my family, and being the best Alpha I can for Dark Star." The look of shock filled the faces of all the council and the look on the king's face, I couldn't decipher.

King Dezmond stood and placed his hands on the table. He demanded me to stand back up, and I obeyed. "Young man, you have some nerve standing up and speaking to me in that manner. Not many would do so. I respect that in you. However, don't make a habit of it, I only take so much from my Alphas," he said, and then it registered what he had said. 'His Alphas'. A smile spread across his face and he stretched out his hand towards me. I placed my hand on his and he shook my hand with a firm shake. "Congratulations, Alpha Jason Carter of the Dark Star Pack." I was elated with his decision, but asked if I could make a request of him. He nodded and I asked, "King Dezmond, I feel that Dark Star has a tarnished name thanks to Callum. May I request a name change once my mate and I take over?" he agreed and asked what I had in mind. Without hesitating, I mentioned Starry Moon. It was a combination of where all my family, who I loved greatly lived. He gave the order for the name change, which he loved, and then asked if I had any idea of who my Beta and Gamma would be. I looked at my uncles, and asked them both if they

would do the honor of taking those positions. Jorma spoke up and said, "Jason, we would be honored. If you choose for us to have them, then we will serve those positions with pride."

Unexpected Meeting

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Melian POV

2 days later

So many changes, but it's time for me to fully grow up and quit depending so much on my brother and Rebecca for support. I need to lean more to my mates, and I know that. However, I already feel like I burden them enough. It's just another thing that I am working through with Peter. I feel sorry for him sometimes when we are in our sessions. I have so much baggage and insecurities that a Luna shouldn't have. At least in my opinion. He always tells me that my "baggage" is validated, but the constant merry go round of emotions about it makes it feel like I can't get past it. Mostly the anger and feeling of being a burden. "Melian, we can ride the 'merry go round' until you decide it's time to get off. Once you get tired of being in a dizzy state of disarray all the time, that is when you know it's time, and I will ride with you to help you through until the wheels fall off," Peter stated. I just sat there taking in what he just said, and I heard him call my name. "Melian? You still with me?" he asked. I looked up at him and replied, "Ye..yes, sorry, I was just processing what you said. You are right, as usual. Why is it so hard?" I asked. He laughed and told me that he felt it was because I was too focused on the past, and not focused enough on the future. That's when it fully hit me. My jaw dropped and I quickly closed it. "I hate when you are right, Peter." I laughed. He laughed along with me and said, "Hate me all you want, let's just get through the work. It will be worth it, I promise." I knew he was right, and our session ended.

I walked out of Peter's house and started towards Nick's Place to get Maddix. Deep in thought, I wasn't paying attention to where I was going and ran into a solid form. "I'm sorry, I wasn't paying attention." I apologized and then saw who I had run into. "Nadine? What are you doing here? Why aren't you at the sanitarium?" I asked. Fear filled my body, and I kept my distance from her. "I'm only here temporarily, Luna," she sneered. "I am to leave with the council and King and be housed in their hospital. So, I will be out of your hair tomorrow." she continued. "How are you able to roam freely? Shouldn't you be in the cell house until your departure?" I asked. She looked at me with disgust, and walked away. I immediately called Loki to ask what the hell was going on, and his reply was that she was supposed to be in the cells. I told him I would keep my eye on her until a guard could fetch her, and he said he would investigate what happened. I turned on my heel and followed Nadine from a distance. She wasn't acting peculiarly

or anything, but I think that is what concerned me most. I noticed she was getting closer and closer to the forest edge, and I linked Loki and told him to hurry with the guards. I explained why, and the guards near by were immediately on her trail. She fought them when they tried to detain her, and it only confirmed my suspicions. She was trying to escape. Once she was securely on her way back to her cell, I continued on my way to get my son.

Entering Nick's Place, to my surprise, my uncles were there playing with the kids. Each one had one of the twins in their arms. Jorma had Regina, and Leif had Riley. Maddix was using Jorma as a jungle jim, even with Regina in his arms. Jorma took it with great stride, and they had a great time together. I was going to miss them. It's strange to feel that way about people you haven't had a relationship with since you were very young. However, this is how my heart was feeling. I sat on the floor with them, and Maddix came and sat in my lap. He started to paly with my hair so I knew he was starting to get tired. "Uncle Jorma, may I ask you a question?" I asked. He told me that I could ask him whatever I wanted, always. "OK, well, I guess I want to know more about our side of the family. Were they all as loving as my mother and you two? Are there any others still living? How many others in our family are like us?" I started asking. He gave a hearty laugh at all the questions, and answered them one by one without hesitation. "To fully explain our side of the family, it would take a great deal of time. Maybe we can meet for lunch tomorrow and I will tell you all you want to know. As far as being a loving family, yes. Our mother, your grandmother, was a full-blooded Fae. Our father was a hybrid like us. There was always laughter and happiness. Our parents made sure of that. It broke my mother's heart when your mother went to be with David. At first he seemed great, and then all of the kids came. His attitude started to shift, he became colder, and always seemed overwhelmed. He started treating Lily differently when no one was around, and when there was, he was the doting husband and father. As to your question about anyone else living, we aren't sure. Because we had to go into hiding, we had lost track of our family, and once settled at Starry Moon, we would like to try and find them. Now, as far as how many other hybrids are in the family, in total, from the beginning of our kind, there have been at least 50. You are the last one, so far." He said as he glanced at my belly.

