

Breathe

Lucas asked, "What's wrong Nick?" Nick sighed, "That shifter boy, we found some of his family. We had a couple that was going to adopt him, but his family wanted to take custody. They came to meet him, and they took him home." I said, "That does not sound bad." Nick sighed, "They got caught in a freak land slide." I winced, "Don't tell me." Nick told me, "I'm sorry, Lucas. None of them made it." I groaned, "Thanks for telling me. I'll talk to you later." I hung up the phone. Shit. Emmaline was going to be upset.

My mind went completely blank for several seconds when Emmaline came out of the bathroom. What kind of girls day was this? Dominic snickered, "The blessed kind." Agreed. I tried to tell her about her friend, but she didn't want to know. I could feel her need mounting in my chest. I'll have to tell her tomorrow.

My dick was straining in my pants. She was wearing the Princess Leia slave costume. She walked towards me like a seductress and my mouth went dry. I couldn't stop my eyes from taking in every inch of her. Dominic growled, "If you don't take mate I will." I retorted, "This outfit is for me, Dominic." Dominic said, "Then move." I moved quickly so my wolf wouldn't come out and take my outfit moment.

She thought she knew what she was doing to me, but she had no idea. This was a teenage fantasy of mine that had never been acted out. I was going to take my damn time with her in this. They needed to have these girls' days every Saturday. I was positive all their mates would agree. They could just do an afternoon thing. It didn't need to be the whole day.

I wasn't expecting her to be able to let me fuck her mouth to completion, but she took everything. She didn't gag and there were no tears running down her face. For the first time in my life, I was able to come after fucking a girl's mouth. Moon goddess my mate is perfect. I couldn't take it anymore. I needed to be inside her. We were insatiable for hours; she even took over and rode me. Eventually, her eyes fluttered closed. I was right behind her.

When we woke up, I told her about her friend. She was very emotional about it. She wanted to go do something for him at their spot. I linked Nick, "We will briefly be in your territory. Emmaline wants to put up a cross to honor the boy." Nick replied, "That's not a problem." I linked Dylan, "Get the Bishop siblings to Red Run." Dylan grunted, "Already done." I winced, not wanting to ask why he was grunting.

When we got back from Red Run, I linked Dylan, “Do not link me the rest of today unless something is literally one fire.” Dylan replied, “Copy that, boss man. I feel the same way. I’m sending Haley a gift basket. She doesn’t understand what a girl’s day is, and I will END anyone who tells her how they do it in this realm.”

I snorted, “I’m sure Eric has put out the word if he’s managed to pull himself away from her.” Dylan said, “Seriously, their bad ass girl gang day is my new religion.” I shivered, “I understand, but that’s my sister.” Dylan snickered, “Who wore sexy snow-white lingerie last night, Lucas. Sexy snow white. I died. RIP ME. I died, dead.” I winced, “Again, that’s my sister. Emmaline wore the Princess Leia slave costume.” Dylan laughed, “So you died too then. The poor leaderless pack we have. Who cares? Not Dylan, that’s who. They literally acted out teenage fantasies for us.” I said, “Yes, and now I’m closing my link so you can stop talking about my sister in sexy lingerie.”

Emmaline took a little nap. I nuzzled her when she started to wake up. Dominic purred, “Mate is so cute. She makes the cutest noises when she wakes up.” I agreed, “She does.” Dominic was practically jumping up and down, “Ask what else she got yesterday. Mate said she got lots of stuff. I want to see it.”

Emmaline’s eyes fluttered open. I smiled at her, “Would you care to show off your other fashion show items?” She smiled, “I could be persuaded, it would be a nice distraction. Except for two of the outfits. Those are going to be saved for special occasions.” I said, “As long as there are more than two other outfits, I can live with that.” Emmaline laughed, “Our living room was FULL of racks and racks of lingerie. Haley was determined everyone would take home lots of stuff. I don’t need to buy sexy things for a very long time.” I kissed her and scooted her away, “Off you go, it’s fashion show time.”

She giggled and shot off to the bathroom. I heard her snap her fingers and she called out, “Are you ready?” I sat up in anticipation, “Am I ever.” I was not. She had gotten twenty different outfits. I couldn’t stop myself from fucking her in each one. Dylan was right, their bad ass girl gang day was my new religion. I would rip out the tongue of anyone who told Haley Connors what girl’s days were in this realm. I was positive between Eric, his brothers, Haley’s brothers, Dylan, and myself, that we could make this happen. Emmaline already told me Astrid said she didn’t know what they were. It didn’t appear that any of the girls had told her.

Thankfully for everyone, nothing caught on fire in our pack for me to be linked about. I didn’t have to murder anyone who took me away from Emmaline’s perfect body and her sexy lingerie. I did decide weekends needed to be longer. Monday came too quickly. Emmaline kissed me before she left for school, waking me up. I wanted her

to stay because the two outfits I didn't see were plaguing my mind. I wanted to see them. I needed to know how sexy and perfect she looked in them.

I begrudgingly got up and showered after Emmaline left. I walked into my office to find a beaming Dylan. I put my hands up, "I don't even want to know." Dylan smiled, "I love the fashion show they did. I love the bad ass girl gang days. Let's make them a national holiday." I laughed, "If anyone could, it would be you." Dylan put his hand over his heart, "I'm so glad you know that."

The office phone rang. I answered, "Hello." Eric replied, "Lucas." I greeted, "Hello, Eric. How was your Sunday?" Jackson snorted. Eric answered, "It was amazing." I laughed, "Dylan has said we need to keep Haley from finding out what a girl's day in this realm is actually like." Eric assured me, "That's already taken care of. All her brothers are on alert. We ALL enjoyed Haley's version of a girl's day."

