

And Then There Were Four by Lilith Carrie

Chapter 26: Fatherly Admissions

Ivy POV

Spending time with Talon had been more than amazing, but while the fun was coming to a close, I never expected that my father would text me asking to speak with me. I was hesitant after everything that had happened, and I wasn't sure if I was ready to face him after he hit me.

"Ivy, it will be okay." Talon stated reassuringly, "I will be close: I won't let him hurt you again."

It was sweet that he was so willing to be protective over me. The moment we completed the mate bond, I could feel everything he did and knew that even though he was more on the aggressive side-he would do anything for

me.

What I had not expected when we entered the house through the kitchen was to see Damian standing there with Hale and James. I wanted more than anything to wrap myself in their embrace and welcome them home, but I knew that I couldn't do that because of Damian.

Damian didn't know what I had with them.

Yes, Damian and I fought all the time but no matter how many times we argued and yelled at each other, I couldn't help but find him attractive.

I couldn't help but want him.

Knocking on my father's office door, I waited.

"Come in." His loud voice boomed across the small space and with nervous hands, I pushed open the door making my way inside. His rather large and imposing figure sat behind his desk while his eyes barely glanced up at my approaching figure.

"You wanted to see me?" I was hesitant to see him after the argument we had. Our last confrontation ended with him slapping me. Something my father had never done, and I wasn't sure why he had done to begin with.

“Yes,” he replied before setting down his pin and looking at me, “I wanted to talk about what happened earlier and to apologize for losing my cool. That should never have happened, and I regret what I did.”

Shock filled me that my father was apologizing. For him to apologize when he was such a proud man was not something I expected. But then again, he had never tried to hurt me before so perhaps he really was sorry.

“It’s okay. I know it was done in the heat of the moment.” I mumbled taking a seat across from him.

“Indeed,” he chuckled, “there are actually some things that I think we need to talk about.”

“What would that be?”

“You are mating with the boys, of course.” My father said coolly with a smirk that caused my eyes to widen in shock

How in the heck did he know that!

“I have no idea-”

“Don’t try to lie to me like I’m a fool, Ivy.” He growled with impatience, shaking his head with a laugh before leaning back in his chair. “It’s a good thing, though.”

“What’s a good thing?” I was hesitant and nervous about where the conversation was going. There was still so much about all of this that I didn’t know about. Hale and I had only had a brief conversation about mates and what that meant

“Did you know that it was much harder to get you here than I expected? But I knew the moment Damian recognized

you as his mate when I came back from your graduation that had to do what it took to make sure you came here.”

My father’s riddled words made no sense at all, but I figured it was probably better not to say anything so that I didn’t anger him. Instead, I watched how he found joy in the fact that I was miserable in a way but happy at the same time.

“I don’t understand.”

“Of course not!” He chuckled, “to think you could have been at an Ivy League school but I pulled some strings made sure you were here to fulfill your destiny.”

His words were like a dagger to my heart as I tried to understand what he meant, “what do you mean, you pulled some strings?”

“Oh don’t act like that, Ivy.” He scolded, “it’s for the better. You would never have done well there.”

The fact that my father did something to prevent me from going where I wanted, and then was telling me I wouldn’t have made it there. It was beyond cruel. He had no idea what I was capable of... they were my dreams.

“You didn’t!” I screamed at him, “that was my future!”

“Don’t you dare raise your tone with me!” He growled, causing me to shrink back, but not before the office door flew – = open and all four of them stood there, eyes glowing gold staring at my father as if he lost his mind.

“You will not speak to her that way,” Damian growled, causing my father’s eyes to open wide. “You went behind my =back, and made my brother’s mate with her after I said no.”

Hale, Talon, and James all looked toward Damian

Damian had basically just let on to the fact he knew we were all mated, and that wasn’t something I had suspected. We were supposed to keep it on the down low, and not let him find out.

I was supposed to be their dirty little secret. T’

“They did as they were commanded, as you should too.” Zane bellowed, causing Damian to look at him with fury. “I am the Alpha, not you!”

