

Alpha's Unhinged, Alpha's Unhinged Mate, Alpha's Unhinged Mate by Jessica Hall, Alphas, chapter, Series, Alpha's Unhinged Mate

Chapter 31

Damien's POV

"What the f**k have you done, Tabitha?" The anger I felt in this moment was unbelievable, all this drama. The trouble she caused and the strain she has placed on my relationship with Lily, which is only just hanging on by a thread and the kid isn't even mine. How does one f**k that up so badly?

"I'm sorry, I thought when I got the results back it was yours" She stumbled over her apology.

"Have you any idea, the problems this baby has caused me and it isn't even mine? What were you thinking, I just wouldn't notice?"

"No, that's not it, I didn't know. I swear"

"Who's is it then, it clearly ain't mine? And where did you get the test done" She looked away guiltily. I watched tears brim in her eyes before catching movement as the bundle in her arms wriggled. Stepping closer, I pulled the blanket back, It's scent hitting me like a slap in the face. Tabitha stepped back worriedly.

"I may be an a*****e, but I won't hurt her. Does he know?" I asked when I placed where I smelt the scent before. Tabitha shakes her head nervously.

"At a human facility, I got the test done at the same place they did my scan" She answers.

"Are you stupid, what the f**k were you thinking? You could have taken anyone's DNA in there. It would have come up positive from the werewolf gene" I scolded her.

"Does Lily know it isn't mine?" Tabitha shrugged unsure.

"I don't know. I am truly sorry, I only just realised with everything going on. There were too many scents when the door exploded. I don't think she knows" Tabitha confessed. I pinched the bridge of my nose, frustrated.

"I need to go check on her, ring Tatum and let him know he has a daughter" I tell her before turning my back and looking for Lily. Just as I was nearly out the door, Tabitha spoke up again, making me stop.

"Alpha" I turned to her and glared. She took a step back. "What Tabitha?"

"Can Trey be released?" She asks.

"Are you f*****g joking right now, we just got attacked by rogues and you want me to release one?" I ask her incredulously. The nerve of this woman.

"Let him out, I was going to ask you, anyway. He isn't a threat" Lily says, walking back out into the kitchen. I look at her shocked, since when is she on team Tabitha?

Lily looked toward Tabitha before walking over and looking at the baby in Tabitha's arms. I watch as she sniffs the air before looking up at Tabitha. "It isn't his. I am so sorry Luna, I swear I didn't know" Tabitha tells her. Lily nods her head before stroking the baby's hand.

That's it, that's her reaction? Why isn't she just as angry as I am? "Something isn't right," Darian says, and I agree with him. Lily was way to calm, her heart rate completely normal and no longer thumping loudly, even the way she spoke was different.

"Layla?" I say softly and she turns to look at me. Her eyes blazing, her odd coloured eyes burning brighter as she looks at me and smiles sadly.

"Where is Lily?" She doesn't answer, instead looks to the bodies on the ground before she bends down picking up limbs like she is picking up just ordinary garbage. Once her arms are full, she then marches out the back dumping them in the firepit. Tabitha watches her worriedly.

"She seems calm" Tabitha said, shocked.

"Yes that's what I am worried about, too calm"

"I think it might be best if I go" Tabitha says and I nod to her and watch her leave. Lily walks in, or Layla, I am unsure. I watch as she bends down, grabbing a leg and a torso from the ground. The sight before me was strange to witness someone that looks so gentle just casually stroll around with pieces of a person that she killed. I watch as she kicks a head out the door. The head rolled unevenly as she kicked it, the entire way to the firepit while dragging the body down the stairs. Grabbing the man that was leaning against the kitchen counter, I tossed him over my shoulder and follow her, dumping the body in the pit.

Pack members start coming through the treeline. They all stare at Lily curiously and I can tell they know something is off about her. The waves of fear coming off everyone as they walk past are so thick I could almost taste it. I watch as they walk inside, grabbing what is left before bringing it out and dumping it in the pit before walking back inside to help clean up.

Max and Tatum walk over and Max freezes next to me. "Lily?" He questions and her eyes snap to his and he steps back.

"No, I am Layla" She says simply before looking back at the corpses in the pit. Tatum brings a drum of petrol over and tips it in, I watch as he strikes a match and the bodies catch alight. The smell of burning flesh is putrid as the smell spreads throughout the air.

"God that smells ghastly, I hate the smell of burning hair" Max states, pinching his nose. Layla looks at Tatum.

"You must be Tatum," He nods, looking at her nervously.

"Yeah, how did you know?" He asks.

"Your scent, you gave Lily blood, and" Her eyes darted to me and I shook my head before turning to Tatum.

"Have you spoken to Tabitha?" I ask and he shakes his head, confused.

"No, she tried to ring me though"

"You best go see Tabitha" I tell him and he looks at me strangely before nodding his head. Max's voice echoes in my head through the mind link.

"Does she realise she is using her Alpha aura?" My head snaps in Max's direction. I hadn't noticed but her aura wouldn't affect me. But it explains the fear in the other pack members.

