

Chapter 31 - Her Alpha's Orders

Jo-anne POV

She was standing in front of her easel. All the things she'd ordered had arrived. T.J. had taken her down to sign for them and help her take them all back to her room, then realised she actually didn't have a great deal of room in there for her to work in.

Not that she had told him who she was about to paint, even when he'd asked her. Jo-anne had just smiled right up at him, put her fingers to her lips and made like she was zipping her mouth shut.

He tried to get her to tell him, then laughed at her and told her he would just sneak in and find out when she wasn't in the room, if she didn't tell him. Apparently, keeping secrets from the man was not something he liked, she'd just laughed at him oh that could be a fun game to play with him.

Jo-anne had grinned right at him, pointed to her new door. It had been put in this morning and even had new locks installed, weird it had only had one before but now it had three. "I'll just lock it. They will keep you out."

"West will have the master key." he'd shot right back at her. "I'll bet I can get him to give me a set."

Jo-anne had laughed so hard "Like he's going to give that to you. He's got issues where I'm concerned, remember." it was not likely, she thought, not after that fight last night and the new order she had on her.

T.J. had actually pouted at her, which only made her laugh more, and then, seeing as her camera was in her hand, had snapped a photo of him and his puppy dog eyes, which had lead to him chasing her around the room, trying to get her camera off of her. He'd grabbed hold of her, completely forgetting about West's newest Order for her, not to let any man, other than himself to touch her. She'd gasped in pain, as his arm had snagged her around the waist and he'd picked her up off the floor laughing.

Let go the second he'd realised, at her gasp of pain and stepped completely away from her, "I'm sorry." he'd said, quickly apologising to her "I forgot."

Jo-anne had sighed and shook her head, it wasn't his fault, and the second he'd let go, the pain had subsided. "Not your fault T.J."

"I'll talk to him," he assured her.

"Don't, just let it be. It's not like I'm actively seeking out anyone to have sex with. So it doesn't really matter, honestly your like the only male, that does touch me anyway." she shrugged at him. And it was the truth she realised. Since being here, it was only T.J.

who touched her, or West dragging her about, unhappy with her over one thing or another.

He'd stood there and stared at her, then sighed softly "It's not right Jo-Jo. West will rescind it, when he realises what he did and the complications that it could cause."

Jo-anne strongly doubted it, but the happy mood in the room was gone now and T.J. headed off to do his Beta Duties. She supposed. She was sitting on the floor setting up her printer and connecting it to her laptop and phone, when he'd come back into the room with Ricky, West's Gamma, they were carrying a couple of portable tables.

"For all your supplies to sit on."

"Thank you," she smiled up at them.

Ricky had stood there and frowned down at her, tilted his head and looked at her, like really looked at her, she'd stared right back up at him and after a full minute, had asked "What?"

"Nothing!" he shrugged "you feel different, different to me since the last time you lived here in the pack."

"Oh, do I? Probably because I'm not Mated to West anymore." she hazard a guess.

"Mmm," he'd nodded, but his eyes were narrowed on her for another 10 seconds and then he left the room with T.J. she heard him say "I'm right, right Terence?"

"Yes," T.J. had replied.

Jo-anne stared at the door, then shrugged it off. She didn't really feel any different, was likely to do with being under 18 and Mated to West the last time he'd really looked at her. Or how she'd not felt anything in the last 3 months of being here. He had been the future Gamma and would of, if he'd seen fit, been able to feel her emotions or lack there of. Though it was more likely that his father, Baden, would have been on that, being the actual Gamma at the time.

Not that Jo-anne had recalled seeing Baden at all, didn't actually recall seeing anyone other than T.J. or West. She had not cared to either. Jo-anne shook her head to rid herself of those thoughts and returned her attention back to the task at hand, so she could get herself all set up and start organising her palette and colour choices.

Jo-anne had already picked the photo of West, the magic shot. She just had to print it out so she could see all of the inflections and light play to get it right. Despite the current tense situation between them, she was actually looking forward to this project, and was quite excited to be getting back to work.

Loved painting portraits, and why wouldn't she they were all gorgeous men, she giggled to herself. Had a really good job. This would be no different, she imagined, and the fact that she had managed to get a shot of him actually, for real smiling, it was going to be an amazing portrait.

She had yet to tell Luna Natalia or even Miranda she'd gotten that Magic shot, still wanted it to be a surprise for them both, and if she told them they would both be down here wanting to see it. Ruining her surprise. Though she still had to get that photo of Miranda and West together, she would work on just West for now.

Jo-anne didn't think that it would take long or be that hard to get a photo of them together. Miranda quite liked standing next to him, holding on to his arm, she would be smiling for sure, always smiled up at the man. Why wouldn't she, if he smiled at her behind closed doors, like he was in that photo she had gotten, the girl was likely to melt into a puddle of goo.

It had completely shocked Jo-anne how much just one genuine smile had transformed his face. It was almost as though he was a completely different person, altogether. Who knew that one smile would allow others to see him in such a different light? That was why she liked being behind her camera actually. Capturing the moments of pure joy, or heartache, her camera had caught many different emotions over the years. But happiness was her favourite.

Whatever he had been thinking about that day out there on the pack-house steps, sure had lit him up, like a kid in a candy store for the first time. She'd have to make sure to give his mother the other photos as well, once the portrait was completed. She'd actually managed to capture a dozen shots of just him smiling, and then there were the ones with T.J. too. A miracle, she supposed. Considering that Luna Natalia had told her he just never did smile, she couldn't get him too.

She spent the whole next day sketching out lightly on her canvas, the man himself, the background, making sure to get all the aspects right. She'd been going to make the background green and fade it out, to match his eyes, but had decided she really liked him standing in front of the pack-house right there on that top step. Smiling over his domain, so to speak.

Also, she had changed her mind from the cropped version of him, to a full portrait, all of him, she just thought that it looked better, with him all happy and in charge of his Pack. It would also show just how petite Miranda was too. She was almost a foot shorter than him. Always wore nice clothing too, fitted well, and so her athletic figure would be for all to see.

Jo-anne sighed, the girl was obviously allowed to train, had seen her abs, slightly defined and looking good. Jo-anne herself, well though she was tall and fit, did not have the defined muscles most she-wolves had, her figure was good but came across as soft compared to all the others around her. Not an ounce of fat on her. No she-wolves were

fat, burned way too many calories for that. But still never had that perfect athletic body, more feminine than werewolf ripped and hotness.

She was standing outside the pack-house a day later, stretching herself a bit stiff from standing in front of her canvas most of the morning. Her camera was in her hand, she was smiling to herself as she leaned on the front of the pack-house's western corner. She was watching a group of young girls giggling over a bunch of boys. Teens without wolves yet, well the girls didn't have wolves yet. They were swooning over the boys who'd likely just gotten their wolves, and were clearly showing off their new-found wolf muscles to those girls.

She actually remembered doing that herself. Sitting around with her group of friends watching the boys, who'd gotten their wolves. Wow, didn't they change. It was almost instant, once they shifted for the first time, and then returned back to human form, wow the muscles they had gained. Some more than others, a lot more sometimes. Due to their lineage. Your male friends went from being normal, good looking to taller and all muscled out, smoking hot some of them. It was a real treat for young teenage girls, that was for sure, especially if one of them was the boy you were dating at the time. Those boys, they all knew it too.

It was likely that the group she was watching, those boys had just shifted for the first time on the last full moon, and they were still enjoying all the attention from their female friends. Ah, the memories of childhood. She knew from her own experience some of those girls were drooling down there, literally, she also knew some of them had likely lost their V cards already to those boys, not that she had ever done that, had been one of the she-wolves that had wanted to wait on her Goddess-Gifted Mate. Not that that had happened in the end.

"What are you looking at?" T.J.'s voice

Jo-anne turned and looked right at him, a smile on her lips, he was leaning up against the wall next to her "I remember those days." she indicated to the boys and girls she'd been watching.

"Oh, do you now?"

"Yes, even recall your scrawny ass, suddenly not being so scrawny anymore." she teased him.

T.J. chuckled, "I was never scrawny."

No, he had not been, all muscle all the time, the man had been in training all his life for this position, even without his wolf Lark, a large black wolf, not unlike an Alpha wolf she supposed, but he had this white crescent shaped moon on his chest part of his blood line, his mothers wolf also had one and all his sisters. Showed their royal blood line.

“No, you were a pip squeak if I recall.” she giggled and dodged the hand that he tried to whack her with.

“Pip squeak my ass.”

Jo-anne turned her camera on him. “Show me that ass...I bet...I could make a fortune from it.”

He shook his head at her, still smiling, though “Never.”

“Awe are you a virgin T.J.? all shy about that ass of yours.” She knew he was not, the man could have anyone he wanted, not only was he the packs un-mated Beta, he was a bloody Prince in his own right, not that he had ever laid claim to it, didn’t particularly care about it, from what she recalled. But his mother was the youngest princess of the royal family. Never in line for the throne, but it still counted.

He snorted “You know I’m not Jo-Jo.”

She did know he was not, all the girls had oohed and aahed over him as much as they had West for that matter. It was unlikely to have changed while she’d been away from the pack. Especially as he’d seemed to have put on even more muscle now.

Jo-anne took a step back and focused her camera on him, then grinned “Hey T.J. what say you pose for me. I got this idea for a calendar, the she-wolves would all go nuts over.”

“No, Jo-Jo.”

Oh, come on. I bet the revenue I could generate in a week of it coming out, would pay for my art studio in full.”

He shook his head, “No wolf will say yes to that.”

“Why not? The girls will be all hot and bothered.” she teased him. “itching for you to bed them.”

“No Mate would allow it, that is why. Possessive creatures, all of them.”

“Spoil sport, you got that god-like body, you know, and it's being wasted.”

“Eyes up here Jo-Jo.” he commented,

“I’m only looking as a photographer.”

“I hope so. Eyes off my goods, I got a Mate out there somewhere.”

"Me too." she grinned "I'd pose." she teased him, all in-connotation there in her voice implying she'd do it naked.

Her meaning was not missed on him either. He was frowning at her now and she knew why. He was the pack Beta and his Alpha, West, would never allow it. That man had never wanted anyone to see her naked. She'd said it solely because she had seen West through her camera lens, coming out of the pack-house.

He was looking for T.J. no doubt, they were always together. Nothing had changed on that front while she had been gone either. West's eyes had moved in their direction, she'd known he would hear her comment. Wanted to annoy him.

"Jo-Jo!"

"Oh, I know. No man is ever allowed to touch me." she rolled her eyes, every word dripped sarcasm, but as she said it something else occurred to her. No man was ever allowed to touch her...hmm. There might be a loop hole there somewhere.

"I'll talk to him again." he frowned.

