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Chapter 131 Knox

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I had just got out of the shower with Lilah having made the most of an empty house, when I heard a loud howl. That sounded near to our house. That seems odd..... I quickly walked to our bedroom balcony, overlooking the back of our house, a towel wrapped around my waist, and Lilah followed in a towel. I saw what looked to be a wolf running toward the forest. That would make sense, given the noise, but wait.... That looked like Aspen, Gabe's wolf......

"That's Aspen" Lilah whispers, she had already reached my side, and was looking where I was. "Something doesn't add up, he should be with Esme, not shifting into his wolf and running off into the forest" I say.

"Link him, tell him to come back Knox. If something happened he should not be alone. What if she rejected him when they were alone" Lilah says. A feeling of fury rages through me. Would she have done that?! She had run on him when they initially met, had she been too embarrassed to reject him with us all there, and the fact she couldn't just leave because her cousin was mated to one of Gabe's friends? So had she put an act on all night and pretended like she wanted to be with him until they were alone and then told him? If she had then she had put on a fucking good act as she seemed to be genuinely happy to be with him, seemed to be genuinely enjoying her time with him and with all of us.

How dare she treat Gabe like that! Lilah is right, he needs to be with us right now, not running off into the night..... Though perhaps a run to try to run off some of the pain or anger if that is what he was feeling right now would do him good..... Gabe, what is going on bro? saw you shift into Aspen, heard him howl, he sounded in pain, so know something is wrong. I link him, hoping he will at least respond.

I can't really disturb Manuel right now, as much as he is family to Gabe, he has met his mate and needs to be with her right now.

I will link Jake, perhaps Dan too. See what they think we should do. We are friends and we need to be there for Gabe right now. He needs us. I don't know what battle he is fighting but he needs his friends there by his side.

Jake, Dan, you still awake? I link.

And if I am not? Jake responds.

I can't help but grin. Could you come here bro? Worried about Gabe, just seen him shift to Aspen and run off. I link to him and to Dan on the off chance Dan may be awake.

"I linked them beautiful, let's get dressed, and go make some drinks, it may be a sleepless night. Gabe hasn't responded. Do you want to try? He may talk to you Mi Cielo" I smile.

I had hoped for a lazy night and morning in bed with my mate, but right now our friend needed us and I know that would take priority for us all over anything else. My Mum and Dad would be loving their time with their grandson. My sisters would no doubt be over to visit with their nephew tomorrow too before we collected him, they adored him as much as my parents did so he was not short of love.

My sisters, Willow and Livvy were both really close to Lilah now, instantly clicking with her, she didn't have siblings so they said she was their adopted sister, and in a way she was the missing piece for them that had been gone since we had lost our other sister Cleo. They loved doing art with Lilah and Indie and were now helping Indie run the art store, and Willow was selling the crafts that she made out of there too. So they were the perfect little gang.

All as crazy as one another too. Indie had encouraged Livvy to get her nose pierced, and

experiment with her clothes a little, I could see her becoming braver, and more confident through being friends with Indie, and while it had bothered my Mum at first her having her nose pierced, she loved the changes in her daughter now. Livvy adored Indie's little boy Finn too, and was always helping out looking after him.

I looked to Lilah just as her eyes turned back from the glazed expression that told me she had been mindlinking, or attempting to, I just hope Gabe was responding.

She shakes her head. Dammit..... I get he needs to run off steam, let some tension off, probably kill some small prey, that isn't unusual for our wolves, but at least let us know what happened, let us know what we are dealing with. This could affect Manuel too.

Shit, it could mess up his relationship with his mate couldn't it? I don't think he was strong

enough to cope with that..... he was so nervous earlier tonight, so nervous, but so happy, so ecstatic to have finally met her, imagine if that was ripped away from him with no control.... He

would be broken, devastated. No we need to try to stop that.

Gabe. We need you home now dude. Please, let us know what is going on. We need to protect

Manuel too. Please. I link him, I know it is mean using that against him, but I need to do what I need to do to protect our friends. I am scared for Gabe if I am honest. And I want him with us. Lilah and I walked down the stairs into out lounge just as there was a knock at the door, I go to open it, to be greeted by Jake, Dan and a very sleepy looking Indie.

"Whats going on?" she yawned as everyone piled into the house.

"In truth we have no clue. We were getting sorted for bed, when we heard a howl, went to the balcony and saw Aspen shifting and running for the forest, and howling again" Lilah says, looking worried.