I asked, "So, is Darrin ready to thank me for telling him to chill out?" I heard a growl. Eric said, "No. He did thank Haley for taking Shana." I questioned, "What has you calling me first thing then?" Eric sighed, "We have news on Alpha Hammond's movements. He passed through Alpha Nathan McDermont's territory. They weren't able to apprehend them, and their pack took some injuries. He appears to be heading towards Red Run territory." I said, "I'll call Nick and alert him."

I heard a pop. Haley was practically hissing about Tessa coming to their territory. I linked Dylan, "Why would Tessa go to Eric's territory?" I didn't need an answer because Eric reminded her that her mate was here. I smiled mouthing, "Emmaline." to Dylan.

I realized he wasn't looking at me, he was holding his head. I linked him, "Dylan?" He didn't answer. I yelled, "DYLAN!" Dylan winced, "Apparently Tessa apologized to Lacy, and told her why she was so rude to her that morning." I raised an eyebrow, "And you're clutching your head because?" Dylan gloated "Because your sister is growling, yelling, and snarling in our link that I'm hers, among other sexy things that are happening later." I groaned, "That's too much information." He shrugged, "You shouted."

I linked Lacy, "Lacy Loo, I need my Beta to be able to work today. Please stop shouting in your link." Lacy replied, "Did you know? Did you know that's why that wannabe man stealing she wolf was so mean to me?" I replied honestly, "I did. Haley found out about the interaction with Emmaline, and Tessa came to apologize to Dylan and me. She knows he's yours, Lacy Loo." Lacy hissed, "Don't you Lacy Loo me! I had every right to know! After all the crap you gave Emmaline for not telling you stuff about Grayson, you two hide this from me? Haley is right. Male wolves are

sexist shits. I'm done talking to both of you." She slammed our link shut. I groaned. That was going to be a headache.

Eric asked, "Are you guys back to this conversation? Or are you still in trouble?" I answered, "We are back. Did you convince Haley not to kill Tessa?" Eric said, "I convinced Haley to take a nap because we were up very late, into the morning. She's testy. What's going on with you? I'm guessing it's Lacy, Emmaline, or both." I sighed, "Lacy just found out that Tessa was holding onto some love for Dylan, and that Dylan and I knew about it. Care to share why your mate spreads it around that male wolves are, and I quote 'sexist shits?'"

Eric laughed, "I don't know that Haley says sexist shits, but she does say we are sexist. I believe your mate says that as well." I sighed, "Lacy is a she wolf. She was raised in a pack where our relationships are the norm. Haley and Emmaline were not raised in a pack, so I give them both a pass at not understanding how we are."

Jackson chimed in, "Haley understands how we are. We are sexist, but it's in our nature. We are possessive, but not of ourselves. Our nakedness doesn't bother us, but theirs does. Your mates are not wrong. We are sexist, it's just not going to change. It's in our blood."

I sighed, "I suppose you're right." Eric agreed, "Sadly, he is right. As much as I like to argue with my mate about it..." Eric trailed off then yelled, "OH FUCK!" I tensed, "What?" Eric said, "I have a wolf that watches Haley and reports to me. She just fell asleep and disappeared from this realm. For god's sake, she just needed a nap."

I said, "She'll be ok. I'm going to call Nick. I'll make sure he knows to watch out for Hammond." Eric said, "Call if you need us. We can be there." Dylan asked, "How? Your fun sized fairy is in a different reality." Eric growled, "Bexley is not in a different reality though, she's here. I will come if you need me, Lucas." Dylan mocked, "I'm Eric. I have everything. Two fairies. I have two whole fairies. He's a fairy hoarder, Lucas." I hung up.

I dialed Nick. He immediately answered, "Lucas, I have to know how to get my wife an invitation to this bad ass girl gang girl's day. The entire pack could hear Chelsea and Sam going at it with Drake and Peter for the entire day yesterday. My son looked like a cat that ate the canary today. He had all, and I do mean ALL, the mated males asking him how to get their mate invited. Garrett is quite smug because Sharon's invite will be the easiest to get."

I laughed, "I'm surprised she wasn't invited in the first place." Nick said, "She was invited, but she was visiting her mom's pack. I think it's still strange for her that she's

part of our pack now. She never thought she'd have a wolf until she met Haley Conners. She also learned she was a partial fairy. As a whole, the group of partial fairies are adjusting to a lot of changes. Plus, popping makes traveling and visiting much simpler."

I agreed, "It does. Eric got word Alpha Hammond seems to be making his way to your territory. He mowed through Alpha Nathan McDermont's pack. No casualties but they took some damage." Nick sighed, "Yes, well unlike Nathan McDermont I have a witch I can call to counteract Alpha Hammond's apparent allies. I'll call Dustin and Aubree. I'm sure they will help us since it's Emmaline that Hammond is after."

Dustin walked in. Dylan commented, "Speak of the devil and he appears." Nick asked, "He's there? He lives here." Dustin said, "The uhh girl gang day fun lasted all day yesterday. We didn't make it to the car, so we stayed in the room Lucas has for us here."

Nick snorted, "Of course you did. I seriously have got to get my mate an invitation." Dustin laughed, "You could always ask Princess Haley Conners to plan a girl's day for your mate and her friends. From what Aubree said Princess Haley seemed delighted about planning everything. She spoke with the Princesses cousin Bexley, who said she does in fact adores planning parties."