"Again?" she snorted and then reached out and touched his arm gently. He pulled it from her instantly. "Don't bother T.J." there had been no pain when she had touched him interesting. But let's annoy that man a bit more, he wants to alpha order me, I will annoy him with it at every turn, "There are plenty of she-wolves, I can hook up with. Girls touching me is not a problem." she smirked right up at him, T.J. clearly didn't know yet that West was standing and likely listening to every word she was saying, but she did. T.J.'s face was priceless and she snapped a pic of it. His eyes were wide and his mouth had opened in a shocked Oh.

"That's not funny Jo-Jo."

"What? I could see myself with a girl, or two even. Their touch I bet would be all soft and sensual." she dropped her voice to a silken sexy tone for that last part. It was the loop hole she'd thought about earlier, but now she had found another, a more fun one.

"Jo-Jo enough." he snapped at her.

"What?" she laughed.

"Be sensible."

"Oh," she shook her head "Fine," rolled her eyes and then she leaned back on the pack-house next to him "I don't need another anyway, I get plenty of orgasmic action on my own." she smirked and she did "can soak my own sheets some nights, or mornings hell even in the afternoons, sometimes..." she sighed making it sound all dreamy like, "exhaust myself all on my own." she smiled at him. It was the truth, her bloody shivers

could be so damned strong they could bring her to her knees and some times she touched herself to increase the high of pleasure.

She did not need a man or a woman for that matter, likely never would. The look on his face now, he was glaring right down at her, she'd ticked him off, it seemed, though she was fully amused by her own words, mostly because he had no idea just how true her words were.

"I don't want to hear you talk like that, Jo-Jo. Not ever. Do you hear me?" he grated out angrily at her.

"Why T.J. are you a prude?" she raised an eyebrow, she wasn't done yet. "Who's to say I don't have a draw full of vibrators and sex toys, to help me out."

"Enough." he snapped at her, a warning edge to his voice. "Don't talk like that." he turned and stalked away from her.

Jo-anne allowed her eyes to follow him, she was still smiling, very pleased and amused with herself. West was looking right at her, her eyes met his for only an instant and then she just turned and walked away, sashaying her hips as she walked off, and laughed to herself. He looked suitably annoyed to her. Good.

Not only had she annoyed him, she had found two loop holes around his Alpha Order, one she could hook up with a she-wolf and it wouldn't cause her any pain, and interestingly enough, she could touch a male wolf, he just couldn't touch her. Now that was interesting indeed. Would have to think about that some more.

She had blatantly stood there and let him know she had found away around his order. Probably going to get an impromptu visit later on, but what else was new? Besides, her canvas was covered by a black drop cloth, so even if he did stalk into her room he wouldn't see what was on it. That was her only concern right this minute. His annoyance or anger over what she had said. Well, what else was new?

She headed off into town to get a cup of tea, was on her way back when she turned her head at the sound of her name "Jo-Anne." It was her father. "May I have a word with you?"

She had not seen him, since Jester had bitten her. He had blocked all her attempts to mind-link him since then as well. Didn't want to talk to her, she nodded to him. Didn't know what to say to him to be honest.

Was he here to apologise for attacking her? To explain why it had happened?

He walked right over to her, his eyes were on hers the whole time, it was a little weird she couldn't read his facial expression at all. Didn't see it coming when his hand snapped out and he grabbed her around the neck and was suddenly squeezing her

throat with all he had. Pain ripped through her at his touch, along with the actual pain of what felt like him trying to strangle her.

She gasped for air, not understanding, he was attacking her again. Why? What had she done to deserve this? His other hand was now around her throat, as he pulled her close to his face and stared right into her shocked eyes “Do you know what they did to me?”

No, she did not know what his punishment had been. She opened her mouth to try and talk but couldn't get any words out, his grip on her throat was too tight. Felt herself getting lifted off the ground and her cup of tea and camera fell from her hands to the ground as both her hands were clutching at his, she couldn't breathe and pain was wracking her body at his very touch.

She was trying desperately to pry his hands off of her neck, needed to breathe.

“I'll pay you back for every lash and every hit I took.” he growled menacingly at her, saw Jester surface, was clawing at his hands, and tried to kick out at him, her strength was nothing compared to his, and her lack of oxygen and the pain of another man, that was not West, touching her was excruciating and stopping Clova from being able to shift her, it was all too much, even for her wolf.

Then his claws were out. She tried to scream but couldn't, felt as his claws punctured into her skin pain ripped through her, and she knew in that moment he was going to kill her, Jester was lending him all his strength, they were going to kill her and she didn't even know why.

‘Father please.’ she opened a mind-link to him to beg him to stop.

“I'll kill you for it.” he and his wolf snarled at her.

It was too much, she couldn't hold her arms up anymore to fight him any more, to weakened from lack of oxygen and darkness was tinging her vision. He really did mean to kill her, was killing her.

Then she hit the ground, lay there unable to move, darkness still at the edges of her vision, could feel her mouth open and close as she tried desperately to suck air into her lungs, to draw even a single breath. She couldn't, nothing was working, no matter how hard she fought and struggled to breathe, she could not make air pass to her lungs. Could feel Clova panicking inside her mind, seemingly unable to aid her either.

Could feel her wolf's desperation as she was trying to force their human body to shift, but could not was cut off from it. Then pain ripped through her whole body as she was picked up off the ground. “I go you Jo-Jo, stay with me.” T.J.'s voice seemed to be yelling at her, but it sounded very far away, as that darkness crept further into her vision.

'I can't breathe.' she mind-linked him.

"Hold on, Jo-Jo please. I got you." he was moving fast, something was seriously wrong with her, darkness was filling her vision so quickly rushing towards her now, yet she still could not breathe, no matter how hard she tried.

'T.J.' she whispered down the mind-link sadly, Clova was gone to the far reaches of her mind and darkness claimed her.

Chapter 32 - Her Alpha's Orders

T.J. POV

T.J. walked back towards the front doors of the pack-house, very annoyed with Jo-Jo's comments, he did not need to hear her talk about sex or her orgasms like she had been, for that matter, and certainly not when referring to herself in that tone she had used. His eyes landed on West as he headed for the pack-house, and knew instantly, why she had struck up that conversation, and used all that sultriness.

She had known he was over there. Likely knew he'd seen the two of them talking, probably seen him through that camera of hers. The question was how long had the man been standing there listening. Jo-Jo had clearly stated those things to intentionally antagonise the man. Was she insane? It was completely possible that West would get really mad and lay down another order on her.

Did she not know better, than to tempt fate?

Crazy woman, was going to be the death of him. He looked at West's face, the man was frowning right at her, looking past T.J. altogether, even T.J. heard her laugh and internally sighed, that bloody woman was playing with fire, it seemed, and enjoying it. Had she forgotten how damned possessive he had been during their Mate Bond, or had she just never really realised his behaviour was related to his possessiveness.

West had never, not even once, liked even the thought of someone else seeing her naked. Hell, she'd not even been allowed to attend gym class, because that meant she had to get changed in the girls' locker room, even other girls seeing her naked was a no go in his eyes. Wolf training had been out for her as well, because that had meant she'd have to be naked to shift into Clova in front of both male and female wolves. The one time she'd done it he'd gone absolutely ballistic.

Hadn't realised she was wolf training with the others until he'd seen Clova out there on the training grounds and, well, he'd stalked off down there in a fully ticked off rage, that they had seen her naked body. Yelled at the whole damned field that training was over, literally picked up her wolf, Clova being quite small and all, and had stalked off with her to the side of the pack-house. To the omega stairs, kicked the door open and put her wolf on the inside, demanding she shift and return to their room.

T.J. had been trailing him, not really understanding the issue, until West had yelled at her that she was not allowed to shift in front of others. Poor Jo-Jo had just stared up at him not understanding at all why he was so irate. She'd just been training like everyone else did, hadn't thought anything of it, they'd only been mated a couple of weeks, had finally gotten the all clear from the doctor to resume all normal wolven things, including training.

She'd looked at T.J. for clarification on the situation, only to find West turn and look at him, not realising he was standing right there, where he could see the girl naked. Had snarled at her to get her ass upstairs and stepped outside to bang the door closed behind her.

Now here she was talking loudly right in front of him, about taking up with a she-wolf or two for that matter, had even touched him herself. Which would have incurred her pain, though he'd not seen pain in her at all.

Did it to tick West off, T.J. just knew it.

She had clearly been thinking about ways to get around, her Alpha's Orders, and found a loophole to her liking. Announced it right in his presence of all the stupid things she could do, this was likely the stupidest.

'Let it go West.'

'I know why she did it.' he muttered right back.

'Relinquish it, solve the problem.'

'No.' he stated and turned and walked away 'You've yet to show me where the art studio is to go. I just got the builders request to start clearing land for it.'

T.J. nodded he had been nice to the girl, as T.J. had requested him to be, though it had not lasted long, it seemed, but he would uphold his end of the deal. "Alright, come on. You'll like it."

He walked West right over to the place it would go. Watched as West raised an eyebrow at him, as he turned and looked at the pack-house, tilted his head up to the top floor.

"I can see it from my suite." T.J. commented "You will also get a full view of it from your Alpha suite, if you ever decide to move into it." T.J. had picked this place not just for his own piece of mind, where Jo-Jo was concerned, but also in the hope, that it would force his Alpha, into the Alpha suite up there waiting on him. He pointed to the ground floor. "Your office windows will also get a full view."

West turned and looked right at him, narrowed eyes.

"You're welcome West. She did have one request."

"What was it?"

"A room to stay in, a one bedroom apartment off the back."

"And?"

"I told her it's an art studio, not a place to live basically."

"Hmm."

T.J. watched as West turned and looked into the forest behind where it would go. Oh yes, T.J. had picked this place on purpose. It was actually where West came to be alone. He would sit out there on that stone bridge and either smoke or drink a bourbon. Not that he had seen the man light up at all since Jo-Jo had told him it wasn't good for him.

The man had not given up smoking for his mother, or father and they both had disapproved, point of fact, his mother had chastised him about this, in her words, 'filthy habit' and West had lit one up right in front of her, just to tick the woman off. Miranda had also not been able to convince him either.

West smoked, because it actually burned his lungs and caused him physical pain, not because he actually enjoyed it. Took it up a week or so after Jo-Jo had left him and had, continued to smoke right up until she was back in this pack.

T.J. thought about that for a minute. Actually, he hadn't seen the man light up, not once, since Singapore, and he had seen him mad on several occasions since she had been back. Interesting he thought to himself and wondered if West had realised it. Or his mother and father, for that matter.

"Alright." West nodded at him "guess I'll approve it."

"Good thinking. That room of hers is actually quite small for her work, I noticed. Definitely needs a good sized work space."

Watched as West again looked up to the top floor, his current room, was on the front side of the pack-house, a room only, not a suite. No need for a suite. Is all he'd ever said on the subject.

