

What The Hell?

Chapter 151 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

MADDIX POV

My sister was still unconscious when most of our family left. The only ones still here were me, mom, my dads, and Asteria. River had finally come in and stayed a couple of hours, but Adelina started to feel sick, so he took her home. Riley took grandma back to the pack house, and I asked her to grab us some food while she was there. She hadn't been gone long, but I missed her already. Phoenix had to go do his rounds on the psych unit, but said he would be back after he finished. Dr. Flores had been in and out, checking her vitals, and he asked mom if Alette had received her wolf yet.

Mom confirmed that she had received her wolf, Alaska, the day the girls turned 18. He wrote that on her chart, and dad Loki questioned why that was important, because she was dosed with Wolfsbane, it would affect her wolf as well. "Alpha, Loki, I just wanted to make sure her chart was fully up-to-date. That's all. No other reason," Dr. Flores explained. My dad relaxed, and my mom made him sit down and rest.

As the night got later, my mom sent my dads and sister home. It was just me, her and Riley in the room when Alette finally started to stir. Mom sat up next to her, and started to talk to her. "Come on sweetie, come back to us." she whispered. Alette's eyes slowly opened and started to blink. "Mom?" she said in a low voice. "Yes, baby. It's mom. How are you feeling?" my mother asked her. She tried to sit up, but immediately realized that was a bad idea. As she laid her head back on the pillow she put her hand over her eyes and replied, "Like I have been beaten by tree logs. Where am I?" I stepped forward and told her she was in the pack hospital, and I asked what the last thing she remembered was.

She opened her eyes, and looked at me like I was crazy. "Wait....last thing I remember was being at RockAway with Micah, Scott, Brian, Jamie, Jordan and Wiley. We were having a picnic and having fun playing in the sand. Wiley brought me a drink, and now I'm here. That's all I remember. How long have I been here?" she asked. Mom told her she had only been there a little over 24 hours, and that she had been dosed with a potion that contained Wolfsbane.

She closed her eyes and released a huff. "Wiley did it, didn't he?" she asked. Her emotions were all over the place, and you could hear them through her voice. I told her he had done it, but he wasn't trying to poison her. I explained what the potion was for, and it wasn't supposed to have Wolfsbane in it.

I told her how remorseful he was, and that he only had pure intentions behind the act of giving her the potion. "I know, he cares for me a lot. Maddix, I care a lot for him too, but I want to wait for my mate. Not just anyone will do." she whispered. Sometimes the desire for a mate can make the one waiting for them miserable. Especially if they aren't within your pack, or somewhere you frequent.

Mom said that now she was awake, there only needed to be one person at a time staying with her. We didn't want her overwhelmed, and since she had to be there at least one more day, we wanted her to rest. We would take shifts, and switch out every 4 hours. I had pack business to start attending on the next morning, so I told my mom I would take the first shift. Alette started to pout, and asked if our dad, Liam, could take the first shift. Our sisters depended on our dads for different reasons than us boys. When they wanted to be comforted or just needed someone to talk to, they went to Liam.

When they needed someone to vent to, or a different kind of comfort that they got from Liam, they asked for Loki. Loki was more of the cry and vent and dad will go kick that boy's ass, kind of comfort. Liam was more soothing. Mom called dad, and he must have already been in the hospital, because he was there within minutes. As soon as Alette saw him she started to sob. "Daddy, why did this have to happen? I have only just met my wolf, Alaska, and now she isn't talking to me. Plus, I can't trust my good friend anymore. This isn't fair." she cried.

My dad held her close and shoed me and everyone else out. I could tell it hurt my mom's feelings, but I also knew her very well. She was hurt, but she wouldn't have this situation any other way. Mom always appreciated the bond our dads had with us. She never had that with her own dad, and to make sure we had it, especially the girls, she would eat her own hurt just so they could be there for us.

Me, Mom and Asteria walked into the lobby of the hospital and there sat Wiley. He stood when he saw us and asked how she was. "Well, Wiley, to be honest, she is hurt. She is confused, weak, tired and confused. She's also angry. She cared and trusted you, and now she feels like she can trust no one. She is very upset because she can't reach out to her wolf, and we aren't sure when she will be able to again. We understand that you are remorseful for what you did, but it still doesn't excuse the fact that you hurt her by doing it. It was selfish. I hope to the goddess you have learned your lesson, because if you haven't, and you continue to upset or try to manipulate her in any other way. You will be punished to the fullest extent of my ability. I promise you that," I told him.

I could feel my own anger starting to fester, so I said what I needed and left the hospital. I was afraid if I didn't, I would hurt him.

No More Shadows

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MADDIX POV

"Alpha, please...wait," Wiley yelled after me. I wanted to keep going but as an alpha I couldn't, and unfortunately, I wasn't just Alette's big brother anymore. I stopped and turned towards him. "What, Wiley? I am kind of in a hurry," I said to him. His whole body looked deflated, and I tried to hide my frustration. He was as nervous as I was frustrated, but, in fairness, I needed to hear him out. "Alpha, I really want to apologize to Alette. What happened has really been bothering me. I would like to try and help you find the witch who sold me the potion," he said.

His willingness to help might be just the thing to help me stop being so pissed off at him.

"OK. The apology will have to wait. She is with one of my dads, and is resting. She is very confused and very hurt about what happened, Wiley. I will ask her tomorrow if she will see you, but tonight isn't good. Sorry. As far as your offer to help find the witch, I will take you up on that. Thank you," I told him. He shook my hand and we both left the hospital.

I stopped by Nick's place as I walked home to check on Henry. He and Celeste took over residency today, and I wanted to see how they were adjusting. We haven't gotten many abandoned children lately, which is a good thing. However, our domestic violence shelter stayed full. Our cell house stood as a revolving door for offenders, and unless they gravely harmed their mates or children, we couldn't hold them longer than 5 days. I felt that the jail sentence wasn't enough time, because with a light sentence like that, they always repeat offended.