Nick paused then agreed, "That is a fantastic idea. I'll reach out to Alpha Eric about that. Then us older Alpha's can get in on your young folks' fun." Beta McAlister said, "As long as my mate gets to go too, this is a great plan." Nick laughed, "As if my mate would have a party without yours. Thick as thieves those two. Anyway, Dustin I need your help. It seems Alpha Hammond is working his way back to Red Run."

Dustin stood, "Is he still working with a coven?" I said, "It appears so. They worked their way through one of our ally's territories with witches." Dustin announced, "I'm on the way." he walked out the door yelling, "AUBREE WE HAVE TO GO!" I heard the front door slam and hurried steps. Aubree muttered, "It's like he didn't get laid for twenty-four hours straight. What could possibly have upset him? Slamming doors, it's not even our house." I laughed as Aubree mumbled the rest of the way out of the door.

I told Nick, "Dylan and I will head to our border with you with some warriors." Nick said, "Ben and I will be heading out into our territory as well. Be safe, Lucas." I replied, "You as well." I hung up.

Dylan and I got into an SUV. I linked several warriors, "Follow our car, we are going to secure our border with Red Run. Alpha Hammond appears to be heading this way." There were growls, but fifteen men got into cars to follow us.

I linked Brad, "Alpha Hammond appears to be heading this way. Be on alert." Brad answered, "We are on alert, Alpha." I closed the link and kept driving. Dylan broke the silence, "She'll be fine, you worrying sleep tyrant." I sighed, "Alpha Hammond is smart. I don't like the man, and never have. This is sloppy though. Letting us know he's coming and the direction he's coming from? It's not like him. What if this is a misdirect?"

Dylan countered, "He might be losing his mind. If he's trying to draw us away from Emmaline, we'd be closer to her if we are at the border than at home." I sighed, "Something is off. I should go pull her out of school."

Dylan disagreed, "She's safer in school. Alpha Hammond isn't going to attack there because there are humans." I pointed out, "Don't you think he's beyond caring about that? The werewolf council will already kill him for what he's done. There's nothing more dangerous than a person with nothing to lose." Dylan agreed, "I know. Your dad, and mine, drilled that into our heads for years." I debated going against Dylan's advice but ultimately decided not to pull her out of school. It was almost lunch time, and Brad was updating me that nothing was amiss. The principal and all the teachers were on alert.

I asked Dylan, "Is Travis on alert?" Dylan nodded, "He is. I think it's a fairy thing how protective some of us are of Emmaline. The mates she's brought together feel a loyalty to her. I feel a strong loyalty to her that feels far beyond her being my Luna and best friends' mate. I want her to be safe, to protect her at all costs. Travis feels the same way."

I considered, "That does sound like something a fairy power would do. Not that she would abuse it." Dylan said, "A full blooded fairy would though, and that was the last known Soul Searcher." I nodded, "That's true." We reached the border and parked our cars. We went into the woods and shifted and started to run and smell the grounds.

After thirty minutes I linked Dylan, "I've got nothing. Not a hint of a scent that shouldn't belong or magic." Dylan grumbled, "I've got nothing either." We shifted back and grabbed our clothes. Dylan had just pulled his shirt on when he paled.

I asked, "What's wrong?" Dylan said, "Lacy just linked me. She was pissed that you were being romantic, coming to surprise Emmaline at school." I growled, "WHAT? WHERE IS SHE?" Dylan's eyes glazed over before he told me, "Lacy is running after her. She's heading to some tree she always goes to."

I linked Brad, "GET TO EMMALINE NOW!" Brad answered, "I was only... a few steps from her, and she just disappeared." I growled, "To water or she popped?" Brad

said, “Neither. She was here then she wasn’t. I smell witch magic.” I growled, “Check the area behind the school where we found her in the first place.”

I called Nick. He answered, “Lucas...” I cut him off, “Nick, is Dustin with you?” Nick replied cautiously, “He is. I’m assuming this is what my son is frantically linking me about.” I answered, “Yes. Dustin, can you hear me?”

Dustin replied, “Yes, Ryan is outside the school, and he just texted me that your pack and Alpha Kyle’s are running around like crazy people. What happened to Evie?” I sighed, “We don’t know. They don’t think she turned to water or popped, but she thought she was meeting me, and she disappeared.

Dustin swore, “Mother fucker! I’ll tell Ryan to check the area. It sounds like someone holoported her, but she could turn to water once she gets where they want her. She’s clearly not in a safe place.” I agreed, “Dylan and I will start checking the bodies of water closest to the border and work our way to you.”

I hung up and gunned it to the place I’d taken Emmaline to unlock her water fairy powers. We searched but there was nothing. We’d worked our way to the ruined remains of the Red Run school. I had so many feelings seeing it, this had brought me my mate.

I linked my dad, “Be on alert.” My dad assured me, “I have men checking the water in our area.” I replied tersely, “Thank you, dad.” I took out my phone to call Eric. He greeted, “Lucas, long time no talk.” My voice shook, “Eric...” Eric instantly asked, “What’s wrong?” Words wouldn’t come to me.

Dylan took the phone from me, “Emmaline’s gone. Some weird witch voodoo went down. We are checking bodies of water, but we haven’t found her.” I heard Katie scream, “WHAT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN WITCH VOODOO?! LOGAN, TAKE ME TO THEM NOW!”

I heard Logan reply, “Brother, take her home. Katie, I swear I will your sister, but I can’t have you here right now.” Katie was screaming at him until suddenly it stopped. Dylan linked me, “I guess one of his brothers dragged her through a portal. That will end oh so well for our creepy ninja assassin. It’s a good thing he’s an assassin or I may fear he might die.” I shot him a look.