"I don't know how to control it" Layla says, answering the question Max just asked. Making both of us look at her. Max said that only to me through a private link.

"You heard that?" I ask. She nods.

"I can hear everyone" She states, her tone completely emotionless and cold, sending a shiver up my spine.

My phone rings in my pocket and I pull it out, looking at the screen. Aria. Walking away, I answer it.

“Aria, I’m sorry for your loss” I tell her.

“Where is Lily?” She asks.

“With me” I hear her breathe a sigh of relief.

“I am on my way don’t let her out of your sight”

“Why?”

“That’s not Lily in case you haven’t noticed”

“I noticed, but she seems fine,” I tell her. I can feel Layla watching and listening in.

Literally feel her eyes boring into my back.

“Yeah, for now. This is only the calm before the storm” Aria says hanging up. I turn to Lily, but she is gone. Scanning around only to see her retreating frame walking into the house. I let out a breath of relief before chasing after her.

Walking inside, everyone is busy cleaning and a few are patching the hole in the wall. Lily walks past everyone and they part, stepping away from her as she heads toward the stairs.

“Layla, when is Lily coming back?” I ask, chasing after her.

“She’s not” She says walking up the stairs not even looking back.

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Chapter 32

Lily POV

The moment I heard Aria’s voice on the other end of the phone, the dam wall burst, and a tidal wave of emotion rushed through me, freezing my veins and I couldn’t speak. Aria’s frantic voice coming through the phone, laced with panic. Yet I couldn’t utter a word. Completely consumed by sadness. I can’t fix this, what has been done, cannot be undone. And that realisation cut deeply, bleeding my soul out of me.

“I can’t because it hurts. Just make it go away” I tell Layla. Anything to take this feeling away, anything to stop my already broken pieces from sharpening more and slicing through me.

“Let me take over, Lily” Layla spoke, her voice pained as she watched me struggle with myself. Struggle with my new reality. Struggle with everything I had been holding in. I feel her pull on the veil that separated us, letting her move forward, the darkness swallowing me and I let her. Shoving her forward as she came closer.

Everyone has a breaking point, those that say they don’t, is because they haven’t reached it yet. They don’t know the soul shattering pain of when everything weighing you down becomes too much. Everyone has a breaking point. A point when they no longer feel like it is worth the pain of living. When the weight becomes too much, where you feel like you can no longer breathe. When you no longer want to.

“Don’t think like that” Layla says listening in on my thoughts. I retreat, going to where she can’t reach me.

“Let me know when you want to come back” She says.

"I'm not coming back" I tell her as I let the darkness swallow me whole. Letting it numb me as it pulls me into the darkest parts of myself where you're no longer conscious, where the pain is gone. I feel like I am just floating merely existing with no purpose, no thoughts to plague me, just nothing and a feeling of peace washing over me, numbing me from everything I ever knew and thought of.

Layla POV

I felt her slipping away, moving where not even I will go. To the part of us that is nothing but a black hole. I tried to force her back, pulling on the line leading to her, but it was like pulling on a never-ending piece of string until you get halfway through and the line snaps. Panic coursing through me when I couldn't find her. Is this what Lily feels when she can't reach me? I suddenly feel empty, hollow, the silence maddening. The piece of us that is her now gone, slipped into the abyss.

"Lily, Lily" I hear Aria's voice screaming through the phone. I look at the phone in my hand, placing it to my ear. Her voice is so loud as she screams through the phone at me, making my ears hurt.

"Dad is dead, Lily is gone" I tell her, trying to make sure I articulate my words.

"Layla? Give Lily control, now" She yells. I shake my head before realising she can't actually see me.

"Lily left, she won't come back" I tell her.

"What do you mean, Layla?"

"Goodbye Aria" I tell her, hanging up the phone. Walking out of the room, I head downstairs. Everyone was being so loud. Hear their voices racing through my head a million miles an hour. I try to block them out with my hands until I realise it is the mind-Link. And I can feel the makings of a migraine coming on.

Maybe if we clean up and make everything better, Lily will come back. I think to myself before trying to tug on the link again, only to find nothing. Once on the bottom floor, I hear talking, Tabitha and Damien seem to be having a heated discussion. I hear Tabitha apologising about the baby not being his. Hmm, well things are already looking up.

"You hear that Lily, the pup ain't his" I yell to her hoping she can hear me and will at least reply. She doesn't, I try to make a mental list of s**t I have to do, like Lily does. She always has lists tucked away in our head of the things she has to do or wants to do. Lists for everything, always taking up space in our head. Seriously, the girl needs to relax with the lists. Needs to just go off instinct. Things would be easier that way. Trying to remember what Lily might do in this situation. I make my list. Clean s**t, fix s**t, get drunk. Hmm, sounds like a list she would write in our head, but how do I do that?