Maybe that is a change that me, George and Henry could implement. Luckily, when I walked in, my bride was sitting on one of the rocking chairs with one of the current infant residents. She put her finger to her lips to tell me to be quiet, and I gave her a smile. Seeing her there holding the baby and rocking the little girl made my heart swell. I couldn't wait to see her belly round with our pup inside. It's not something we have talked about really, but I know that I wanted as many as she would want to give me. I loved kids, I always have. I wasn't only willing to care for my own either, I wasn't opposed to adoption either. I mean, I was adopted. So was River. Mom adopted Phoenix as her own, even though he was biologically Liam's.

Watching my mate with the baby, I briefly caught myself wondering if my biological mom ever did that with me. She couldn't have been all bad, could she? I had to quickly shake that thought from my head. I didn't want to think of them. I don't even know why my biological parents ever came into my thoughts. I didn't know them, and from what I was told, I'm glad I didn't. I am nothing like any of the Carter family. Except for my mom and my uncle Jason, they were all horrible humans. I felt sorry for their wolves, because I truly don't believe their wolves held any

part of what my mom went through. "What's on your mind?" George asked. I shook my head and didn't reply. I heard him sigh, and he came close to talk to me.

"Look at me Maddix, you are not them. You will never be them. You are no more your parents than Henry, Jack and I are like our father. We were all blessed to be raised by strong, caring men. Even stronger women. I know it's different for you because you didn't know yours. Trust your older and wiser best friend. You are better off. I never met them personally, but heard all about them from people who did. You are a million times better than them," he explained.

George was one of a kind. He was close to 10 years older than me, and hadn't found his mate. He believes she might have died, or is human, because he has never even gotten a tingle she has been close by. He hasn't given up hope yet, and I admired him for that. His brother, Henry, was also older than me. He was 8 years older, and had found his mate. Celeste was pretty awesome. She was slightly younger than Henry, but she adored him. I never really had friends my age. I didn't trust them much. If my parents had their way, Phoenix would have been my Beta, and River my Gamma. They, however, didn't want the positions. George and Henry were already like my brothers, so it made sense.

Riley laid the little one back in her crib, and she came and snaked her arms around my waist. "How's Alette?" she asked. I pulled her tight and said, "She's awake. She's confused and upset, but she will be fine. Dad Liam is with her right now." She nodded her head and said that with dad there, she was bound to be good. He had a way to make things seem they would always be good. "You looked good holding that little one. Have you ever thought about whether you wanted kids or not?" I asked her. She nodded her head, "I was an only child, so I have always dreamed of a big family. I hated not having siblings to grow up with. It was so lonely. What about you?" she asked. "Yes. I have always wanted a huge blended family," I replied. She looked at me oddly and asked, "Blended?" I smiled at her and said, "Yes, blended. I want my own, but I also want to adopt." She just smiled and squeezed me tighter.

She mentioned she was starving, and we said goodbye to Henry and Celeste. "Let's go eat." I said, and we made our way to the dining hall. It was Italian night at the pack house, and I couldn't wait for a few slices of chef Mattie's pizza.

Willow

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Riley POV

I went to visit Celeste at Nick's Place to see how she was settling in. Since arriving at Blood Moon, the two of us have grown rather close. I have always been kind of awkward when it comes to meeting new people or developing friendships, but Celeste made it really easy to love her. From what I have learned is that she and Henry met Celeste during a ranking member seminar that he attended with his dad, Rico.

It was being held at her former pack, Snowy Creek, in central Oregon. She was born an Omega, but in Henry's eyes, she might as well have been an Alpha Queen. It was her quirky sense of humor that drew people to her, and I loved her calm demeanor. It reminded me of my mom. Celeste may have only been a couple of years older than me, but she definitely had that motherly vibe about her. Gretchen says that Celeste is wise beyond her years, and that she will be the one with common sense when things get crazy. I had to agree.

From what I learned recently, there haven't been many children taken in at Nick's place. I suppose that is a good thing, but it didn't leave much for Celeste to do. She decided that she would also volunteer at the domestic violence center. That place, unfortunately, had more residents than it should have. It's almost at max capacity, and more than likely, we are going to have to open the doors here to make more room. There has to be a solution to that problem, and maybe Maddix and I can have a conversation about how to fix it. I have some ideas, but not sure if they are feasible here.

Henry and Celeste needed to admit a family, so I agreed to watch Willow. Willow is only 5 weeks old, and her mother died during childbirth, along with Willow's twin brother. We don't know who the father is, and he hasn't stepped up to claim her. She was born with small traces of Wolfsbane in her system, and was just recently released from the NICU. She seems pretty healthy now, but she has to go in for frequent health check-ups to make sure she had no adverse effects of the Wolfsbane. She is just the sweetest. She started to fuss, so I picked her up and walked with her. Singing softly, hoping it would calm her down.

It wasn't time for her feeding, and she didn't need a diaper change, so I did whatever I could to soothe her. Luckily, the singing worked. I decided to sit in one of the rocking chairs, and rock her. As the rocking chair moved back and forth, I sang to her softly. I sang the song my mom had sung to me when she sang me to sleep. Lullaby (Goodnight, My Angel) by Billy Joel.

"Goodnight my angel, time to close your eyes

And save these questions for another day

I think I know what you've been asking me

I think you know what I've been trying to say

I promised I would never leave you

Then you should always know

Wherever you may go, no matter where you are

I never will be far away"

She was soon letting out tiny little snores, and smiling in her sleep. I wish I could do something for this little girl. She was so precious and just needed someone to care for her. Celeste said that people had stopped to look at her, but no takers. She thought it was because of the situation with no one knowing who her dad was, and she was probably right. The fear of an absent father suddenly coming in and trying to take her from someone who took her in as their own, was a definite possibility, but also highly unlikely.