A pop sounded and a furious Bexley was before me. She grumbled, “I’m with Haley on team witches suck.” A car engine roared over the hill and screeched as it slammed on the breaks. Lacy, Valerie, Drake, Peter, Travis, Ryan, and Emmaline’s guards ran over to our group.

Ryan screamed, “WHERE IS SHE, DUSTIN?” Dustin answered, “I don’t know. Aubree is scrying at home. We will find her, Ryan.” Ryan punched a charred wall in the school and yelled, “We JUST got her back! We can’t lose her!” Ryan scoffed, “We will find her, you say. How? Just like we found her last time? We found her because she told MY MATE about me. We didn’t find shit!” Dustin sighed, “That’s not entirely accurate.”

Dylan linked, “What did he just say?” I rubbed my head, “I don’t know. I don’t care.” Dylan grumbled, “Ye of alpha blood, I have questions.” Before he could continue Ryan went to his knees, “I can’t lose her, not my baby sister. Not again.” Valerie ran to comfort Ryan. I went numb. I barely saw Liam and Bexley arguing away from the group. She stomped her foot then popped away.

Eric grabbed my shoulders, “Have you linked her?” I said, “It feels like it’s blocked in my head.” Dominic was pacing in my mind, begging to be let free. Strategies were being talked around me, but I couldn’t focus. I don’t know how Eric did this. I couldn’t take a full breath of air. Emmaline was my air; she was my everything. Alpha Hammond was going to hurt her. Dominic was growling that we wouldn’t let that happen. I felt weak.

Suddenly, the world tilted back onto its axis as her sweet voice filtered into our link. I jolted up and Eric and Dylan glanced sharply at me. When she said there was a note in her locker I lost it. I turned to Brad, “HOW THE FUCK did someone get into the school to her locker without ANY of you noticing?” Brad said, “What? No one outside of personnel and students were there today.” I punched him, “OBVIOUSLY THERE WAS A WITCH!”

Dylan pushed me back. Eric touched my shoulder, “Lucas, she linked you. Keep her talking, we need clues on how to find her.” I stared at Eric, “She’s scared. I can feel it, and it’s tearing me apart.” Eric looked me in the eye, “I know. I know exactly how you feel.” I growled as I felt her pain, “THEY ARE HURTING HER!” Everyone was dead silent.

Eric commanded, “Lucas, TALK to her. Ask what’s happening. If she hasn’t been hit with iron, she can get away. It’s new to her, it’s not a natural instinct. She might not have thought of it.” My eyes clouded and I felt a hand on my back.

Dylan said, “Focus on Emmaline. How she looked this morning. Stay calm and mind blown her.” I laughed. Eric commented, “You’re making less sense than usual, Dylan.” Dylan snorted, “I’m being adorable and brilliant at the same time. Emmaline calls linking mind blown. Now, my adorable little sleep tyrant is calmer. I am oh so very smart. I know. I’ll be accepting compliments when my Luna is back.”

I tried to reason with Emmaline, but she wasn't cooperating. I growled, then yelled "FUCK! She wants to take Alpha Hammond down. She has her fairy powers. She's evading when she answers my question." Ryan stood, "You tell her to get her ASS back here now!" Dylan said, "Uhh you do realize he is doing that right? That's a thing you realize in your warlock fairy keeping secrets about things mind."

I asked Eric, "Is Haley back? I don't know if Emmaline's going to pop out, and she wants to call on her protection." Eric shook his head, "She's not back, and I don't know what would happen if she was called upon while in the ribbon. I don't even know if it would call to her." Of course not.

I was not above begging her to come back. Aubree wasn't having any luck scrying for her, and we had no clues to her whereabouts. It was as if Alpha Hammond's group disappeared between Alpha McDermont's pack and here.

I swore, "I knew it was a fucking misdirect. I fucking knew it!" I saw Lacy walk away from our group, but I couldn't focus on what she was doing. I asked Ryan and Dustin, "Do you have some sibling code I can say to her to get her back here?" They both looked at me like I was crazy.

Dustin answered, "Sibling code? No, just tell her to pop her happy little self here." I explained, "Lacy and I have a code word. If one of us ever uses it the other does what the one who used the code says no questions asked." Ryan stated, "When we get her back you bet your ass will have a fucking sibling code word."

Logan spoke, "Gunner just tracked her phone, it's at school. Did you happen to put a GPS tracker in her ring like my brother in law did to my sister?" I turned to Eric, shocked, "You put a GPS in Haley's wedding ring?" Eric nodded.

Ryan asked incredulously, "And you got mad she chipped you for a few hours?" Eric growled, "It's different. She knows I had it put in after Arion attacked her. I didn't have it done before I gave it to her." I sighed, "I might need your guy. I could get Emmaline to agree while we have this threat going." Eric snorted, "Gunner. The guy is Gunner." Maybe if I paid him, he'd help me too.

I heard a car door shut. Lacy had gotten back into an SUV. She was focusing really hard on something. Emmaline told me she was coming back. Relief hit me. I told the group, "Get ready. Emmaline's bringing the warlock that took her to us." Ryan said, "Fucking finally. She sees sense."

When I heard a pop, I took what felt like my first real breath of air. I took her in my arms. Dominic needed out to smell her, so I agreed. I told him, "Only for a minute. I

need to be in control to handle everything.” Dominic said, “I could handle it but fine. Let me out. I want to smell mate when I’m in control.”

Haley popped in and Emmaline talked about her newly discovered power. Dylan linked me, “Is she the fairy version of Jesus now? Iron to water. Can I get some iron to whiskey? Hell, we are by a lake, turn the water to whiskey. Dylan needs a drink. A stiff one, on the rocks.” I snorted and took back over from Dominic now that he had calmed down.