"So when are you going to move into your suite? You know its ready up there."

"Mm, I do. There is no point. I don't need all those rooms."

"You're the Alpha now West. You should be in the Alpha suite."

“With Miranda? I don’t think so.” he’d replied and strode off.

They walked back to the pack-house, not with Miranda. Well, that explained a lot T.J. guessed, not his Luna, so would not have her in there. Walked all the way into the Alpha’s office where he watched as West did sign and approve the application from the builders to clear and level the land in prep for her art studio.

He had not been able to get West to rescind the order on her. There was no convincing the man. T.J. had stared right at him and called him an ass-hole to his face. West had just looked at him, didn’t even seem surprised by it. Was probably expecting T.J. to come in here and beat the living hell out of him over it.

The only reason that T.J. had not done exactly that, was because Jo-Jo didn’t actually seem to be bothered by it, annoyed, maybe exasperated, but not actually angry and even kind of understood. T.J. thought she was, way to understanding about it. She’d just told him to leave it, and now on more than one occasion.

He knew she’d been worried about the fight between her Alpha and another Alpha, worried it had ruined the pack’s alliance with Alpha Jayden, even. It was likely very clear to her that West was never going to let anyone touch her and this was her way of making sure nothing was ruined by herself, because her Alpha was a possessive ass-hole.

The Goddess herself only knew what was going to happen if this coming full moon did not give the man what he wanted. Though T.J. also knew that West was concerned about him and her. T.J. was not at all concerned about it. He’d never looked at her like that. He just liked pissing his friend off, by letting him think it was on the cards. Amused him to no end over it, in fact.

Though T.J. knew that everyone was expecting them to be Mates and that he had never found his Mate in all these years and he had been looking, also only added to West’s thinking that he was the competition for Jo-Jo. Only his mother shook her head on the matter, stating once, “I don’t see it, son.”

T.J.’s head snapped up as pain shot through him, interrupting his thoughts, his chair tipped over as he shot to his feet, and then he was gone, running from his Alpha’s office. She was in pain, serious pain, his heart was racing, there was so much pain.

He heard West yell his name, ignored it, couldn’t focus on anything other than his need to get to her.

Every ounce of his being was screaming danger, not just pain, danger, whatever it was, his tether to her was hot and burning, his damned arm felt like liquid fire was being poured over it. The marks down the inside of his bicep were burning and scorching him.

T.J. saw it before he got to her. Heath had her up off the ground, by her neck, he was strangling her, she was struggling against him with all she had, trying to pry his hands off of her neck. Lark roared inside of his head and he was filled with all his wolf's power and they shot forward with all his speed, slammed right into the man, he could tell she was fading and fast, he'd obviously locked off her airway, saw her hands fall away and was no longer struggling by the time he got there, fear was ripping right through him.

It seemed that Heath had not been expecting the attack, did not brace for it and they went tumbling over each other on the ground. He'd let go of her with T.J.'s impact and now he had that bastard pinned down on the ground, his arms slammed down on his neck, cutting off the man's own airway, see how you like you bastard.

'Save her or kill me.' Heath sneered at him via the mind-link.

T.J.'s eyes moved over to Jo-Jo, she was just lying there on the ground, so still, not moving, he could see the blood on her neck, couldn't see the rise and fall of her chest. She still couldn't breathe, though it looked like she was trying to, but actually couldn't. Launched himself off of Heath and over to Jo-Jo. There was blood coming from multiple wounds on her neck.

That bastard had his claws out and had them all inside her neck. Already he could see the hand prints still dark red around her neck. She couldn't breathe at all he realised too much damage had already been done.

Yanked her up off the ground, she was going to be in severe pain with him touching her, but there was nothing he could do about it at this point, she was going to have to endure it. There was no other way for him to get her to the pack hospital.

She looked to have a crushed windpipe and it was why she couldn't breathe, begged her to stay with him, heard her tell him through the mind-link that she couldn't breathe, told her to hold on, as he ran as fast as he could, Lark giving him all he had, filled with adrenaline. The whisper of his name so filled with sadness, she knew she was dying, believed it was too late, drove fear right to his heart, it was hammering inside his chest, he could even feel Lark's fear ebbing in, feared he'd not been quick enough.

'Patterson.' T.J. roared down the mind-link to the pack doctor, 'incoming, Jo-Jo, crushed windpipe. Not breathing.'

'On it, meet you in front, how long?' he could hear the man's urgency coming down the line.

'2 minutes, I'm coming at full speed.'

'Heartbeat?'

T.J. tuned his senses to her heartbeat, 'yes, erratic.' it was beating erratically inside her chest likely trying to compensate for her respiratory distress.

'I'll ready the crash cart, Alpha aware?'

'No time, I'll tell him when she's breathing.' T.J. did not care that he hadn't alerted West, he had more pressing needs, communicating with the doctor was more important for Jo-Jo's survival right that minute.

'Right.'

It took less than 2 minutes for him to get there and there were 2 nurses holding the pack hospital doors open. He shot through and put her down on the waiting gurney with Patterson. The minute she was lying in front of him, his fingers were on her throat, probing for the right spot to cut her open and get that breathing tube into her.

Right there in the pack hospital foyer, the man was performing an emergency Tracheotomy, he had to get it right, but it was taking too long. "Hurry up." T.J. yelled at the man.

Got yelled at right back "Shut up Beta, I have to get it right."

'West, pack hospital now, Jo-Jo's not breathing.' he finally linked West in on the emergency that was unfolding within his own pack.

'What?' was roared right back at him, then the line was severed, T.J. knew the man was coming likely as fast as T.J. himself had moved.

T.J. stood and watched as Patterson's fingers were touching her. She didn't even flinch away from him, her heart rate was weakening with every second he wanted to scream at the man, her body was compensating for the lack of oxygen, but it was not helping, her lungs could not oxygenate what it was not receiving.

Finally, the man, put a scalpel on her neck and pressed it in. Blood flowed from the place on her neck and he was pushing a tube in after the blade was removed. A whoosh of air was heard as her body finally breathed and took in the oxygen it needed.

Watched on his own heart rate finally easing off a bit as he saw the rise and fall of her chest. Her unconscious body doing its own thing. Watched as Patterson started looking at the other wounds on her neck, they were all still bleeding, lifted his head and looked right at him, right as West shot through the front doors, his eyes fell right on her as Patterson motioned for his staff to take her away to the actual emergency treatment room for proper treatment.

"What the hell happened?" Patterson snapped before West could even get the words out himself.

“Heath.” T.J. stated flatly, that man had only been out of the cells for 2 damned days. Would have only just been fully healed himself. And already that bastard had come for her again.

Saw Patterson become angry, not something that happened with their pack doctor “I’ll look after her.”

West grabbed on to the man. “Is she going to be alright?”

“She’s breathing. Crushed windpipe, the Beta was not wrong. But she’s also got penetrating claw marks all around her neck, still actively bleeding, I have to check those.” and then he was heading off after his nurses who were pushing that gurney through a set of double doors now.

“Women only.” T.J. yelled after him, got an angry, annoyed look back from the doctor and then he disappeared behind the doors, she’d been taken through.

“It was Heath. I had him West. That bastard told me. It was her life or his. He knew. He knew what he did to her. Knew I would give up killing him to save her too.”

“He’s going to die. I’ll fucking kill him myself.” West snarled, Volt right there on the surface.

“West, it’s her father. If you kill him, she might hate you for it.”

T.J. watched as his Alpha thought about, seemed to be actually contemplating what to do. It was likely he knew T.J. was right, she’d not wanted to own up to him hurting her last time could very well be the same this time. “Cells it is then, until I get her permission, she’d better bloody give it T.J., This is...”

“I know, but we also need to know why West. Interrogation first.”

West nodded, “He hasn’t gone rogue. Gotta know where coming for him.”

“Definitely knows, I’m coming.” T.J. grated out.

“Betting on Jo-anne asking me not to kill him, in other words.”

T.J. watched as West closed his eyes and knew what he was doing, he was using that Alpha to pack member tether, to try and locate the man. “Oh, he’s moving Terence. And fast.”

“He’s running.”

“Yes, right towards the eastern border, the closest one I guess.”

“Let’s go get that mother fucker.”

“Lets.” West agreed without hesitation.

And they were gone from the pack hospital to hunt down that bastard.

Chapter 33 - Her Alpha's Orders

West POV.

West did not like hearing Jo-anne talk about sex like that and a draw full of toys? Made him wonder if she actually had one? Most she-wolves did, he knew that, they were all sexual creatures, their sex drives high. It was entirely possible, or was it a dig at him and his draw in his plane.

Volt was up and listening, seemed quite interested in her comments about soaking her own sheets, at all times of the day. Not offended, seemed to make his wolf want to Mate her and prove he could do a better job, than she could. The stupid wolf was turned on, it appeared. West, though it had shot an image into his brain, had pushed it aside and was more annoyed than anything.

They both knew what it was like to have her in bed, and fully turned on and wanting him. The pleasure they’d been able to give her. West shook his head to clear it, nope don’t go there. He told himself ‘yes go there.’ Volt snorted amused at him.

West had been doing his best to stay away from her over the past couple of days, he had buried himself in paper work and phone calls. He even actually left the packs territory to officially open his new airline and have a press conference. Inspected all his planes and check that it was actually ready, he knew it was, but a good long walk around the aircraft hanger had been a good distraction from her.

T.J. showed him where the art studio was to go and it surprised him more than a little. The man had picked out a spot that West would actually walk past on a regular basis, to just sit and be alone. No-one bothered him when he was out here. His Alpha suite would have a full view of it as well.

Though T.J. could also see it from his corner suite. T.J.’s Beta Suite was on the front corner of the eastern end of the pack-house and West’s Alpha suite was on the back corner of the eastern end of the pack-house. Their two suites took up the entire eastern corner of the building.

Not that West had ever used it. He had strolled in and looked at it, it was nice but there was way too much space for him. A 5 bedroom apartment and it was ready to go. He’d, at his mother's instance, picked furniture for it and a colour scheme, had just kept it pretty basic, black and white. Had no actual intention of using it, unless he found his Goddess-Gifted Mate and then and only then would he move into it. Not even Miranda

had been inside it. He'd vetoed that pretty darn fast. She was not his Mate, so she was not allowed.

When he got his Mate, she could decorate it at will. He was not fussed either way. As long as it had a large bed for the two of them to roll around in, he did not care about the rest of it.

He did like that he would be able to see the art studio from his office. That was nice, would be able to keep an eye on her, night and day it seemed. He would be able to keep her safe, if he could see her. Volt also liked that idea, knowing where Clova was all the time, settled his beast.

West returned to his office to sign off on the paperwork, mind-linked the contractors within his pack, to let them know and could start clearing the land as early as tomorrow if they had the time. His father had already produced blue prints for the art studio. In his nature to want to design, he had an architecture degree. Designed nearly every building in this pack since he was like 30.