This would be so much easier with Lily's commentary telling me what to do but I can deal, just smile and be nice, don't kill anyone except Kade. Possibly Aria, can't believe she kept this from us. Our father would be alive if we had warning. Why was he even alive, they said he was dead? They f*****g lied to us, they always lie. I let my burning anger for Aria fester, pushing it away so I could do what I needed to do to get Lily back. Marching down the hall, I hear Tabitha ask about her mate.

"Are you f*****g joking right now, we just got attacked by rogues and you want me to release one?" Damien yells at her. I actually feel bad for her. He could be a jerk sometimes.

"Let him out, I was going to ask you, anyway. He isn't a threat" I tell him walking into

the room, I know that's what Lily would say and want. Lily was the sort of person who would never make someone else suffer, the one that bottles everything up to hide from others, so they don't worry about her. I really didn't understand how after everything she wasn't angry. I was constantly angry for her. She gets furious with Damien, though something about him rubs her the wrong way. She likes to think of herself as an independent woman, yet I know she absolutely loves the way he takes control, likes his dominant side. It turns her on, even if she won't admit it. She hates being in charge and Damien hates not being in charge, so really it is a good mix.

Walking over to Tabitha, I want to see what this kid looks like. They always say how cute babies are and that you can tell who they look like. "It isn't his. I am so sorry Luna; I swear I didn't know" Tabitha says. I nod my head before stroking the baby's hand.

The thing is cute, but I don't know what they mean about instantly being able to tell who they look like, reminds of squishy play dough with eyeballs. Smells like its mother's v****a. I fight the urge to growl just thinking of Damien sticking his d**k in the wench that helped destroy Lily. Turning away before I do something Lily won't forgive me for, I start cleaning.

Note to self, try to leave bodies intact for easier clean up. No wonder Lily hates when I come forward. What a b***h this is having to clean up after myself. I can feel Damien watching me. As I bend down, picking up a leg. "Layla?" He says and I feel myself get excited over hearing my name roll off his tongue. Turning, I look at him. I don't say anything, just stare at him. Either I s**k at being Lily, or he can feel the difference between us. I am actually shocked Darian didn't try reaching me through our bond.

Damien looks concerned. Turning away, I concentrate on the task at hand, cleaning up the mess I made.

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Chapter 33

Damien POV

Layla cleaned up all day and night. She barely said anything. I know in this form she has a bit of a language delay and I wonder if that is why. Her words scared me, and I have tried to get her to tell me what she meant, but she won't answer.

Walking in the kitchen, I find her looking in the fridge. The hole in the wall is repaired now, but it needs painting and looking at it really grinds my gears. Everything needed to be in order, for it to stay that way and that wall was not in order.

Layla stands up, having found what she was looking for. I am shocked when she turns around with a beer in her hand. I was nearly tempted to take it from her, but then thought maybe drunk, I can get answers from her.

"If you want to know when she is coming back, I can't tell you because I don't know," She says, turning around trying to work out how to take the lid off. I suppose she hasn't mastered using fingers. I go to help her when her claws slip out and they go into the can

and she peels the top back, using her claws like a can opener. I stare in disbelief. Not once I have ever seen a wolf do that.

“What?” she says, looking at me.

“Nothing, they have a pull ring on top” I tell her pointing to the can. She looks down at the lid in her hand.

“Yeah, I couldn’t get these fingers under it, I have seen Lily do it, but doing it myself was a little awkward. These work just as well.” She says, lifting it to her lips.

“God, this is nasty, tastes like p**s,” She says.

“You don’t know what beer tastes like?” I ask her, wondering how she doesn’t when Lily used to spend most of her time drunk.

“No, Lily prefers vodka, tequila, the s**t that burns. She only drinks beer when that’s all there is, and for the most part, I try to block her out when she is drunk. She makes me angry” She says walking over and sitting on a stool.

“Aria will be here tomorrow, she was held back. She is having trouble with the kids” I feel anger roll off Layla at the mention of her name and I wonder why she is angry at Aria.

“We need to know what to do for the funeral” I ask her, hoping it might make Lily come forward.

“Don’t people just dig a hole and drop the body in it and put some decorative c**p on top,” Layla answers, which doesn’t help at all. I suppose I will just have to ask Aria.

“Will Lily be back for the funeral”

“No, I don’t know. I hope soon, because this skin thing is a little itchy, and she really needs to cut this hair. It just gets in the way,” She says, swiping at her hair. I point to the hair Tie on her wrist. And she looks at me like I have grown two heads.

Gripping her wrist, I pull it off before standing and moving behind her. I pull her hair into a bun, well as good as it will get. I don’t have long hair so it doesn’t look perfect, but it will do, and I worry about Layla chopping Lily’s hair if it becomes annoying. I love her hair.

“Thanks” She mutters.

“You don’t watch Lily much?” I ask, confused how she doesn’t know some normal simple tasks. I know if I let Darian take over, he can do most things, could probably even c**k. He just isn’t comfortable, says it makes him on edge and doesn’t feel right. Looking at Layla though, she looks pretty comfortable, relaxed even though she can’t do the simplest of tasks.