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I wasn’t sure what was going on but all the testosterone that was floating around was driving me insane. I didn’t understand why these men couldn’t just let me do what I wanted to do.

I had come to Idaho to get my degree and work towards changing the future. Instead, I came and was made to live this weird love thing that didn’t make any sense and everyone was walking on eggshells around Damian.

"I can't do this..." I mumbled, standing to my feet and pushing through the men. I made my way outside of my father's office. My father's tone raised and called out to me as I walked away from him.

"Ivy..." James called out, making his way behind me, please don't run off. I'm sorry that this is like this. Please just give us,"

"Give you want?" I yelled, spinning around to face him, "time? That's all you guys ask for. You never think about how things make me feel, just think about yourselves."

James stared at me, shocked, as I pulled my car keys from my pocket. I didn't want to keep going down this road with them. Right now, I was more than ready to pack all of my things and book a flight back to Georgia away from everyone here.

"Where are you going... you can't leave.," James' pleaded, grabbing my arm and stopping me from getting into my car.

"James... let me go," I whispered before his lips came down upon mine, taking my breath away. I had missed the way he tasted, but there was no way he could just use the feeling he created in me to change my mind.

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Pushing softly against his chest, I leaned my forehead against his and sighed, "I did time, James. I need to wrap my mind around this. You all treat me like a secret, and now I find out my father lied to me. He never cared about me,

and ruined my chances at the school of my dream just to have me come here and mate with you all..."

"Do you regret it though?" He asked looking at me, "do you regret mating with me?"

"No, but love isn't forced. It isn't just about what one side wants... it's both sides." I whispered pulling away from him and sliding into my car closing the door. I knew that what I said had double meaning behind it, but he was going to have to realize that he couldn't just do what he wanted.

It wasn't just about them... they flipped my life upside down.

And through it all, no one ever asked me what I wanted.

Chapter 27: Coffee with Caleb

Driving from the main house, I found myself thinking over everything that had happened. Yes, I had created a bond with Talon and it had been a wonderful moment.

But the last thing that I expected when I got called into my father's office was that he was going to explain to me that he had set all of this up.

Tears streamed down my face, realizing that I had been deceived. The only thing that I had wanted was to come here and get an education and be able to make a difference in the world. That thought that I hadn't gotten accepted to those universities because I wasn't good enough. But at the end of the day, it was because my father had made sure I didn't.

He had pulled strings to satisfy his own needs and desires, making sure that I came here to fulfill some destiny that he thought was the right path. No one had explained anything to me, and in fact, no one had even asked my opinion on all of it, or what it was that I had desired.

Instead, they treated me like some child that was incapable of being able to decide what she wanted. I wasn't going to stand for it. If I wasn't finishing up a semester right now, I'd probably pack my bags and leave.

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-The thought of leaving though made a part of my soul ache.

Could I really leave them after everything?

Before I knew it, I found myself outside the cafe that was on part of the college campus. Rain poured down outside as if it felt the pain I had within myself. Reaching up, I dried my tears and tried to figure out my next step. More than anything I didn't want to go home.

_Atleast not right now.

Grabbing my purse, I quickly darted from my car and ran across the sidewalk to the front entrance at the cafe. The bell chimed above the door as I opened and closed it, the delicious aroma hitting me in my face making me feel more at home.

My mother had always said there wasn't a problem that couldn't be fixed with a good cup of coffee or a hot cup of tea. Tonight she was right. I wished more than anything she was here with me right now. I wanted to tell her everything that was going on, but I knew she wasn't in a good state, and burdening her with my problems wasn't the right thing to do. The chattering of individuals could be heard all around me, but it was the soft music that seemed to calm me.

Jazz... a book lover's soulmate... well at least that was my opinion.

"What can I get for you tonight? The barista asked as I looked over the menu and quickly ordered a cup of tea with milk and honey.

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Paying the woman, I waited patiently for her to complete my order. My eyes scanned the room looking for an empty table, and instead of falling on Caleb, who was sitting in the far corner going over a bunch of paperwork.