I looked up to see my love staring at me. I lifted my finger to my lips, instructing him to keep quiet. George had approached him, and it looked like the conversation they had was pretty sentimental. George was like another big brother to him, and I know Maddix saw him more as a brother than a best friend. When George stepped away, I took that as my chance to be close to my mate. I laid little Willow back in her crib, and waltzed up to my husband. I wrapped my arms around him and squeezed him tight.

I asked about his sister, and he told me how she was awake, but very freaked out at the moment. Liam was with her, and I was thankful for that. He was the most soothing of the former Alphas, and Alette was in the best hands she could be. Then he asked me about kids. I told him I would love to have them, and he said he wanted a huge blended family. Adoption was a must at some point. It got my mind racing, and I wondered if it would make sense if we adopted Willow. I would talk to him about it at dinner. It was Italian food for dinner tonight, and it was my favorite night of the week.

When we got to our table in the dining hall, the food was already being placed on it. My mouth was salivating, and I heard Maddix chuckle. "What's so funny?" I asked him. He just shook his head and sat in his seat. "Oh, nothing. Just watching you eyeball that food made me wonder if you didn't have a little wolf in you somewhere." he said. I had thought about having him make it possible for me to get a wolf, but I think I like just being me. "Maddix?" I said. He looked up at me and I finished my sentence. "What would you think of adopting Willow? Everyone keeps passing on her because no one knows who her dad is. I don't think it's fair to her, she just wants and deserves to be loved. I want her." The look of surprise on his face shocked me at first, but it soon softened. He took my hand and kissed my knuckles. "If that's what you want baby, that's what I want," he replied.

Compromise

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Alette POV

Hopefully, I can go home today. I have a little more strength than yesterday, and I really just want to sleep in my own bed. I have decided that if Dr. Flores won't release me today, I'm going over his head. I will just have Maddix tell him I can rest just as well at home as I can here. The smell of antiseptic cleaner and bleach is nauseating. Mom and daddy Loki are here with me now, and I know better than to bitch and complain with the two of them here. "Mom, did the doc say when he would be in again? I really want to go home. I need a shower and my own bed," I asked my mom. I heard her huff, and I gave my dad big doe eyes. "Mel, she's restless. Give her a break. You were the same way when you had to stay overnight here," Loki called out to my mom.

She didn't say much after that, and went out to see if she could find more information. While she was out, dad came and sat on my bed. "Want to tell me why you left pack grounds without telling anyone?" he asked me. I knew it was coming, and was hoping they would forget. I should have known better though, because my dad, Loki, never forgets. He's like a damn elephant. "Look, dad, I couldn't find anyone to tell. I left a note on my bed, and I honestly didn't plan on being gone long. I surely didn't expect to be drugged, especially by one of my friends. I'm sorry I didn't follow the rules, but I did leave a note," I plead my case.

His face went stern, and he started to shake his head. "Alette, we have rules for a reason. You are a prime target for anyone with a grudge towards our family or our pack. You know that you have to actually tell someone, and then have a warrior with you. No matter what, and no damn excuses. We could have lost you, damn it. You need to quit being so reckless. I don't know what the hell I would do if anything serious happened to any of you kids. Do you understand me??" He stated.

He was hurt and angry, and he wanted to let me know that he wasn't happy with me. I felt bad for dad and my other parents worrying, but I also hated feeling like I was always treated like a delicate child. I needed to spread my wings, and being tied to Blood Moon and having to have guards constantly over me, wasn't helping me do that.

"I'm sorry daddy, I didn't mean to worry you guys. Can I ask you something though?" I asked. He nodded his head and I sat up on my bed next to him. I leaned my head on his shoulder and wrapped my arm around his. "What is it going to be like when I leave next week for college? Am I still going to be shadowed constantly by guards or warriors? You guys are going to have to let go a little bit, or we are never going to learn how to live life on our own," I asked. I knew this hit a nerve, but I needed that answered.

"Look, Lettie, I know you and your sisters hate being shadowed. Like I said though, it's for your safety. I will make a deal with you though, and I'll deal with the ramifications of it from your other dad and brothers, but I will let you go without a shadow for the first few weeks when you get there. One one condition. You have to activate the tracker app on your phone. When you leave your apartment you will have to text me, when you get to your destination you will have to text me. If I check the locator, and you haven't done what I asked, I will immediately put a shadow or two on you. No questions asked, and no fight from you. Deal?" he stated. I jumped up

and hugged his neck. "Thank you daddy!!! I won't let you down, I promise you!" i squealed. He gave a chuckle and reminded me not to make him regret this decision.

Dr. Flores came in during all the commotion, and cleared his throat. "Well, looks like someone is feeling better. How would you like to go home?" He asked. I told him I would love to, and he said as long as my vitals were good, I could go. However, I would have to come in every 2 days until I left for college to have my blood checked. I agreed, and dad called my mom to bring me some clothes to change into. The only thing I had on when my brother brought me here was my bikini, and I didn't want to walk through the hospital in just that.

It only took her 20 minutes to get here, and she brought me my favorite black and orange leggings and an orange t-shirt. I slipped on my flip-flops and pulled my long, dark curls up into a high ponytail. "Ready?" I asked. Mom laughed and told me to hold my horses. We had to wait for my discharge papers before I could leave. While we were waiting, Wiley came through my door. Dad was on his feet immediately, and growling at him. "Calm down dad, it's OK. I want to talk to him," I said. I asked my parents to leave, but my mom refused. Wiley stated that it was OK if they stayed, and I nodded to let him know I understood. I pointed to a chair that was close to my bed, and he came and sat in it. "What is it, Wiley?" I asked. He looked as if he was fighting tears and a nervous wreck, so I placed my hand on his shoulder. "It's alright, Wiley. Just tell me what you need to say." I told him.