“No, I usually block her out, unless you’re there or her father. He is funny or if she is in danger, She replies, taking another mouthful and scrunching her face up.

“Why?” I ask confused, Darian is with me constantly unless I shove him out.

“Because I hurt her. Being there is a constant reminder of what Kade did to us. Lily likes to put on a front and I know you think I don’t know much but I can tell she is depressed; she always has been. Why do you think she gets shitfaced all the time?”

“To control you” I tell her honestly.

“No, well yeah, she thinks it does. But that’s not the real reason. She gets like that, so she doesn’t have to feel, doesn’t have to relive it and won’t dream about it. She sleeps better with you near her, your scent comforts her” Layla says, and I realise maybe none of us really know Lily. Everyone always tells her what they want and need from her, what is expected of her and yet no one asks if she is ok.

"Is that why she left?" Layla nods before looking at me.

"I offered to take over. It worried me she would hurt herself. I just didn't think she would abandon me. And by the time I felt her leaving I couldn't force her back" Layla says and I can see the guilt in her eyes. Feel it through the bond. She feels guilty for not stopping her. Darian whines loudly in my head, wanting to comfort her.

Layla gets up and I watch as she leaves the kitchen.

"Where are you going?"

"To shower, this skin is f*****g itchy, and the blood is making it worse" She says. I follow her and turn the shower on, knowing she probably won't figure it out. Layla strips off and stands under the water. She is definitely comfortable in this skin, as she has no care that I am watching.

"You forget Damien, we are the most primal side, Layla wants what Lily wants and vice versa. Just Layla isn't held back from the restraints you humans are self-conscious of" Darian says.

Stripping off, I step under the water with her. I feel her eyes trail up and down my body and for once I feel my face blush under her gaze, never have I felt so bare before as she literally looked at every inch of me.

"You done?" I ask, as her eyes meet mine.

"Sorry" She says, passing me the soap. We quickly wash and get out. When we get in bed though. Layla lays her head on my chest and I relax. Only suddenly she sits up before climbing on top of me. "Layla, what are you doing" I ask and she leans down and kisses me.

I try to tell her to stop. Pulling her face back to mine. I kiss her before rolling her on to her back and pushing my weight on her. Pulling back with my arms on either side of her head, I look down at her as she inhales my scent, lifting her head up, she runs her nose across the crook of my neck to my chin.

"Lily, won't forgive Layla if she takes this from her Damien, make her stop" Darian says even though I could tell he wants nothing more, yet he loves Lily. She is our mate, so is Layla, but this isn't Layla's form to do as she pleases with.

"Layla, we can't do this, not without, Lily"

"I know and I wouldn't do that to her, but thanks for assuming I would" She rambles on for a bit under her breath and Darian feels bad which seeps into me making me feel bad for upsetting her.

"Well, you read that wrong" I tell Darian.

"Nothing wrong with placing boundaries, at least while the rational part of her isn't here" Darian answers.

"She seems more rational," I tell him.

"I think she is just hollow without Lily at the moment, don't let your guard down. After seeing everything downstairs, what she is capable of. It worries me," Darian answers.

"She seems fine"

"Yeah, but what happens if Lily doesn't come back for a while. I know Layla won't cope. She isn't safe in her own mind without Lily, just as Lily isn't safe without her. Just imagine what it would be like if you only heard silence" He says.

I pull Layla over to me and wrap my arm around her, hugging her tight, and I feel her breathing even out and her muscles relax at my closeness as she falls asleep. Darian is right, I would go stir crazy without him and it would be so lonely in my head without him.

This must feel so foreign to Layla not having Lily's guidance. I just hope Lily is surviving without her. Because after speaking to Layla, one thing I realised is Lily needs help.

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Chapter 34

Layla POV

My anger bubbled under the surface, building up while I watched the minutes tick by, ever so slowly. Seconds turning to minutes, minutes to hours when finally, I heard it and all that anger and hatred I felt in this moment was a ticking time bomb about to burst. Lily's last thought of how she betrayed her, made my hair stand on end. They kept this from her, kept Kade from her, and she felt betrayed.

Me on the other hand, felt nothing but pure hatred. Maybe if I got a better understanding of what she was feeling, I wouldn't have done it. Wouldn't have thought revenge for Lily was what she would have wanted. Lily loved Aria, I realise that now, realise this was Aria protecting her. But the moment she stepped through the front door; I didn't see that. I saw nothing but red, fiery red-hot anger.

Damien was talking to her. Yet I couldn't focus on what they were saying, only focus on the feeling that was bubbling and spilling over the sides. A storm within me raging and setting every cell in my body alight with rage.

Her voice washed over me, smashing into me full force and I exploded. Lunging straight for her throat. We crashed straight through the front door and tumbled down the stairs. I watched as she got up, shaking herself off, as she commanded me to stop, her Alpha voice ringing loudly to submit.

I could see the alarm in Damien's face as he too had his arms placed out like he was trying to cage a wild animal. The primal urge to submit to her rolled over me and I shook it off, I felt the pain of it rush over every atom in us, only fueling the desire to cause her the same pain that she caused Lily, caused me. As I threw everything that I had at her.

