

## Wolfless 71

### Chapter Seventy-One

Luna Ayla

Nate stormed into our bedroom, slamming the door behind him. It hit the door frame with such force I was surprised it didn't fly into the living room. I looked at the bedroom door before looking at Xander.

"Poking the big bad alpha," Silas snickered.

"Ayla, what the hell?" Xander demanded.

"I'm going to ignore your tone, Xander. I wasn't doing anything wrong. They belong to my kingdom." I told him, standing up from the couch.

"And we will talk after I'm done with my mate." I huffed.

"Ayla, we should probably get going," Chase said, and I shook my head.

"No, this is also my pack and you three are a part of my side. And if this is supposed to be my home as well, then I should be able to have people who I care about here."

"Let's give them a few minutes. I'm sure you guys are hungry." I heard Xander say before I walked into my bedroom, closing the door behind me.

I sighed when I heard the shower going. I walked over to the bathroom door to find the door was locked. Kaia let out a growl, unimpressed with Nate locking us out.

"It's fine. He's just upset. Breath." I told her as I sat on the edge of the bed.

"No, Ayla, he is being ridiculous. You weren't doing anything wrong. And we have marked him. He should know we are his," she huffed. I didn't respond. I just took some deep breaths. I needed to be patient with him.

After the longest ten minutes of my life. Nate finally emerged from the bathroom. He was still wet and the towel was wrapped dangerously low on his hips. He didn't even look at me as we walked over to the closet.

"Nate, come here," I said before he even made it across the room. He stopped in his tracks. Hesitant about what to do.

"Please," I said softly. He cursed under his breath before he stormed over to sit beside me.

I instantly climbed on his lap, straddling him and throwing my arms around his neck. I was now staring into his deep blue eyes where a storm was brewing. I leaned in and pecked his lips before resting my forehead against his.

"Do you want to tell me what's bothering you, babe?" I asked after a few moments of silence.

"Ayla, I just.." he stammered before running a hand through his hair.

"Do you not want to be with me?" I bit my lower lip, hoping to ease the stabbing pain in my chest.

"What? Of course I do, I just. I don't trust him and I don't want you being that close to him or him in our home." He exclaimed, gripping my hips tightly.

"Have I given you a reason not to trust me?"

"No," he sighed.

"Nate, I have a hard time trusting anyone. But I'm trying. I was comforting him." He went to speak but I held up my hand to stop him.

"Let me finish. I was explaining to them what happened and it came back to my relationship with Jordan. Kaden felt guilty. I may not be in love with him, but I still care. All of them are like family to me. They are a part of my kingdom. I would protect all of them with my life, as well as you. My wolf forced the shift so she could claim you. Please don't ever doubt me. I love you so much." I finished. He gazed into my eyes for only a moment before he crushed his lips against mine. I smiled against his lips as his grip on my hips tightened. He slammed me down, grinding my core against his hardening c\*\*k.

"Baby, I'm sorry. I know I should never doubt you. But our bond was broken before and it scares me. The relationship you had with him scares me." he breathed out, after breaking the kiss. I rested my forehead against his, before rubbing our noses together.

"I love you so much, Nate. It hurts. And when the full moon is finally high in the sky, I want to claim you fully. I don't want anyone to be able to break our bond again. I don't want to have to live without you. Just be honest with me. Whenever something is bothering you, we can talk about it." I told him and he sighed.

"I overreacted."

"Maybe, but I understand. If the situation was reversed, it would be hard for me. But I love you and I want to claim you and only you. I want to build us a house closer to the ocean. And in a few years, I want to have your babies."

"What not now," he chuckled.

"The house? or the babies?" I smiled.

"f\*\*k, I want you to have my babies," he mumbled, kissing my neck. I moaned as I rolled my hips down, grinding against him.

"And when the time is right, I'll be more than happy to give them to you. But for now, we need to focus on us, our pack, and kingdoms." I told him, taking hold of his cheeks so he would look at me.

"Can I make a counteroffer?" he purred, lifting my shirt above my head. As soon as he discarded the shirt, my bra was un-clipped and he was sliding it down my arms.

"Depends on the offer," I gasped, as Nate kissed down my neck, along my collarbone.

"Give me a year. Everything should be finished by then. Then you give me a pup or two," he mumbled, kissing the tops of my breasts. I let out a giggle.

"I don't know if everything will be done within a year, but I promise I will try. Plus, we can always practice."

"Oh, I intended to have your body mesmerized. Every inch," he purred, taking a n\*\*\*\*e into his mouth. I moaned as I pushed my fingers into his hair, holding him against my chest. He bit, sucked, and flicked it with his tongue before moving on to the other one. My body was on fire, and our bond flared to life as he explored my body with his tongue and hands.

With his hands firmly against my ass, he stood up and placed me down on the bed. His towel was nowhere in sight as he gripped the band of my leggings, tugging them down. I licked my lips, dying to taste him. Yesterday, I was scared it would hurt, but today, I was willing to do anything and everything. All of him was mine.

When my pants and panties were off, I sat up, forcing Nate to stand. I kissed along the contours of his abs, as I took his throbbing c\*\*k into my hand. Nate let out a hiss and a groan before his hands were in my hair. I moaned as I licked the precum off the tip. f\*\*k, he was an addiction. My addiction as I took to the back of my throat. I let Nate take control as he slowly pulled out, to slam it back into my mouth. I swirled my tongue and squeezed his balls as he f\*\*\*\*d my mouth. Our moans and groans filled the room as his balls tightened and I knew he was close. I took back control as I sucked on the tip, hard, while stroking the shaft.

"f\*\*k, baby," he groaned as ribbons of hot c\*m filled my mouth. His taste engulfed my senses as I made sure I had every drop. I licked my lips as I looked up at him through my eyelashes. His breaths were rapid, and I knew it was a good one, as he smirked down at me.

"Did you enjoy that?" he said, pushing me back onto the bed.

"I did, alpha," I purred, as he hovered above me, wearing only a smirk.

"Is there anything else I can do for you, alpha," I pleaded as I bit my bottom lip. He pushed his c\*\*k into my folds, the tip against my clit. My gasps turned into moans as he rolled his hips.

"You can scream my name," he groaned as he positioned his tip at my entrance.

"Nate," I cried, as he pushed his full length into me. He stilled for a moment, as I caught my breath. He kissed over his mark, and I shivered as my walls clamped around him.

"You okay," he asked, resting his forehead against mine.

"Yes, don't stop," I breathed out, kissing his lips. His thrusts started like our kiss, soft, and intimate but quickly turning into hard and demanding. Our tongues fought for dominance as his thrusts became so hard, I had to break the kiss. Panting, I was quickly coming undone as my body took everything he had to give.