As if sensing that I was looking at him, his eyes looked up to meet mine, and a smile crossed his face. There was something about his smile that seemed so familiar to me, and in the chaos of my daydream, I almost didn't hear the barista calling my name.

"Ivy!"

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"I'm so sorry..." I replied sheepishly as I took my drink from her. Her scolding look did nothing for my uneasy soul. Turning back, Caleb gestured for me to come over and I welcome the idea of casual conversation that didn't involve the current dilemma that was going on at home.

"Caleb, isn't it a little bit late for you to be out tonight? Shouldn't you be home relaxing?" I stated with a teasing smile as I took my seat across from him.

"I could say the same for you, Ivy." He replied with a deep laugh, "What brings you out tonight? You don't look like you're in a very good position right now."

If only he had known the truth, I was far from being in a good place. In fact, all I wanted to do was lock myself away and be free of all the drama that was going on currently in my life.

"There's just a lot going on at home that doesn't make me feel comfortable being there right now. I wish things were easier, but alas, that is not my life." He nodded, as if he knew exactly what I meant and quickly picked up the coffee that he had in front of him and took a long sip.

"Why don't you explain to me what's going on? Perhaps I can give you some guidance. After all, sometimes an outsider's opinion seems to help people work through their issues."

"Oh, I couldn't possibly do that. I would hate to be a burden on you. I'm sure that you have so much that you need to attend to tonight." He laughed at my statement, shaking his head no.

"Unfortunately, I am a single man who does nothing but work his entire life, so I am more than welcoming when it comes to casual conversation. If you know what I mean."

In fact, I did know what he meant. Sometimes having casual conversation that didn't revolve around the life you currently walked was often a very nice thing to have.

"I completely understand what you mean." I replied with a sigh, "I have some guy issues at home and I also found out that my father went behind my back and made sure that I didn't get into any of the Ivy League schools that I had – applied for, just to be able to make sure that I came here."

Mouth formed and Q as his eyes widened in shock at what I had said, "That is definitely something to be upset about. Why on earth would your dad do something like that? Does he not know how wonderful it is to be accepted into a prestigious school?"

"I don't know. My father and I's relationship has been strained for a long time, and it just seems like he wants things his way and doesn't really take into consideration anything that I want."

-Caleb nodded his head thinking over what I had just said, "I am familiar with the person that your dad is. He is known around the town for being a very aggressive businessman and his godsons, I believe are not much better than he is."

I was confused at his response and wondered where it came from. I didn't realize that there was a possibility that Caleb could, in fact, know the boys and my father, although it would make sense if he had lived in this town for quite some time. "Did you grow up here?" Caleb's smirk crossed his face as he slowly nodded his head, "I did actually. I went to school with Damian. We ended up graduating a year apart. I graduated ahead of him. But he was definitely known to be a very extreme kind of person while we were in school."

"What do you mean extreme? I mean, he is a bit of an asshole, but at the same time, I'm sure it's just all the stress that causes him to be that way."

I didn't want to think of the fact that Damian was a complete-dick his entire life. Part of me wanted to believe that he could be a soft, sweet, and gentlemanly, That he was simply stressed with all the work and everything else that came with taking over a pack. So they call it. I didn't understand what it all entailed or what his life really was like, but I wanted to find out eventually.

"Well, they just aren't normal like the rest of us. I guess you could say."

Caleb's statement had me wondering if he knew exactly what they were. I had learned that there were a lot of people in this town who were actually part of the pack Damien controlled. I figured that Caleb more than likely wasn't one of those, but it didn't mean that as a human he didn't know.

I wanted to ask him but again, I knew it wasn't for me to mention something like that, and if he didn't know about that, I didn't want him to think that I was crazy. Because honestly, I felt crazy 100% of the time and I already knew the truth.

“Well, how normal could they actually be? I’ve learned quite fast when I got here that most of them were as far from normal as possible.”

“Oh, so they told you their secret, did they? Well, as much as the majority of humans don’t seem to believe in certain things, I think it’s pretty obvious that at the end of the day, we are what we are. No matter what DNA says.”