Choosing An Heir

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MELIAN POV

Tucking Maddix into his crib, I thought about the words Jorma had said to me. There had only been around 50 of my kind in our family that he was aware of, and one or all of my girls could add to that count. Loki and Liam said they needed to speak to me tonight once we were all in our bedroom, and it sounded serious. I missed dinner, so I ordered a couple of pizzas and some hot

wings, and told them to meet me in our room when they were ready. I ran down to the kitchen and grabbed a 12 pack of soda and some juice, and went up to our room to wait for them. I put the drinks in the mini fridge, and went into my closet to change into my nightgown. I was exhausted, but not tired enough to go to sleep. I clicked on the TV and waited on the sectional couch bundled in my fuzzy blanket. I turned up the volume on the baby monitor to make sure I could hear Maddix if he woke up, and turned on a true crime documentary about Jeffery Dahmner. I was so in tune to the show that I didn't hear my mates come in, and when Liam kissed the top of my head I jumped with a scream. I cursed him a few times, and Loki was laughing harder than he probably should have. He definitely earned a glare from me. A knock on the door let us know the food had arrived, and Liam went to retrieve it. "You assholes got her just in time," I sneered. Liam apologized again, and I finally let it go. "You shouldn't be sneaking up on a pregnant woman anyway, baby." I told him.

The guys placed the food on the coffee table, and I got our drinks. As we were filling our plates, I asked the guys what it was we needed to discuss. Casually, Loki said, "The council wants us to decide which of our children will be our heir." I stopped chewing and shook my head. "Why now? Maddix is only a year old and the girls aren't even born yet," I told them. Liam nodded his head and said, "Because there will more than likely be a war when we go to the former Dark Star pack. We have already received word that they will not give up the pack to Jason so easily. Therefore, as a just in case measure, they want us to appoint an heir." I still didn't understand, even if something were to happen, the children weren't of legal age to take over. Rico would have to run the pack until they were able, and that is if he even wanted that responsibility. Otherwise, the responsibility would be mine. I would do as I must, but would still need a strong person to run the pack beside me. I growled in frustration and said, "Fine, who are you choosing?" Loki was the first to answer and he said he thought that whichever girl was born first, and Liam agreed. This built my frustration a little greater and I blurted out, "Why not Maddix? He is the oldest. He may not be your blood, but he is mine. Plus, he has Alpha blood as well." Both men looked ashamed that they hadn't even considered him and couldn't give me an answer. I threw my plate on the table and stood up to go to bed. "I have one last thing to say before I go to bed, because I am finished with this conversation. You can both choose on your own, because obviously, the clear answer doesn't matter. The alpha role should go to the oldest child. Period. Maddix is the oldest. He IS your son. You both chose to adopt him. Now that you have your own blood children on the way, Maddix's rights aren't even being considered. I will respect your choices, but I don't have to agree." I scolded them. I moved to go towards our bed, but at the last minute I changed my mind. I left our room and went straight to the nursery. I picked my son up out of his crib and laid him on the spare bed and cuddled next to him under the blanket. Was I being selfish? I loved my girls as much as I loved Maddix. He may have started as my nephew, but he wasn't that child anymore. He was our son. If the girls weren't involved in the equation, would he still be overlooked? It was an answer I was afraid of finding.

The next morning, I was woken by Maddix blowing raspberries on my face. "Good morning, little man. Did you sleep well?" He smiled and went in for another round of raspberries. I had to laugh at his goofy mood and got up to get us ready to go to breakfast. After changing him and getting him dressed, I placed him in his crib so that I could use the restroom and get dressed myself. I picked him up and carried him down to the dining hall, and put him in his highchair. I made him a plate of fruit and scrambled eggs. He was learning to feed himself, even if it was

with his hands, and was doing very well with it. I was watching him as he ate, and he looked towards the door, "Da da's" he said, as he reached his arms towards them. I sat silently as they approached and Maddix got more excited. He loved them both so much, and deep down I knew they loved him. "Can we talk?" Loki asked. I nodded my head and motioned for them to sit down. They sat on each side of Maddix, and Loki began to speak, "We're sorry Mel. It wasn't as if we forgot about this little guy, because we didn't. He was our first choice. We just weren't sure how you were going to feel if we chose him over our blood children." This once again fueled my anger, but I tried to keep my voice low. "You seriously thought that I would be upset if you chose our son over our daughters? Have you both gone mad?" I retorted. "I'm mad because you didn't mention him first. I would be fine with ANY of our children taking on the role of Alpha. I know our daughters would be kick-ass female Alpha rulers, but I also know that OUR son would rule just as badass! SO, don't ever assume you know how I will feel or react."

