

Chapter 34

"We named him Jack."

Mrs Fuller said after a long silence.

"Jack Joseph Fuller."

Lori nodded, forcing a smile on her face. Jack. That was a nice name. A lovely name even.

"I'm sorry we hid him from you Lori. But you must understand. We were so angry..."

Angry?!

If they were angry then she must have been out of her mind, because as far as memory served her, she was the one who was rushed to the hospital, she was the one who gave birth to him.

"We blamed you for everything. For his death."

"Jack. Jack was our miracle baby. He was supposed to be the one who changed things for us."

"Yoh have no idea how broken I felt when he died."

Broken?! Lori scoffed. What about her? It wasn't exactly a walk in the park for her either.

"It was like all hope had been snatched away from me."

Lori shook her head.

No. They didn't have any right to make her feel that way. To make her feel like she didn't care about him too.

"He was my son."

"My son."

She repeated as she pointed to herself.

"I put him up for adoption because I loved him. Because I wanted to give him a better life..."

"Not because I didn't want him..."

Mrs Fuller nodded.

"I know. I understand that now. I'm sorry I ever made you feel like it was your fault."

"I'm sorry I kept you away from his grave so long..."

"I'm sorry. Really."

Lori sniffed. Blinking away tears as she tried to compose herself.

"Where? Where is he buried?"

There was a slight pause before Mrs Fuller replied.

"At St Joseph Memorial. I can take you there..."

Lori shook her head.

"I want to go alone."

"It would be quite hard navigating the..."

"I want to go alone."

Mrs Fuller nodded.

"Okay. I'll write down his plot number for you."

After a while Lori left the store, but it didn't mean she was going home.

She dropped off the things she bought in the car and asked Tony to head home without her.

He refused, protesting lightly but Lori assured him that she would be back home before dinner.

She took the first cab she saw after that to St Joseph's Memorial.

Gabriel looked at the time, it was getting quite late, Tony and Lori should be back. In the time she had left, Draco had come over with reports. Apparently his grandfather had found out that he had a granddaughter a while ago. At least for the past two months. A nurse under Dr Calloway had given him the information but he chose to stay quiet, even after the baby was born, Gabriel didn't know if it was because he truly didn't want to meddle or he was waiting for Gabriel to inform him himself.

Either way, he had confirmed the story and got angry about it. Which was to be expected, Gabriel only hoped he'd keep his mouth shut in that regard. He loved his grandfather but the man wasn't only nosy he also talked quite a lot. Times were different, the werewolf world was cutthroat. It was a dog eat dog existence. Only the strongest could survive.

Alliances, strength, numbers, that was what mattered. Any sign of weakness would be sought after. Especially since Gabriel had fought so hard to be alpha.

He had fought hard, pissed many people off, some of which were family.

It was why he was never fully comfortable with Elliot around. Because he still felt weary, still felt traumatized by how his cousins and distant relatives had attacked him, vying for the position just because they believed they were older and more experienced. Elliot was the only one who never tried. Elliot acknowledged him as alpha, in fact, he was one of the first of his family to do so, asides his grandfather.

His brother on the other hand, oh no, Lyle had fought with everything in him.

And when Lyle and Gabriel had that final fight that left Lyle bleeding out in the woods and Gabriel leaving victorious. No one dared to voice an opposition.

Not even Elliot, who ordinarily, should want to avenge his elder brother's death.

He went downstairs and found Jenny talking to Tony. She looked worried as she rubbed her fingers on her apron nervously.

She turned when she saw him approaching and bowed slightly. They only did that when Lori wasn't around Mz

"Tony was just telling me that Lori didn't come with him. She told him she had somewhere to go and she'd be back before dinner."

"What? She didn't tell me that.."

Gabriel said as he fished out his phone from his pocket, dialing her number.

"Did she tell you where she was going?"

He asked and Tony shook his head.

"I don't know. I tried to ask her but it seemed like she was in a rush. I assumed you already gave her permission..."

Gabriel shook his head.

"No. I didn't give her any permission."

Gabriel pressed his phone to his ear.

No response.

She wasn't picking her calls either.

He sighed as he turned to Jenny and Tony who were waiting for him to say something.

"You said she mentioned she'll be back before dinner right?"

He asked and Tony nodded.

"We'll wait till then."