"I thought I heard a howl, told myself was hearing things or perhaps it was one of the guys if they were marking their mates as know it occasionally happens" Jake shrugs.

"You think she rejected him?" Dan asks, I can see confusion and concern across his face.

"I don't know, he isn't responding" I say. "But otherwise he'd be with her now wouldn't he. The howl was one of pain I know that."

"Shit" Jake says.

"You think all that at the club was an act for him?" Indie looks pissed off. "I am wondering that now, but please tell me I am not the only one who thinks she seemed genuine there?" I say.

They all shake their heads "I agree, I thought she seemed genuinely happy" Indie says.

Seriously Gabe, I know you need time to run this off bro, but please let me know you are ok

please. Come back to mine, we are all here, worried about you. We want to be there for you, please. I link.

"I have linked him again. That's is the third time now I think, and Lilah tried too. But we have had no response. I know he probably wants to clear his head but I want to know he is ok. Plus we need to make sure this isn't going to affect Manuel" I explain.

"Oh no, that can't happen" I see Lilah's face drop. "Definitely not" Indie looks just as concerned.

That guy means the world to both of these two. I

know they will do what they can to protect him, though I think they feel the same for Gabe, and right

now they are desperate to help him. I can

feel through the bond just how on edge Lilah is at the fact he has run off. We need to get him back here with us, be there for him, support him, and just to know he is ok.

The front door opens, and Gabe walks in, nothing on but a pair of shorts. Tears are in his eyes.

"Oh Gabe" Lilah runs to him.

He embraces her, holding her tight to him, I see him fighting tears and despite the fact Knight is going crazy in my mind at the fact another male is holding my mate, I watch, feeling terrible for my friend...

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I had run for a while, chasing some small prey, taking out mine and Aspen's frustration on the small animals we found in the forest. But I struggled to focus and wasn't doing brilliantly. My mind and Aspen's kept focusing back on Esme, on our apparent mate, the mate that didn't want us, the mate that had run from us. Knox and Lilah had mind linked us numerous times, Aspen howling when he shifted must have disturbed them so they knew something was wrong as they had seen me shift and go for a run. So they knew I wasn't in my house making sweet love to my new fucking mate the way I should be. How fucking twisted fate ended being. I had clearly messed up in a past life to end up being punished like this.

I had ignored their links, continuing to run, pushing myself to the point it hurt, needing to feel the pain, then when Knox had mentioned Manuel I knew I had to go back.

What if all this shit does affect him? I fucking hope the actions of Esme do not effect the

relationships of our cousins, that would not be fair in anyway. That would not be right. I headed

straight back as soon as Knox had said that. still not responding to them, but finding a pair of

shorts in the trees at the edges of the borders,

carrying them in Aspen's mouth and running back toward the houses before shifting.

Enjoying the discomfort of my bones cracking and realigning to my human form. No pain and discomfort would be enough right now to outweigh the pain and suffering that Esme was putting me through.

I walked into Knox and Lilah's house, Dan, Indie and Jake were there too. It was sweet they all wanted to be there too. Though I am glad they had left Manuel to be with his mate, he deserved that, this was their special night to be together. He did not need that spoiling by the drama caused by Esme doing what she had.

Lilah threw herself at me in a big hug, I could feel the tears already building, I flung my arms around her, pulling her into a tight embrace. I just needed a hug right now, I was fighting tears. Knowing it was pathetic for me to cry in front of my friends.

"What happened Gabe?" Lilah whispered.

"She ran" I muttered.

"What do you mean?" Jake asks, standing to come and put his arm around me as Lilah steps back. They were all now standing around me, trying to show me support.

"Exactly that, we got home. She went to the bathroom and climbed out the fucking window. Not a fucking word, no explanation. Nothing. All seemed good. She seemed excited, happy even. What a fucking fool am I." I laugh almost sarcastically. Indie wraps her arms around me, nearly knocking me over with her pregnancy bump as she does it with such force " You are not a fool handsome, she is. Didn't see the good in front of her" "Thing is Indie is right, Esme had walked away from a good mate, giving him no explanation, other than the previous discussion earlier in the evening, and that had seemingly been sorted. But

evening, and that had seemingly been sorted. But this was not fair. You do not climb out of a fucking window, leaving with no word and no explanation, leaving a guy hurting this way." Knox says, frustration evident in his voice. "My Abuela was right all along, my mate would see me and run" I roll my eyes "she didn't even give me the decency of rejecting me first though" I am really struggling to fight tears.