"I'm sorry, Lette. I didn't mean for you to get hurt. I really didn't. I have loved you for so long, and I wanted you to want me too. I wanted you to want me for your mate. That's all. I know that is wrong too, but I was desperate to be with you. I know this can't happen now, because you want your mate, but I wanted to hold on to hope. The good news about all of this, though, is that I think I found the witch." He explained. I couldn't be mad at my friend, because I understood where he was coming from. "I understand where you are coming from, Wiley. I love you too, but as my friend. We have been close friends since we were young kids, and I can't see you in any other light. I'm sorry. Where did you find her?" I replied to him. I felt so bad about hurting him, but hopefully our friendship can recover. I needed answers about this damn witch, so I hope he wasn't lying.

Preparing to Leave

Chapter 155 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

MADDIX POV

2 weeks later

My sisters leave for college this weekend. My parents are staying until they see them off, and then they are going on a European trip for a month. Their first stop is Norway and by the time they are done they will have seen 9 countries, and it will end in Germany. I would be lying if I said I wasn't envious, but my parents have earned this. When they get back here, they will only be here for 3 weeks before my parents and Rico and Grace leave for an Alaskan cruise. Living that retired life.

We brought Willow home with us 2 weeks ago, and she is fitting in just fine. She is spoiled rotten already by my dads, and my mom is always the doting grandma. My brother, Phoenix, curses at me all the time now, because mom is pressuring him about grandkids. He hasn't even settled down yet, and she is pressuring him. He loves Willow though. We gave her a middle name, and, of course, she has our last name. Her middle name is Fawn, and it suits her. She is as precious as Bambi.

Asteria has gotten pretty close to her niece, and it's causing her to want to stay home and attend online classes. Mom says it's not happening, but if Asteria struggles with the crowded college life, I know dad Loki will make mom give in. My sisters may be identical twins, but they are definitely polar opposites in every way imaginable.

"Honey? Are you hearing me?" my mom asks. "What? I'm sorry mom, I was in deep thought. What did you say?" I apologize. She gives a mild huff and makes me look at her. "I asked if you had the menu submitted for the girls send off party. It's your responsibility as Alpha to choose the celebration menu," she replied. Fuck, I knew I forgot something. "No, I spaced it. What are the girls' favorite dishes again?" I admitted.

Just by the change in her stance, I knew she was pissed off. "Alette's favorite is pasta carbonara with whole wheat pasta, Caesar salad, and garlic knots. Black forest cake for dessert. Adelina's favorite is roast beef with gravy, roasted potatoes with carrots and brussel sprouts. Her favorite dessert is chocolate mousse with fresh raspberries. Asteria's favorite is Hazel's famous flatbread pizza with cream cheese dill sauce. Topped with onion, mushrooms, tomato, red olives and jalapeños. She likes it topped with fresh basil and the avocado vinaigrette. Her favorite dessert is blueberry cheesecake. It would also be nice to just have an array of finger foods available," she reminded me. I thanked her and called down to the kitchen to make the food arrangements.

Tradition is that when a pack member leaves the pack to work towards a goal, they are celebrated for venturing out and spreading their wings. Education is highly important to all of us, and my sisters are the last of us to head to college. River has already decided on trade school only. He wants to be a history teacher. The trade school is the quickest way for him to get his degree, so he is going that route.

I needed to speak to my sisters, and get their schedules. I know my dad, Loki, promised Alette that he would allow them to roam freely without the presence of guards or warriors for a few weeks, but I'm not my dad. I didn't promise anything, and they are my responsibility as Alpha and brother. There would be someone shadowing them, but as a fellow student, not a guard.

Thankfully, there were more than just my sisters going to University of Washington this year. It made it easier to recruit several people to watch over them and report back to me. Their tuition would be paid for by the pack for providing their service. I got lucky and actually found them all together. They were going over sleeping arrangements in their on-campus apartment my parents got for them. In the apartment would be my sisters, Alette's best friend Jamie, Adelina's friend Ashley, and Asteria's friend Mary.

There were 5 bedrooms in the townhouse, but there was also an attic room. Alette wanted the attic room, but so did Adelina, so it was quite an argument right now. "Hey, Hey! I can hear you girls all the way down the hall. What the hell is all the screaming for?" I asked. Asteria spoke up and said, "They are fighting over the attic room in the townhouse. Whoever doesn't get that room, gets the smaller room downstairs, because I won the master bedroom. Adelina thinks she should get it because she was born first, and Alette thinks she should get it because she needs more space because of all of her stuff. I think they should fight till the death for it." I was thinking about what she was saying, and I realized what she said at the end. "Um, Asteria, you don't mean that," I said. She started laughing and said, "So, you were listening. Just wanted to make sure."

The two girls kept arguing, even with me standing there. It took them more time than I was happy with to even notice I was there. I finally raised my voice and released my alpha aura just enough to get their attention. "GIRLS!" I yelled. Both of them stopped mid-sentence and looked at me like I had 6 heads. "Enough of this childish crap! If you can't make a decision as adults, I will make the final call. Arguing over a place to sleep and study is ridiculous. Now, let's figure this out, and I need both of your schedules on my desk by tomorrow morning. No argument about it! Am I understood?" I bellowed. The two of them nodded their head and Adelina gave in. "Fine, she can have the attic room. However, I want an extra spending allotment for being so generous to her," she said. I agreed and she pranced out of the room thinking she won grand prize.

Ready for the Journey

Chapter 156 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

Riley POV

My sister-in-law's party was a success. They leave in the morning, and I know Maddix is worried sick. He has always had them near him, and sometimes his overprotective way of loving them is smothering. I have spent a lot of time with them this week, and I sure am going to miss them. After what happened to Alette, she seems to have calmed down some. I hope she continues to

stay calmer after she leaves for school. True to his word, Wiley found the witch who gave him the tainted potion. However, she adamantly denied ever selling it to him.

What the witch didn't expect though, was Melian. She instantly read the deception in the witch's mind, and called her out on it. The witch, Yvonne, finally admitted that she had sold the potion to Wiley, and tainted it with Wolfsbane. She said it was in retaliation for being denied a place in the coven at Ruby Meadows. She blamed Liam for it, because he had refused her advances during a visit, and reported her to Gretchen and Luke. As the warriors moved to detain her, she vanished into thin air. We haven't even found a slight trace of her since.