Dylan said, “Of course King Alpha Prick has to explain the Ribbon. Because his ego needs to be larger. Hopefully, they pop home. None of us with fit in the car with his oversized head.” I rolled my eyes.

Eric explained in hushed tones, “We are twice light bound, and we are mates in any and every reality. We can go to alternate realities and help other versions of ourselves. I’ve gone with Haley, and she goes without me. I’ve never gone alone so far, but Marcious believes I will go alone at some point. We just disappear from this plane, and then reappear once we accomplish what the thread wants us to.”

Nick gaped, “If that’s just not the weirdest shit I’ve ever heard. Have you met another version of me?” Eric laughed, “I haven’t but Haley might have now that she knows you. If she went to a reality where Emmaline was in your territory, she would’ve involved you and Lucas.”

Nick’s eyes were wide as saucers, “That’s... well... fairy’s... who knew?” Eric retorted, “None of us. Because it’s partial fairies, and we didn’t feel it was our place to tell them about being supernatural’s. Fairies fucked themselves by ignoring them.” Nick snorted, “No shit. Their loss is our gain I suppose.” Everyone nodded.

I linked Lacy, “This wasn’t your fault. Brad was right there with her. We would’ve known, but you did a good job alerting us. We were several moments ahead because of you.” Lacy didn’t answer me. I linked Dylan, “She did everything right. She shouldn’t feel bad.” Dylan said, “She thinks she should’ve gone with her.” I sighed, shaking my head.

I was resisting every atom in my body demanding I pull Emmaline back into my arms as the others hugged her. Logan took out his phone speaking softly, “Marcus, we’ve got her. Send Katie to Red Run’s high school.” I couldn’t hear Marcus’ response. I linked Eric, “Did Haley do that thing to Logan’s phone too? Because I can’t hear the answers on this side. Eric nodded, “She’s done it to all their phones.” I said, “I need her to do it to mine.” Eric said, “I’m sure she would.”

Nick linked me, “Why couldn’t we hear Prince Logan’s brother's answering him?” I said, “Haley did some fairy thing to it for privacy from supe hearing.” Nick said, “I would like to put in a request with the Princess.” I smirked, “Ask Eric. I just did.” He laughed.

Katie came through a portal. I linked Eric, “Something tells me Katie will in fact be hard on him.” Eric shrugged, “Who knows? You know how it goes with mates. My in laws all have a hair trigger about their mates being pregnant in this realm. I’m sure they will be a wreck when Haley is pregnant again.” I raised an eyebrow asking, “Will that be any time soon?” Eric shrugged, “Depends on your definition. We’ve discussed trying in a year or two. We did just have three.” I inclined my head, conceding his point.

Haley whispered in Fealish. Katie calmed down. I linked Eric, “What did she say?” Eric replied, “She asked the earth to grant Katie calm and peace.” I said, “That’s handy. Can we just have Haley on retainer for all your allies?” Eric said, “No, I’d never see her, and then I would be grumpy. No one wants to see that version of me again. Emmaline can do that. I’ll have Haley teach Emmaline at her next fairy training session.”

I raised an eyebrow, “You are calling your attitude when Haley was taken, grumpy?” Eric nodded. I reminded him, “Dylan REFUSED to be within a fifty-mile radius of you until we rescued Haley from Damon.” Eric retorted, “Dylan is a weenie.” I disagreed, “He’s not. You were... I get it, but you were murderously enraged.” He defiantly didn’t seem weak like I’d just felt with Emmaline gone.

I really studied Emmaline from head to toe. Rage seeped into me. She was already getting a black eye. Dylan linked me, “Take a deep breath.” I growled, “Do you know how hard she had to be hit to have a bruise less than an hour after it happened? I will FUCKING KILL THEM!” Dylan nodded, “That seems fair. Some might say it’s an overreaction to yell at me in our link when I didn’t do it. Not Dylan though.”

Haley’s lips twitched throughout Emmaline’s recounting of the events. Eric linked me, “She’s thinking of training plans.” I sighed, “Those are words I never thought I’d feel relief hearing, that’s my only emotion right now.”

I linked Dylan, “Her story makes it clear we don’t have the one that punched her. I want a name.” Dylan said, “And you will have it Alpha Rational. We have this warlock; he will give us answers. I will not rest until I have an answer. I say this because I like having answers and I know you won’t let me sleep without answers. It seems we are just letting Dustin’s comment about finding Emmaline go so getting a

warlock's name is happening." This warlock had no idea the hell he was about to go through.

Dominic growled, "He made mate sick. He had someone hurt her. I will kill him." I said, "No one disagrees, Dominic. We will get answers, and he will die by our hands." Dominic agreed, "She smells like them Lucas. I hate it." I said, "I know." She was going to have to shower.

I linked my dad, "We have Emmaline back. We are bringing the warlock who took her home for questioning." He replied, "Thank god. Your mother and I have been so worried. I'll call the men back from searching bodies of water. We will get you answers, and this will stop. We will stop Alpha Hammond; I promise you that no one comes for our family and get away with it." I replied, "Thanks, Dad."

Everyone started to disperse. I linked Nick, "It's going to be awhile before she calls her friends." Nick responded, "I think we all know that." I linked Brad and her other guards, "Brad, you come with us. The rest of you drive the vehicles back to our territory." They answered together, "Yes, Alpha."

When Emmaline popped us back home I linked Brad, "Stay at the house for now. When you need it, grab a guest room. I don't want anyone far from her for now. Your mate is welcome to come up here with you." Brad responded, "Yes, Alpha." I sighed. I was going to have to apologize to him later.