Shock filled me, his words were almost as if it was a confession. I wanted to ask him, but I didn’t want to intrude. Could the man in front of me be more than what he was? Was he like the rest of them?

“Are you a-” I started but quickly pulled back on my conversation. I was acting stupid. There was no way that Caleb was a werewolf. He didn’t act like the others at all.

“A werewolf?” He finished with a sly grin across his lips, “why yes, Ivy. I am.”

Chapter 28: Learning the Truth

I couldn’t believe what Caleb was saying. He was a werewolf, just like the others!

He was a complete contrast to what I was used to with the guys. He was kind, caring, and compassionate. He had a love for agriculture and literature that I would only dream of finding in somebody, and even though I didn’t see him in that way, he’d become quite a good friend to me.

“I’ve never thought that you were one of them,” I admitted shyly.

“It’s OK, Ivy. We all have our little secrets, but I want you to know that you don’t ever have to be afraid to speak with me. I will be open with you completely about anything you want to know. You simply just have to ask the question.”

His smile was warm, and part of me felt overjoyed at the idea he was so willing to help me understand. The truth was that the guys had never really taken the time to explain much to me. Granted, Hale explained a little but it wasn’t what I was hoping for. 1443-

I didn’t honestly know all that much about them, and that broke my heart:

Caleb cleared his throat, bringing me back from my thoughts, and causing me to give him an apologetic look, “I’m sorry...” “There is no need to apologize. Are you OK?” “Honestly, Thardly know anymore.” My reply was the honest truth. I felt completely off and different from the world that was floating around me. As much as I wanted to stay on top of the game and be in control=I couldn’t find it in myself to be that way.

I felt so defeated not knowing if I was coming or going.

"It's OK, I understand. He replied with a smile, "Perhaps the best thing for you to do tonight is just to go home and sleep it off and get some rest, and be able to recoup tomorrow and figure out what you're going to do next."

Chuckling at his comment, I contemplated sleeping:

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Sleeping sounds wonderful, but definitely couldn't go home—at least not tonight.

Perhaps I could call the girls and see if I could crash with one of them? The thought was very appealing, but then again I didn't want to be a burden to anyone.

"Thanks, but I think I'll sit here a little while longer. My plan was to try to call somebody and see about staying at one of their dorms for the night. I just don't feel comfortable going home right now."

His eyebrows shot up, and he nodded his head. "Well, I know it's a lot, but I do have a three-bedroom house with two spare rooms. If you want, you can crash in my guest room. If you'd like for the night. No strings attached or anything like that. Just trying to give you an option if you don't feel like going home."

I found his offer to be very kind, and I quickly nodded my head. "That would be wonderful, actually... If you don't mind."

"Not at all, Ivy," Caleb chuckled as he quickly slid his chair out, grabbing his bag in his jacket. "Let's get out of here and go get you settled in for the night."

Following him, I wasn't quite sure what was going to happen. I knew that the guys weren't going to be happy about the fact that I wasn't coming home tonight. But at the same time, I didn't care. I needed the space to be able to clear my mind and comprehend everything that I had been learning.

Part of me had hoped that maybe tonight before I go to bed, I could pick Caleb's mind to learn a little bit more about the life that they were trying to pull me into. They hadn't really discussed and told me anything, and I was supposed to just blindly trust them and follow forward.

I had to learn how to start listening to myself because I was the only one

Walking into Caleb's home, I was taken back by how beautiful it was. He definitely was making good money at the university to be able to afford to live in a place like this. Beautiful-wooden floors, granite countertops, lush, furnishing. It was a dream come true, and similar to what I hoped that I could own later on in my future.

"Just go ahead and get comfortable. I will take you upstairs in just a minute and sh

I stayed quiet but smiled at him before he disappeared around the corner. I wasn't quite sure where he was going, but when he came back empty-handed, and with a T-shirt on and Gray sweatpants, I realized that he had gotten himself a little more comfortable. !
"Here, let's go upstairs. I'll show you the room that you're staying in. There should be a change of clothes, some shorts or T-shirts or something in the drawer that my sister left here. You're more than welcome to use them and take a shower if you'd like."