I know that is just another worry to add to Maddix's already long list of worries. He was such a great big brother. He was a fierce protector, and had a heart of gold. I got lucky in the mate department, that is for sure. "Hey, Adelina, can I speak to you a moment?" I asked. She nodded her head and patted the spot beside her on her bed. "What's up?" she asked. I had Willow with me, and she quickly took her out of my arms. "I just want to ask you a favor. You are the most responsible one out of the three of you, and I want to ask you to help make sure Alette stays out of trouble. Your brother is worried sick she is going to get herself in some trouble without realizing it. She's too trusting and naive, and definitely a wild one," I explained. She grabbed my hand and gave it a squeeze. "Don't worry, Riley. I will make sure she behaves herself. I'm sure she will be too busy with her studies to worry about anything else," she replied. I wanted to believe her, but something in my gut didn't feel like what she was saying would work out that way.

Willow and I sat with her aunt for another half an hour, and the baby started to get fussy. "I had better get her to her room and get her settled down. She is probably sleepy, and ready for a nap. I'll see you at dinner, OK?" I told her. She nodded her head and waved us goodbye. I walked into Willow's nursery, and noticed Maddix sitting in the rocking chair. "Maddix? Everything alright, love?" I asked him. He just stared into space and didn't acknowledge me. I laid the now sleeping Willow in her crib, and sat on my knees in front of him. "Babe? Maddix?" He looked at me finally and tears started to fall from his eyes. "Riley, have you ever just had a nagging feeling that something wasn't right? Like something bad was on the way?" he asked. I nodded my head, and asked where this was coming from. He explained he had been having nightmares.

His nightmares were where a shadowed figure kept telling him not to allow his sisters to leave for school. To keep them in the pack, and to be leery of any new friends in their lives.

"Sweetheart, it's just nightmares, and your sisters will be fine. It's more than likely your nerves about letting them go. They will only be a few hours away, and we can go visit often. If it gets too much for you, we can require them to come home on weekends. Plus, you have Josh, Andy and Ryan watching over them. Try to relax, it will be fine. I promise," I said to him. Trying to console Maddix when he is this shaken has proven to be a task, but I would help him through this at any cost. He cupped my face, and quietly replied, "Thank you."

After my mate finally calmed down, we went to Coffee and Thyme to meet his dads. They wanted to discuss some things about their trip and the girls with us. They were already waiting when we got there, and Maddix stopped by the counter to order us a sandwich and drinks. Loki gave us a huge smile, while Liam looked like he was about to cry. Loki stood up and greeted me

with a hug, and I went over to Liam and hugged his shoulders. "What's got you so glum? You are about to embark on an amazing journey," I said to him. He finally smiled and said he was just worried about being so far from home.

"What if you kids need us for something? Cell service isn't going to be the best in some places we are going. What if there is an emergency?" He asked. Maddix scoffed and shook his head. "Dad, will you please put a little more trust and have a little more confidence in me? I will make sure everything is fine. If push comes to shove, we will get a message to you somehow. I have 3 copies of your itinerary, thanks to each of you. I know where you will be before you do. Hell, I think mom even scheduled bathroom breaks." Maddix replied. I understand their worry, but I now see where Maddix gets his overprotective tendencies from.

Our meeting went from Liam worrying about his kids to us worrying about him and Loki. Melian has got them doing some crazy things, and some of them even have these strong Alphas, fearing for themselves. Melian didn't have much of a childhood, and went from being on lockdown all the time, to being Luna, a wife and mother. She didn't get to experience what being a kid is like, so she scheduled a visit to an amusement park in every country they visit. Roller coasters, Ferris wheels, rides that spin fast.

Everything the Alphas dreaded was the things she was most excited about. Just listening to them whine was comical. Loki was terrified of heights, and Liam got motion sickness pretty easily. I hated finding humor in their misery, but the way they were acting, I couldn't help it. Tomorrow was the beginning of our journey and theirs, and as hard as it was going to be on all of us, we were ready.

One Good Thing

Chapter 157 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

MADDIX POV

Driving to Seattle this morning was not high on my wishlist. Thankfully, mom was smart enough to hire a moving truck to drop the girls' stuff off yesterday. She followed the movers, and stayed overnight to help organize things a little before the triplets got there. Adelina's friend Ashley was there too. Alette and Asteria drove in the car with Riley, Willow and me, and Adelina drove in the car with my dads, Jamie and Mary, and Phoenix and River drove in River's new truck.

Everyone was very quiet during the drive. That is until we pulled onto their street. Alette gave out a squeal of excitement and woke up Willow. So now we not only have a happy Alette, but a crying Willow. Asteria finally got the baby to calm down, and she scolded Alette for waking her

up. Asteria definitely had the motherly instincts of all my sisters, but claimed she didn't want to have any. I'm sure that will change eventually, but as of right now, her persistence in never having kids was OK with me.

Pulling up to their townhouse, mom was waiting for us on their little porch. She was sitting in one of the chairs drinking her coffee, and eating a doughnut. "It's about time you all got here," she yelled. Dad, Liam, told her to keep it down. "The girls have neighbors, Mel' he exclaimed. Mom's only reply was that they would get over it, and a hearty laugh. I'm going to miss her sassy banter. Everyone filed out of their cars and made their way inside. Mom had a pot of coffee ready and a plethora of pastries for us to eat.