Conflicted Emotions

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LIAM POV

After Melian stormed out of our bedroom, I contemplated going after her. It was Loki who reminded me that if I did, I would only piss her off more. Loki ended up passing out on the couch waiting for her to come back, so I went to make sure she was at least safe. I had a feeling I knew where to find her, so I went straight to the nursery. I poked my head in the door and saw my mate and my son fast asleep on the spare bed. He was snug in her arms, and he was holding onto her beautiful hair. His little leg was kicked up on her rounded belly, and my heart broke. How could I have been so blind? How could Loki and I assume that she would have wanted one of our girls to take over instead of Maddix? We would raise him to be honorable and kind. To be the best version of himself that he could be. That would make him an amazing leader. We had to do this right, but would Mel see it as pity because she exploded? This was about to get tricky for Loki and I. I snuck back to our room, and laid in our bed. I tossed and turned all night long, not being able to sleep without my mate snuggled between Loki and I.

Before I was even able to get to the point of dozing off, the sunrise was shining on the horizon. I just gave up on the intention of even sleeping. Flipping the covers off of me, I got up and went into the bathroom to shower. Maybe a hot shower would help me get in the right mindset to talk with Melian. Once the water started to flow over me, tears started to flow from my eyes. Everything from the time I laid eyes on our mate to the latest situation with her blowup last night, has been overwhelming to say the least. However, I love her, and it's not just the love that comes from the mate bond. I genuinely love her as a person. I wouldn't change anything we have done to have to protect her, and I wouldn't change who she is for anything. I am thankful she has

come out of her trauma a strong, loving woman. She is an amazing Luna, and a wonderful mother to Maddix. I have no doubt that she will be an even more amazing mother to the girls once they are here. What I can't get over is the feeling of starting to feel resentment about how dramatic our life has become. I miss my normal mundane life, and all I ever wanted in life was a mate and children to share that with. I wasn't expecting this whirlwind of one thing after another. My heart aches when I feel this way. It's not her fault, and she didn't ask for any of it. I really need to have a one on one conversation with her about how I'm feeling, but I don't want to hurt her or make her feel like she has ruined my life, because she hasn't. She has only enhanced it.

I got out of the shower and Loki was already awake and dressed. "Are you going to tell me why you are so upset, brother? I can feel your pain, remember?" He asked. I told him to let me get dressed and we would talk. I could really use his advice on this. It's like him and I switched personality traits somewhere during all of this, and he would know exactly what I was saying. Going into my closet, I grabbed a pair of black jeans and a dark green button-up shirt, and I rolled the sleeves to my elbows. I threw my long curls up into a bun, and then grabbed my favorite boots. I went and sat next to my brother, and started to put them on. As I did, I started to explain how I was feeling. His face instantly shifted into one of concern and worry. "So, what are you truly saying, Liam? Do you not want what we have with her anymore?" he asked. I looked at him as if he was crazy and shook my head. "Lok, that's not what I am saying at all. All I'm trying to get at is this. I need things to slow down. I need to be able to know my wife without constant turmoil around us. I need all of us, kids included, to just be a family for a change. Hopefully, once this whole thing with Dark Star, Starry Moon, whatever it will be now, is over, we can have that. I don't want to drag our feet with this, Loki. Getting Jason settled will take a minute, and we will have to take turns being away from here. I know that, but I still want it done as soon as possible. Now do you understand?" I explained. He placed his hand on my knee and said, "You are not the only one feeling like this. I do also at times, but there is never resentment. You cannot resent her for things happening that are out of her control, brother. You need to have a heart to heart with her. Take her to her favorite spot and have lunch today, and just tell her how you feel." I agreed and thanked him for once again helping me get my head out of my ass and think straight.

Deciding to find Mel, we went to the nursery. She wasn't there, and her scent was faint, so we knew she hadn't been there for a little while. That left one of two places she would go with Maddix, the dining hall or Nick's Place. We started in the dining hall, and found her sitting at our table making sure our son was eating his breakfast safely. We sat down and started to apologize about last night and our assumption of how we thought she would be upset if we didn't choose one of the girls. I don't know if her hormones are reacting, but once again she went off on us. She was angry that we assumed how she felt, and that we didn't think she would be OK with Maddix being our chosen heir. I can see her point, and I apologized once again. I told her how I wanted Maddix as heir, because he is the oldest, and I didn't see him as our adopted son, but our son in general. She seemed to relax a little, and then I took the opportunity to ask her to lunch. "Baby, I feel like I am constantly sticking my foot in my mouth lately. I have a bunch of conflicting emotions and I really need to speak to you about them. Would you please have lunch with me today at Coffee & Thyme? Say around 1pm?" I could hear her heart start to race, but she agreed to join me. It was time to be completely transparent and honest with my wife.