I will give her one thing: she was fast, faster than I could have imagined, her kick sending me flying into Damien's car leaving a dent and outline of my body in his door.

Getting to my feet, I shift. My clothes shredding to pieces as I stalk towards her, teeth bared and head down. I could feel my fur rise as I hackled up. Damien shifting beside me made my eyes dart to him as I felt Darian take over. His Alpha voice rang loudly through the link as he lunged at me. But I was quicker as I lunged at the same time back at Aria. Darian missed me, hitting air.

My claws digging into the earth before I spring off my back legs and run full force at her. What I wasn't expecting was the look of panic on her face, and I thought she feared me. That wasn't it, though. The fear wasn't for herself. It was the fear you see in a mother's eyes. Aria screams and runs straight at me and I see him a second later.

Ryker runs straight into my path. My heart beating so fast, I watch as time slows, and I force the shift from wolf back to Lily's skin. Knowing if I don't, he was going to get

nothing but claws and teeth.

Skidding along the concrete driveway, I feel my skin being ripped to shreds as the gravel bites into my flesh. When I stop, I find myself on top of Ryker before he tries to shove me off.

Aria's frantic screaming for her son makes me spring up and off him as panic seized me. Ryker shakes his head and his mop of black hair flops to the side as he brushes his fringe to the side and off his face before sitting up.

"Bad Layla, don't eat my mother" He says smacking my shoulder. And I sigh a breath of relief before ripping him to me and hugging him tight, realising he was okay. Aria was at his side in a second, gripping his face and checking him for injuries, but I was too lost in the fear of almost hurting him when I heard his little voice and I fought the urge to laugh as he hugs me tightly. I hear Damien shifting back, but I don't pay attention as all I can think is how I almost hurt him.

"Aunty your b**b is on my ear" He says and I chuckle before kissing his thick hair on his head. Then suddenly I feel it. The sting on the side of my neck and I place my hand on my neck, trying to understand where the bee-like sting came from. Looking up, I see Damien with a syringe in his hand before I feel the world spin, my body feeling heavy.

My body paralysed before I slump on the ground, Ryker's hands on the side of my face stop my head smashing into the concrete as he gently places my head on the ground.

"You okay, Aunty Lil. You just need sleep" Ryker tells me and I feel my eyes flutter. The last thing I think is that the kid is wise beyond his years as darkness takes over and the last thing I see is his face watching me.

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Chapter 35

Lily POV

I was in my bubble of nothing, just floating. Floating around in the darkness of my mind. No feeling, just darkness and silence. I felt at peace and I was forgetting why I was here. Forgetting if I came here voluntarily or if I was placed here. Yet I felt nothing, so I didn't care. I wasn't awake or asleep, just floating, and weightless.

I could hear a buzzing, the buzzing getting closer before I realised it was a voice I could hear. There was something about the voice. I knew it somehow, but I couldn't figure out why it felt familiar. The voice got louder and louder as they got closer.

"Lily, Lily, d**n it, where are you? Need a torch in here" I listen, trying to remember who it is, only coming up blank until I feel it rush past me.

"Man, time really stands still in here" The voice says and I feel myself questioning them.

"Who are you and how did you get here?"

"It's me Layla, you don't remember me?" She asks. The name is important to me. I know that much.

"You know who I am, how can you forget, I am the best part of you. And you me" She

says and something in her words makes memories flash back to me. Memories of the day my father died, memories of Kade ripping my father's heart out of his chest. The look on his face as he looked at me. Memories I was here to forget.

"Why are you here?" I ask her annoyed realising I left her and I feel the pain, the crippling pain of grief starting to swallow me.

"I missed you" She said, and I felt her presence around me. Comforting and I could almost feel her the closer she got, feel the teether that links us and all its frayed pieces barely holding us together and also dragging us apart. We sit in the darkness, not saying anything. After a few minutes, I hear her voice echoing loudly beside me into the abyss.

"Well this is fun, do you come here often?" She says and I chuckle.

"Don't suppose you brought a torch, it's dark down here" Layla whines.

"Go back Layla, you can't be here" I tell her.

"No, if your quitting I quit too"

"No, go back. You said you would take over"

"Yeah, tried that, I s**k at being you. And there is something wrong with that skin of yours, it made me so itchy. You really need to rub some lotion on it, something is not right with it" She says.

"You promised, I tell her"

"No, I didn't. I said I would take over, I never said how long for"

"How long has it been?"

"I don't know, took me a while to find you or maybe it was second I have no idea, time is weird back here,"

"Can you go back please Layla? I want to be alone"

"Maybe that is the problem Lily, we are always alone. I'm alone, you're alone, maybe if we were together, we wouldn't feel so alone," She rambles.

"That's not what I meant. I don't want to remember, you being here brings it back, now go"

"I will if you come back" She says tugging on our already broken link.