I grabbed myself a cream cheese danish and a bottle of orange juice, and sat on the floor in the living room. Riley made her plate, and came and sat beside me. Willow was sound asleep again, and tucked in her bouncy seat. As we were eating, we heard a scream from upstairs. My dads and I bolted up the stairs, only to find Alette sitting on her floor in front of an open box. The look of horror filled her eyes, and when we peered inside the box, we all started to laugh. Well, everyone except Alette. Inside the box was a bunch of Playboy magazines. They were my dads when they were young, and must have gotten mixed into Alette's stuff. The box had even been marked 'Alette's Room'. Liam took the box and pitched it in the dumpster. When mom asked what happened, he told her. Mom's laughter filled the house, and right then we knew, she had been the one to label the box as a prank. That was mom, forever the prankster. Just one more thing I was going to miss with her being gone.

We all worked to get the girls' townhouse situated. Loki and I put the furniture together, mom and Liam organized it in place, and the girls and their roommates worked tirelessly to unpack all the boxes. Finally, around dinner time, Asteria asked if we could go somewhere for dinner. She was starving. I had to agree with her, skipping lunch was probably not a good thing, and I was starving as well. Adelina pulled out her phone to google what restaurants were nearby, and we decided on a local steakhouse and pub not far from where we were. As we pulled into the lot, a bright red sign flashed 'Bonnie's Steakhouse and Pub'. It looked like it had seen better days, but it had a 5-star rating.

When we all walked in, you would have thought the staff hadn't seen a large group of people before. The hostess approached us and asked how many. Mel replied and said, "There are 13 of us, plus an infant." The hostess smiled and went to prepare a sitting area large enough for us. After she returned, she happily took us to our table. The inside of the place looked much better than the outside, and I was just happy it was clean and the smell of the food made my mouth water. The hostess, Courtney, gave us our menus and said our waitress would be right with us. Sure enough, as soon as Courtney walked away, two waitresses walked up. They took our drink orders, and we all looked over the menu. It had several Irish dishes that I stayed far away from. Something about the thought of Haggis turned my stomach a little bit.

After the waitresses, Heather and Brianne, returned, we each placed our order, and had a simple conversation while we waited. I ordered a 16oz ribeye, a loaded baked potato, brussel sprouts and a house salad. Riley ordered a smothered chicken and rice dish, roasted carrots and coleslaw. Of course, my father, Loki, had to order the Haggis. I was positive now that he had no sense of

smell or taste buds. Thankfully, everyone else's food smelled amazing, and he was at the other end of the table.

Phoenix and I were having a deep discussion about a couple pack members, and their mental health issues, when Phoenix's nose went into the air. He started to sniff, and his eyes slammed shut. His whole body stiffened, and he slowly opened his eyes. I started to look around the room, to see what it could be, and my eyes landed on a small framed girl, with long black hair. She stood frozen in place with a tray full of refills for our table. She had just come on for her shift, and was helping our waitresses. Phoenix stood up and turned towards her, and he whispered, "Mate." Riley stood up and took the tray of drinks from her, and the girl slowly moved towards my brother. He moved at a quicker pace towards her, and when they came face to face, she pulled him into a deep hug.

"Mate," she whispered back. They stood in each other's embrace for longer than they probably should have, and the girl, whose name we learned was Lindy, started to be scolded by one of her managers. Phoenix's anger was evident, and Liam sent to calm him down. The owner, Bonnie, came out of the kitchen to see what the commotion was, and when she saw what was transpiring, she scolded the manager. "Can't you see she has found her mate? You of all people should know that value. Leave the girl be," she said. Bonnie quickly apologized to Phoenix and Lindy, and gave the girl the night off to spend with her mate. At least one good thing came out of tonight. It definitely took my mind off of the fact that I was leaving my baby sisters at school, without the safety of me being there.

True Friend

Chapter 158 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

Alette POV

FINALLY! My parents have left for their hotel. Maddix, Riley and River are on their way home, and Phoenix will be sleeping on our couch for a couple of days. He met his mate, Lindy, tonight, and I am so happy for him. I worked on my room a little bit before finally crawling into bed, and I picked up my phone to text Micah.

Me: Hey girl, I need to talk. You awake?

Micah: Unfortunately, yes. Not feeling the greatest.

Me: I'm sorry, pregnant? LOL

Micah: Lette, that isn't funny, but it's possible.

Me: WHAT?!? I was joking. Don't you think you should find out?

Micah: I have the test, just afraid to take it.

Me: Go take it! I will talk with you until you get the results.

Micah: OK, give me a sec.

I waited patiently for her to message me back, and all I could think of was the fact that if she is pregnant, it's not by her mate.

Micah: OK, I took it. Now we are waiting for 3 minutes.

Me: OK good. Mic, what are you going to do if you are? Scott isn't your mate.

Micah: Yeah, I know. I don't know, Lette. Abortion isn't an option for me. However, I know I can't raise it. Scott would definitely bolt if it turns out I am.

Me: Then why are you with a scumbag like him? You are gorgeous and could get any guy you want.

Micah: We weren't supposed to be anything serious, just bed buddies. He was the one to get more serious first. I've just went along with it. Lette, I am scared.

Me: I know you are, but you have me to help you through this. Even if I am a few hours away.

Micah: Thank you, that means a lot to me. It's time. BRB

I felt bad for her, but she knew the risks. If she was pregnant, the baby would be sent to Nick's place after she gave birth. I just knew it.

Micah: Lette?

Me: Yeah?

SMS ARRIVED

She sent me a picture of the test, and plain as day it read POSITIVE. I quickly dialed her number and she let it go to voicemail.

Me: Micah? Why aren't you answering?

Micah: I can't talk right now, Lette. I'm crying so hard.

Me: Girl, we will get you through this. No matter what you decide, we get through this together. Alright?

Micah: Yes, thank you. I need to be alone for a while. I'm sorry, Lette. I'll talk to you tomorrow, OK?

Me: Of course, get some rest and hang in there, bestie. Love you!

Micah: Night, Lette. Love you back.

I meant what I told her. I would help her however I could. First step, talking to Riley and Celeste first thing in the morning. If anyone knew how to help Micah, it would be them.

I snuggled into my bed, and quickly fell asleep. Nightmares have made it hard to stay asleep lately, but tonight the nightmares stayed away and gave me some kind of peace.