"She owes you an explanation. Let Manny have his night with Lola and then we speak to her, she gets her cousin to do the decent thing and give you an apology and an explanation" Jake says. "Why? To be told I am not right for her? Think she made that clear already. I will be fine. I will hurt for a bit then will carry on as before. Don't let this effect Manny ok? He deserves to be happy, please guys, I mean it" I say. I try to sound confident. Yeah I want to be brave so they think I can cope with this, so they don't bring Manuel into this. I don't want him involved. Let him have his mate and his happiness. I would have to find a way to get through this. Like I told them. I am just not sure I know how......

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To finally get Lola back to my home, well what would be our home now, was heaven, I still cannot believe my mate is finally here after waiting

so long. Seeing her with my friends earlier had felt so amazing, she had fitted in so well, laughing and joking with us like she had known them all her life, this is what I had dreamt of and for it to have happened showed the Moon Goddess knew what she was doing. I am not one for dancing but when Lola asked me to join in with them dancing with the girls I was not going to turn my mate down, and having her body pushed against mine had felt so good. I know to look at the height difference must look amusing for those looking in, but she is cute, and I love how she looks. She clearly isn't as confident as Gabe's new mate, but then I am not as confident as Gabe, so in that regard we are the perfect match. We can work on all of that together. Though right now, the fact we are finally on our own, I am a massive bag of nerves! I have never been the best with women, not like some of the guys in pack, especially the warriors, and despite the fact Lola is my mate, I am still anxious and don't know what best to do now we are finally alone.

I know all the things I want to do, all the things I want to say, I am just not quite sure I am confident enough or brave enough to pull them off

confident enough or brave enough to pull them off....

"Wow, I thought you'd live in the pack house" Lola says as we walk into my house.

"I did until last month, but because Knox, and Dan had built their homes on the lake Gabe, Jake and I wanted to use the plots before someone else did so we would all have homes close to one another so we had our houses built here too, even without mates or families, forward planning I guess." I smile at her. "You like it?" I suddenly feel anxious, realising this will be her home, so if she doesn't like it then that won't be good. She smiles at me, "You may have to let me walk further than the hallway to allow me to give you an answer Guapo"

Mmmm, I could get used to my mate calling me handsome, I have to say.

"Ah yeah, sorry. I am not thinking straight I don't think Mi Amor" I take her hand, the tingle of the mate bond, reverberating down my arm.

"Aww is my mate nervous around me?" she giggles. I smile nervously with a small nod, and lead her to the lounge as I show her around the home I had built, that would be our family home, back when I hadn't even met my mate, but now I finally got to show my mate around. The house wasn't as big or complex as Knox and Lilah's, but the house was modern, with a dining room, and kitchen downstairs, plus a large lounge with patio doors that open onto decking in the back garden. Upstairs, there was a large master bedroom with an ensuite, two other bedrooms and a main bathroom. The house was neutrally decorated, though

I had added many of Indie and Lilah's paintings around my home to make it look more homely as I loved their art work.

I could see a look of awe on Lola's face as I led her around the house showing her room by room,

"It is beautiful Manuel" Lola says reaching for my hand as we reach the lounge once more,

having done a full tour of the house "I will do my best to look after it for you"

What? That seems an awfully weird thing to say. this is our home now, not just mine.....

But then she reaches up on her tiptoes to kiss me gently on my cheek, which to be fair, is nearer my chin as her height doesn't really allow her to reach much higher. I can't help but smile. The height difference, could be interesting.....

I gently place my hands either side of her waist and lift her up toward me to kiss her on her lips,

she hooks her legs around my waist, as I support her weight and am able to kiss her properly now. The touch of her lips against mine feels like heaven, she nibbles tenderly at my bottom lip, giving me sensations like nothing I have ever felt before. As our tongues twist and tease one another, I feel her groan against my mouth.

How had I managed without my mate in my life this long? She had literally been here for a few hours and I cannot imagine her not being here...... "You are perfect angel" I say to her, as she runs her hands through my hair.

"You are not too bad yourself my handsome warrior" she giggles as I go to sit her down on the large black leather sofa.

I already love the sound of her giggles, her face lights up when she is smiling and laughing, a sight I am hoping to be the cause of for my beautiful mate many times in our lifetime ahead.

"Do you want a drink?" I ask, suddenly feeling nervous again, aware that most men by now would have already been in the bedroom.