What he'd designed was a single building, all glass down the front side for natural light, it had a full set of 4 folding glass doors that could open up and let the whole place feel the breeze. Though it might be a bit cold in the winter snow. West already knew that would be the side he'd have facing his office. All the glass he'd be easily able to watch her.

The building had a nice sized bathroom, even a bath, a little odd. But it was what it was. There was inbuilt shelving all down one side of the building. And a sunken area, where his father had put a couch, table and chairs for visitors, he guessed. There was a small server area with a sink and fridge and a few cupboards and had even put in the plans, a coffee machine. He did not know Jo-anne well. The woman did not drink coffee. Tea, hot chocolate and cold beverages were all. And then there was a deck all along the front 2 meters wide and he'd even put in some patio furniture. His father, in full architecture mode, it seemed.

West was going to have to make sure the thing was properly insulated. Likely his father had thought of that and it did seem to have air conditioning was likely reverse cycle. But West would double check any way. Next time he saw his father, he would ask the question.

T.J.'s sudden bolt from his office, knocking over his chair, startled him completely and the pen in his hand had slashed across the page of the contract he was reading through, and would have to get another once printed out. He yelled after his Beta as he'd fled the office and leaned out from his desk to track the man's movements. Got nothing back from him as he'd bolted away from the office.

Frowned, usually only Jo-anne could make the man move that fast, but they had seen her like 20 minutes ago and she had been perfectly fine, had even been chuckling to

herself, at his expense no less. But he had let it go, was trying to stay away from the woman.

It could be one of T.J.'s two sisters, he guessed. He was quite protective of all his family members. West shook his head and returned his attention to the contract before him. T.J. would mind-link him if it was urgent or something that needed his attention.

'West, pack hospital now. Jo-Jo not breathing.' his Beta's voice came down the mind-link about 7 minutes after he'd rushed from the office.

'What?' West had roared, shot up on to his feet. Why the hell hadn't he told him it was Jo-anne earlier when he'd run from the office? Volt was already pushing everything he had at West as they now ran from his office at top speed, leaving the pack-house in the exact same manner as his Beta had. Headed right for the packs hospital 'not breathing' what the hell did that mean? She'd been fine like 25 or 30 minutes ago.

He shot through the front doors of the hospital and his eyes fell on her. Lying there, a breathing tube coming from her neck, her neck was completely black and blue already. He could see someone had been strangling her. Those bruises were hand prints, strangling her with all their strength, their wolf had helped. He could see deep claw marks in her neck, whoever had done this had all claws out.

The one who had done this was not out to just hurt her. They were out to kill her. Had likely damned near succeeded, Volt was whining inside his mind for Clova. He tried to calm his wolf. 'unconscious is all Volt.'

He'd lost his Mate once before and just looking at her, he could feel his wolf worry he might loose her again. They would have to wait and see, but as he focused on her with all his Alpha senses, West could Sense Clova still in there somewhere, not gone just unconscious like Jo-anne.

"What the hell happened?" Patterson snapped before West could get any words out, he was too busy focusing on the woman herself. Why did he always have to see her covered in bruises and all bloodied?

"Heath." T.J. stated flatly.

West was listening, but still didn't seem to be able to form words. Watched as Jo-anne was wheeled away from him, latched on to Patterson, he still didn't know the extent of her injuries, he didn't want to hear it, but needed to at the same time "Is she going to be alright?"

'Breathing. Crushed windpipe. The Beta was not wrong, but she's got penetrating claw marks all around her neck, still actively bleeding. I have to check those.' then he turned to leave and go and tend to her injuries.

West knew the man would do his job, heard T.J. yell, 'women only.' saw the man frown back at the two of them annoyed, then pushed through the door to go and heal her and tend to her wounds.

To hear it was her own father once again. First Jester had bitten her and now this. To try and kill her, and Jester right there with him. Why? Again, it made no sense.

T.J. had actually had the man, but had released him in order to save Jo-anne. That man had known what he'd done. Told his own pack Beta as much. The one man in this pack other than West himself. You didn't want hunting you over Jo-anne. That sick son of a bitch was going to die. West was going to rip his freaking head clean off his body. Volt was once again aligned with West's thoughts, he wanted to do it himself. Kind of felt a little odd him and his wolf getting along and agreeing about things for the first time in a decade.

His Beta was trying to talk him out of it, shocked West more than a little, but he unfortunately did see the logic in the man's words. So did Volt. He nor his wolf wanted either Jo-anne or Clova to hate them. So, instead, he would hunt that bastard down and beat him to within an inch of his life, for the rest of his damned life, till she gave permission. If she never gave it, the man's life was about to become a living breathing nightmare.

T.J. was right about interrogating that man, he had already hurt her once and now to try and kill her, there had to be a reason. He would find out what it was or T.J. would one of them was bound to pull it from him.

The man in question, Heath, he realised had yet to go rogue. That was odd. He had to know at the very least T.J. was coming for him to kill him for the injuries she'd sustained, one bite last time and T.J. had torn strips of flesh off of the man, 10 full lashes, now to try and kill her. The man had to know there was no escape for him.

Heath had to be relying on Jo-anne begging both of them not to kill him, because he was her father. Little did he know. West knew that he was not actually her biological father.

West would tell her the truth, if need be, to gain her consent. T.J, on the other hand, restraining him, might be the bigger problem. He was as pissed off as West was.

West closed his eyes and tugged on that tether inside his mind, that belonged to Heath, shut everything else down in his mind until it was just Heath. The man was running at full wolf speed, it felt like, heading right for the eastern border, he was definitely on the run now. Though without going rogue, West had that bastard locked in his sights in his mind. 'You want to run fast you bastard.' he shot down the mind-link to let him know they were coming for him, let fear eat him alive before they got to him. Told T.J. that he was indeed running for his life.

“ Let's get that mother fucker.” he grated out.

“Let's.” West agreed. Mind-linked Ricky and Cole with the information and all four of them now, off to hunt that son of a bitch down.

West felt the minute Heath went Rogue, it was right at the time he and T.J. were joined by Ricky and Cole. It was also the minute he felt Heath leave the packs territory. A smart decision, to go rogue in pack territory would make him one particular, rotten smelling, foul creature that would set off one alert after the other as he fled across the pack, and any, and all warriors, on duty or not, that was within close enough range to smell him, would instantly be reporting the smell of a rogue to him, their Alpha, and being going after it themselves a second later.

The man was a border patrol man. He knew how this pack dealt with rogues. Swift, deadly action would be taken against him regardless of who he had come across on his flee to rogue territory.

They found the eastern border Patrol man dead, accounted for why he'd not been stopped from leaving the pack. Or why West had not been alerted to Heath trying to flee. Heath would have known the man in all likelihood, if he was in human form could have just walked up to him to say high and then attacked him. Actually, that's exactly what it looked like Cole told him. He was a good tracker that one. His Delta had a father who, was the previous Delta, but his mother was a tracker from another pack. From Wests' understanding gave Cole's dad quite a bit of grief, trying to bring her in to be his Mate. Sedated the man and took off, from West's knowledge, not that, that had deterred him at all. Just pushed him to hunt her with a vengeance. Kicked in all his primal instincts to hunt and claim what was his.

Heath shifted into his wolf form, the second he went rogue, he didn't even stop to take his clothes off, shredded clothes to be seen. The man had a good 20 minute head start, but that was not going to save him. He and his unit stripped their clothes off, no one in his pack could out run he and his Alpha Unit.

The hunt, it seemed, would continue out into rogue territory. That son of a bitch was not getting away no matter how long it took them to hunt one foul-smelling rouge out in rogue territory, he might now smell like all the rest of the filthy diseased-ridden critters, but they had a distinct advantage. They knew what his wolf looked like. So, even hiding inside a group of rogues would not save him.

The only other problem they had to deal with was they couldn't kill him. So they had to corner him out here in mountainous terrain, was more difficult than any of them had thought it would be. West could not order him to shift into his human form, and he had tried, used everything he had.

It did not help that in the middle of hunting him they'd had to defend themselves against a roaming pack of 4 other rogues and the man had bolted off once more, and the bloody

hunt had to start all over again. Finally caught up with his wolf a second time, 30 minutes after they'd had to fight off other rogues.

Jester himself was quite the agile wolf, suppose he had to be, when dealing with rogue wolves all the time, attacking and taking down rogues on a regular basis, as part of his job inside the pack, made his wolf very alert to all attacks on him.

In the end, West had given the order for all them to attack at once, they were never going to get him one on one without killing him. His wolf did not want to be taken alive and likely neither did Heath. They both knew what they were in for. The four of them had taken to him and he'd not been able to defend against them all. He'd been injured to the point that his wolf could not sustain his wolf form anymore and he was shifted back to his human form.

Then they'd had to haul his unconscious ass all the way back to the pack across Mt Rainier, no less, took hours. Dumped his unconscious body in the cells to let him heal up so they could interrogate the man when he woke up, chained both his ankles to the back wall and left him there.

Night had fallen by now and he and T.J. headed for the packs hospital. He left Ricky and Cole to start the report of their hunt.

Jo-anne was lying on the bed in the Luna's suite of the hospital, just like so many times before, that breathing tube was still in her neck, under a light sedation, due to having woken up in a panic and ripped it out only to not have Clova back yet, to heal her and it had to be reinserted, had taken Patterson and two of his nurses to get her pinned downed for him to sedate her even before he could reinsert the tube so she could breath.

To his surprise, his mother was sitting in the room, reading a book as she sat there. He'd not told her what had happened. Patterson in all likelihood, he realised. She lifted her head up and looked right at him. "Did you get him?"

"Yes, in the cells."

"Good, I want a word with him myself. So don't go killing him just yet." her eyes moved from West to T.J. "That goes for you as well, Terence."

T.J. did not say a thing, just stood staring at her and she stared right back at him. Those two were obviously going to have private words about this. The tension in the air could be cut with a knife.

"There will be no killing. Till Jo-anne okays it, or...I tell her the truth about the man, in the hope she will give it once she knows the truth."

His mother nodded at him. "If you don't have to, best you don't. It could hurt her more to find out the truth. She was blood bonded to him, so he is her father as far as she is concerned."

West sighed, but said nothing. That was a completely normal thing for them to have done. Even he would have done it as the Alpha in charge, with such a young baby, barely days old.

He watched T.J. walk out of the room after his mother and left them to it. He knew the story. How T.J. had claimed Jo-anne and had not wanted her out of his sight, even at just 4 the man was so darn protective of the girl. His mother had taken Jo-anne from him and given her to Heath. The argument they were about to have, was one that would likely take place inside the Luna's office itself. Private not for all ears.