We went upstairs together, talked, showered, and both Dominic and I claimed her. We were calmer, but our anger for those warlocks was simmering beneath the surface. I was attending her needs before I dealt with them, but that was coming. I held her until she fell asleep. I slipped out of bed and stood at the door staring at her for a moment before stepping outside.

I linked my mom and Lacy, "Meet me in the Luna rooms." Both replied, "Coming." It only took them a few minutes. I explained, "I need you to watch over Emmaline. I have to deal with this, and I need to know that she's ok. I can't leave her alone right now, guarded or not." Lacy nodded.

Katie appeared, "I'll watch her too. I can't promise there will be room in your bed for you when you get done though." I smiled, "I don't know that I'll be making it to bed, but I appreciate the warning." I nodded to them.

I grabbed Lacy before she continued through the adjoining door to my bedroom. I whispered, "Thank you. Emmaline told me you were the one who convinced her to get out of there. I can't..." Tears filled my eyes, "I can't thank you enough, Lacy

Loo.” Lacy hugged me, “I love her too, Luc. I would do anything for you, you know that. I reasoned with her in a way you were not capable of in the moment. Dylan wouldn’t have been able to do it with me if the situation was reversed. He’s in the dungeons with Logan, Dad, Ryan, and Dustin by the way. I think they have some answers, but they have been waiting for you.” I nodded and gave her one last hug. My mom smiled at us from the door. I saw Katie had already opened the adjoining door and climbed into bed, holding her sister.

I let my anger fill me as I stalked away. The closer I got to the dungeons the angrier I got. I opened the door and heard my enemies screams. I walked closer to see Dustin and Ryan's hands glowing. The warlock was screaming, “I didn’t know she was your sister! No one knows that man!” Ryan said, “Do we look like we give a shit?” The warlock threatened, “I’ll get out of here and tell David Forrester myself. He’ll kill her.”

I slammed the door open and ripped him off the table Dylan had him tied down to. I didn’t even register anyone speaking to me. I snarled, “No one will kill my mate. Do you hear me?” The warlock’s eyes rounded, and he nodded. I dropped him in a heap. I grabbed a knife from Dylan.

He panicked, “What the hell is with this girl? She’s got warlock’s, witches, werewolves, and the damn Hackura defending her.” I heard a pop. Haley commented, “You forgot fairies.”

I turned and raised my eyebrow. She explained, “I wanted to help you get the truth, my lion. Then you can torture and kill him, while we go find the other warlocks involved. As I have heard Eric say this is a win, win. I agree with that saying. It makes sense.”

Dustin gaped at her. Ryan said, “Right on.” I asked, “Does anyone know his name yet?” Dylan said, “Our very own Queen Elsa, because I heard about that her ability to freeze things for SHAME no one announced it to me properly, said his name wasn’t important because that’s what he told her. He has not given up his name. Fang says I should shift and bite him. We’ve been quibbling back and forth about it. I keep trying to tell him this guy is not a bunny. Ryan said he could turn him into a bunny. Fang is onboard with that plan. We could set him loose in the dungeons and I could shift to chase him. I bet he’d give up his name, and all would be entertained. I feel like everyone would be. Seems like a good time for all but the nameless warlock we don’t care about. So, that doesn’t really count.”

I cut him across his stomach, “Tell me your name.” The warlock whimpered, “Jaron.” Dylan scoffed, “Hours of planning and telling my wolf he could rabbit hunt down the

drain. I give and give and no one appreciates me.” I growled, punched Jaron, and rephrased, “What’s your full name?” The warlock said, “Jaron Humphries.

Ryan interjected, “Then that would make the two others with you Parker and Alex Humphries.” Jaron answered, “It would.” I raised an eyebrow. Dustin clued me in, “They are his brothers.” Dylan cleared his throat, “I did know that, for the record. Just like I know he answered you because my fun sized fairy goddess is here. It’s not fair, it’s actually cheating. Poor Fang.”

I said, “How quaint. A family affair to abduct and kidnap my mate. Which one punched Emmaline?” Jaron scoffed, “Emmaline, Evelyn, Luna, the girl’s got a lot of names. Alex punched her. Bitch wouldn’t sit still.” Haley muttered, “Duchess. You forgot Duchess, you dumbass.” I growled and broke his arm. He screamed in agony. I questioned, “Why would you three agree to take my mate? Who agrees to come against me, all my allies, and Dustin Bishop?”

Jaron laughed, “It all makes sense now. It’s not just the bounty their dad put out. They actually found their little sister, and that made you guys change your name.” Dustin didn’t answer. I cleared my throat. Jaron sighed, “I took the job because Alpha Hammond offered a lot of money and protection. He’s going to use your little fairy to take over.”

Haley scoffed, “By going to war with the fairies? How incredibly short sighted.” Jaron frowned, “The fairies wouldn’t go to war.” Haley said, “Yes, we most certainly would.” I added, “So would I.” Jaron said, “You were going to be dead, so...” Everyone glanced at him. Dylan growled, “Dead warlock laying down said what about my bestie?”

I snorted, “Who was going to kill me?” Jaron shrugged, “I don’t know. Someone you weren’t going to suspect. Just kill me but leave my brothers alone.” I growled, “Your brothers put their hands on what’s mine. They will die, but don’t you worry. You can have a family reunion before I kill all of you. Where are your brothers?”

Jaron tried not to answer. I turned and watched Haley flick dirt out from under her nails. Jaron cried, trying not to say the words. Eventually he was unable to keep silent, “A safe house in Red Run.” I nodded, “Thank you, Jaron. Where was Alpha Hammond meeting you?”