I woke up to my phone ringing. I picked it up and saw that it was Scott, Micah's boyfriend. "Hello?" I answered in a sleepy voice. "Lette, what the hell is going on? I have been trying to get a hold of Micah since late last night, and she is ignoring my calls and texts. Have you heard from her?" he asked. I started to get aggravated, and opened my mouth to answer him when my door flew open. It was Micah.

I pointed to my phone and mouthed that it was Scott, and she shook her head and told me not to tell him she was there. "Lette?" I heard him call my name. "Um, sorry Scott. You woke me up. I'm trying to get my thoughts together. Um, no. I talked to her yesterday, but haven't heard from her since. Sorry." I told him. "FUCK!" he yelled as he disconnected the call. I threw my phone beside me and looked at my friend. "Micah! What are you doing here sweetie? I didn't expect to see you here." I asked her. She started to cry and apologized for just showing up, and I motioned to her to come to me. I pulled her into the bed with me and just held onto her. My friend was in turmoil, and she came to me. I had to help her, and I would.

Phoenix came to my door, and saw the situation. I shook my head at him, signifying that it wasn't a good time. He gave me a slight nod, and went back down the steps. "Listen, we will get through this. Have you slept? Ate anything? She shook her head, and I told her I was going to make her a sandwich, and then she was going to get some rest. No one would disturb her, and she thanked me for letting her stay. I assured her it wasn't a problem, nor would it be. I went down to the kitchen and made her a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, a glass of milk.

I let everyone know that she was there, but didn't tell them why. It was her story to tell, not mine. I asked that they leave her be, and just let her rest. They all agreed, but I knew Phoenix had more questions for me. I just hoped he would wait until later to ask them. When I returned to my room, Micah was fast asleep. I left her a note, saying I was in the shower just in case she woke up, and sat the food on the bedside table.

I gathered my things, and went into my bathroom. I sat on the floor, and started to sob for my friend. That could have easily been me at one point in time. Scott and I had hooked up not long

before he got with Micah, and it's a secret I will take to the grave with me. I got myself together and took a quick shower. I put on a pair of pink cotton shorts and a white tank top. I decided to go for a walk while she was sleeping, and just explore the neighborhood. I let my brother know where I was going, and he waved me off. He was on the phone with Lindy. I gave him a smile, grabbed my phone and left.

I noticed there was a park not far from the townhouse, and decided to head in that direction. It was a cute little space with a small playground, a walking path, and a small pond with lots of ducks. I walked towards the pond, and sat on one of the benches. As I was scrolling on my phone, soaking in the sun and quiet atmosphere, I heard a deep voice behind me. "Surely you aren't here alone?" it asked. I spun around to see who was speaking to me, and there stood one of the most gorgeous men I had ever seen.

Memory Lane

Chapter 159 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

ALETTE POV

"Surely you aren't here alone?" the deep voice behind me asked. When I turned to see where the voice was coming from, I saw a tall dark-haired man with eyes that were as blue as the ocean. "Excuse me?" I asked. He gave a chuckle and sat on the bench next to me. He extended his hand and introduced himself. "Hi, I'm Joshua. Josh for short. Are you new around here?" I nodded my head and told him we had just moved into the neighborhood. "We?" he asked. "Yea, it's me, and my two sisters. We're triplets. Then there are our 3 roommates. We live in the red townhouse up the street. He nodded his head in understanding. "You're a triplet? That's pretty cool," he said. "Yes, and we are identical in looks only. We have very different personalities." I smiled. He was really easy to talk to, and didn't seem like a stranger at all. He got a text on his phone, and after reading it, he quickly excused himself. Strange, but it's whatever.

It started to get close to lunchtime, and I knew if Phoenix was still at the house, he would start to get worried. I left my serene little spot, and started to walk home. I noticed that a dark red car was driving slowly down our street, and started to pick up the pace. It eventually passed by me, and the windows were tinted, so I couldn't see inside. It freaked me out a little bit, and I started to walk faster. When I got inside, I had to shake off the heebie jeebies before facing everyone, so I went to check on Micah.

She was still sleeping, but she must have woken up at one point. Her food was eaten, and her milk was almost gone. I covered her up, and went back downstairs. Adelina and Asteria were going through boxes, and deciding what to keep packed up and what to set out. "Hey girlies,

what are you doing?" I asked. I plopped myself on the couch, and I saw the two of them give each other a look. "What?" I asked. Adelina finally let out a sigh and said, "What is going on with Micah, Lettie? No one just shows up at someone's door at the wee hours of the morning without something being wrong."

I knew I had to tell them, so I swore them to secrecy until she decided to tell them herself. I hated telling her tea when she was in the same house, but I knew my sisters wouldn't say anything. "She's pregnant, and Scott is the dad. She doesn't love him, and doesn't want to keep the baby. She also doesn't believe in abortion, so she will carry it to term and then either surrender it to Nick's place, so it can be adopted." I explained. Asteria's mouth fell open, and Adelina got very quiet. Asteria moved closer to me and said, "Poor Micah. What if she finds her mate while she is pregnant?" I smiled at her and said, "I don't know Asteria. That is her call, and I guess if she does, it's something they will have to work out. Maybe he will step up and take care of the baby."

We left the conversation at that, and I helped them go through the boxes. I felt I should tell them about Joshua, but at the same time, I didn't see the point. I would probably never see him again anyway. Between the three of us girls, we were able to empty 8 boxes of stuff. It was fun seeing some things that we hadn't seen since we were kids. I was surprised mom had sent some of the things that she did. Like, Addie's baby blanket, Asteria's first stuffed wolf, and my boofie. My boofie was just an old t-shirt of my dad Liam's. I used to carry it with me everywhere, like a security thing. When I think about it though, those three things were always a comfortable thing for the three of us. Maybe mom sent them with a purpose. There were tons of pictures and sweet things in the boxes, and as we went through them, it was like a walk down memory lane.