Probably going to be one hell of a screaming match, his mother might be the Luna, but T.J. had royal blood in him, he could make just about anyone bow down to him, if he so chose to. He was generally so laid back and happy just to be the Packs Beta and 2nd in command that he just never did it. Could put West down if he so wanted to.

Today was likely going to be the acceptance to the rule, and his own mother was in T.J.'s line of sight. West was going to stay out of it, knew better than to get between T.J. and the thing he held dearest to his heart. Letting them sort out their own issues was all he could do. There would be fallout, he'd have to deal with it, he imagined.

West looked at the woman in question, Jo-anne. Lying there in the hospital bed, wound dressings attached to her sleeping body. It was not the first time he'd seen this, though the last time, like this...had been his fault and he knew it. Would never forgive himself for that day.

They had not seen it coming, he or his wolf, and then it had been too late. Her naked and broken body was lying on the ground before him, as he'd knelt before her near lifeless body. Filled with pain and grief, unable to comprehend. Frozen as he'd stared at her broken body, his hands had been out stretched to touch her, but he had not, couldn't touch her. It was his fault and he'd known it even then. Had no right to touch her.

His parents had been right there, had seen him flying through the pack-house Volt in full control rushing to get to her. They had tracked him knowing on instinct something was very wrong. They had stood there yelling at him, telling him to pick her up, but he couldn't.

His wolf had been howling in pain inside of him, already knew Clova was lost to him, his connection to her had been severed so violently as he'd run through the pack-house at full Alpha Wolf speed to try and get to her, to catch her before she'd hit the ground, but not even Volt had been fast enough, likely wouldn't have helped either.

Would have killed them both, but Volt had not cared about that. His only thought was to get to his Mate to try and save her. T.J. had come running, came to a halt, staggered about clutching his chest, staring down at her. Then somehow he had been able to pull himself together and snapped out of it, picked up her body and fled with her to the pack hospital, while West had sat there still on his knees, staring at the pool of blood where her body had been.

West didn't even remember walking to the hospital. Shock had obliterated it from his memory. Just recalled T.J. had turned on him so violently and they had ended up in a massive fight all wolfed out and trying to kill each other over it right there in the hallway of the packs hospital outside the emergency room.

They had both been tranquillised by his father, the Alpha at the time, and the two of them had woken up in the cells. With his father and T.J.'s father both sitting on chairs staring at the two of them.

West pulled the chair his mother had been sitting on over to the bed and sat down next to her. Not the first time he'd done that either. "I'm sorry," he whispered. He'd not been able to protect her twice now. Since she'd come home, since he'd made her come home. Forced her to be here, in fact. It was his fault yet again that she was lying here in a hospital bed injured. It may not have been by his own hands, but had been by his own actions.

Patterson walked in and looked at him. "Didn't I tell you, I hated patching this girl up Alpha."

West nodded, indeed he had done so. Just a week ago, just outside this very room. "I'm sorry." he apologised to the man, there was nothing else he could say.

"This is not your fault, West."

"Yes it is." he disagreed "She had a contract to live overseas for the next 2 years. I null and voided it and physically brought her back here myself."

"That does not mean it is your fault."

"Yes it does." he again disagreed with the man.

"West...Alpha, it would of only put this off for 2 years, in all likelihood, this has nothing to do with you. Something else is going on."

It did make sense, he supposed, there didn't seem to be a rhyme or reason to why her own father would attack her or try to kill her. For that matter, as far as he knew, she'd had no contact with him over the past decade. Bar these two interactions. The man had been in the cells up until 2 days ago, so it seemed he'd gotten out and come right for her the minute she was out of the pack-house.

This knowledge, however, did not make him feel any less guilty on the inside. He reached out and took her hand in his. His eyes had not left her, not even with Patterson talking to him.

"I'll take the tube out shortly, Clova is actively healing her, just slowly due to the light sedation."

West nodded "When do you expect her to wake up?"

"When I actively stop that sedation drip. Alpha."

West's eyes moved to the bag of fluids that was hanging by her bed, then turned his eyes on Patterson, "You're keeping her sedated still?"

"Yes, it's for the best. The Luna approved it."

That was interesting he thought "When will you be stopping it?"

"Likely when T.J. comes back," he commented, "Or if that isn't before I head home, in the morning."

West sighed and nodded "Fine." He didn't argue about it, she would likely want T.J. not him in this room, when she woke up anyway.

Chapter 34 - Her Alpha's Orders

West POV

It was almost midnight when T.J. returned to the Luna's medical suite in the hospital. He looked no less annoyed than when he had left 2 hours ago, what ever had gone on between his mother and his Beta, did not appear to satisfy him at all.

"And?"

"And what?" T.J. returned.

"Who won?" West enquired of him.

"Neither of us," he shook his head. "A stalemate for now. I'll sit with her."

"I'm fine Terence."

Watched as T.J.'s eyes lock right on to him, West did not budge. "This too, will be a stalemate, Terence."

T.J. just nodded and pulled up a chair on the other side of her. "When's that tube coming out?"

"In the morning, I imagine Patterson's gone home for the night, she's stable."

"Alright. Take the Order off her West, right now."

West sighed, he'd already changed it, just hadn't told anyone "You can touch her Terence, I give you permission to."

T.J. glared right at him, "It hurt her, you know. When I had to pick her up."

"It won't right now, I assure you."

"You have to stop this West. It's not protecting her."

West did actually know that, but he was a selfish bastard it seemed, and until he knew for certain who she belonged to, he would remain that way. "Patterson is also allowed to touch her." he informed his Beta, he did want Jo-anne to be able to be attended to medically and with his pack doctor being a man he'd had to change the order. West also knew that T.J. was going to want to hold her hand and likely want to actually hug her and hold her in his arms when she woke up.

The man had always held her after one of West's Alpha Orders, to comfort her. This would be no different at all. So the order she was under had been altered, but West was not going to tell her that.

He still didn't want anyone touching her, as for T.J. well, West just had to deal with it. Like he had always had too. Nothing new there. He watched as T.J. reached out and touched her face, so gentle. He would never hurt her, the man loved her, right from the moment she was born.

T.J. paid no attention to West at all. Not surprising to West, his only concern was for Jo-anne right this minute. It was only now that he was watching his Beta closely that he realised he was wearing different clothing, and that he'd showered as well.

T.J.'s clothes had, had Jo-anne's blood on them, probably didn't want her to see her own blood on him. West stood "I'll give you some time alone with her, Terence." He figured the man would probably want that.

"It's not necessary, West."

"I need to shower and clean up anyway, I'll come back soon."

"Don't come back smelling like Miranda, I'll likely punch you right in the face."

"I haven't slept with Miranda in days," West commented as he left the room. He could feel his Beta's eyes on him, but didn't bother with it.

West actually hadn't, had not even slept in the same room as her. She was still in his room, he knew that. However, he had not been. Had slept the last few nights in his old destroyed room, he'd only seen Miranda when he'd returned for clothes or to shower, she'd not looked happy about it. Likely thought he had another she-wolf to fuck. But he had not and she could smell him all she liked. She would not smell another on him, he'd wanted to be alone and so had gone and slept elsewhere.

He walked into his room and she was there in bed, awake and texting on her phone. He'd been hoping she would be asleep. No such luck, it seemed.

"Is Jo-anne alright?" she asked, looking at him.

West frowned, how did she know what had happened? "Not awake yet." he stated simply.

"Your mother told me what happened." she sighed heavily and shook her head. "horrible."

"I don't want to talk about it, Miranda." he sighed and headed for the bathroom, closed and locked the door to shower in peace, did hear her try to open it, while he was in there.

She was standing at the end of the bed completely naked when he came out of the bathroom. "Let me help you think about something else." she smiled up at him.

"No, thank you. I'll be heading back to the hospital."

"West, we haven't had sex in days," she pouted.

"I'm aware of that," he acknowledged as he pulled his clothes on.

"Don't you want to?" she asked with a sigh. Like she already knew the answer to her own question.

West looked right at her, slid his eyes over her naked body. No, he did not, he realised. "Not particularly Miranda." he answered with full honesty, her body did not appeal to him at all anymore.

She was frowning at him now. "Are you punishing me for sleeping with another?"

"Not at all. I just have a lot on my mind," he told her and headed for the door.

"Are you sure that's it West? You've been different since you took over."

“Have I?” he glanced at her.

“Yes,” she stated firmly.

“Guess, being the actual Alpha. I have other priorities, Miranda, and sex is not high on my list of priorities right now. Feel free to find someone to sort out your sexual needs. Just don’t do it in here. You can have a room of your own if you like.”

“I don’t want another room West, you know that.”

West just looked at her and said nothing, stepped out of the room and headed back to the pack hospital. T.J. was exactly where he’d left him. Glanced up at West and actually smelled him. West had not been gone long enough for that. Nor had he had any intention of doing that. Had no actual interest in Miranda at all any more, it seemed.

Raised an eyebrow at his Beta, but said nothing. Did it really surprise him that T.J. had smelled him? No, not really. The man was looking for a reason to beat his own Alpha, likely his own Alpha blood boiling, he certainly didn’t look like the happy, relaxed man he normally was.

West watched as the sun came up through the window to her room. T.J. had headed for the cells an hour ago, Heath was finally conscious and T.J. wanted the first crack at the man. West would not deny him that. Simply reminded his friend and Beta not to kill the man.

T.J.’s eyes had landed right on West, nodded and then he’d left the room. West knew his friend well enough to understand he would restrain himself, but then again it had been Jo-anne the man had tried to kill and was Jo-anne lying injured in the hospital bed. It might be best to remind the man again. ‘A life of torture Terence. If she won’t give permission, a life sentence of you walking in there anytime you like, or me for that matter.’

‘Understood West.’ he’d replied and severed the link.

West watched as Patterson came into the room, glanced around and asked about the Beta, where he was. West told him, dealing with the prisoner.

“I’m going to stop the sedation and remove the tube, be prepared West. She will not be able to breathe right away, not until Clova heals her. Likely take a good solid minute. If she wakes up completely, will likely be in a panic.”

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'Nothing West...just never seen you,...be so,' he seemed to think about it for a moment 'tender.'

'Shut up Terence.' West practically snarled at the man.

Only to see his Beta clamp a hand over his own mouth to stop himself from laughing out loud, West sighed. It probably did look odd to the man, he was not the tender type. Always aggressive in everything he did, with the exception of Jo-anne, he had never wanted to hurt her, not even once.

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West nodded, looked back at Jo-anne and frowned. He didn't want her to be alone, not even with that bastard in his cells, twice she'd been attacked in his pack. Yes, by that man he had, but he didn't like it. Leaving her alone, unprotected, he didn't want that.

'She already asked me not to kill him, Terence. The first words down the mind-link in fact.'

'Expected as much West. Come on, she'll be alright here, it's the Luna suite.'

'I don't want her left alone, Terence.'