"It's not broken Lily, don't think that"

"We are broken Layla, why am I the only one of us that realises that"

"Because you're the only one that thinks it, we are perfectly imperfect. Maybe we aren't broken, maybe the pieces are just lost, we just need to put the pieces back together" I say nothing, just letting her ramble like she does. I don't know how long we sat there in the darkness when her questions made me tune back in.

"If you could have one thing, what would it be?"

"You know the answer already, Layla"

"Well, I can't bring Dad back so choose another" She says.

"I don't know then"

"You want to know what I want?" She asks.

"What do you want, Layla?" I ask, bored with this questioning.

"I want you to accept yourself and forgive yourself"

"Forgive myself?" I say rolling my eyes. "I have done nothing, to need to forgive myself"

"Yes, you have. You gave up, gave up on us. We were never broken Lily, we were never whole to break. How can you expect anyone else to accept us when you don't. I have always accepted you. I never wanted to be by anyone's side more than I have

wanted to be by yours” She tells me.

“Not even Damien’s?” I ask.

“I would love to do a lot of things to Damien, but If I had to choose, I would choose you. So can you forgive yourself or at least try. We don’t have to do this alone, not anymore. I won’t ever leave you Lily, you are mine”

“As you are mine, Layla”

“So you will do it?”

“Do what?”

“Come back and accept us as perfectly imperfect” She says and I chuckle.

“Yes, Layla. I will try but I don’t want to go back”

“Well, maybe we stay for a bit, probably best that way, your sister scares me”

“Aria? Why, what did she do?”

“Oh nothing, just”

“Layla, what did you do?”

“I will tell you only, if you promise not to get angry”

“Layla?” I growl.

“Okay, okay, I may have tried to attack her, but she was so much quicker. That sister of yours is a real badass, Reid has trained her well. Luckily Ryker got in the way because she probably would have given me a beat down, then Damien drugged me and then I came here and yeah all caught up. So yeah, she is pretty mad at you for nearly hurting Ryker so I thought it best to come get you so you can deal with her and I don’t try to eat her” Layla blurted like word vomit.

“You did what?”

“You said you wouldn’t get mad, I didn’t even leave a scratch on her, I am sure. Pretty sure we got gravel rash in places we shouldn’t have gravel rash but we will be fine, might have scratched that itchy a*s skin of yours glad to be rid of that. Think you need a flea bath”

“I don’t have fleas and will you slow down, you aren’t making sense. Why would you attack my sister?”

“Because I made a list, like you do of what I need to do, to bring you back”

“And attacking my sister was on that list?”

“No, but she was like an added extra. You were upset because she didn’t tell you about Kade, so I wanted to get revenge for you”

“Layla, no she is my sister and what about Ryker?”

“He is fine, said I can’t eat his mother, complained about my well your b**b in his ear. I like that kid. Gave me quite the fright when I ran into him, but he is good, everyone is good”

“You didn’t think to tell me this when you first came here?”

“No, kind of slipped my mind, like I slipped yours. But if you come back, we can fix everything. Fix us”

“Maybe, but I don’t even know how to get back”

“hmm, this place needs some neon signs and map”

“Be serious, Layla. How do we go back?”

“I don’t know, I can’t even see you. Just feel you’re near”

“Well, maybe we try to find each other, then we can find the way back together” I tell her, trying to feel anything in oblivion surrounding us. I couldn’t even feel my own limbs,

yet I could feel her presence as I struggled to reach out to her, to find her in the darkness. Both of us are pulling on the weak tether that holds us together. Stretching and moving further into the darkness until I felt it. Like a rubber band being stretched before it flings back together.

Smacking into each other with so much force we burst from the darkness and I felt her fur brush against my hand as we both looked out the eyes of our human vessel. I move closer, debating whether I should take the reins back.

“You can do this Lily, I am here with you” Layla says, her fur brushing against me in encouragement.

“I don’t want to feel the pain”

“Then don’t, focus on something else, focus on our mate” She says, nudging me forward.

I go to run back when Layla gets in my way, blocking my way back to the void of darkness.

“I can’t Layla”

“You can, I am right here. Right here, Lily. Where I have always been,” She says her Sapphire and amber eyes burning into me. “We are one. I won’t let you fall, not again. You can trust me”

That’s when I felt it, the overwhelming feeling of every emotion I ever felt rush into me, but that wasn’t all I felt as I felt hers rushing over me to making me gasp and I realised she was giving it to me, showing me she would always be there, that she has always been there. Watching from the shadows, but she was there watching and feeling everything with me. So I let go, let go of everything and I felt stronger and more in tune to her.

Layla always thought we needed a mate to fix us, and I always thought I needed a different wolf, but what we really needed was each other. To let the walls we built up between us come crashing down. Brick by brick they fell, and I snapped back to reality, snapping out of my head and into the present.

Opening my eyes, I felt heavy, like I haven’t moved in weeks. I try to sit up, but even that is a task in itself, as I prop myself up on the headboard. Looking around the room, I try to figure out where I am. I don’t recognise this room. The walls padded with white padding;

I try to reach up and rub my eyes only to find cuffs holding my wrists to the bed, my ankles also shackled to the bed. I yank them, trying to free myself, when that doesn’t work. I feel Layla press against my skin.