"Nate," I screamed as my body shuddered and my vision blurred. Nate groaned, before nipping at my mark, and I swear, another orgasm ripped through me. I forgot how to breathe as Nate stilled on top of me, breathless.

"Maybe I should be angry all the time," I giggled, as I fought to get air into my lungs. My body felt heavy as I tried to lift my arms around Nate's neck.

"I love you, my alpha."

Chapter Seventy-Two

Luna Ayla

After ensuring my alpha was feeling better about having my ex here, we showered and headed down for dinner. I slept all night and morning after marking Nate and shifting. As we walked into the dining room, I noticed all my boys and Xander sitting at a table together. Nate's chest rumbled and I giggled, squeezing his hand. I can't be mad because I know I would feel the same way.

"Wuna," I heard Violet squeal. She fought through the crowd of people. I kneeled as she rushed over to me, jumping and wrapping her little arms around my neck. She hit me with such force, I fell back on my butt. We were both laughing as I squeezed her tight.

"Violet, be gentle," I heard Melanie scold her.

"It's okay, I'm all healed," I told her and Violet's face lit up.

"We can go swimming," she squealed.

"Violet, it's getting late," her mother said.

"But mommy," she whined with a pout.

"If I show you something special, will you wait until tomorrow to go swimming with me?" I asked her. She bobbed her head in nods.

"Okay, watch my arm," I forced scales to cover one of my forearms. I heard gasps from all around the room as I watched Violet's face.

"Pweety," she gasped, reaching her tiny hand out, touching the black and purple scales.

"Would you like one?" I whispered and she grinned, nodding her little head.

"Which one is your favorite?" I asked and she pointed to one that was the most purple. I pulled it out, trying not to make a sound as pain rippled up my arm.

"There you go, sweetie," I handed her the scale before bringing my forearm to my mouth to clean up the blood.

She squealed, holding the scale to her chest before jumping into my arms again. I squeezed her tightly.

"Thank you, Wuna. I wove you," she said, kissing my cheek.

"Now, can you go to bed for your mommy?" I asked her, with a firm look.

"Okay, but can I show Daddy first?" She pleaded with her big blue eyes. Man, this kid was good. I feel like I could give her the Western kingdom if she asked for it.

"Let's go show Daddy," Melanie said, saving me. Violet hugged me tight one more time before running back to her mother.

I forced my scales back before taking Nate's waiting hand. He pulled me up, pulling me firmly against his body, with an arm around my waist.

"I lied," he whispered, causing my body to stiffen.

"Lied?" I stammered, my heart sinking.

"You get six months. I can't wait a year," he said, bringing my forearm to his lips and licking the blood that had pooled. I smirked, shaking my head.

"Have you met me? There is no way I can get my s\*\*t together in six months," I exclaimed, before laughing.

"Maybe, but you'll be an amazing mother," he purred, leaning into my ear.

"Maybe, but I like that I can give them back," I giggled.

"Fine, but I won't let this go, " he sighed, his breath on my neck caused me to shiver.

"Can you at least feed me while you pout?" I cooed, grabbing his cheeks and pecking his lips. Nate took my hand and led me over to the table where the boys were sitting.

"Nate, why do you look like she just kicked your puppy?" Xander chuckled. I smiled as I gave everyone a kiss on the cheek. I was glad that Nate and Xander were getting along. I took a seat beside Xander and Nate sat down beside me. The other three were sitting across from us.

"Ignore him. He wants a baby," I chuckled, rolling my eyes. All eyes snapped at me as the table went silent.

"Isn't it a little early for the baby talk?" Silas asked.

"Well, Silas, when two people love each other, they get naked and.." I didn't get to finish as the entire table groaned, making me chuckle.

"Yeah, I know how babies are made," he exclaimed.

"Are you sure? Did you see enough of the king and queen?" His cringing made me laugh so hard, I had tears in my eyes.

"I think you broke him?" Xander chuckled as we watched Silas' face go through a variety of emotions. After my laughs calmed down, I looked around the table.

"I just want to make this clear. When Nate and I do decide to have kids, it's our decision. Not the kingdoms or the packs, ours." I told them firmly.

"Six months," Nate exclaimed and I elbowed him in the ribs, causing him to groan.

"Who was the little girl?" Kaden asked, changing the subject.

"A member of our pack. She also loves mermaids. So be careful, she may claim one of you," I giggled.

"Do you understand what giving her one of your scales means?" He questioned and my face fell. Is it bad

that I gave her a scale?

"Kaden, stop. It means the scale will never lose its lustre. When scales are taken, they will eventually dull and crumble. That won't happen with hers," Chase explained.

"Couldn't you have just said that, Kaden? I thought the worst," I breathed out. He just shrugged. I shouldn't have mentioned babies. I know I would be hurt if he was talking about babies with someone else.

"I'm sorry, Kaden. I should have said anything," I sighed. He stared at me until Nate growled.

"How is that fair? I'm not hiding our relationship because he can't handle it!"

"She's yours because of the mate bond!" Kaden retorted.

"Enough," I screamed and the entire room stopped.

"Can you both just try to get along? f\*\*k," I yelled, standing up. I left the dining room. I was no longer hungry and I needed a moment by myself.

I can see why the goddess needed a bridge. Mermaids and wolves are just so different.

"I understand both sides," Kaia chimed in.

"How the hell am I going to work with my ex and make my mate happy?" I asked in despair. I made my way out of the pack house and towards the ocean.

"I wish I could answer that. I know you care about Kaden but you're in love with our mate," she sighed.

"Is it only because of the mate bond?" I asked her.

"The mate bond brings two soulmates together. Even without the bond, Nate would still be our soulmate." She explained. The universe has to be playing a cruel joke on me. It knew Nate would be my mate, but it made me and Kaden cross paths. And then I fell in love with him. But am I still in love with him? Or do I just not want to see him hurt? But then if he still loved me, wouldn't he want to see me happy? I'm happy with Nate.

Ryan rushed over to me as I looked out into the bay. I let out a gasp.

"Luna?" Ryan called out, but I ignored him.

"Mom?"

Chapter Seventy-Three

Luna Ayla

I rushed into the waves and grabbed onto my mother. She was on the verge of collapsing. My dress covered my body as my foot hit the water. I paid no attention to it as I held on to my mother. I never expected to see her again and we parted on bad terms, but seeing her like this broke my heart. She was heavily pregnant and covered in dark bruises.

"Mom, what happened?" I exclaimed, grabbing her cheeks as she held on to my hips. She had a fresh black eye and a spit lip.

"I'm okay," she winced, but I knew better.

"Ryan," I yelled out. I turned to find him standing on the beach.