'Get your mother to come and sit with her, or you could get...Ricky.'

West rubbed his temples, the man surely was busting his balls right now and loving it. Bringing Ricky into this room would speak volumes, seeing as he was the Gamma and she was right now, as T.J. had stated inside the Luna suite, the very place any injured Luna came to be healed, or for any medical things, he and his 5 sisters had all been born in this very room. Hell she's spent a month in this room once before herself.

West realised that he had not been the one to bring her here, or place her in the Luna suite. T.J. had brought her here to the hospital both times now, the bite she'd sustained from Jester had seen her in this room, to be patched up and T.J. had brought her here to Patterson.

West did not have a problem with it. He was curious though as to who made the decision to put her into the Luna suite on each occasion, had it been T.J. or Patterson who'd made that decision. His mother had also not moved her out of this room, to another room either. That was also interesting to him. It technically was his mother's suite and she was allowing another to use it.

Chapter 35 - Her Alpha's Orders

West POV

It was almost midnight when T.J. returned to the Luna's medical suite in the hospital. He looked no less annoyed than when he had left 2 hours ago, what ever had gone on between his mother and his Beta, did not appear to satisfy him at all.

"And?"

"And what?" T.J. returned.

"Who won?" West enquired of him.

"Neither of us," he shook his head. "A stalemate for now. I'll sit with her."

"I'm fine Terence."

Watched as T.J.'s eyes lock right on to him, West did not budge. "This too, will be a stalemate, Terence."

T.J. just nodded and pulled up a chair on the other side of her. "When's that tube coming out?"

"In the morning, I imagine Patterson's gone home for the night, she's stable."

"Alright. Take the Order off her West, right now."

West sighed, he'd already changed it, just hadn't told anyone "You can touch her Terence, I give you permission to."

T.J. glared right at him, "It hurt her, you know. When I had to pick her up."

"It won't right now, I assure you."

"You have to stop this West. It's not protecting her."

West did actually know that, but he was a selfish bastard it seemed, and until he knew for certain who she belonged to, he would remain that way. "Patterson is also allowed to touch her." he informed his Beta, he did want Jo-anne to be able to be attended to medically and with his pack doctor being a man he'd had to change the order. West also knew that T.J. was going to want to hold her hand and likely want to actually hug her and hold her in his arms when she woke up.

The man had always held her after one of West's Alpha Orders, to comfort her. This would be no different at all. So the order she was under had been altered, but West was not going to tell her that.

He still didn't want anyone touching her, as for T.J. well, West just had to deal with it. Like he had always had too. Nothing new there. He watched as T.J. reached out and touched her face, so gentle. He would never hurt her, the man loved her, right from the moment she was born.

T.J. paid no attention to West at all. Not surprising to West, his only concern was for Jo-anne right this minute. It was only now that he was watching his Beta closely that he realised he was wearing different clothing, and that he'd showered as well.

T.J.'s clothes had, had Jo-anne's blood on them, probably didn't want her to see her own blood on him. West stood "I'll give you some time alone with her, Terence." He figured the man would probably want that.

"It's not necessary, West."

"I need to shower and clean up anyway, I'll come back soon."

"Don't come back smelling like Miranda, I'll likely punch you right in the face."

"I haven't slept with Miranda in days," West commented as he left the room. He could feel his Beta's eyes on him, but didn't bother with it.

West actually hadn't, had not even slept in the same room as her. She was still in his room, he knew that. However, he had not been. Had slept the last few nights in his old destroyed room, he'd only seen Miranda when he'd returned for clothes or to shower, she'd not looked happy about it. Likely thought he had another she-wolf to fuck. But he had not and she could smell him all she liked. She would not smell another on him, he'd wanted to be alone and so had gone and slept elsewhere.

He walked into his room and she was there in bed, awake and texting on her phone. He'd been hoping she would be asleep. No such luck, it seemed.

"Is Jo-anne alright?" she asked, looking at him.

West frowned, how did she know what had happened? "Not awake yet." he stated simply.

"Your mother told me what happened." she sighed heavily and shook her head. "horrible."

"I don't want to talk about it, Miranda." he sighed and headed for the bathroom, closed and locked the door to shower in peace, did hear her try to open it, while he was in there.

She was standing at the end of the bed completely naked when he came out of the bathroom. "Let me help you think about something else." she smiled up at him.

"No, thank you. I'll be heading back to the hospital."

"West, we haven't had sex in days," she pouted.

"I'm aware of that," he acknowledged as he pulled his clothes on.

"Don't you want to?" she asked with a sigh. Like she already knew the answer to her own question.

West looked right at her, slid his eyes over her naked body. No, he did not, he realised. "Not particularly Miranda." he answered with full honesty, her body did not appeal to him at all anymore.

She was frowning at him now. "Are you punishing me for sleeping with another?"

"Not at all. I just have a lot on my mind," he told her and headed for the door.

"Are you sure that's it West? You've been different since you took over."

"Have I?" he glanced at her.

"Yes," she stated firmly.

"Guess, being the actual Alpha. I have other priorities, Miranda, and sex is not high on my list of priorities right now. Feel free to find someone to sort out your sexual needs. Just don't do it in here. You can have a room of your own if you like."

"I don't want another room West, you know that."

West just looked at her and said nothing, stepped out of the room and headed back to the pack hospital. T.J. was exactly where he'd left him. Glanced up at West and actually smelled him. West had not been gone long enough for that. Nor had he had any intention of doing that. Had no actual interest in Miranda at all any more, it seemed.

Raised an eyebrow at his Beta, but said nothing. Did it really surprise him that T.J. had smelled him? No, not really. The man was looking for a reason to beat his own Alpha, likely his own Alpha blood boiling, he certainly didn't look like the happy, relaxed man he normally was.

West watched as the sun came up through the window to her room. T.J. had headed for the cells an hour ago, Heath was finally conscious and T.J. wanted the first crack at the man. West would not deny him that. Simply reminded his friend and Beta not to kill the man.

T.J.'s eyes had landed right on West, nodded and then he'd left the room. West knew his friend well enough to understand he would restrain himself, but then again it had

been Jo-anne the man had tried to kill and was Jo-anne lying injured in the hospital bed. It might be best to remind the man again. 'A life of torture Terence. If she won't give permission, a life sentence of you walking in there anytime you like, or me for that matter.'

'Understood West.' he'd replied and severed the link.

West watched as Patterson came into the room, glanced around and asked about the Beta, where he was. West told him, dealing with the prisoner.

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Chapter 36 - Her Alpha's Orders

Jo-anne POV

Her eyes opened and she looked around the room. Luna Natalia looked right at her, closing a book in her hands and placing it on her lap. "Welcome back."

Jo-anne sighed, not understanding her words for a moment, and then it all rushed back to her, what her own father had done to her. What he had said to her, had wanted to kill her because of what West and T.J. did to him after he bit her. She recalled his hand on her neck and the way he had been crushing it. Her hand moved to her neck. It still felt tender and painful.

"You're alright Jo-anne. T.J. got to you in time. Like always."

She looked at her Luna as tears burned her eyes. No he hadn't, she recalled the feeling of dying, of darkness claiming her, they'd probably had to bring her back from that. Opened her mouth and tried to ask where her father was, but found she couldn't make a sound. Tried again and it dawned on her she couldn't talk, had he ruined her voice box, he had strangled her so badly, her tears spilled at the savagery her own father had unleashed on her.

"You're going to be fine." Luna Natalia told her, reached out and took her hand in hers "A few days, you'll be able to talk normally again."

'Why?' Jo-anne asked through the mind-link.

"Why What? You could be asking a number of questions."

'Why can't I talk?' she asked, her most pressing thought.

She watched as her Luna sighed a little sadly "Your windpipe was crushed along with your vocal cords."

Jo-anne bit her lip and closed her eyes, felt the Luna squeeze her hand reassuringly.

"You'll be fine. Patterson said good as new in a few days."

Jo-anne just nodded her head, but even that caused pain in her neck at that movement.

"Your father did this to you! Do you know why, child?"

She nodded, he'd told her why 'Because of the punishment West and T.J. dealt him for biting me.' she answered her.

Heard her Luna sigh again, opened her eyes and looked at her. She was frowning down at Jo-anne "That is it, what about why he bit you? I don't think it was because he was punished, he had to know that was coming, Jo-anne."

'I don't know why he bit me.' and she didn't, 'thought he was coming to apologise to me for that, asked to speak with me, I didn't think he was going to hurt me.'

She seemed to think about Jo-anne's words, "Well, West is with him, he'll figure it out."

Pain and sorrow started to fill her T.J. would likely kill him for this. This was very bad, and she didn't even understand why it had all started. She didn't know what West would do, she'd had the weirdest dreams while unconscious. Stupid brain had come up with some weird ass images of West being all soft and caring, trying to comfort her, hell she didn't even know what to think about her brain producing that image of him kissing her all soft like that. West was not that kind of man.

It was a nice dream, to see him look at her like that. She had once craved that man to look at her like that, but he'd never had, still didn't, would never. She sighed bloody stupid, oxygen-deprived hallucinations. She was glad it was just a dream, it would have killed Miranda to feel another betrayal. That thought brought her to wonder why Luna Natalia was here, instead of Miranda.

'I thought Miranda would have been the one to be here,'

"Why is that?"

'Being the future Luna, shouldn't she be the one here with me?'

"I'm still the current Luna, Jo-anne. It's my place to be here for now." the woman was staring right at her, it was kind of weird to be honest. It was like she knew something Jo-anne didn't but wasn't willing to talk about it.

'My father?' she tried to distract the woman from staring at her.

"In the cells, still alive...for now." she sounded quite annoyed about it, to Jo-anne.

'For now?' she asked hesitantly.

"Yes, he tried to kill you. I'm honestly surprised he's still alive. Terence, I thought, would have ripped him from limb to limb by now. It seems the man has some restraint after all."

'I don't want him to die.' Jo-anne told the Luna, and she didn't. For although Jo-anne did not understand why her father had turned on her so viciously, she didn't want him to die, and she did want to know why, but also at the same time, did not want to know at all.

"Jo-anne," her Luna tone, "he tried to kill you. Nearly succeeded. If Damien was still the Alpha in charge, he would be dead by now. West is too lenient with you and your wants, over this."

'I...I just. I don't' she didn't even know what to say right this minute, had some of her dreams been real? Did she at some point wake up tell him she didn't want him to kill her father? It was all too fuzzy inside her mind. She didn't know what was real and what was a dream it seemed.

She had grown up here in this pack, knew the pack laws, they were drummed into you from a young age, knew how severely wolves were punished for their crimes, depending on the crime, of course.

Not many went about attacking or trying to kill their family members. Hurting your own family, only hurt yourself, and to kill one meant you would feel all ties to them severe, it was very painful. Though she had not suffered it, she had seen some of her school friends suffer it when there were rogue attacks. To willingly inflict that kind of pain on yourself was nearly unheard of.