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MELIAN POV

I agreed to have lunch with Liam at my favorite place, but then remembered that I was also supposed to have lunch with my uncles. With Liam having to speak with me about something about things of importance, I decided to call my uncles to see if they could meet me in the library after we finished with breakfast. We agreed to meet in an hour after I dropped Maddix off with Grace. I left our son with my mates so that I could shower, and journeyed to our room. My brain was in overdrive trying to figure out what Liam needed to talk to me about, and the information my uncles were about to reveal. I took a quick shower, and French braided my hair. I grabbed a pair of dark red leggings and a black sweater, and slid on my Ugg boots. Instead of putting on a jacket, I pulled out one of my favorite wrap-around parkas that Rebecca had gotten me. It was a beautiful crimson red with a snowflake pattern on it. I wrapped it around me, and headed out the door. The library wasn't too far from the packhouse, and I got there earlier than my uncles. I found a secluded table, and as I waited for them I chit chatted with Christopher. He had been doing such a great job at the library and was an amazing curator. The historian side of him is what I find most interesting about Chris. He is so full of knowledge about different werewolf packs, and all other types of species were intriguing to me. History was my favorite subject in school, and parts of me wish that I would have been able to pursue something that I could teach or do something involving history.

Leif walked in the door and yelled, "There's my favorite niece, " and Chris shot him a look to keep his tone down. Leif threw his hands up in the air in defense and shook Chris's hand and apologized. Jorma soon followed Leif and was bearing gifts. "I have some things for you, Mel. I hope you like them." I walked them to the table I had set my things on, and we each took our seats. "Thank you guys for meeting me here, apparently I'm in high demand today." I laughed. "After our talk, I got to meet with Liam. He says he has something important to talk to me about. Honestly, I'm kind of afraid," I told them. "I wouldn't be afraid, little bird. I'm sure he just needs to convey some things to you. Nothing major. He could feel overwhelmed by quickly becoming a father of 4," Leif explained. That made me feel a little better, but I still held on to a little worry. "So, what did you bring me, uncle Jorma?" I asked. He laughed and handed me a bag. Inside the bag were pictures. Lots and lots of pictures. There were pictures of my mother and uncles when they were young. Pictures of my grandparents, and of me and my brothers when we all actually got along. The most shocking was the picture of my parents. They looked so happy and in love. The expression on my dad's face looked foreign to me. I can't remember the last time I had seen him genuinely smile because he was happy, and most of all, in love. I dropped the picture and fought back tears. "Why couldn't he stay this way? We were all hurting and gutted when she

died." I whispered. Jorma took my hand and said, "I can't tell you why he changed, little bird. Losing a mate does things to your soul, and unless you go through the situation, understanding is impossible. That is the only thing I can think of to explain why. Maybe he was always the way he ended up, but your mother changed him while they were together. No one can truly say the reason, except him, and that time has passed. It's better not to dwell on it." I pressed my lips together and shook my head. "There is just so much I'll never know or understand where my parents are concerned. I used to wish all the time that things would have turned out differently, and that I could have had that perfect family life. Now, I don't think I would have changed anything other than want mom to be here. That's it. It made me the woman I am today. I have realized how strong I truly am inside. It may be a day late and a dollar short, but here we are. Thank you for these pictures. They mean a lot to me, and it was so thoughtful. I love it." I flashed them a legitimate smile, and took my time looking more closely at the pictures. There was a picture of my mom holding me right after I was born, and Thomas and Jason were on each side of her looking at me. Thomas looked as if he was stroking my hair, and looking at me like I was the best thing ever. Much different than it was in the end. It broke my heart, but I had to tell myself that it was a different time and a different place. I can't rely or live on what if's anymore. It felt good to know that my brothers and I loved each other at one point in time, and even more, that Jason and I were now close. I love my brother, and it was killing me that he was about to leave. Leif took me out of my thoughts and asked if I still wanted to know about our family. "No, I think I would rather learn as we go. We have time, and it gives me an excuse to spend more time with my uncles." They both smiled and we made the best of the rest of our time together for the day. I knew I would see them at dinner, but I also felt like I had already lost so much time. As we were standing in the lobby of the library saying our goodbyes, one of our cooks from the packhouse kitchen came in. Both of my uncles' noses went into the air and sniffed. Their heads turned towards the door where Meribeth stood with the biggest grin, and whispered, "Mate!"