"Asteria! LOOK!" I yelled. I held up a picture of her and our dads. They were holding her upside down, with each of them holding one of her feet. She had the biggest smile on her face, and they were smiling just as big. It's going to be weird without them around all the time. She busted out laughing and all she could concentrate on was that she was missing her front two top teeth. Addie's phone rang and it was Maddix. "Hey big brother," she answered. A look of concern draped over her face and she looked right at me. "Yes, she is here. She is sleeping in Alette's room," she said. "Look, Mads, it's not my place to say. Here talk to Lettie," she responded, and handed me the phone. I gave her a hateful look and took her phone.

"Hey Maddix," I said. He asked me if I had seen Micah, and I reiterated what Adelina had told him. "Yes, she's here. She is safe and sound. She just needs some space right now. I can't tell you why. It's not my place. Just trust me that it's something huge, and she just needs some time. Please tell her mother we will call her later and explain. I just want her to rest right now. If at all possible though, could you please not tell Scott where she is? He is the last person she wants to find out where she is," I explained to him. He agreed to my terms, but insisted we tell him what was going on by the end of the day. I promised him, and it was a promise I would keep. I hated keeping secrets, but I would if it meant keeping people I cared about feeling safe.

FIRE!

Chapter 160 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

MADDIX POV

One day. We haven't been home one day, and we're already dealing with drama. In the past 3 hours, I have had 15 phone calls and 4 visits from Scott, Alette's friend Micah's boyfriend. He seems desperate to find her, and has now started to have her mother call me. I assured her mother that I would look into the situation, and would let her know. I also told her that if Scott contacted me one more time, whether himself or through someone else, I would put him in the cells until I figured out what was happening. I was done messing with him.

I called my sisters to see if they knew what was going on, and Alette informed me Micah was there, but she couldn't tell me why. I had given them until the end of today to tell me what was going on, or I was bringing Micah's mom with me to their house. If I had to make another trip to Seattle in this short period of time, it wasn't going to be a good visit at all. I wanted to get this Micah situation taken care of before I addressed the mystery man Alette was talking to in the park. I hated secretly keeping tabs on them, but dad had overridden me in the guard department, and I wasn't OK with that.

I decided to take a break before my next meeting, and go see my girls. I had quickly grown fond of baby Willow, and just like Riley, I couldn't picture my life without her. I am close to finding out who her biological dad is, but people are very tight-lipped where he is concerned. I find it odd, but it also makes me feel like it's someone I know. Why else would it be such a hush-hush secret?

I found Riley and Willow in the garden. Riley was weeding and planting, and Willow was lying on a blanket next to her. "There's my girls," I said as I bent over to give my bride a kiss. "The flower bed is looking amazing, babe. I love the yellow and purple together," I told her. I sat next to her and started playing with Willow when I heard the alarms going off. I stood at my feet and instructed Riley to get into the safe room with our daughter.

I ran around to the front of the house, and noticed it wasn't an attack, but a large fire. Coffee & Thyme was on fire, as were the buildings on each side of it. On the left of it was an office building, and on the right was Nick's place. I called out for warriors to go into Nick's place to make sure everyone was out, and I turned to go towards the bistro.

I could see someone inside, but there was a wall of fire between me and that person. It looked like a woman, and I instantly started to worry. It had to either be Hazel or Christy, and they were both like aunts to me. I didn't hesitate and busted through the door. I hollered out to whoever it was, and they didn't move. I started to run and jumped through the fire, only slightly burning

myself. I bent down beside the woman, and realized it was Hazel. I picked her up and tried to find an opening to get out of safely.

My only option was to go out the way I went in because the rest of the building was engulfed in flames. I found a table cloth and got it wet in the bar sink. I wrapped it around Hazel, making sure her head and face were covered, and I ran as fast as I could through the same fire wall I went through before. Thankfully, she wasn't hurt anymore than she already was.

As I came out of the building, I was coughing from all the smoke inhalation. I tried to holler for a medic to come help. As I made my way closer to help, I collapsed with Hazel in my arms. The fire brigade was working hard to get the fire contained, and someone had pulled me up onto a gurney. I had an oxygen mask on my face, and I was finally coming to. "Hazel?" I called. "Alpha, she is fine. Just unconscious. She took a blow to the head, and breathed in quite a bit of smoke, but she will be fine. Her wolf is already helping her pull through." a medic informed me. A wave of relief consumed me, and I asked about any others. "Everyone else so far is fine, Alpha. They are still sweeping through the children's home," he said.

I pulled off the oxygen mask, and got up off the gurney. I started towards Nick's Place, and noticed Henry and Celeste lying in front of the building. Both had been knocked unconscious. One of the warriors came rushing towards me with a note in hand. "Alpha, we found this pinned to the door with a knife. The gamma and his mate were the only ones inside," the warrior said. I took the note and read it.

"Quit trying to track me down. I don't want the kid, just like I didn't want her mom. If you persist in asking questions about me, I will retaliate. Sincerely, the kids father." I crumbled up the paper, and shoved it into my back pocket. I know it said not to continue, but it only made me more determined to find out who it was. Not only to answer for why he abandoned his child, and sign over his rights, but to answer for why he attacked three people, and set fire to pack property.

I called George and Jack to let them know about Henry, and then I called Tim to let him know about Hazel. Tim said he had already been contacted and was on his way. He asked if I needed anything, and I told him that he just needed to tend to his wife. I checked on my mate and child, and then met George in my office. When I walked in, I plopped myself in my chair and said, "Bro, shit is getting stupid, and my parents haven't been gone a full 24 hours yet. It's like whoever started that fire waited for them to leave just to test me. I pulled the note out of my back pocket, and slid it across my desk to him. He read it and threw it back on the desk. "What do we do now?" he asked. I ran my hands down my face and said, "We are calling a pack meeting, and my cousin Luke. Time we find out the easy way."