She couldn't understand it, she knew he loved her. She had a lot of good and wonderful memories. Yes, things did change a bit once Karen and he had their first born child together. She'd been 9 at the time and kind of got pushed to the side a bit.

But he'd never hurt her, just more doting over his daughter with his Mate, and when she was 11 and her other sister had been born, she'd become somewhat invisible to him, only talked to her when she addressed him, though he was still kind to her at all times, just left her alone. She'd watched from the sidelines as the 4 of them were a solid family

unit, and she on the outside, it had hurt to say the least, but there was nothing she could do about it.

She'd always done as she was told, been a good daughter, even when she'd felt alone and left out. Had been left out when they'd all gone off shopping together or out for dinner and she'd been left at home by herself or they'd gone off without telling her at all and so she'd come home to an empty house.

She'd never complained, felt bad about bringing it up, didn't want them to feel bad about it, had instead just turned to her school work and her art, and tried to ignore the hurt she felt. Pushed it down and away. Had learned over the years to just go and spend time with her school friends, it was much easier to deal with and not think about it, if she was fully occupied. So she had just filled up her days with lots of other things and always made sure to have plans to hang out with her friends or study with her friends in the pack-house library all of the time, after school, on weekends and during school breaks.

It didn't seem to bother either her father or stepmother at all, only occasionally had her father asked where she had been. Karen always had chores for her to do and Jo-anne had done them, trying to be a good daughter to the only mother she had known, and had done them without complaints. Unlike her two sisters who winged the whole time, they had to do their chores.

Jo-anne had just wanted everyone to be happy, all of them as well as herself. She'd always had all the things she needed. Clothes, food, a roof over her head, she just didn't seem to get the same amount of love and attention her little sisters got. They were doted on, spoiled now, she realised, never went without anything, and were always getting new things. Very spoiled compared to Jo-anne, she now realised.

Jo-anne had not blamed them, they were the children of a fully Bonded pair, and she was a constant reminder to Karen, of his previous Mate, who had rarely even looked at her after she was 12.

Jo-anne could actually recall the day quite clearly when things had really changed in the house. She had been preparing dinner, along side Karen and had accidentally cut herself with the knife. Karen had turned and looked down at her and the cut a half smile on her face, called her a little clumsy with a soft chuckle and then put the tiny cut to her mouth and kissed it better, said she would go and get a band-aide, but had just not come back.

T.J. had turned up and pushed through the door without so much as knocking, and demanded to know what had happened to her. She'd shown him the tiny cut, no longer bleeding, and he'd been satisfied. Neither he nor she could find Karen in the house. Seems she had walked out and not come back.

After that day, Karen had become more distant towards her, and just didn't want to have anything to do with her after that, and nothing Jo-anne did could please her, it seemed.

Jo-anne pulled herself from the memory and sat herself up on the bed. There was nothing she could really think of that would turn her father or his wolf against her, nothing at all, it was all just wrong as far as she could tell.

Dr Patterson came in and looked over her a little while later “I don’t like patching you up all the time, Jo-anne. No more trouble from you, young lady, alright.”

She just nodded, though it had not been her fault the majority of the times she’d been in this hospital or under his care. She could understand him. He checked her wounds and removed the dressings, probed her throat with his fingers gently and she couldn’t help but flinch. It was still painful.

“Sorry it’ll likely be tender and inflamed for a day or two.” Then he sat on the edge of her bed and looked right at her “I saw last night, when attending to the wounds on the back of your neck, you got some tattoos down your back. Had quite a good look at it actually, hope you don’t mind.”

She shook her head, though they weren’t tattoos. She didn’t care if he saw them or who else did, for that matter.

“West is not going to like it.”

Jo-anne stared at him with a raised eye-brow and just shrugged, it was not up to him what she did with her body, and it wasn’t like he couldn’t see the wolf on her neck, she never hid it. She was actually really proud of the representation of Clova she had designed and had tattooed on her neck. Even Clova liked it.

“He actually doesn’t like tattoos of any kind on his pack members, just a heads up. Might want to keep your back covered.”

‘It’s my body’ she replied through the mind-link, ‘my own personal canvas and I will do what I want with it.’

Patterson smiled, “Well child, don’t say I didn’t warn you then.” he stood, “Come on, let’s get you showered and dressed.”

Jo-anne stared up at him a little shocked at the thought he was going to shower and dress her. West would not like that, he’d had his hand on she realized, he’d touched her and it hadn’t caused her any pain. Had West taken back his Alpha Order? She didn’t know.

He smiled and then chuckled “The nurse will come in, and once you’re all dressed I’m happy to release you. Clova is doing a good healing you. Just be patient a few days, okay.”

She watched as the man's brown eyes glazed over and a minute later he looked right at her "T.J. said you can't go without an escort, so he'll send someone he trusts to walk you back to your room and you're to stay there for now."

Jo-anne nodded that was likely to be expected after what happened. She wouldn't argue with it. Wouldn't mind the escort from here to her room in the pack-house. She'd never felt unsafe here before, not inside her pack, not even out in the human world actually, always just knew things were always going to be alright. But right this minute she was still on edge and could use the escort.

She got off the bed and went to the bathroom, looked at her neck in the mirror, and felt tears well up once more. She could clearly see the defined hand prints around her neck, her own father's hands at that. He was in the cells right this minute, tried to reach out to him via the mind-link to get some answers.

Frowned when she couldn't, it wasn't like before, when he'd blocked her, it was almost like he didn't exist to her at all. Had they loaded him with wolfs-bane and chained him with silver? Her eyes met her own in the mirror, as her tears spilled 'why' she whispered sadly in her mind, heard Clova whine softly.

Was provided clothes to wear, and when she looked at them, they were her own she realised, someone had been to her room and gotten them. Her own clothes to wear. She dressed and brushed her long hair, pulled it up into a pony tail. Clova, it appeared, was sleeping now, tired from healing her, needing rest. She would be for a few days, until she was fully healed.

Stepped out of the bathroom to find Jonathan, the former pack Beta, leaning on the wall by the door to the suite, his eyes moved right to her neck and he sighed.

"You should just let T.J. and West kill him. It's what Damien and I would have done girl, even against your wishes."

She shook her head and just felt sad about it, but to hear him say against her wishes, she guessed that part of her weird hazy dream was actually real, she had asked West not to kill him and he'd agreed apparently.

"Come on then, back to the pack-house with you." he opened the door and let her walk out ahead of him.

Jo-anne could feel his eyes on her a few times, and saw other pack members stop and stare at her, as well. They were all moved on by Jonathan and his commanding Beta tone as he stated "Move on." at them, every one of them bowed ever so slightly and moved away, he still held power in the pack. Just had retired.

Walked her all the way to her room and opened the door. It was unlocked, which shocked her a bit. She'd been keeping it locked since her Canvas was being worked on.

To her surprise, inside her room were two of her friends, Ella and Julie. They both looked right at her and then just got up and walked over to her and hugged her. She stood between them.

"I'll leave you in their hands."

The three of them turned to look at him and he smirked, he looked just like T.J. right this minute, just an older version of him. "Now girls don't go doing anything." his voice dropped suddenly "Naughty." and then, to their shock, he snapped a picture of the three of them.

Ella laughed and reached out to hit him. He grinned and backed out the door, winked right at Jo-anne right before he shut the door. That was a bit weird, unless he knew about West's current order on her.

Both girls looked right at her questioningly. She shrugged but smiled and they both laughed. "Men, all of them, got filthy dirty minds." Ella giggled. "Can't half see where Terence gets it from though." She shook her head.

"Like father, like son." Julie agreed.

The door opened once more and he, Jonathan, snapped his fingers. "Come on girls, your young and fun,"

"Perv." Julie shot at him.

He grinned "Just trying to cheer someone up, now Jo-anne I forgot to tell you, Terence will be dropping by, possibly the Alpha as well, they will want to have words about that piece of shit they have in the cells...now be a good girl and do what is right." he looked at her pointedly and then he was gone.

She knew what he meant, to give her permission to kill him.

Jo-anne didn't like hearing him talk about her father that way, despite what he had done to her, the man was still her father. There had to be an explanation. Perhaps T.J. would take her over there to see him herself. Maybe she could get him to tell her what had happened? Why he'd done this to her? If they couldn't, that was.

She just knew those two were over there likely torturing her own father and it pained her. She knew only a part of them would be looking for answers. The other part, their primal animalistic side would just want to beat him and lay down their power over him, show him who was in control and put him in his place.

A part of her wondered if they had already gotten the answer and were now just beating him for the sake of it. She sighed no it wasn't like that, he had committed a crime and they would be punishing him. Though she could well imagine T.J. would enjoy it.

Jo-anne sat with her friends, they were a good distraction, chatting about different things in their lives, how Petra's youngest had shoved a crayon up his nose at his older sister's insistence that he couldn't get it up his tiny nose and he'd tried to prove her room, and he'd had to have it removed by the pack doctor, jammed it so far up there it was damned near irretrievable. Not funny at the time, but now a few days later, Petra thought it was hilarious.

They sat and discussed the up-coming mating ball, and the dresses her two friends were going to wear, how they hoped they would find their Mates, that they were sick of waiting, then that started them all talking about the Alpha's who had been here and were all giggling.

T.J. strolled into the room and smiled at Ella and Julie, "ladies may I have a moment with Jo-Jo."

They'd both gotten up and headed out. Ella had bumped herself right into him, put a hand on her chest and looked right up at him. "Oh, sorry Beta." she batted her eye lashes up at him, she watched as T.J.'s eyes moved to the woman's ample breasts and then smiled at her as she turned and walked away, the woman was shameless. Watched as T.J. swat her right on the bottom and she turned with a fiend shocked Oh expression on her face, T.J. winked right at her, she was a gale of laughter as she walked down the hall way.

Jo-anne raised an eyebrow at him.

"She's cheeky that one," he smiled at her as he closed the door, "likes a good spanking."

Still unable to talk replied through the mind-link 'One of your girls?'

"No, actually I have never."

'Why not? Seems open to it.'

"Come on Jo-Jo, that's Cole's little sister, he already warned me off, not to, years ago."

'So if he hadn't?' she queried.

He smiled "honestly." he thought about it. "I really like the girl, she would likely make a good Mate. Shame she hasn't found one. I'm not going to ruin her for that man." he wiggled his eyebrows at her suggestively.

Jo-anne smiled, Ella was a cheeky one for sure, did want a Mate too. Just was over waiting for him to turn up, and had come to the conclusion she didn't have one out there, so was now playing the field at will.

'I think you really, like her.'

He actually nodded, "I do like her, she's absolutely lovely, but," he shrugged, "not my Mate."