“Layla, can we shift?” I ask and I feel her force the shift, I scream from the snapping of bones and I can tell wherever we are, we have been here awhile, because shifting isn’t usually this painful. I feel the cuffs slide off our paws and the hospital gown is shredded on the bed. Jumping off the bed we land on our paws on the floor, which is also padded.

Shifting back, I am left in a coat of sweat as pain wracked every muscle and bone in my body. There are no windows to let us know if it is day or night, turning I see a door.

When it hits me, the room upstairs. I recognise the steel door. The prison Damien made for us. The one I thought I would never see the inside of.

“What did you do, Layla, that we would get locked in here?”

“I do not know, I just remember being stabbed by a needle then I went looking for you” Walking to the door, I pressed my hand against the cold steel before knocking on it. I

hear no movement outside the door, but I wouldn't be surprised if the place was sound proof.

"The mind link Lily,"

I nod in agreement with Layla before feeling for the bond.

"Damien?" I ask, and I feel his shock through the bond.

"Lily?"

"Can you let me out?"

"I can't do that Lily"

"What, why? It is me Damien"

"I'm sorry Lily, it's not safe"

"What do you mean it's not safe"

"You're not safe Lily, I won't allow you to hurt anyone else"

"What are you talking about, let me out, this isn't funny Damien?"

"I will come see you when I get home" He says before cutting the mind link.

"I don't understand Layla, why won't he let us out?"

"I..I don't know, I swear I didn't do anything else. I can only remember what I told you" Layla says and I can feel her disappointment and sadness rush over me. Sitting on the ground, I hug my knees to my chest, suddenly feeling cold.

"I just want it to stop, I want it to stop. I don't understand, I came back. I came back. Why doesn't he want us now? Is it because of the baby?" I ask, scared that Damien tossed us aside for Tabitha.

"S**t, I forgot to tell you, that place really messes with your mind. It isn't Damien's; she had her blood tested at the human facility and the results were wrong. Damien isn't the father, Tatum is," Layla says, making my head snap up.

"What?"

"He isn't the father Lily, the results were wrong" I feel relieved at her words but that doesn't explain why he has us locked away. Why he doesn't want us anymore"

We waited for Damien to arrive; I wasn't sure how long it took but it did take a while before I heard the locks on the door twisting and groaning. His scent wafting throughout the room as he stepped in making my heart flutter, Layla purring in my head with excitement.

Hopping off the bed, I walk over and wrap my arms around his waist as he shuts the door. I feel him freeze and the muscles in his back tense at my actions, but I ignore his reaction just enjoying him being this close.

He turns around in my arms and I rest my head on his chest; I feel him brush my hair off my head before kissing the top of my head. The mate bond was a lot stronger now, and I felt tingles everywhere his skin was pressed against mine, maybe absence really does make the heart grow fonder. His heartbeat thumping in his chest softly as I pressed my ear against his chest. I feel him fiddling with his back pocket and step away so he can retrieve what I assumed must have been his phone.

I walk over to the door, tugging on its handle only to find it locked. Turning around, I glare at him.

"Let me out Damien, I want to leave" I tell him. He shakes his head and I feel Layla suddenly become wary as we both look at our mate.

"I can't do that, Layla" Layla? Confused, I feel my eyebrows furrow trying to remember anything, I could feel Layla doing the same and she couldn't figure out why he was

acting this way.

“No, it’s me Lily,” I tell him, yanking on the handle. I feel Damien step closer, making the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. Spinning around to face him, I go to demand he let me out when I see the syringe in his hand making my heart rate quicken.

“How did you get out of the cuffs?” He asked, cocking his head to the side.

“What? I shifted how else. Let me out Damien you’re scaring me” I tell him as he moves closer. I see his eyes soften and sadness flood me through the bond.

“I can’t, I can’t take that risk. I am doing this for your own good” He said moving closer. I shake my head.

“No, Damien, it’s really me, please” I tell him looking toward the door. I see him move out of the corner of my eye and see him lunge at me. I try to fight him off, but he is quick to pin me face down on the ground. I feel the sting of the needle as it stabs into my neck, instantly feeling woozy.

“I don’t understand,” I tell him, trying to get out from under him. My body feels heavier and heavier as I struggle, the room getting darker as I try to fight the fog that’s taking over. I feel him roll me onto my back before lifting me off the ground. His lips going to my head as he kisses me. I hear another voice and recognise it as Natalia’s.

“Is this really necessary, she seems cognitive?”

“I don’t care, I won’t take the risk. She nearly killed her. What if it happens again and she kills more of my men?” I hear Damien speak.

“You can’t punish her for what might happen. We don’t even know if she is telling the truth. This isn’t the answer, Damien. And since when did you care for your mother, the b***h deserves death” Natalia spat.