"I'm taking her to the house," I told him.

"Ayla, I don't think.." she panted before gritting her teeth.

"It's okay, mom. I got you." I helped her back into deeper water before I shifted.

"If you don't have the strength to shift, just sit with your legs over my tail with your back against my chest," I instructed.

When I had her secured, I swam down the coast on my back, towards the house my grandmother gave me.

I didn't want to take her to the pack house. I was still annoyed by all the fighting. But most importantly, I was concerned about my mother. She did inflict those bruises on herself.

"Ayla, I.." she cried.

"It's okay, just breathe. You can explain everything after you have rested." I told her. I was also worried about her baby.

"I can hear its heartbeat. It's elevated, but steady." Kaia said, and I blew out a breath.

The house came into view and I swam faster, keeping my mom snug against me with my hands around her chest. When we reached the spot closest to the house, I shifted back when my butt hit the sandy bottom. My mom was struggling to stay up, even with my help.

"I remember this house," she breathed out before wincing.

"Grandmother gifted it to me. Nate and I were going to live here until he became alpha." I talked as I



walked her slowly up to the house. I needed to get her inside to rest. Whatever happened can not be good for the baby. And there was more under the surface.

There were a few of Xander's warriors standing outside as we approached the house.

"Ayla, I can't," my mother cried as I tried to hold her up.

"Help, please," I yelled out. One warrior rushed over and scooped up my mother like she weighed nothing.

"Follow me," I ordered, as I rushed into the house, up the stairs, and to my old room.

"Lay her on the bed, please," I said as I walked into the closet, hoping to find some clothes for her. I was praying Nate didn't have everything moved to the pack house. Thanking my lucky starfish, I found an oversized sleeping shirt and a pair of shorts.

I rushed out of the closet to see my mother lying on the bed. She already had her eyes closed. The warrior was standing nearby, watching over her.

"Mom, did you want to change? Are you hungry?" I asked, sitting on the edge of the bed, beside her. I excused the warrior, thanking him before he left. When I turned back to my mother, she was looking at me with desperation.

"Ayla, I need to warn you about Noah. I know I hurt you and I destroyed any chance of a relationship, but I need you to listen to me. I love you." She winced before crying out in pain.

"Mom, you need to see a doctor. You and the baby need to be checked." I told her, but she shook her head.

"I'll be okay after some rest. Can you please get me a glass of water? She tried not to show it but I knew she was in pain. I wish she would let me help her.

"You can tell me more about Noah when I come back. Rest in the meantime. I'll be right back." I leaned forward and kissed her forehead. She reached out and grabbed my hand after I stood up.

"Does Nate treat you well?" She whispered.

"He does." I smiled, squeezing her hand.

"Good," she nodded, lying back down.

"I'll be right back," I told her before I left the room.

My blood was boiling as I made my way to the kitchen. Whatever Noah did, I was going to make him pay for it. Regardless of everything she has put me through, I will always protect her.

"My Queen, should I call for a doctor?" The warrior from earlier was standing at the bottom of the stairs.

"I think that would be best. She doesn't want one but I need to make sure they are both okay." I told him, walking into the kitchen, I grabbed a few bottles of water from the fridge.

"Should I alert Commander Xander?" He asked.

"No, I can handle this. She is my mother." I told him and his eyes went wide.

"My Queen, I don't mean to overstep, but whoever is responsible for this, is a monster. We should alert the commander, so he can track them down."

"I will deal with her piece of s\*\*t claim as soon as I make sure she and my sibling are safe. Please ring a doctor. I know it will take a few hours before they arrive. In the meantime, my wolf will monitor the baby's heartbeat." I told him and he gave me a nod.

I was lost in my thoughts as I walked back upstairs. What happened between me and my mother would have to wait until after I knew she was safe. I would never be able to forgive myself if I allowed something to happen to her. Her and my sibling. She is still my mother and I love her.

Walking into my old room, my eyes went wide in horror as sheer panic consumed me. My mother was lying back with her knees bent. But it was the amount of blood that twisted my heart painfully.

"Mom!" I cried out, the bottles falling out of my arms as I rushed to her side.

"Ayla, this baby is coming," she panted before letting out a cry of pure agony.

"Mom, there's too much blood," I panicked, looking at the blood and then at my mother.

"I know, but I needed to warn you. Do not trust anyone. I love you so much, my baby girl." Her voice faded as her eyes rolled back. Tears streamed down my cheeks as I looked between her legs. I could see the head of the baby.

"Mom, I need you to push," I commanded, trying to lift her body. Her body felt so cold.

"Please, Mom," I begged, as I hit her cheeks.

"She's gone, Ayla," Kaia whined.

"No, she can't be gone," I cried out loud.

"Ayla, you need to get the baby out now, or it will die," she demanded.

"The baby!" I moved fast, not knowing what I was doing. Getting my hands in there, I began to pull. This baby can't die. Once the head was free, I worked the shoulders until I was holding my baby sister in my arms.

When she let out a scream, relief hit me in waves as she screamed at the top of her little lungs. Reality hit me when I looked back at my mother.

"Nate!" I yelled through the mind-link.

"Ayla, you can break down after, but right now you need to get the baby safe." Kaia rushed out.

"I don't know what to do," I cried as I held this baby to my chest, trying to soothe her.

"Towels and we need to bite through the umbilical cord," she explained.

My gums tingled as I felt Kaia push forward. I took the umbilical cord into my mouth, separating my sister from our mother. I spit out everything that filled my mouth. I can't believe I just did that.

"Did you have a better idea? Now go get towels. We will deal with your mother after the baby is warm and settled." My wolf reassured me. Before heading into the bathroom attached to the room, I covered my mother up as best I could with one hand. I can't believe she is gone for real this time. And all because she needed to warn me.

Chapter Seventy-Four

Alpha Nate

I was furious as I watched my mate storm out of the dining room.

"What the f\*\*k is your problem?" I yelled.

"Ayla is our queen and she should be with a king!" He retorted and I scoffed.

"And that's you? The fucker who promised her the world and then fucken left. Sounds like a great option for her." He growled as we all stood up from the table.

"Enough," Xander demanded.

"Kaden, I know you don't understand the mate bond but you have no right to tell Ayla who she should be with. She doesn't want to hurt you, but you need to let her go. If you love her, you will let her be

happy.” Xander exclaimed.

“Kaden, I know this is hard for you, but she shouldn’t have to feel like she has to hide her relationship with Nate. He has done nothing but love her, and we have all seen it. They may have a bond, but who are you to say what they have isn’t real?” Chase defended.

“I’m not asking for your permission to be happy with my mate. And if you want to be in her life, you are going to have to get over it and move on. I’m not going anywhere,” I growled, gripping the back of the chair.