Hurry Home To Me

Chapter 107 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

LIAM POV

I arrived at Coffee & Thyme earlier than Mel, and I went ahead and ordered for us. I ordered her favorite flatbread pizza with extra garlic, and a caesar salad for us both. I ordered her favorite blueberry banana smoothie and I ordered a pint of ale. It wasn't long after Hazel brought out the food when Mel arrived. I stood up to greet her and kissed her on the forehead. "I'm so happy to see you, baby. I went ahead and ordered for us, as you can see," I told her. A smile spread across her face and she thanked me for being so thoughtful. We ate our lunch and chit-chatted until we were done, and then it was time to let her know what I had brought her here for. "Baby, you know how I said I needed to talk to you? Well, I have something to confess to you, and I'm

afraid of how you are going to take it," I started. Her face twisted out of curiosity, and what looked to be fear, but I continued. "I know I have tried to hide it, but I have been feeling rather overwhelmed with everything lately. Ever since you came into our lives it's been chaos, and sometimes I miss my mundane, boring life. I'm not blaming you, so please don't think that's what I'm saying. I'm just ready for us to have some peace and quiet for awhile before the girls are born. I wouldn't change finding you, and building our lives together for anything in the world. You're our everything, baby. Loki and I may look alike, and are similar in a lot of ways, but being able to maintain a steady pace during times that are crazy isn't one of them. He handles it much better than I do. I hide the anxiety pretty well for the most part, but it gets tough. I just wanted you to know that if I seem distant or shut down, this is why." During the whole explanation, her eyes never left mine. Her face still holding a worried expression, but her eyes softened. "I'm truly sorry, Liam. I didn't know you felt this way, and I don't want you to. Hopefully, the worst will be behind us soon, and you can go back to the way you like your life to be." she responded. I knew right then and there that she blamed herself even though I asked her not to, because I didn't.

I took her hand and decided to change the subject. We started to talk about the babies, and everything we still needed to buy for them. I asked her if she wanted me to have Rico and Grace take her into town to buy whatever was needed, and you would have thought by the way she looked at me that I had grown 6 heads. "No thanks, if I can't go with you and Loki, I will just order online." she stated. I didn't realize how important it really was for us to do stuff like that together. Most women liked to shop without men, but I regularly forget our mate isn't like others. I promised that we would make time prior to the trip to Starry Moon, and her demeanor started to change to a more relaxed one.

Jason, Rebecca and the kids came in as we were preparing to leave, and they asked us to join them for a moment. We sat at their table, and Jason informed us that Iris had told him that we needed to head to Starry Moon immediately. Things were getting out of control, and needed corrected as soon as possible. My anxiety started to rise because of frustration, and Mel placed her hand on my thigh to calm me. I told him I would get with the warriors and our ranked crew and we would head out first thing in the morning. Even though we needed to make a lot of preparations, we would have to do it on the fly. Loki was going to be pissed, but there's not much we can do since it's been ordered by the council. "What time are you wanting to head out?" I asked him. "I was hoping before the first light, if that's alright with you guys," he replied. I told him I would let him know as soon as I talked to the others, and Mel and I took our leave.

"I'm sorry," I apologized to her. She shook her head and said that she would rather us go now and get home than for it to be put off for another time. I intertwined our fingers and kissed her knuckles. "You're the best, I hope you know that," I told her. She just smiled and leaned in closer to me. "Just hurry and finish the job. Then get home to me and our babies as soon as possible." she replied. We continued our walk, stopping randomly to speak with pack members when they would stop us, and eventually making it to our destination.

I dropped her off at Nick's Place so she could pick up Maddix, and left to find my twin. It wasn't hard, because as soon as I approached the packhouse I heard him yelling at Timmy. "Why in the actual hell do I have to do everything myself?!? YOU are our head warrior, and it's YOUR job to

make sure everyone is ready to go!! We have to leave in the morning, so get shit together!!" he bellowed. When our eyes met, I knew he had already been notified. "Who told you?" I asked. He was fuming, just like I knew he would be, and the way he was acting, I don't think even Mel could calm him down. "Fucking Iris," he said. "I'm like you bro. I desperately need a break. Just us, Mel and our boy. I want to make sure Jason and Bex are settled and safe, but damn man, I want our life with our family to calm down too." he expressed.

Quiet Night

Chapter 108 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

LOKI POV

Finally, this day is ending, and we can just spend a quiet night with our mate. We are all at our wits' end with all the bullshit lately, and need this time together. To add fuel to the fire, Mel had been extremely hormonal because of the pregnancy, and she needed a little pampering. I can't help but laugh at the fact that one false move and Liam and I may get our asses kicked. We decided to grab some snacks and drinks from the kitchen, and watch a movie before heading to bed. I would have preferred skipping the movie and making love to our mate until we had to leave, but she wasn't feeling the greatest, so we gave in and watched the movie Edward Scissorhands with her. She had been so up and down with her emotions the past few days, and I think she cried throughout the whole movie. She was tucked under Liam's arm, cuddled in tight, and I had my head resting on her hip cuddling her legs. Times like this is what I live for.