“I don’t care for her, she can rot in hell for all I care. You let her out, and I will banish you, understand?” I hear him growl.

“You can’t do this; it isn’t right, why can’t you see that?”

“You don’t tell me what to do with my mate” He spat at her when she growled angrily at him.

“She may be your mate, but she is my Luna. You can’t treat her like this” Natalia yelled angrily back at him. I could feel Damien fiddling with my wrists and I felt something go around my neck. My entire body feels heavy before I lose feeling in my limbs.

“What are you going to keep her locked up for the rest of her life?” Natalia asked.

“She is unhinged, I won’t risk my pack. Now get out” he bellowed, his voice echoing through the room. His words slapped me in the face. I have heard that term from everyone else, I never expected it to leave his lips and it suddenly hurt more coming from him. The one person who was meant to love us, made to accept us. It would have hurt less if he did slap me, his words cutting deeper than any wound I had ever had.

I heard Layla whimper in my head before it left my lips. I could feel tears run down my cheek and I just wanted him to leave. I feel him wipe my tears and I feel him move away from me.

We should have known better than to believe he would accept us; I should have ignored Layla when she begged me not to reject him. That would have hurt less, would have hurt less than hearing those three words leave his mouth.

She is unhinged. His words replayed in my head over and over as I slipped into unconsciousness. I no longer fought to remain conscious, instead I willed it to happen. Praying I wouldn’t wake up and for once Layla didn’t argue. For once we wanted the

same thing. Death would be better than feeling every piece of my heart shattered by those three words that taunted me all my life, now taunting me worse coming from him.

We would never be good enough, always known to be the unhinged Alpha. The unhinged one, the one no one wanted around because she couldn't be trusted.

Damien's POV

I hated seeing her like this, hated myself for doing it to her. Tucking the blanket around her I walk out, locking the door and pocketing the key. Walking down the stairs, I see the thing that is supposed to be my mother wandering into the hall.

"Why did you come back?" I ask her. I couldn't stand the woman, and Darian was pressing beneath my skin, wanting nothing more than to rip her to pieces. Yet as much as I hated her I couldn't bring myself to kill her. She was my mother after all, even if she didn't protect me. Even if she fed me to the wolves literally. My body was littered with scars from my old man and all she did was watch, letting me take the beating so she wouldn't have to. What mother does that? What mother can sit back and watch her child be beaten till the brink of death, only to heal him and let him do it all over again.

"I missed you?" She says looking at her feet. I scoff at her words.

"How much?" I ask and she looks up, anger in her green eyes.

"Come on, mum. How much do you need this time, what s**t do I have to dig you out of this time"

"It's not like that son, I heard you found your Luna, I just want to be a part of my future grandchild's life"

"You will never come near any child I ever have; I will skin you alive before I let you near any future grandchildren".

"Wow, you really are your father's son, aren't you?" I growled at her words; I was nothing like my father. He was cruel and merciless on his pack and on me. I treat my pack right; I look after them. He just tortured them for his own sick amusement. To inflict that sort of pain on a child, on his own pack members and to claim you are an Alpha is simply wrong. Alpha's look after their own, not destroy them, not sell them off. They certainly don't kill them for fun.

I must admit though, she does look better than last time I saw her five years ago. She didn't look like your typical rogue, her long dark wavy hair flowing seamlessly down her back and she had gained weight, was no longer frail and her olive skin had fewer wrinkles. She no longer looked like a corpse.

"I met someone, he looks after me" She said looking at me hopefully like I could just forget the past and let her in my life again.

"Good, that means you don't need me" I tell her before turning my back on her. I mind link my Beta and tell him to get her off Pack land. She had caused enough damage already. My mate forever stuck in a padded room because I could no longer trust her around my pack after what she did. Darian said we shouldn't trust my mother, he said that Layla wouldn't just attack her for no reason, my mother was many things, had done unspeakable things, yet she had no reason to lie about Lily. She didn't know her, didn't know she was my Luna. So, her lying didn't make sense.

Darian and Aria pleaded with me to listen, that it was out of character for her to do those things. Yet I could also see the doubt of her own words as she spoke them. Aria truly didn't know what Layla and Lily were capable of because no one knew what the mutated genes did to her. What the effect they had on her was. How could we when we

weren't even sure what she was anymore. Aria left promising to get answers but until then I have no choice but to keep her locked up.

I feel terrible that she missed her own father's funeral, that she didn't get to reconcile with Aria. I felt terrible for Ryker as Aria hauled him away kicking and screaming for his aunty. But it doesn't undo what she did.

But I couldn't take that risk, not after what she did downstairs, not after what she did to Aria. If she would attack her own family, how could I trust her not to attack my pack? And the fact that she was able to resist Aria's Lycan voice and my own Alpha voice had left me with more questions. What was she? I knew she was a wolf, but wolves don't drain people of their blood, they recognise their own pack, yet she killed three of my warriors already. I won't let her hurt anymore people. I won't let her kill for pleasure. I loved her but love isn't enough when you're an Alpha.

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