His offer was sweet, but at the same time, I was a little hesitant.

Showering in a house with another man I don't really know in the next room?

"Thank you so much for this," I said from behind him as I followed him up the stairs towards the guest bedroom. "I feel like I'm being a bother, but you have no idea how much this means to me to be able to get away from it all for a night." Reaching the top of the stairs he turned slightly and smiled at me, "You don't even have to say thank you for staying here. My door is always open to you, Ivy."

Taken back by his offer, I stood speechless staring at him. Yes, he was my professor but since I had come to this town, he had slowly become so much more. He had in fact become a very good friend. "Thank you, Caleb. You have no idea how much that means to me." A deep chuckle slipped his lips as he nodded his head, and turned to continue on. The subtle movement of his muscles beneath his shirt drew my eyes in, but a reminder that they weren't one of the guys quickly diminished my

thoughts.

I missed them terribly, but at the same time. I was happy to be away.

Walking through the open door my eyes took in the soft feminine decor of the guest bedroom. I had no doubt that his sister frequented his home because of how it looked. Soft whites, pinks, and yellows littered every inch of the room and brought a smile to my face.

"When you're done, come downstairs and I'll get us some tea. Perhaps; I can answer some of those lingering questions for you." I spun to face him as he slowly closed the door with a grin on his face.

I was shocked that he was able to pick up on the fact I had questions. The chiming of my phone resonated again, and looking down I saw the fifteenth missed call that lay waiting on my phone.

Each of the men had tried to reach out to me, but I had ignored their advances. Why should I be the one to cave in when they all have done nothing but push me around to get what they wanted... never what I wanted.

All I wanted was for my thoughts and opinions taken into account.

Was that so much to ask for?

Staring at my phone I sighed and quickly powered it off, I needed a night that was free from their persistent ways. I wanted a night that was just me, and I had wished more than anything I would have just got a dorm room like the others.

I wasn't sure if there was a way for them to track me down, but with the necklace secured around my neck, I hoped it wouldn't be possible. Thinking back over everything Hale had said to me about what the necklace could do...

I was pretty sure tracking was one thing it prevented-or so I hoped.

Obtaining my privacy felt like a jolt of accomplishment. I was finally able to clear my mind, and also try to gain insight into what I am really getting myself into.

Or at least that is what I hoped would happen.

I cared about them all, but they had been lying and betraying me. In a way, they used me to their advantage. Yes, I enjoyed the moments spent with them. But in the end, I honestly knew nothing of the life they lived.

I was completely ignorant of werewolf life.

Up until a few weeks ago, I didn't even know they existed-but then I came here.

Of course, that's how my life seemed to go. One thing after another as if my life wasn't already full with school work.

Chapter 29: Is it Love?

The hot cascading water felt amazing upon my skin. So much so that I groaned internally when I forced myself to shut it off. The water pressure from the jets was much better in Caleb's guest shower than it was in my small cottage.

Throwing on a pair of shorts and a t-shirt from the draw he had mentioned, I made my way downstairs towards the kitchen. I wasn't quite sure why a sense of safety filled me around Caleb, but something inside me told me I could trust him.

"Ate you feeling refreshed after your shower?" He asked without looking up from the book he had been reading at the kitchen table. His eyes hesitated on the page before finally glancing at me with a smile on his face.

"Yes, I am." I replied, "Thank you."

“No need to thank me, Ivy. he replied, closing the book and setting it on the table. “Why don’t you take a seat? Go ahead and start on your tea and biscuits and I will answer any questions that you have.”

For a moment, my situation seemed amazing. But then a longing inside of me opened up wishing it was Hale or someone else that was having this conversation with me.

Taking a deep breath, moved toward the table and took my place in front of him. The tea hot and refreshing as drank it lost in my thoughts before deciding what question it was I would ask him.