Near the end of the movie, Mel got up to go to the bathroom to do her beauty ritual before bed. Liam and I got our bed ready, and he wanted to go check on Maddix before we settled in for the night. I went along with him because I was sure he wouldn't be awake before we left for Starry Moon. As we stood over his crib, Liam looked at me and said, "I have to find a way to make things up to Mel. I've been a real ass lately." I shook my head and told him he hadn't, he just felt he had because of how he was feeling. He told me I was probably right, and we each kissed our son on the head before we went back to our room. "He is one of the best parts of our life right now, and I'll be damned if anything bad ever happens to him on my watch," I told Liam. He nodded his head and agreed. That little boy, in a matter of a couple of months, had dug a place in our hearts so deep that there was no way he would ever leave them.

Back in our room, Mel had finished getting ready for bed and was waiting for us when we got there. She had put on a short, pink nightgown that showed off her little baby bump and ample breasts perfectly. "What took you both so long? I've been waiting." she asked. I gave a chuckle and answered, "Babe, we have only been gone maybe 10 minutes." She smiled and said that was way too long, and then patted the bed for us to join her. I took off my jeans and threw them over

the back of the sectional, and was left in just my boxers. Liam stripped off his sweats, and crawled into our bed in nothing but what the goddess blessed him with. Mel quickly straddled on top of Liam and smashed her lips into his. She kissed him as if it would be the last time she ever did. She grabbed my arm and pulled me closer to her and Liam and took turns kissing us as she ground her hips into Liam. Our girl was feeling needy, and we were all too willing to fulfill those needs. Liam placed his hands on her hips and helped her grind deeper onto his already hard cock, and her hand started to massage my cock through my boxers. I slid out of my boxers, and she started to stroke me properly. A deep guttural moan left my throat, and she gave me a tighter squeeze as she stroked me. I had to concentrate really hard so that I wouldn't release too soon, and was thankful when Liam flipped her over on her back. The cute pink nightgown she had on was instantly ripped off of her body, as were the matching panties. His face was in between her legs ravishing her pussy with his tongue. "Yes! Liam! Please, more!" she squealed. As I was massaging her breasts and licking her nipples, I had Liam position her on her side with her leg up over his shoulder. This gave me full access to her voluptuous ass. I wet my finger and started to rub her little puckered hole, and slowly slid it in. She started to tighten up, and I whispered in her ear to relax. I licked her mark, and she instantly relaxed, allowing my finger to slide further in. Moving it back and forth, she started to moan. "You like that baby?" I asked, and she just moaned softly in response. Liam was still working on her pulsing bud, causing her to start to tremor. I knew she was on the verge of a climax, and we weren't ready for her to cum yet. "Not yet, my love, how would you like both of us inside you at once?" I asked. "Yes, babe, please. I want you both so badly," she moaned. Liam laid down and placed her back on top of him, sliding his hard member into her super wet entrance. He moved in and out of her for a moment before pulling out so that I could slide in to get my cock wet with her juices. As I pumped in and out of her, I slid my thumb back into her ass to get her ready for me. Once I pulled out, Liam slid back in, and I slowly slid my cock into her ass. She started to whimper and Liam started to kiss his mark to help her to relax. "I'll go slow baby, it will only hurt for a moment," I whispered. Once I fully entered her she released a gasp, and Liam started to move again. I followed his pace as we pleased our mate. Her moans were indication enough for us that she was fully enjoying the pleasures we were giving her. She informed us she was about to cum, and it caused us to quicken our pace, finally releasing our seeds inside our mate. I pulled out, and went to get warm washcloths to clean up. I snuggled in behind my already sleeping mate, and held her close as she held onto Liam. It was right then when I prayed to the goddess that this venture would be quickly taken care of and I could get home to my wife.

Let's Go!

Chapter 109 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

JASON POV

I felt horrible for leaving my wife and sister to take care of business, but it had to be done so that we could finally move on to our new responsibilities. Iris had met with me yesterday morning to let me know that the rebels that took over the former Dark Star when Callum was captured had been terrorizing pack members. They were angry that no one stood up for their former Alpha and were even angrier that someone from outside the pack was taking over. I had a lot of adversity already, and I hadn't even fully been sworn in yet. Sometimes I question whether or not I made the right decision in pursuing and accepting the position, then my wife, sister and brother-in-laws remind me that I am more than ready and capable of doing the job. It was 5am, and I had placed my bag by the door. Rebecca, Trinity and Joel were still fast asleep, and I went to kiss them each on the head before I left. Rebecca stirred and pulled me into a deeper hug, and told me to hurry back safely. I assured her I would, and I left our room to meet everyone else. Liam and Loki were standing in the foyer giving last-minute instructions to Rico. He would be staying back with their newly appointed Gamma, Tobias. Tobias was Nick, Rico and the twins' good friend growing up. He had just returned to the pack from attending law school at the human college in Washington state just before Nick died. He was perfect for the position, and they skipped all the ceremonial hoopla to get him sworn in quickly. Melian was a little standoffish with him at first, but she eventually softened up to him. With us being gone, it was the perfect opportunity for them to get to know one another better. He had been given strict instructions to make sure his Luna and their son were safe at all times.