Jaron admitted, “A house on the border of Red Run and Alpha McDermont’s territory. It’s where I holoported the fairy to.” I asked, “How did you set that up?” Jaron answered, “I did it on Sunday. Alpha Hammond gave me your patrol times. I slipped in and out without anyone noticing.” I gritted my teeth, “How did he get my patrol

times?” Jaron asked, “Do I look like a magic eight ball? I don’t fucking know, man!” I growled and threw him against the wall.

I complimented Haley, “It’s significantly easier to get answers with you here.” Dylan grumbled, “Turned to rabbit, fang hunts would get answers to.” Haley smiled, “I am very happy to be of service. Do you need me to pop you to Red Run?” I asked, “Will you get in trouble with Eric?” Haley said, “That would make it more fun. Did you know spoiling a fairy’s fun is dangerous?” Dylan chastised me, “Don’t spoil her fun! Her version of fun saves me HOURS of my life. Plllleeeasse! Think of my pillow.”

I rolled my eyes, “A minute ago you were upset about bunny chases. If you wouldn’t mind Haley, your help would be appreciated.” Haley grabbed Logan’s hand. He winked then grabbed mine. The rest of us quickly linked arms, then Haley popped us to a house. Logan asked, “Are we going stealthy or shock and awe?” Haley called the wind and threw the door off the house. Logan smirked, “Shock and awe it is.”

We all stalked in, and Haley questioned, “Which one of you motherfuckers is Alex?” One raised his hand. She walked up to him and punched him straight on, breaking his nose. Alex yelled, “WHAT THE FUCK, BITCH?” Logan said, “I know I didn’t just hear you call my sister a bitch.” He let his eyes blaze and both brothers stood up.

One stammered, “Jaron ratted us out? He would never!” Haley tapped her temple, “He didn’t have a choice.” They both got ready to charge at her. Logan had Alex by the throat before he’d managed to take a step. I grabbed Parker’s arm and twisted it behind his back, slamming him against the wall.

I glanced back at her, “Haley, pop us home please.” Haley asked, “Logan, can you come back over here and join the group?” Logan carried Alex over by the throat and Haley touched his arm. He put his elbow out and touched me. Dylan, Dustin, and Ryan grabbed my arm and we all popped back.

Jaron was crying, “I’m so sorry guys. I tried to fight it, but the fairy made me tell the truth.” His brothers said, “It’s not your fault. You can’t fight the Truth Seeker, Jaron. We knew the risks of this job.” Haley commented, “You three are morons. Does NO ONE remember I’m not JUST a fairy? Or THE fairy? I’m the goddamn fucking princess. I’m also a Hackura. Why does literally no one EVER remember that fact? It’s insulting, that’s what it is.”

Logan laughed, “I remember, little sister.” She kissed his forehead then said, “I’ll leave you to it, my lion. Call or text Eric should you require my services. Or Logan could call me. I always answer my brother's calls.” Logan said, “Provided you haven’t

been kidnapped, or you're not off fucking your wolf." Haley said, "I call you back when I'm done fucking my husband." With that she popped away.

Logan dropped Alex, who was sputtering and clutching his throat. I picked up a crowbar. "Alex, I hear you punched my mate." Alex said, "I was just trying to subdue her. She was fighting back." Dustin said, "Yes, because typically kidnap victims just accept their fate. Especially those who are supernatural."

I swung the crowbar and hit Alex in the stomach. He went down in a heap. I followed through with a hit on his kneecap. I let Dominic out. He snarled, "You hit MY MATE! MY MATE! I'll fucking kill you!" He attacked. Neither of us wanted to stop. Eventually Dylan said, "Dominic, my buddy and pal, he's dead. Deader than dead dead. Be a lamb and give Lucas back control." Dominic just kept hitting Alex. Logically I knew Alex had to be dead. I'd been beating him for far too long for him to be alive.

I felt a hand on my back, "Son, he's dead." I slowed down and someone caught my hand before I could bring it down again. My dad said, "Come on, Lucas." I nodded and stood. The other two brothers were wailing over their brothers death.

I addressed them, "You both know you're going to die. Do you have any information to pass along about Alpha Hammond?" Parker looked up at me, "Someone you don't see coming is going to kill you. We will be avenged." I said, "It would take a lot to kill me, and besides Alpha Hammond wants me to see Emmaline as his first."

Jaron asked, "His? She can't be his, she's yours. He wants to kill you both." Dustin spat out, "Aww, did the big bad Alpha who's trying to kidnap a teenager lie to you?" Jaron surmised, "He knew we would die."

Dylan shrugged, "He had to know it was a strong possibility. He probably wanted to see our response. If you succeeded yay for him, but now he knows a bit more about what he's up against. So, we thank you deeply for that. You don't suck at all. Please note my sarcasm. King Alpha Prick should've come with us. He'd have crushed your skulls by now. Or ripped out your heart. One can never tell which way King Alpha Prick will kill someone."

Parker ignored him and looked at Logan, "You're a Hackura, right? Your eyes glowed at the house." Logan nodded. Dylan muttered, "Called the princess his sister too. You are SO UNOBSERVANT! Can we kill him on my beta blood principle now? I'm insulted for our creepy ninja assassin. Is he a Hackura? He's the prince creepy ninja assassin. Some people. What can you do? Oh, wait...KILL THEM."

Parker stammered, “In my wallet is the routing number for the bank we used to for the fee. Take the money out before Alpha Hammond does. We may have decided to take the risk to take Alpha Lucas’ mate, but he double crossed us and always planned for us to die. If Lucas wasn’t dying today, then we were never meant to live.” Logan pulled Parker’s wallet out, “I’ll see to it.”