“How doe’s someone become a werewolf? Is it like magic or something?”

A chuckle left his lips as he shook his head. “Uh-I guess you can call it that.

“I’m sorry. I don’t even know how to go about asking these questions.” I replied shyly, almost embarrassed that | was talking to him about it!

“No, don’t feel bad, Wvy. It’s completely normal to have these questions when you don’t know something.” The smile he gave me did little to make me feel better, but he quickly stood to his feet and gestured for me to follow him.

Moving from the kitchen, Caleb brought me into a small den within his home and gestured towards an oversized

sofa that I willingly accepted to get comfortable on. I had no doubt this conversation was going to belong.

“Alright... Let me see, he replied as his fingers moved over a set of very old books on a large brown bookcase. “Yes, here it is.”

Turning towards me, he brought over a large brown book and opened it up to a page before laying it down on the coffee table in front of me. The old written words and photos depicted wolves and humans from what seemed to be another lifetime.

“You see while being a werewolf is magic related, it’s far more complicated than someone just saying a simple spell.” Caleb started as he took a seat next to me, and flipped through the pages. “We were blessed by the gods, and are protected by the moon goddess herself.

“The moon goddess?” I asked with curiosity, “is she like the ultimate mother or something?”

“Uh-yeah I suppose you could say that yes. She is our deity,

I was stunned by the recollection of what he was saying. Being a werewolf was definitely a more complex situation. "So she made wolves have mates?"

"Yes, and no... you see not all wolves get mates. But those of us who do are blessed by her to have a love for eternity with the wolf who completes the other half of our soul. It helps to balance out our wolf."

"That makes sense." I replied, "when I worked at the wolf sanctuary in Georgia, I learned that even they mate for life. A wolf who loses its mate becomes lost and depressed and if they don't happen to get another, they often die."

"In a sense, yes. See you may know more than you think." Caleb replied, smiling at me as he turned the page again, "Over centuries, wolves got tired of having to search for their mate for fear that they had died, or perhaps weren't just born yet. So they started taking chosen mates instead. Which in my opinion was wrong."

"What? That's horrible."

"Yes, I know but as time grew on many stopped believing in her feeling that she had abandoned us so long ago."

Staring at the pages before me, I saw the depicted photo of the moon goddess and couldn't help but run my fingers against the page. "People are far too impatient."

"Yes, there are many of the wolves that also felt that way. But to each their own, I guess you can say." Caleb seemed to be quiet as if regarding the information that he had given me.

"Have you not found your mate yet?" The look in his eyes when I asked the question spoke volumes about the conflict he felt

"Uh-well I did, but unfortunately, she rejected me and claimed another."

"Oh, Caleb. I'm so sorry." My heart broke from him, and before I knew it, I wrapped my arms around him and gave him a hug.

To be given a mate, and then rejected of their love must have been horrible. Especially considering the amount of love he obviously had to give.

I wouldn't know how to act if that had happened to me, and I wasn't a wolf.

Swirling thoughts made me take a look at the relationship I had with the guys. I hadn't been with them long, and in all honesty, could I actually say I loved them?

Love was such a strong word.

I cared for them of course, but I wasn't sure if love reflected how I felt.

"It's okay. It was a long time ago." He replied as I pulled away from him.

"Can I ask something?"

"Of course, Ivy." He chuckled while staring at me, you can ask me anything."

Awkwardness filled me after he had just told me about his mate, but taking a deep breath I nodded. "I understand what you mean about the goddess giving each wolf a mate, but then why am I mated to all four of them?"

*All four of them?"

"Yes, James, Hale, Talon, and I have completed the bond. But Damian won't and he is my mate too. Honestly, I don't get it and don't even know much about them."

Caleb's eyes widened in shock, his mouth slowly, slowly dropping open. "That's impossible. I mean, I figured it was one of them, but not all four of them. That hasn't happened in hundreds of years. Mates are technically typically one person with another one person or on rare occasions two and one."

"Is it bad I am?" I asked a little taken back by his outburst. Was it bad to supposedly be mated to this many people? What if it's a bad omen or something?