“Can everyone just calm down? We almost lost her. She is a part of both our worlds and she is under enough stress. Ayla needs to know that we have her back and that she can trust us. Attacking her mate isn’t going to get her back.” Silas said and I growled.

“She is mine. I’m never letting her go and if she didn’t want me, she wouldn’t have remarked me,” I told them. I was about to leave until Ayla’s despair hit me like a brick. My claws broke through the back of the chairs as I leaned forward, catching my breath.

“Nate?” Xander was beside me.

“Find Ayla,” I breathed out.

“Nate!” Her cry of pain filled my mind through the link.

“Ayla!” I screamed through the link but she didn’t answer.

“Nate, I can’t reach her!” Xander exclaimed in a panic.

“She just linked but she isn’t answering me.”

“What did she say?” He rushed out.

“She just called for me. We need to find her. Send out an alert.” I told him while I opened the link with my warriors. I told them to find the Luna.

“Ryan said she went to the house with her mother,” Xander informed me. I ran out of the pack house and shifted before taking off towards the house. I had to cross into Alpha Matt’s pack but I didn’t care. All I cared about was getting to Ayla. I could feel her despair and fear through the bond. I kept trying to reach her through the link but she wasn’t answering.

I approached the house quickly and there were a few of Xander’s warriors waiting. I shifted back.

“Where is she?” I demanded, not caring that I was now naked.

"She's upstairs with her mother. She showed up here with her mother not too long ago and her mother was in bad shape. I called for a doctor but it would take a few hours before a mermaid one could arrive." One warrior informed me.

"Find Alpha Matt. Tell him we need a doctor," I commanded. Before running into the house.

"Ayla," I called out as I rushed up the stairs. I followed her scent and it led me to our old room.

I opened the door and stopped in my tracks. There was so much blood. The scent invaded my senses and I no longer smelt Ayla. But now I could see her kneeling beside the bed hysterically crying and she held something to her chest.

"Baby?" I called out as I cautiously approached the bed. There was something under a blanket on the bed.

"I couldn't save her. She came to warn me and she died." Ayla cried. She lifted her head to look at me. I could feel all of her emotions.

"Baby, let's get you cleaned up and you can tell me everything. I know you are hurting." I told her gently as I kneeled beside her. She just shook her head.

"I can't leave her." She cried as I wrapped an arm around her shoulders.

"Okay, it's okay. We can sit here as long as you want." I said, resting my head against hers. Looking down, that's when I noticed she was holding a baby.

"Ayla, whose baby is that?" I asked her, looking at the tiny sleeping baby. She was bundled in a towel, sleeping.

"She's my sister," she whispered before breaking out in sobs again.

"Are you hurt?" I asked and she shook her head.

I heard gasping coming from the door and I turned to find Alpha Matt and Luna Julie. There was a look of horror on both their faces.

"Ayla bear?" Alpha Matt called out.

"She's gone," she cried, as her body shook against mine. Julie rushed over, kneeling by Ayla and me.

"Ayla, are you hurt?" She asked her and Ayla shook her head.

"But there's a baby," I told her. Julie looked at me, then at Alpha Matt, before looking back at Ayla.

"Ayla, I can take the baby to get checked out." She told her.

"I got her out and I cut the umbilical cord before bundling her up. She also let out a few screams." Ayla told her, sniffing.

"That's good, Ayla. That's everything you needed to do. And I'll take her to the pack hospital and get her all checked out. Does she have a name?" Luna Julia asked and she shook her head.

"She died before she was born. She didn't even get to meet her." My heart broke as I listened to Ayla.

"It's okay. We will just call her baby girl until you can name her. It will all be okay." Luna Julie kissed Ayla's forehead before taking the baby from her.

As soon as her arms were empty, she threw her arms around my neck and sobbed. I pulled her into my lap as we sat on the floor. All I could do was comfort her. I had no idea what she could be feeling right now. Her emotions were all over the place and they were bleeding into mine.

"Nate, do you know what happened? What was Melody doing here?" Alpha Matt asked me. Luna Julie had rushed the baby to the hospital, leaving Alpha Matt with us.

"I need a moment to say goodbye," Ayla whispered before I could answer the alpha.

"Okay, Ayla bear. Nate and I will just be waiting in the hallway for you." He told her, rubbing her back. I gripped her cheeks so she would look at me.

"Do you need me to stay?" I asked her.

"I need to do this." She whispered and I nodded. I pecked both her cheeks before wrapping my arms around her again.

"I'll be right outside the door. Call out or mind link me, and I'll be right beside you." I told her, squeezing her tightly.

"I love you so much, Nate, please don't ever leave me," she cried.

"Never, baby. You will forever be mine." I mumbled, kissing her head.

I moved her off my lap and helped her to kneel beside her mother. I hesitated before I left the room. I almost went back to her when her sobs consumed her again.

"Nate, what happened? Why are you covered in blood?" Xander rushed out as I closed the door behind me. They were all waiting in the hallway with Ryan and the warrior from earlier.

"I don't know. All I know is that Melody is dead and she gave birth to a girl." I breathed out. Alpha Matt handed me a pair of shorts and I pulled them on before I leaned against the wall.

"Melody showed up in the bay when Ayla was outside earlier. She told me she was bringing her to the house." Ryan told us.

"And I helped bring the queen's mother inside when she could no longer walk," the warrior said.

"Melody was in rough shape. She had a black eye and deep bruising on her arms. Whatever happened, wasn't good," Ryan said.

"And I suspected she was in labor. I watched my sister in labor and all the signs were the same. But she refused a doctor." The warrior explained.

"It's because she knew there was nothing they could do," Xander sighed.

"What does that mean?" I asked him.

"There's a reason mermaids usually only have one child. After the first birth, the chances of bleeding out are higher. This being Melody's second child, she would have known the risks." He explained.

"But Ryan has a brother?" I questioned.

"And without medical intervention, my mother would have died," Ryan answered.

My mind was racing with questions now. Why would Melody risk everything to come to see Ayla? Where was her claim? Was he the one that inflicted those bruises? And will Ayla be able to have our babies? I don't want to lose her. And if that means we don't have children, then so be it. I can't risk her life.

"Everyone, Ayla is grieving. But when she has a moment to breathe, she will explain everything." Alpha Matt said.

But how was I going to breathe when I could feel everything Ayla was going through and there was nothing I could do to take it away?

Chapter Seventy-Six

Alpha Nate

The wait for Ayla was unbearable. I could feel everything she was feeling. Hurt, disbelief, and anger. But when rage hit me, the doors to the room were thrown open. Ayla walked out covered in her scale armor and the blood from her mother. Her eyes were glowing like two amethysts. Kaia was front and center.