Me, however am more aware of the fact I may be a big disappointment, my lack of experience

with women and the fact I am so nervous can only be a recipe for disaster right? Oh goddess, why can I not be more confident? I bet Gabe has been sweet talking and charming his mate since the moment they got in. Probably already mated and marked.....

"Yeah sure, juice would be good please" Lola smiles, to be honest she looks as anxious as me. I see her twiddling her hair around her finger the way Lilah does when I know she is anxious. Is that a universal girl signal for when they are nervous?

I head to the kitchen to sort a drink, perhaps I could suggest taking the drinks to my room? Or is that too cringy? Though there is the balcony up there overlooking the garden.....

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Awww Manuel is the sweetest, I can see he is anxious, nervous to have me here. Lilah had told me he was not very confident around women, plus Gabe had teased about me being gentle with him. Yet I look at him, he is big, tall and a muscly, strong warrior, handsome and covered in tattoos, I seriously do not understand why he would not be confident, he is gorgeous. I imagine he has had she-wolves queuing up for him, yet the moon goddess had decided he would be mine. I find his uncertainty and nerves quite endearing to be honest... Trying to kiss him to reassure him is difficult when he is a fricking giant! I aimed for his cheek and pretty much got his chin! But it meant he lifted me up, I decided to go out of my comfort zone and do what I had seen Esme do earlier and wrap my legs around his waist to allow us to kiss properly and wow, had I been rewarded for being brave!

The kiss was amazing! See he may be nervous, but I am just as nervous.... I do not have much experience around men, other than family, the majority of men in our pack are narcissistic dicks, that is one of the reasons Esme and I say so often about running away. But it seems the Moon Goddess has arranged a way out for us...

Lola, I am hoping you can hear me. You can't let him mark you. I suddenly got a link from Esme.

I messaged Mami about finding my mate, she was not happy, told me under no circumstances to let him mark me. I need to stick to agreement of pack for my course. Plus Alpha needs to agree to letting us be marked by someone out of pack.

I felt my heart drop. No... this cannot be happening! I don't want this...

That can't be right. I know our pack is old fashioned, many of the pack couples are chosen mates from original pack members as our Alphas past and present, prefer to keep the pack together. We are run differently to the majority of the packs in the country. In the time since I have grown up I cannot remember many pack members being given permission to leave when finding their fated mate. Though, pack members rarely leave the pack anyway...

Surely I would be allowed to leave to be with Manuel now I had found him? Though how would I explain how I had met him?! Alpha does not even know I am here, he has never known about my visits to see my cousin at university, that is always something my parents have arranged for me and hidden from him. He would be far from happy to find out I had regularly been sneaking out to visit my cousin. He did not like pack members leaving pack without his consent. I would be in a lot of trouble. Even more so when he realised the sneaking out to visit Esme meant I had met my fated mate. Something he does not agree with. I feel a horrible feeling of uncertainty and dread taking over me. Would I lose my mate just as I had found him and be made to settle with one I do not want at my own pack? Our Alpha was ruthless beyond compare, we do not disobey him, that would not wise, if he said I could not be with Manuel I would have to do as I was told, wouldn't I? A sickness fill my stomach at that

thought. Because I know if that were to happen I would also be punished. This would never be good.

Yet I am surprised at Esme, she is strong and feisty and stands up for her rights, and everything she believes in. She does not do what is expected of her and she will always argue and stand her ground against our Alpha which he detests in her, but yet he allowed her to go to university in spite of that. But if she wants Gabe, I can not for the life of me understand why she would not just do as she wants, follow the plan fate set for her, she would not be dictated to by our tyrant of an Alpha. That makes no sense to me. I can imagine she will go ahead and mark him and allow him to mark her, say nothing and once her course is done simply state she is not returning. She would not follow orders. She is free and does as she pleases. She wanted Gabe dodnt she? IT sure seemed that way at the bar once they had sorted things out. So surely she would do as she wanted. That is the sort of thing my Esme would do. Perhaps she is just warning me, because she knows I am not as brave as her. She knows how scared I am of getting in trouble, and that I will do what is expected of me. But the thing is, I do not want to leave my fated mate now I have met him. I do

not want to give him up... he is mine. Meant for me, picked for me. I am not meant for some man picked by a cruel Alpha. My heart feels like it is breaking. What was I do to do? I could not allow Manuel to mark me if what Esme said is true, could I? Because then I am putting myself in danger. I feel my wolf whimpering, she so desperately wants her mate, the mate meant for her, fated for her. Why does there always have to be a cruel twist to a happy ending? This seems to unfair. I can't see a way out of this. I had felt so happy literally moments ago, yet now I felt like I wanted to fall apart...