They had never really explained it when I slept with them, but at the same time, I never stopped them either. When in the act, I welcomed it or almost expected them to take their claim. It was like a powerful urge sweeping over me.

"I just... they never told you anything?" He asked again, looking absolutely dumbfounded. .

"No, I mean Hale explained some things but not like you have."

"I'm so sorry, Ivy. You've been brought into all of this with people who didn't even take your own thoughts and opinions into consideration. They should have taken it more seriously. At least that's what you typically do, especially with someone who's human." His eyes scanned over me with pity before going back to the book,

"It's okay..." I murmured, finishing off my tea, and contemplating going to bed.

"I will try my best to explain some of the stuff that I know to you, but of course, I'm not part of a pack like the others and I'm what they call a lone wolf, someone who doesn't belong to anybody and primarily keeps to themselves."

Lone wolf was a new term that I hadn't heard before. Of course, I had tried to do a little bit of reading on what could find about stuff, but it was all fantasy and fiction, nothing that helped me in the real world.

*Anything that you could tell me would be wonderful. I really appreciate your help."

Caleb nodded, his eyes going to the clock on the stove before looking back at me, "Damian is what they consider to be an alpha. The leader of a group of people, almost like a president would be to a country. But he is the leader of his pack, and his pack happens to be one of the largest on this side of the continent."

I didn't realize that Damian was in charge of so many different things. It did make a lot of sense, though. The reason why he was always stressed out and of course, the reason why Hale and the others had said that he had so many responsibilities.

He was in charge of so many different people.

"That explains a lot, I guess."

An empty pit formed in the pit of my stomach as my mind wandered over to what the guys were probably doing right now. I had turned my phone off so that I could enjoy my peace and had no doubt that I would get nothing but shit from them when I went home in the morning.

"Did you want to continue for tonight?" Caleb asked me as he closed the book, and made his way back towards the bookshelf.

Exhaustion filled me as I yawned, and shook my head. "No, what you have told me already has my mind spinning. Perhaps, we can pick up tomorrow maybe?"

"Of course, Ivy. Go get some rest, and in the morning we can continue if you would like."

Taking to my feet, I walked slowly back to my room and closed the door. The softness of the bed was a welcome feeling, and as I lay there I felt the darkness pulling me closer.

Sleep was overtaking me...

But the thoughts of Damian and their secrets would never stop plaguing my mind.

Chapter 30: Words from Mommy Dearest

The last thing I expected when I woke up early in the morning was for the smell of bacon to waft in the air, and for my stomach to start growling. I wasn't sure how I felt about everything that I had learned the night before. I was

angry and had every right to be.

Time to go home.

Groaning, I rolled over and turned on my phone, letting it power up as I made my way towards the ensuite bathroom. As much as I wanted to relax in peace all day, I knew it wasn't possible.

I had to face the guys today, and I needed to find the courage to do so.

Notification after notification my phone chimed in a chorus of tunes as I brushed my teeth, and by the time I picked it up. I noticed the number of times people had tried to get a hold of me. The guys, my father, Allison... All of them tried to contact me as if something happened.

Shoving my phone into the back pocket of my jean shorts, I slipped on my shoes and raced downstairs. Caleb's well-toned body stood over the stove as he slaved away to making breakfast.

As much as I wanted to cut out and run, I felt bad about leaving when he worked so hard and decided against it. "Good Morning."

"Oh, well good morning." He replied with a smile as he looked over his shoulder, "I hope you're hungry."

"Yes, I am. Thank you for this."

"It's no problem. I figured you would have to leave right away this morning so I decided to make you something to eat before you did leave." Caleb never ceased to amaze me with how sweet he really was.

To think that his mate rejected him broke my heart because it was obvious he had a lot of love to give someone. "You're amazing, Caleb."

"Well, I like to think so." He replied, causing us both to laugh.

As the morning crept on, breakfast finished with laughing and great food, and eventually, I was wishing him goodbye. "Thank you so much for everything."