"Ayla," Xander breathed out, reaching for her, but she pulled away. I could see that action hurt him.

"Kaden, bring me my mother's claim. And I want him alive." She growled. Her aura hit everything and even Alpha Matt was struggling under the weight of her power.

I grabbed her wrist and she fought against my grip. I pinned her up against the wall with my body, as she still struggled against my hold. She fought hard as I pinned her arms above her head. She looked up at me with fury. She may be pissed but her body knew I wasn't going to hurt her. Everywhere our skin touched, my chest bare, her scales receded.

"Nate, let me go." She yelled, her chest rumbling out a growl. Kaia was equally as pissed.

"Never," I breathed out. She stopped fighting me. Looking up at me, her eyes filled with more tears.

"Nate, I need to make that bastard pay," she cried. I leaned down and kissed away the tears on both cheeks.

"And we will. But right now, I'm concerned about you. Your well-being is my top priority. I can feel everything you are feeling." I told her.

"Then you know I have to do this! She came here to warn me and she died. My sister almost died. I'm not letting that fucker get away with this!" She cried in despair. I rested my forehead against hers. Her chest heaved against mine.

"But right now you need to worry about your sister. Everyone here will do everything we can to find him. We would all die for you. So let us help you. Stop thinking you have to do this alone." She broke down into sobs and I released her wrists. She wrapped her arms around my waist and buried her head into my chest.

"Please make the pain stop. It hurts so much," she sobbed, and I tightened my grip around her shoulders.

"I know, baby. I know." I mumbled, feeling helpless. I don't know how to take away her pain. I've never lost a parent or witnessed anything like this before.

"Queen Andrea and my mother are on their way," Xander informed us.

"Julie says the baby girl is doing well." Alpha Matt said, handing me a blanket for Ayla. She was beginning to tremble as she came down from the adrenaline and her scales were all beginning to recede.

"Please ask Luna Julie to come back to check on Ayla," I asked the alpha, turning my head to face him. Ayla was going into shock and we may need to sedate her.



I let out a groan when Ayla's hand hit my chest, and something sharp pierced my skin. Blood was running down her chest, and her scale was embedded in my skin when she removed her hand. Man, that heals like a b\*\*\*h.

"Baby," I grumbled through the pain. She looked up at me. Her eyes were a storm of sadness and grief.

"Something bad is coming and I'm done waiting," her lips trembled, and her body shook.

I pulled away from the wall and wrapped the blanket around her, using my body to shield her now-naked one. I leaned down and pressed my tongue over the wound the scale left.

"Let the bad come. It will have to go through Duke and me." I told her. Her teary eyes stared into mine before she gave me a nod. Grabbing hold of her thighs, I lifted her and she wrapped her legs around my waist. With her arms wrapped around my neck, she buried her face in my neck, as I walked out of the house.

Luna Julie was waiting outside for us. She looked concerned when I placed Ayla in the passenger seat of an SUV. Swimming and shifting into our wolves would be the fastest way home, but Ayla was in no condition for either. It's going to take an hour to drive from here to our pack house.

"Ayla, baby girl is healthy, and we are taking good care of her. What you did for her saved her life." Luna told her, hugging her.

"Go home and rest. Try to eat something. Grief is not something that goes away. It just gets easier to manage." Luna Julie kissed her forehead before Alpha Matt stepped in her place.

"If she isn't sleeping or eating, you call me," she ordered, and I nodded.

"Nate, I'm going to stay here and wait for my mother and the queen. Take care of Ayla. I'll come to check on her after everything is done here." Xander said as I walked around to the driver's side. I looked over at him.

"I will. And Xander, I know Ayla is thankful," I told him. He nodded before I climbed in behind the wheel. Alpha Matt was still talking to Ayla.

"I'll call your dad," he told her.

"No," she shouted, shaking her head.

"He's happy. I'll tell him when the time is right," her voice, now a whisper.

"Okay, Ayla bear. If you need anything, you call." He said and she nodded. We gave each other a nod

before he buckled Ayla, he kissed her forehead before he closed the door.

As soon as I pulled out of the driveway, I reached over and took her hand.

"Nate, I.." She stammered. Fresh tears filled her eyes.

"Just breathe, baby." I brought her hand up to my lips. She leaned her head back and looked out the window.

The drive to the pack was quiet and Ayla fell asleep. My hand never left hers. Even in her sleep, her emotions were all over the place. All I wanted to do was take away all her pain. I may not have liked what her mother did to her, but I would never wish for something like that.

David and Max were waiting when I pulled up. They both looked worried.

"Nate," David called out when I exited the vehicle. I closed the door as quietly as possible to not wake Ayla.

"What happened?" Max asked as they approached me. We stood in front of the vehicle.

"Ayla's mother is dead. She also had a baby." Both of them looked at me agape.

"And Ayla was with her," I finished.

"f\*\*k," Max breathed out.

"So, what are we doing?" David asked.

"Xander and the others are handling it. Queen Andrea is on her way and Luna Julie is taking care of the baby," I informed them.

"What's on your chest?" Max blurted out.

"It's one of Ayla's scales. It's how mermaids claim." I took off my shorts and shifted. I could feel the bond with Ayla getting stronger. Her love for me, bleeding into me. I shifted back and pulled on my shorts. Both of them gasped.

"Now we just need a full moon," I declared.

"That's insane," David exclaimed. I didn't need to look down to know the tattoo of Kaia and Duke was back.

"Can you guys get the doors? I need to get Ayla to bed," I asked them.

I opened Ayla's door and unbuckled her before picking up her limp body. She snuggled into my chest as I carried her into the pack house. Both David and Max followed, opening up the doors for me. Ayla needed to sleep. Trauma like this can wreak havoc on the brain.

David closed the bedroom door as I laid Ayla down. Before removing the blanket, I went into the bathroom to get a washcloth. I wanted to clean off as much blood as I could before covering her in our blanket.

I started with cleaning the wound her scale left. The wound was healing slowly. She didn't have to give it to me right then. I don't know why she even did.

"She's afraid you'll leave. The bond was broken before and she's terrified of losing us." Duke whined. And I sighed before cleaning up as much dried blood as I could. I was thankful she stayed asleep.

Covering her naked body with our blanket, I leaned down and kissed her forehead.

"Tomorrow is going to be rough, but I'm not going anywhere."  
Chapter Seventy-Seven

Luna Ayla

I awoke with a groan. My head was pounding and my body ached. My eyes felt like sandpaper as I tried to open them. The room was dark as I blinked to clear my eyes. Nate was sleeping soundly beside me. I quietly got out of bed, grabbing a robe from the bathroom before leaving our room.