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"Here you go Mi Amor" I say offering the glass of juice to Lola, she looked deep in thought, I hope she is ok, and not having second thoughts of being with me.

She looks to me, a small smile on her face, though I am almost certain there are traces of tears building in her eyes "Thank you" "You want to go sit on the balcony in my room, we have great view of the lake from up there, it is quite warm out still. We can sit and talk if you like?" I suggest, hoping to the goddess that does not sound sleazy or dodgy in anyway. I really need to work on this.....

She simply nods, following me upstairs. I open the patio doors, leading out onto the small balcony attached to my bedroom, over looking the back garden of my home, and also views of the lake and parts of the forest in the pack. Our packlands are beautiful, full of mountains and plenty of forests, which are perfect for when we shift and need to run. I have a small table and chairs set up out here, as I love to have my breakfast out here in the summer, or sit out watching the sun go down.

"Wow, it is beautiful" Lola smiles as she sits down. She rests her head on her hands, her elbow resting on the table, she looks lost in her own thoughts. This doesn't seem to be going too well. We have just met, and just come home, by now surely we should be ripping one another's clothes off right? Yet she looks like she is contemplating the meaning of life right now and me? Well I feel sick with nerves.....

"Lola? Do you want me to take you home?" I ask.

She looks at me, shock on her face "No, why?" she stutters.

"You look really uncertain and uncomfortable Carino, and I don't want that, if you want to take things slowly, or you want to have a think if I am even what you want then perhaps I should take you home, or back to Esme's at least." I say, though it is breaking my heart to even suggest it, but I feel I need to say it, she looks so unsure of herself right now and I don't want her to be feeling rushed or pressured into things.

I know I am nervous, but I know this is what I want, I know that I am happy. The nerves are just because I am scared of disappointing her, because I have waited so long for this moment, waited so long for my mate.....

The look on her face right now, I am not so sure it is for the same reasons, and that scares me, that is why I needed to ask, needed to offer, I need to do the right thing for my mate.

"Oh Guapo, no. You think I don't want you?" she says, her voice breaking, tears beginning to fall. I smile sadly at her and shrug.

She stands from her seat and walks to me, coming to sit herself on my lap, one leg either side of my waist, so her face is close to mine, my heart is racing having her so close. I place my hands on her waist. Holding her this close feels so good, but I am still scared of her answer to my questions.....

"Guapo, I want you, more than you know. I am just scared. Unsure of what all this means for the future....." she says between sobs.

Unsure of what it means for the future? What does that mean? Why is she scared? I am her mate though, she should not be scared of me, I don't want her scared....

Before I can ask her what she means, her lips meet mine in a kiss, a gentle kiss to begin with, I

can taste the salt of her tears. But as she kisses me, her need and intensity grows, the kiss deepens.

She is running her hands through my hair, pulling my head back to allow a deeper kiss.

All questions and thoughts I had are now forgotten, my thoughts now on my mate, I stand, lifting her as I do, walking to my bedroom. She continues to roughly run her hands through my hair,

teasing with her tongue along the space on my neck where her mate mark would be, the sensation of the wetness of her tongue giving me shivers down my body. I hear her giggle.

I gently lay her down on the bed, my nerves suddenly gone, this is my mate, I want to please her, I want to make her mine. I stand looking down at her.....She is perfect..... She hooks her finger in my shirt to pull me down to her with that same sexy giggle she has.... Wow.... My mate has me good.....

Her hands have slipped under my shirt, the touch of her skin to my chest feels incredible, the sensation from the contact of our skin is beyond what I had imagined. She pushes my shirt up above my head, urging my to slip it off, pausing our kisses as I do, allowing her better access to my body.....

I feel the tender touch of her finger tips tracing the outlines of my tattoos decorating my chest, as she pulls me closer once more, I slide my hand down the womanly curve of her body..... This mate of mine was perfection....she pauses our kisses once more to sit herself up.....

Has she changed her mind?.... I began to think, but as the thought began to cross my mind she was slipping her dress off, leaving her kneeling in front of me in nothing but a lacy black bra and panties..... which only compliment the natural curves of her beautiful body..... if I had thought my heart was racing before, then it is on a whole other level now..... my mate is heavenly...... Previous Next