"No problem. You are welcome here any time."

Nodding my head, I hugged him tight one more time. The feeling of his arms wrapping around me and pulling me in for a tight embrace made me feel like I was hugging a long-lost friend. "I will see you later," I whispered as I pulled away from him. "Time to go walk through the fires of hell."

He chuckled, shaking his head as he watched me, “give them hell, tiger.”

Oh, that’s what I plan on doing...4

Pulling into the driveway, I should have known that there was going to be nothing but chaos, and before I barely made it out of my car, James and Hale were at my door,

“Where have you been!” James yelled, catching me off guard as Hale tried to pull him away,” do you understand how worried we have been about you!”

I figured that Talon or even Damian would be yelling at me, but for James to yell?

“It’s nice to see you as well,” I replied with sarcasm, slamming my car door and making my way towards the back door heading for my cottage. If the guys thought I was going to accept them yelling at me then they were sadly mistaken.

I wasn’t in the mood for any of it.

“Ivy, please... wait.” Hale called after me, “we were just worried.”

“Worried?!” I scoffed, spinning to face him, “so worried that you kept me blinded about my commitment to you instead of explaining the truth?”

Fuck y’all. I mentally responded as I spun back on the path and continued to my home. I knew what was expected of me, but at the same time, I wasn’t going to just play by their games. They claimed to care, but they told me nothing.

Caleb had to explain it all to me.

It’s all bullshit.

“Ivy, please stop...” Hale’s words fell on deaf ears as I opened my cottage door, and slammed it behind me, making sure to put the locks in place.

I knew I was acting immature, but I had prepared myself on the entire ride over here that I would come home and sit down and talk with them. Then James and Hale had to come out and just piss me off. The two out of the four that I figured would never do such a thing.

“Go away, Hale.” I responded when I heard him call out to me again, “when you guys learn to talk to me properly then we discuss more!”

His groan of protest was met with a victory smile on my behalf. I may have been small and weak in some eyes, but I wasn’t. I was a strong individual, and I didn’t have to take crap from them like I did.

I wish Kate were here to let me vent, but when the semester ended, she took a few weeks to go home and I was left without someone else to really talk to.

There was one person though I had not spoken to in a few days that I wished was with me more than anything, and that was my mom. Picking up my phone, I lay on my bed and dialed her number.

“Hello?” She said softly through the phone. The sound of her pain was evident in her voice and made me want to come home to take care of her.

“Hey, mama. How are you feeling?” I asked, trying to lighten the subject.

“Oh, my dear. I am doing perfectly. Just tired from work.”

I wasn't sure when she was going to stop lying about her situation, but I knew it was because she didn't want me to worry about her while I was at school. She was such a selfless woman in that way, and it killed me because if she died, I would regret forever not being able to be there with her on her last days.

“You need to rest, Mom.” I bit out through hidden tears, “how will you ever be ready for a permanent vaca when I get my degree if you're working too hard.”

The ongoing joke made us both laugh as I used the back of my sleeve to wipe away tears.

“So how are things with those boys? Are they being nice to you?” I had slowly begun to tell my mom about how school was, and the new friends I had made but not about werewolves.

That just wasn't something normal.

“They are okay, I guess. They always like to try and start arguments with me.”

“Well, if you remember correctly.” she started with a smile, “you were not that easy to live with before”

I feigned hurt at her comment which caused her to laugh, “I was an angel when I was younger.”

“Yes, well all Lucifer was once an angel too.”

My mother had a point, and hearing like this warmed my heart. It was almost like how it had been when I was younger. Back before she got diagnosed with cancer. I couldn't imagine my life without her, but a part of me also said that we had to keep up with only the good memories.

“I just wish they wouldn’t hide things from me. They like to keep too many secrets.” I muttered trying to figure out how to fix my current situation.

“Well, they are werewolves, Ivy. It’s time you accept them as their Luna.”

Shock and curiosity filled me with my mother’s words.

How in the hell did she know what they were, and how they were connected to me.

It was impossible... wasn’t it?