I asked, “Who decided to take the job?” Jaron sighed, “I did.” I moved quickly to Parker and snapped his neck. I instructed, “Dylan, strap Jaron here down to the table. Let him see what his grandiose plan got him.” Jaron pleaded, “No, no, no just kill me.” I growled, “Well if that’s what you want then I might as well give it you.” I stalked off.

My dad caught me at the top of the steps, “Shower in our room, son.” I looked down, realizing I was covered in blood. I nodded and headed off to their wing. I stood in the shower for a really long time before I turned the water off. My dad had left some shorts in the bathroom.

I found my dad sitting on the couch in their room. He gestured, “Have a seat.” I nodded, “I’m sorry I lost control of myself and Dominic. You taught me better.” My dad snorted, “He hurt your mate. He was going to hand her over to Alpha Hammond. None of them were going to live. Ryan is still down there with Jaron. He wants to kill him.”

I asked, “Then what’s with the couch chat? Feel free to tell Ryan to kill Jaron after a few hours of looking at his dead brothers.” My dad said, “Alpha Hammond has a plan. How was he when you saw him?” I frowned, “What do you mean?”

My dad sighed, “Sometimes when an Alpha loses their mate, when they have nothing else to hold onto; they go crazy.” I frowned, “Alpha Hammond never met his mate.” My dad pursed his lips, “That we know of. Were his eyes a little crazy? I mean he’s working with witches and warlocks for god's sake! We don’t dislike them by any means, but we don’t go out of our way to work with them. He seems to be with them more than wolves.” I said, “We’ve been working with Dustin and Ryan.” My dad raised an eyebrow, “If I have to tell you why that’s different... or tell you why it proves my point... his mate could’ve been a witch.”

I thought about it, “He’s always said he wanted to choose his mate himself. I guess he could’ve met his mate or he took a chosen mate.” My dad shook his head, “Losing a chosen mate doesn’t do the same thing to you. When your fated mate dies it rips a piece of your soul away. I’m just saying, he changed his mind about Emmaline without warning. Suddenly, he wanted her to be his. He’s never wanted anyone to be

his. He wanted to fall in love organically. He changed his lifelong goal after hearing her name in diner? It just doesn't make sense.”

I agreed, “You’re right. We need to look into it. I’ll see if Dustin and Ryan have figured out what coven he has working with him. He had to know those guys would die, and he didn’t want to offer up the ones he’s running with.” My dad nodded, “We’ll keep Emmy safe.”

I asked, “How? How can we keep her safe? Fairies are popping up; Alpha Hammond got our patrol schedule down. We need to change it. I’m going to have to have a rotating schedule of patrols so no one can catch the pattern. Emmaline said the note was in my handwriting.”

My dad put his hand on my back, “Now, we are aware. They messed up. This was sloppy and not well planned. He trusted warlocks to get iron into her. If she’d been more alert, she could’ve popped away the second she’d regained her senses. We keep her safe by adjusting. Haley is going to change up their training. We will change our approach. We WILL get him because no one messes with our family. We are the Lyons and we have run this territory for centuries. This is our home, and no one comes into our home and tries to take what is our and lives.” I nodded, “I agree.”

My dad smiled, “On a separate note, when are you getting that amazing girl down the aisle?” I smiled, “I can’t believe you haven’t heard yet. We are getting married on Christmas Eve.” My dad smiled, “Halloween and Christmas Eve. I like it. That suits both my pups. Go, get some sleep.” I nodded and left his room.

I found Brad in the hallway outside my room. He stood straighter when he saw me. He reported, “Alpha, the girls are still in there. Prince Logan came and picked up Princess Katie and took her back to their realm.” I nodded, “I’m sorry I punched you. This wasn’t your fault. There was nothing you could’ve done. I shouldn’t have hit you.” Brad disagreed, “I should’ve been close to her. She’s gotten notes from her friends before. I didn’t think to double check it with you.”

I frowned, “You did nothing wrong. Stick closer to her now. If she gets a note from me you don’t know about, get her out of there. I’ll link you if I decide to surprise her.” Brad nodded, “I won’t let you down again.” I sighed, “I let you down today, not the other way around. I let my temper control me, and I shouldn’t have.” Brad shrugged, “I’d go crazy if my mate vanished too.” I put my hand on his shoulder, “Go get some sleep. I’m sure your mate is waiting up.” Brad nodded again then left.

I opened the door to my room. Lacy and my mom groggily waved. I linked Dylan, “Are you coming to get Lacy?” Dylan said, “If you’d told me she was up there I’d

have already had her. You're slipping, Lucas. I'm just down here about to risk your mom's ire to shift into Fang to follow her scent to find her. I thought we were playing a sexy game. You are no fun." I groaned, "Just come get her, she's dead on her feet."

I linked my dad, "Can you come get mom?" My dad answered, "I'm at the door. Ryan is going to kill Jaron in three hours. He's being very literal about the couple of hours part." I turned and smiled as he carried my mom back to their room.

Dylan walked and picked up Lacy, "I was about to call out the national Beta guard. I was ready to activate my Beta group chat at this time of night." Lacy smiled lazily, "Didn't I tell you I was up here?" Dylan said, "You definitely didn't." Lacy mumbled, "Sorry."

Dylan picked her up, "Sure you are, my naughty little Alpha." I closed the door as they left and climbed into bed, pulling Emmaline to me. She whispered, "I love you, Lucas." I said, "I love you too, baby girl." I'd keep her safe. I have to.