With the robe wrapped around me, I quietly made my way out of the pack house. Once outside, I took a deep breath of the salty sea air. The almost full moon was still high in the sky, casting its reflection over the deep blue water.

The pack was silent and I took off toward the ocean. Everything that happened yesterday was fresh in my mind. My mom is gone and I have a newborn sister. And I still had that son of a b\*\*\*h to find.

Just the thought of him had me running faster, pushing my achy body to its limit. I will train harder and that bastard will die a slow, painful death for what he did to my mother.

With the water in my reach, I threw off the robe and jumped into the waves, diving under the surface. My shift was quick and effortless as I kicked my tail, swimming out of the swell. Once I was in calmer water, I surfaced.

The ocean healed my aching body, but nothing could ease the pain of yesterday. I'll never have a chance with my mother. My sister will never know her. I thought she was happy with her claim. Was it all a lie? And now she is gone and I'll never get the answers to all the questions swirling in my mind.

My sobs once again consumed me. I thought I'd have no more tears by now, but they just kept coming. The pain was raw in my chest, twisting my heart painfully. I lowered myself below the surface and let out a scream. This was too much for any one person to bear.

The songs of the humpback whales filled my ears. Surfacing again, I saw a pod breach the surface. A sense of calm came over me as I listened. I floated on my back, looking up at the moon and stars. I listened to their songs and welcomed the peace they brought me.

As much as I wish I could change yesterday, I can't. I can't change any of my mother's decisions. She made a choice and I will have to live with it until I see her again, one day.

"Baby?" Nate's panicked voice filled my head.

"I'm in the bay," I told him.

"I'll be right there," he rushed back.

"Our mate is so wonderful," Kaia purred.

"Too bad he got suck with such a mess," I snorted.

"He balances us. He's the calm when we are stuck in a storm. He is our strength when we feel weak. He gives us love when we believe we are unworthy. He will always be the other part of us. Our best friend, our lover, and our defender. And tomorrow, when the moon is full, you will claim him. After you do, things will become clearer," Kaia said, before retreating.

"Ayla, where are you?" I heard Nate through the mind-link. I lifted my hand in the air. I was still floating on my back, enjoying the gentle current of the sea. The whales were still singing their songs.

"I see you. Come to the beach," he told me.

Flipping over, I dived under the surface. I swam under the swell of the waves towards the beach. I didn't shift back, instead, I let the waves carry me to the shore. My body slid upon the beach, the waves cascading against my body.

Quickly, Nate was standing over me, looking down at me.

"Do you have any idea what time it is? You nearly gave me a heart attack when I woke up and you weren't there," he scolded, running a hand through his hair.

Looking up, I could see his mark under the glow of the moon. He must have shifted to seal that part of the claim. I smiled as I looked at our wolves now on his chest, like before.

With a sigh, Nate sat down on the sand and pulled me to sit between his legs. The gentle waves moved around us as he wrapped his arms around me, resting his chin on my shoulder.

"Are you okay?" He whispered, kissing my shoulder.

"I didn't mean to scare you. I just needed a swim." I told him, looking out towards the horizon.

"Do you feel better? It's hard to put together all of your emotions." He sighed.

"I don't know how I feel. My mother is really gone and I know nothing about her life. I thought she was happy," I shrugged.

"Kaden is looking into it. Queen Andrea is also here. She wants to see you," he told me. I looked over my shoulder and kissed his cheek.

"Thank you," I breathed out.

"I love you, Ayla. There's nothing I wouldn't do for you. And when you are ready, you will claim me under the full moon, and I'll be yours, forever," he said, kissing my cheek.

"Thank you for everything, Nate. I don't know what I would do without you," I whispered, my voice cracking against the emotion in my words.

"Baby, you don't need to thank me,"

"But I do. I need to thank you for so many things. You loved me when I couldn't love myself. When I believed I was broken. You have loved me every step of this journey. And you need to know how much I love you. How happy you make me. Thank you for not giving up on me," I told him, with tears rolling down my cheeks.

"It will always be us against the world. I'll always be standing in your corner and you will never have to be alone again." He squeezed me tightly as we cuddled in the sand, the waves rolling over us.

"Your scales look even more beautiful under the moonlight," Nate mumbled against my shoulder as his hands explored the scales on my hips.

"My mom's were white and pink, like an opal," I whispered, remembering her dress. Her colors were the opposite of mine.

"You saw her as a mermaid?" Nate asked and I shook my head.

"Just her dress," I confessed.

"I'm so sorry about your mother, baby. I promise I will get you some answers." He told me.

"I know you will. I love you. So much." I turned back and pecked his lips.

"Let's get you back to bed. Tomorrow is going to be a long, hard day."

## Chapter Seventy-Eight

Luna Ayla

The morning light came faster than I wanted. After Nate and I came back inside, we showered before going back to bed. I just lay there, looking at the ceiling. I know my grandmother is here, and I was worried she'd blame me. Her daughter died because of me. Guilt twisted my stomach as I held back my tears. My mind was a sea of turmoil.

The pain was worse than when I lost her the first time. Maybe because I witnessed it or maybe because it didn't have to happen. She could have sought medical attention in Kaden's kingdom. Then, after she and her baby were safe, have someone contact Kaden and then he would contact me.

"Whatever happened spooked her enough to find you. Even after everything, I know she loved you. And maybe she couldn't tell you the truth so she pushed you away. As your father did," Kaia sighed.

"And I was so mean," I choked out, my sobs consuming me again. Nate wrapped his arms around me tighter before kissing my head.

"I'm here, baby," he mumbled as I cried on his chest.

"I should have been nicer, more understanding. I was such a b\*\*\*h to her," I cried out loud.

"Baby, you were hurt. You are not to blame for what happened," Nate tried to reassure me.

"I should have helped her. What if this Noah trapped her? I could have helped her!" I exclaimed, angry with myself.

"I should have helped her," I whispered through my sobs.

"We will get you the answers, I promise. But you are not to blame. You didn't know, how could you? Understandable you were hurt by your mother's actions. We all believed it." His voice was comforting but it did nothing to ease my guilt. I should have known my mother would never abandon me. And now I'll never see her again.

Nate held me until my tears ran out. I don't think I've ever cried this much in my life.

"Let's take a bath. Then you can eat something before we go see your grandmother. She is staying with Alpha Matt," Nate informed me, kissing the top of my head.

"I don't think I'll ever be able to go back to that house," I murmured.

"And you don't have to. I'll get it cleaned out and move Xander and his warriors here," he said. I sat up on my elbow to look at him.

"Thank you," I breathed out.

"Anything, baby," he cupped my cheek and I leaned into his touch. This time I'm not alone. I have Nate and Duke. And Xander.