"It's about time you joined us, Alpha." Loki joked. He handed me a large thermos of coffee and a bag of bagels and danish for the trip. I asked if everyone was ready, and he told me that they were just waiting for me. I gave a curt nod, and shook Rico and Tobias's hands. Rico told me not to worry about my family, that between him, Tobias and what warriors that were left there to guard the pack, they would be in good hands. I gave Rico a bro-hug and thanked him for looking out for them. I was going to miss him once we moved. He and I had become as close as brothers, and I was thankful to him. "Alright, let's go!" I bellowed, and we all loaded into the trucks. It wasn't that long of a drive, but long enough to where that coffee was going to come in real handy. Because of there being three alphas on this trip, we each had to ride in different vehicles. I was in the lead vehicle with one of the lead warriors, Kyle, driving and 8 other warriors with us. Loki and Timmy in the second truck and Liam in the fourth with my uncles and more warriors. There was a truck full of warriors between the ones that held Liam and Loki to throw off anyone who thought about attacking.

We got to Starry Moon at around 8:30am, and there were no guards at the gate. We drove in without incident and it made my stomach twist. I called Liam and asked him if it felt strange, and he said that it didn't, but it did seem odd for there to be no one guarding the gates. Especially if things were as bad as Iris had indicated. He said he was going to have Loki and some of the warriors from the third vehicle check things out before we exited the trucks just to be on the safe side. He disconnected the call and I watched as Timmy and the warriors exited, and started to investigate the situation. They searched the guard tower and surrounding buildings, and no one was there. The pack wasn't that big, it wasn't far from the gate to the pack house. As they moved up the lane towards the pack house, the trucks followed behind them slowly. Loki sent me a text saying that Timmy informed him that there were about 5 men waiting outside the pack house for us, and they didn't seem all that friendly. I told him that we needed to face this head on, and that we should approach. He agreed and everyone exited the trucks. The three of us and my uncles

led the warriors to where the men were waiting, and I stepped to the front. "I am Alpha Jason Carter. I am taking over as alpha, here at the former Dark Star. It will now be known as the Starry Moon. Who are you, and why are you terrorizing my pack?" I asked. One of the men, a big burly man with unruly dark hair and a long beard, started to laugh. "You? The new alpha? What is this Starry Moon bullshit you're spewing?" he asked. I ignored his questions and asked his name again. His laugh and amusement quickly faded and disdain quickly took over. "I am Bart Starr, Alpha Callum was my uncle. So, rightfully, it is my pack. I don't give two shits what that stupid council says. I will tell you exactly what I told that bitch. It will be over my dead body before anyone takes it from me." he snarled and quickly shifted into his wolf. I looked at the twins, and they were already shifting, as were the others. I shifted to Edward and the only thing running through my mind was how outnumbered these men were. Even when their 'warriors' joined them. Their warriors were mere rebels who may have had the required training, but they were no match for Blood Moon's fully trained warriors. We quickly tore through them all, leaving a pile of dead bodies in the aftermath. The only one left standing was Bart. I shifted back to my human form, and stood before his wolf. "SHIFT!" I yelled. He tried to resist but couldn't, and shifted back to his human form. "Surrender now! You have no chance of making it out of here alive unless you do! This pack is now under my reign, and things are changing here and now! I am not foolish enough to believe that this was all you had to help you try and keep us out, so I am asking you now where the others are!" I demanded. He laughed again and told me that he would rather die than tell me, and I would find out soon enough where they were. I was trying to make a rational choice about killing him or just putting him in the cells, but the rage I was feeling was causing me not to think straight. I started to pace, my eyes never leaving the man. Suddenly, I heard Loki scream, "Jason! Rogues are attacking Blood Moon!" I stopped pacing and noticed Bart laughing hysterically. "I told you that you would soon find out," he cackled. I ran towards him and grabbed him by the head and twisted it off his shoulders. "GET IN THE TRUCKS NOW!" Liam yelled. The guilt of bringing them all with me was now consuming my body. My uncles stayed behind with close to 20 warriors to watch over Starry Moon, and I was pushed into the truck to head back to Blood Moon. Please Goddess, keep our family and their pack safe.

When you run with rogues...