He pocketed his phone.

Lori wouldn't run away, or do something stupid, he knew her, she was too smart for that. So he was going to give her the benefit of doubt before tracking her phone.

When he gave her a new phone it already had a spyware that let him know where her location was at all times, as long as her phone was on, Gabriel could track her.

But not now, she said she'd be back before dinner so he would wait.

He went back upstairs and disappeared into his study.

"Anything?!"

Sabine asked and Vara shrugged.

"Nothing! Nothing sensible at all!"

"Gabriel planned this very well. Very smart too. All the doctors, nurses and specialists that handled the delivery of his daughter were all werewolves. And they're his werewolves. They wouldn't spill a word."

Sabine scoffed. He was craftier than she gave him credit for. He certainly knew how to hide his tracks and he was hiding it well. Whoever this woman was, she must be important enough for him to be keeping her covered up and giving her so much protection.

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From the little she and Vara had been able to gather, the woman was probably living in his house, she was still unrecognizable to them but at least they had ruled out the fact that she was working with him because she had mysteriously appeared when his daughter was born.

His daughter whom they could also not find enough information about. Sabine wondered exactly why he was going to great lengths to protect the two of them. It was weird, it was annoying.

Vara left the room to take a call, Sabine sat on her chair fuming. Ever since she made Gabriel give her his word she had been wondering what she was going to ask for. It was her only chance and she knew he would honor the promise, but she didn't know what she could or would ask for.

If she found out enough about him, enough of his secrets and what he was hiding, she would use it against him.

Vara walked back into the room, there was a huge smile on her face.

"I think we have something."

"What's that?"

Sabine sprang to her feet.

"There was a woman in the same hospital ward.. She donated her breast milk to Gabriel's daughter. Our contact only found her nurse because she talked to Gabriel Caine about a breast milk donor."

"Well! Does the woman have a name?!"

Vara sighed.

"We'll have to pay her to talk. But it won't be long before we find out whether or not it's an actual lead."

Jack Joseph Fuller.

That was what the plain grey concrete slab on the grass said. She brought flowers, daisies. The ones she could pick while she was on her way to the cemetery. ①

She placed them on the grave. She stood, quietly for a while, for a long time. Because she didn't know what to say. Or what to do.

The grief she was feeling, it was heavy on her chest, but she didn't know how to pour it out.

Or what to do with it.

She stood there for a long time, no words, no tears, no emotion, just standing there and watching.

After a long time Lori placed a hand on the cold concrete slab, then she

stood up and walked away.

As she walked out of the cemetery, she decided she wasn't quite ready to go home yet, she somehow missed her old apartment. The smallness of it, the coziness, besides some of her stuff was still there and she still paid the last month rent, she didn't know why she did that.

She didn't have a key on her, but she always left a spare in a good hiding spot.

She took a cab and went to her apartment, plucking the key from the crooked floor crack that she covered with a fake plant. Her neighbor wasn't around or so she thought.

If he was around he would have heard her coming in, or probably he didn't care.

Everything was just as she left it, only with some accumulated dust. She went to her bedroom and curled up on the mattress. She sort of missed it. She missed her apartment, even though quite frankly it didn't have much to offer her, it served her well.

She looked at her closet and deliberated packing some more clothes she would need.

She looked at the time, it wasn't that late yet, and her phone wasn't beeping like crazy which meant either Gabriel didn't care that she wasn't back home yet or somehow Tony had not gotten home yet.

After a while she went to her closet and picked out some clothes she decided she might need. They weren't many, but they were the ones she wished she didn't leave. Just a few of them, some more outing appropriate clothes.

After packing them she decided to do a little clean up, everything was dusty. So she grabbed a napkin and started wiping down on all the surfaces, then she dusted the furniture and mopped the hardwood floor. By the time she was done, the time had gone, she had spent way more time than she wanted to and she was already mildly pissed off at herself for staying so long.

She dumped her cleaning supplies in the bathroom and went back to her room to pick up her stuff and found out that she had at least ten missed calls from Gabriel.

Her heart jumped.

That was around five minutes ago.

She was still contemplating on whether or not she would call him back when there was a loud knock on her door.

Did Gabriel come for her?

She asked herself as she rushed to the door and opened it.

No. It wasn't Gabriel.

It was Asher.

And Jared. 