"And me," Kaia chimed in.

"And you," I told her. Taking a deep breath, I can do this, I told myself.

"Have you heard anything about baby girl?" I asked him as he sat up.

"No news is good news. Luna Julia assured me she was healthy and doing well," he answered. I smiled, knowing my sister was going to be okay. Her birth may have been traumatic, but I refuse to let her life be that way.

"I'll go run us a bath," Nate said, getting off the bed. He leaned down and kissed my cheek before disappearing into the bathroom. I laid back on the bed, staring up at the ceiling.

I'm not sure how long I laid there. Nate picked me up, carrying me to the bathroom.

"Nate, I can walk," I chuckled.

"I know, I just wanted to hold you," he mumbled, kissing my nose.

We stayed in the bath until my tummy let out a grumble. With everything going on, I don't even remember the last time I had eaten. When we were both ready, we headed down to the dining room, hand in hand.

I was feeling nervous. I knew the news would have spread and I wasn't ready for everyone's sympathy. They mean well, but it's a hard reminder of what happened yesterday.

Entering, the first person I noticed was Xander. I need to apologize to him for how I acted yesterday. Xander has been nothing but good to me, and I pushed him away.

“Go sit was Xander. I’ll grab us some breakfast,” Nate whispered, kissing my cheek. I turned my head and pecked his lips.

“Thank you,” I breathed out, giving him a small smile. He squeezed my hand before letting go and walking off toward the kitchen.

Xander stood up from his seat as I made my way over to him. He was sitting with Ryan and a few other warriors.

“Xander, I’m sorry about yesterday,” I started, but he was quick to wrap me in his arms. I wrapped my arms around his waist and snuggled into his chest.

“You have nothing to apologize for, Ayla. Yesterday was a hard day. How are you feeling?” He mumbled, leaning down, his cheek against mine.

“I guess I’m okay,” I shrugged.

“Did you get any sleep?” He asked, pulling back. I looked up at him.

“Some. I also went for a swim. It helped. There was a pod of humpback whales in the bay, singing.

“They must have sensed your pain. Their songs bring us a level of peace,” he told me.

“It did. But now I need to face my grandmother.” I said, tears filling my eyes. Xander kissed my forehead before squeezing me flush against him.

“The queen is worried about you.”

Chapter Seventy-Nine

Luna Ayla

After eating breakfast with Nate and Xander, we started our drive to Matt’s pack house. I didn’t eat much, but I tried to keep down enough. My stomach was in knots. I wasn’t ready to relive yesterday.

Nate was driving, his hand holding mine tightly. Xander was sitting behind me with a hand on my shoulder. I know he was worried about me. I was kind of worried about myself. I may need to think about getting myself a therapist.

When we pulled in front of the pack house, everyone was waiting outside for us. Matt, Julia, my grandmother, and Xander’s mother, Lorelei. Lorelei was holding a bundled-up baby girl.

I was staring at baby girl when Nate opened my door, causing me to jump. I didn’t notice he had parked the vehicle.



"Are you okay?" He whispered. I bit down on my lower lip before giving him a nod. He took my hand and helped me out of the SUV.

With Nate and Xander at my side, we approached the others. My grandmother rushed over to me, throwing her arms around my neck. All my strength was thrown to the wind as I broke down into sobs against her shoulder.

"I'm so sorry," I cried. She pulled away and cupped my cheeks. She had tears running down her cheeks.

"I should have helped her. She didn't have to die," I choked out.

"Ayla, what you did for my granddaughter, your sister, can never be repaid. I know Melody would have been thankful for you being by her side. Guilt has a way of sneaking into our grief. And you have nothing to feel guilty for. Whatever Melody got herself into was her fault. She was an adult, making her own choices." She told me. All I could do was nod. A part of me knew she was right. She was an adult, but what if she was protecting me this entire time? My grandmother wrapped her arms around me again and held me as tightly as I held her. Grief doesn't get easier, it just becomes more manageable.

"Ayla, sweetie, would you like to hold your sister?" Lorelei asked. Pulling out of the hug, she was standing beside us. I nodded, holding my arms out.

Baby girl was looking up at me with her big blue eyes. I choked back a sob as I looked down at her. She was the cutest baby I had ever seen, with her chubby cheeks and bright red hair. She looks just like our mother.

"She looks just like you," Lorelei said, standing beside me.

"How do you know?" I asked her.

"I helped your mother deliver you. I helped her during her entire pregnancy with you." She confessed.

"Your mother may not have always made the right choices but I know she loved you." The tears started again and Lorelei wrapped an arm around my shoulders.

"Have you named her?" My grandmother asked.

"No. Where is she going to go?" I asked them.

"I wanted to discuss that with you. Alpha Matt and Luna Julie have offered to adopt her." My grandmother told me.

"What?" I breathed out.

"Would that be okay with you?" Matt asked me, coming to stand on the other side of me with Julie.

"I think it would be for the best, Ayla. She would have two loving parents and her sister living close by. And when she turns two, you can experience her first shift with her." My grandmother said. Nate came up behind me and wrapped an arm around my waist.

"It's up to you, we could always take her home with us." He whispered. And as much as I wish I could raise my sister, I was in no position to give this baby girl everything she needed.

"I think having Matt and Julie adopt her is a wonderful idea," I announced and both their faces lit up.

"Now, we just need a name." Matt smiled.

"Abigail Melody, but we will call her Abby Bear," I told him.

"It's beautiful," Julie whispered as she leaned over her mate to see Abby bear.

"I love it, Ayla, it's perfect." My grandmother told me.

"Now I have an Ayla bear and an Abby bear," my uncle smiled and I giggled.

"She looks just like you did. But you had those stormy grey eyes." He smiled.

"Maybe she'll be the calm to my storm." I rubbed her cheek. She tried to eat my finger and I chuckled.

"She's like a little shark," I cooed.

"Let's go inside and get her feed. I'll make some coffee." Julie said and we all followed her into the pack house.

"Baby, are you sure?" Nate asked me, wrapping his arm around my shoulder as we walked inside.

"I'll still be in her life. But I'm not ready to take on this responsibility. And I know Matt and Julie will take care of her, just like she is their own." I told him.

"Okay, baby. I just didn't want you to say no because of me."

"Nate, you are going to be the best dad when the time comes." I looked over at him and smiled.

"She is adorable," he cooed, looking down at her.

"So adorable."

## Chapter Eighty

Luna Ayla

Even under the circumstances, I had a good afternoon with my family. They may not all be blood, but I love them. They truly made this time more bearable.