Chapter 110 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

MELIAN POV

I thought I was dreaming when I woke to the sound of the pack sirens going off. I linked Rico to ask if it was another malfunction and I got no response. I tried Tobias, and the same result. I started to panic and jumped out of bed and straight out of our door. I looked over the balcony on our floor, and I could see those on the first floor scrambling. I saw Grace and the kids rushing

towards the basement door, and I hollered down to her to ask what was going on. She told me we were under attack, and I quickly turned to run towards the nursery to get Maddix. I scooped him up in my arms, and made my way down the stairs and towards the basement door. Meribeth, my uncle's mate, was moving towards the basement as well to go to the safe room, and I asked her to take Maddix. She took him and went on her way, and I took off running towards the front door. My arm was grabbed by Tobias, who was refusing to let me go outside. "Luna, we are under attack by rogues. I have instructions from the alphas to make you go to the safe room and protect your pups." he said. I felt anger stirring in my chest, and I jerked away from him. "I am your Luna, and I am the one that is here, not your alphas. I am not going back into the damn safe room, and will help defend our pack. So, either you come and help me or get the fuck out of my way, Tobias." I demanded. He reluctantly gave in and followed me outside. There were rogues everywhere, but what warriors we did have here were still fighting valiantly. I asked Ruby if we were still safe to shift, and she confirmed we were, and she instantly shifted.

I gave Ruby control, and wherever our warriors were outnumbered, she would jump in to help them. Rogues were falling dead all around us, and just when we thought we were getting ahead, more would come onto the pack grounds. Tobias didn't stay too far from us, and honestly it was starting to annoy me. Does no one have faith in me? The rogues started to surround us, but weren't necessarily attacking. They were toying with us more than anything. I heard one of them yell "We want to speak with the alphas!" Ruby's head shot up, and she trotted to stand in front of the man. I looked back at Tobias, and he ran to retrieve a shirt for me so that I could shift to my human form. When he returned, he held the shirt ready for me to shift and slip on, and once I was dressed I stepped back in front of the man who demanded to see my mates. "I am the Luna of this pack, why do you request an audience with my mates?" I asked. He scoffed at me and replied, "I went to school with Alpha Liam and Alpha Loki. The rest of us don't want to fight you, but seek refuge in the former Dark Star pack. We don't know the new name. I apologize, but we do know the new Alpha is related to you and your mates. If you can make our request happen, we will leave, and you will never have to worry about us again." I cocked my head to the side and clicked my tongue. "Why did you even bother attacking, if you never intended to see it through? You know my mates aren't here and are in the new Starry Moon pack, yet here you still are. If you only sought refuge, then it could have been handled a completely different way. There are children and elderly here that are scared shitless because you chose to attack. Does this make you feel better?" I stated. I was livid at the gall of this man, but I couldn't let it show. I had to keep a level head, but it was getting harder to do. I heard the horns of our trucks blaring as they came roaring up the lane, and I gave a sigh of relief knowing my mates were back.

My mates and brother came running straight towards me, and Liam saw the man I was speaking to and said, "Hunter, what are you doing here? Are you the one attacking Blood Moon?" The man I now knew as Hunter hung his head. "Yes, Liam, I was part of the group who attacked. We all were, but we aren't like the ones you see lying dead on the ground. We were only in search of refuge in the old Dark Star pack. I was told that if we attacked and demanded an audience with you both, then we stood a better chance of achieving our goal. I fear I was misled," he answered. Loki shook his head and started to chuckle. "Hunter, you of all people should know us better than that. All you would have to do was call one of us, and set up an appointment. Jason is the new Alpha of Starry Moon, and would have gladly welcomed you to his pack. He needs dependable men. Why are you even running with rogues to begin with?" he asked. Hunter

explained that he was exiled from his former pack, Golden Sun, because he was fated to the Alpha's youngest daughter, and the Alpha hated Hunter and his family. When Hunter and the alpha's daughter tried to run away together, the alpha stopped them and was going to kill Hunter. His daughter begged him not to, and the alpha banished him and killed his parents. I felt for the man as he told his story, and I spoke to my mates and brother. "Guys, he's telling the truth. I can feel it. However, not all of his men feel the same way he does. Like that one over there, with the black curly hair, he plans on attacking Jason as soon as they get into the pack. The one over there with the scruffy beard and red hair, plans on setting the pack on fire as revenge for Callum." I said. "I've only seen true intentions from Hunter and 4 others out of the close to 40 men here," I finished. Hunter's face became stoic as he turned to face the men he had run into the pack with. "Is this true? Did you all falsely inform me of your intentions? I will stand with Blood Moon and Starry Moon and end you with them if what the Luna says is true. Speak now!" he demanded. The four whose intentions were true stepped forward and turned to face the others. Not one single person from the rest of them could deny they weren't with him from the beginning. Hunter looked back at Liam and Loki and said, "Let's end them! I cannot approve of their intentions!"