Julie and Matt were over the moon when I agreed to let them adopt Abby Bear. Julie confided in me about her struggles with fertility. After having Jonathan, she just couldn't get pregnant again. And I'm happy two wonderful people get to be parents again and my sister will have a family that she deserves. I want nothing but the best for my sister. And with her being so close, I get to be in her life.

My grandmother informed me, my mother was already moved back to the western kingdom. There will be a private ceremony in a few days to lay her to rest. I told her I would be there. I needed to say my peace before I truly said goodbye to her. I don't know where you go after death, but I hope she is at peace.

We stayed for dinner at Matt's pack before we headed home. My grandmother and Lorelei were heading back early the next morning. And I was exhausted from not sleeping the night before. But even though I was exhausted and all cried out, it was good to be surrounded by family. We shared stories about her and even though some were hard to get through, they made it easier. Having a family made this easier to get through.

I was lying in bed when Nate crawled in beside me. We were facing each other. He laid an arm over my waist and kissed my forehead.

"How are you feeling?" He mumbled.

"Better. This morning was hard, but with everyone around me, it made this day bearable." I told him.

"Being with you made this day bearable. I'm so thankful to have such a wonderful mate," I leaned up and pecked his lips.

"I'm glad I could help," he rolled onto his back and pulled me against his side. I rested my head against his chest.

I don't remember falling asleep, but when I awoke, the room was dark with just a glow from behind the curtains. The moon must be high in the sky now. Nate was softly snoring. When I tried to sit up, his grip around me tightened.

"Nope," he grumbled and I chuckled.

"I wasn't going anywhere," and he opened an eye.

"Why do I not believe you?"

"I was just going to go open up the curtains," I told him.

"Why?" He questioned. I climbed on top of him so I was straddling his hips. Leaning down, I brushed my nose against his.

"So I could claim my mate under a full moon," I purred. Nate let out a growl before he flipped us. He rolled his hips, pushing his c\*\*k against my core. I let out a gasp before his lips were on mine. My arms wrapped around his neck, my hands in his hair.

"Nate," I moaned, as his lips left mine, trailing kisses down my jaw to my neck.

"Let me open the curtains. I don't know the rules." He stopped and hovered above me.

"Do you think the moon has to be on us?" I shrugged.

"I don't know, but I don't want to take any chances," I told him. He sighed before pushing himself up, climbing off me, and walking over to the window, ripping the curtains open.

"Better," he grumbled, walking back over to me. I reached down and pulled his shirt I was wearing over my head, leaving me bare.

"Better," I breathed out, as he stalked towards me. He stopped at the foot of the bed and pulled off his boxers before climbing back on top of me. He kissed his way up my body until his lips were on my mark.

"f\*\*k, Nate," I moaned as I ran my fingers through his hair, holding him to me.

"Baby, we don't have to do this now. We can wait if you aren't ready." He said, hovering above me, his elbows on either side of my head.

"I want this. I want you. Please don't stop." I pleaded, looking into his deep blue eyes. His eyes reminded me of the sea under the full moon.

"I want you," he mumbled before his lips crushed into mine. He pushed his hardened length against my folds as he tasted every inch of my mouth.

Everywhere he touched had my body heating with need. I was left breathless as his lips left mine and made their way down my neck to my breasts. I never wanted anyone the way I wanted Nate. He was mine, forever.

My gasps turned into moans when his mouth took in one of my n\*\*\*\*\*s. He rolled the other between

his fingers before switching sides. He would lick, nip, and suck the sting away. It was a delicious pain before pleasure, as my nails dug into his shoulders.

He kissed his way down my stomach to the mound between my legs. He spread my legs wide before taking in the sight before him. I should have been embarrassed by his stare but I needed him to touch me. I moved up on my elbows and his eyes met mine. His eyes stayed on mine until his tongue hit my clit.

"Nate," I moaned, throwing my head back. My hand found the back of his head as he licked and sucked on my clit.

He had me seeing stars when he pushed a finger inside me, curving it up.

"f\*\*k," I gasped as he pulled out and pushed two in.

"f\*\*k, you taste good, baby," Nate growled. The vibration was enough to send me over the edge as he sucked my clit into his mouth.

I moaned and panted as my release exploded. My walls clamped down around his fingers as my body trembled. I swear I forgot how to breathe when Nate took his time to lick up my wetness. When Nate was finished, he kissed his way up my body and settled himself between my legs.

I let out a gasp when he sucked in his mark on my neck. Tingles covered my body and my oversensitive clit throbbed. My lower belly clenched with need as my n\*\*\*\*s pebbled against Nate's chest.

"You ready to be mine forever?" He mumbled against my neck.

"More than ready." I breathed out. He reached between us, rubbing his swollen c\*\*k between my folds. I moaned, biting my lower lip as Nate's eyes found mine. His eyes never left mine as he slowly pushed himself inside of me.

When our bodies became flush, I felt our connection grow stronger. Nate leaned his forehead against mine.

"f\*\*k, baby," he groaned.

"Did you feel it?" I breathed out, wrapping my arms around his neck.

"I felt it. I'm officially yours, baby," his lips crushed against mine as he pulled out before slamming into me again.

Everything felt anew as the bond fully connecting us snapped into place. I felt whole, like a piece I never knew I was missing, was filling all the cracks in my soul. Everything about myself now made sense, as

Nate's love pulled all the broken pieces of myself back together.

"Nate," I mumbled against his lips before another blissful orgasm ripped through me. I felt my entire body tense before the sweet release had me seeing stars.

Nate let out a groan as his lips left mine. His teeth pierced my neck as another orgasm ripped through me.

"f\*\*k," I panted as Nate stilled on top of me. He was breathing as hard as I was. He pulled his teeth from my neck and licked over the mark, causing me to shiver.

"Mine," he growled, kissing my nose.

"Yours," I breathed out.

"Always yours."

The next morning, I awoke to an empty bed. Nate's side was cold so I knew he'd been gone for a while. He closed the curtains but the morning light was coming in around them.

"Nate?" I called through the link.

"Good morning, my love. I'm sorry I didn't make it back before you awoke. Xander has some information." He said.

"Are you in your office?" I asked him, climbing out of bed to get dressed. If there's information about this Noah, then I wanted to know about it.

"Yes."

"I'll be right there," I said before closing the link. I got dressed as fast as I could and followed his scent to his office. It was on the second floor. As I followed his scent, another scent caught my attention. Nate has always smelt like morning forest, but this scent smelt more like a sea breeze in a storm.

I knocked on Nate's office door and he called out for me to enter. As soon as the door opened, I stood there agape. My eyes met Nate's before they found Xander's green ones. How can this be?

"Ayla, what's wrong?" I heard Nate, but I couldn't take my eyes off Xander.

"Mate."

To be continued. My Claimed Mermaid Mate will be posted on July 1st, 2023.