Jo-anne sighed, so many un-mated wolves in this pack and she was certain, that Luna Natalia had held regular mating balls. It was curious as to why so many were un-mated. She too, did not have one. Half her friends didn't have one either. Something was wrong. She just knew it.

T.J. sat down next to her and looked right at her. Here we go, she thought, watched him switch from her friend to the pack Beta, a subtle difference, but one she could not only see in the set of his jaw but the feel of him too.

"Heath is still alive, though I am unhappy about it."

'He's my dad.' she sighed down the mind-link

"Not anymore, Jo-Jo, not after this."

'Yes, T.J. he will always be.' she corrected him.

He was frowning at her now. "He ran and went rogue Jo-Jo, he's not a member of the pack anymore, just a prisoner."

Jo-anne felt her eyes widen at his words. Her own father had gone rogue, he'd been born into this pack, as far as she knew, had a Mate and 2 other daughters here to look out for. How could he abandon them just like that?

'Karen and my sisters?' she asked, worried about them now.

"Fine, as far as I know. Though Karen, I imagine, is very unhappy about being Mated to a Rogue, their bond is still intact. Not a fun thing. Let alone one being..." he didn't finish the sentence.

Tortured, she knew that had been what he'd been about to say, your Mate could feel your emotions through the bond if the channel was open and your Bond to them was strong enough. 'Can I see him?'

"No." he narrowed his eyes on her "Why, on this goddess gifted earth would you want that Jo-Jo?"

'He's still my father T.J.' she replied, it didn't matter what he said, the man was her father would always be.

"No, he is not. Not anymore. Stop referring to him as such or I swear, I'll have West severe that bond between the two of you." he grated out at her sounded very angry "I don't want to ever hear you call that man your father again, do you understand me?" he was yelling at her now. So very angry about this.

She reached out and touched him 'T.J please understand.'

"No Jo-anne," he shot to his feet, "I can not. He is not your father." he roared right at her, and then stormed out of the room, slamming the door.

Jo-anne's eyes were staring at the closed door. 'Jo-anne' the man had never, not even once ever called her by her full name before. She also could not recall a time when he was angry with her like this either.

Had been mad the night she'd gotten tipsy and insulted his Alpha, but he was the Beta. It was his job to get mad about stuff like that, and they'd both yelled at each other. But this was new, that had been more than mad. More than anger. He was furious with her, it seemed.

What was she supposed to do now?

Chapter 37 - Her Alpha's Orders

West POV

Heath was a bloodied, torn-up mess, lying on the cell floor in a pool of his own blood. West could see there were wolf claw and bite marks in the man, he turned and raised an eyebrow at T.J. as they leaned on the cell bars, both of them had been staring at the man as he'd stared right back at them.

"What? Lark really likes his new chew toy." he'd smiled right at West.

"I can see that, chewed him up real good."

"Yep, can't wait to do it again." he'd smirked and turned his eyes back to the man in question.

West too looked down at the man, once a valued pack member, honorable and loyal, now a rogue and a prisoner. He'd never really had much to do with Jo-anne's father, other than the threat that had come out of his mouth when she was 16, of him going to the wolfen council. He'd not asked for anything himself and had requested to stay on border patrol.

It had always been his Mate Karen doing the asking and spending thousands upon thousands of the packs funds. He and Heath though, now that he thought about it, had rarely even seen each other during his Mate Bond to Jo-anne, so why was he so pissed

off with her now? West really thought about that, Heath and Jo-anne. Not once had he seen the two of them together after that day, not once had she told anyone she was going to visit him, and she did have to tell her every movement, so he knew where she was at all times.

Heath, as far as West knew, had not gone near his daughter in the two years, not even once. Odd.

Nothing had changed for Heath, during that time. He had kept his position as border patrol, the only thing that had been different was he'd been Ranked up and then, when she'd left lost that Rank. It didn't make sense the man didn't seem power hungry, hadn't even seemed to care at all about the new Rank, never lorded it over everyone like his Mate or her sisters had. Just went on with life as normal. Seemed to just want to make sure the girl had been protected and looked after.

West would love to just go inside the cell and kill him, but Jo-anne didn't want the man dead and it would hurt her if he did. He'd caused the girl enough emotional pain, he would not do it again. He didn't understand why she didn't want him dead, not even after he had nearly killed her.

How was she so forgiving? Hadn't even been angry, not for the first bite from Jester and not with Heath, for this attack, she was just sad. Did she never get angry? He'd never seen it actually, even in two years, she'd had to suffer life with him and he'd been an ass-hole the whole time, had to be, to make himself not devour the damned girl and ravish every inch of her, Goddess she'd been hard to stay away from on. Still bloody was it seemed.

"Why Heath?" he asked, seeing as he couldn't make sense of it all.

The man lay there and looked up at him, unlikely able to sit up. Lark had done a good job on the man, though the bleeding had stopped and his wounds were healing slowly, he was still too badly injured to get up. Jester was actively healing the man.

"Why not?" he returned with a laugh, which sounded quite nasty to the ear.

"It makes no sense. She's your daughter."

"Is she?" Heath's eyes moved from West to T.J.

"No." T.J. answered the man, "and you will not call her that in future, ever." he grated out the last word.

Heath snorted, "What future? She'll not live long anyway."

That got both their undivided attention, West frowned instantly. The man thought it was not over, which likely meant there was more danger to come, but from where and why?

“Why is that?” West asked, keeping his voice clear of any anger. He needed to keep the man talking.

“Destined to die West. At your hands,” he laughed mirthlessly, “I was trying to save her from you.”

West leaned back from the cell now. He’d never physically hurt her, not once. He wouldn’t stand for it. Why on earth would this piece of shit say that?

“Don’t buy into it West, he’s goading you. Trying to get you to kill him, a quick death.” T.J. put a hand on him to steady him.

West didn’t say anything, just stared down at the man, he did want to go in there and kill him right that minute. He’d never hurt Jo-anne, hated the sight of her blood, had seen enough of it to last him his whole lifetime. Yet he still had to keep seeing it.

He was smiling up at him still, a nasty smile, almost like he knew something West did not and West was itching to go in there and rip it out of him, felt T.J.’s hand grip him hard to stay him from doing just that. “It’s what he wants West.”

West knew it too. If the man was dead, he couldn’t talk, couldn’t tell West what he wanted to know, and if he was dead, he could not be beaten and tortured to within an inch of his life on a regular basis. He stood and stared down at the man for a long time. Volt was sitting in his mind, all attention and ready to be released, but wasn’t pushing for it. ‘You’re awfully quiet Volt.’

‘Clova say no.’ was his only response.

‘Jo-anne said no. Not Clova.’ he corrected his wolf.

‘Same mind.’ Volt replied.

An interesting perspective his wolf had on the two of them. West didn’t think the two of them had the same mind, likely got along better with her wolf, than West and his beast, but most did. Usually you and your wolf were on the same page and it was an easy companionable partnership.

He and Volt had once gotten along, four years of getting along in fact, it had been their difference of opinion over Jo-anne that had fractured his and his wolf’s partnership and it had never gotten any better, unable to be mended at all.

The only time he and his beast saw eye to eye, was in protecting the pack, assisting allied packs, because they both enjoyed a good fight in human form or wolf. It allowed for them both to let all their anger and aggression out, so that was the only time their minds were aligned as one, the only time they’d gotten along in over a decade.

Though, of late, they had been aligned and now that West thought about that, he'd not told Volt, where to go in quite a while, or the other way around. Seems they had found some common ground, that common ground Jo-anne and Clova, the very thing that had fractured them in the first place.

Just staring down at Heath, he didn't know what to do with the man right this minute, couldn't kill him, though he wanted to, and it wouldn't take much to do so right this minute. He didn't have the strength to fight back right now. Could go in there and just reach down and snap the man's neck without much effort at all.

"Help me hang him up," he told T.J. "the bastard can hang from now till Jo-anne lets me kill him."

"Sure West." was T.J.'s only response.

The pair of them strolled in and shackled the man's wrists and hung him from the hook in the ceiling, just like he'd been the last time he'd been there in the cells. Looked at the man and said "I'll be back tomorrow to deal with you." patted him right on the face. "Heal up nice and good for me, won't you." Then he'd left the cells with T.J. the silent threat of being tortured, left hanging in the air.

Sighed at the blood on his clothes, from just picking the man up, can't go into the hospital with the man's blood all over him. Jo-anne would not like that at all. "We should go clean up."

"Agreed." T.J. nodded.

They both walked back to the pack-house together in silence, each with their own thoughts, he supposed, and headed for their rooms.

Miranda was sitting on the couch, raising an eye-brow at his bloodied clothing, knew it wasn't his "Did you kill that sick bastard yet?" she even sounded a bit angry about what Heath had done to Jo-anne. From what he'd seen, the two women did get along, she would make a great Luna to someone, cared about all pack members and they weren't even hers.

"Not yet, still no answers." he answered her.

"Do you want company in there?" she called as he headed for the bathroom.

"No." was his only reply.

He was going to have to deal with her, he couldn't keep letting her sleep in his bed, not when he had no interest in the woman at all anymore and he knew he did not.

Was standing in the shower under the scorching hot water mulling over what Heath said, destined to die at Wests' hands. He didn't like it, felt more than a little foreboding, the wording of his phrase. He didn't like it. So direct, so simple. What if it was true? He sighed and leaned back on the wall, closed his eyes. He didn't actually think he'd physically hurt her, doubt his wolf would allow it as well. But his temper could get well out of hand, sometimes and she had this bloody knack of ticking him off, there was something about the woman that just flipped his switch.

Felt a multi mind-link opened to him and T.J., Dr Patterson not only was Jo-anne awake but he was happy for her to be discharged. West heard T.J. tell him not without an escort and that he would send his father to collect her. West didn't even have a chance to reply, but he had no objections. Jonathan and his own father, Damien, had been regular visitors to her in Seattle, neither of them would ever harm her.

West stayed put in that shower for a good half an hour more, trying not to think about Heath's words, but was not really having any luck with it. His only option was going to be to stay away from her. Though how many times had he told himself that over the past two weeks, never bloody worked.

Even Volt snorted in his mind at the thought, sounded rather amused. 'unlikely to happen.' his wolf tormented him.

He'd kissed the damned woman just this morning, and not like he'd kissed any woman ever before, hell even his first kiss at 13, he'd shoved that girl up against the wall at school and smashed his mouth down on to hers all demanding to take what he wanted, nothing gentle about even that. But today had been different, very freaking different.

He also had not cared who'd seen it either, which meant any of the nurses in the hospital could have walked in to check on her, seen it and backed out of the room without him knowing about it. Hell he'd not even registered T.J. inside the room. The one person he should not be kissing her in front of.

Miranda was likely to find out at some point too. But what could he do about that? He could, he supposed, order anyone who saw not to talk about it, but did he really want to.

Again Volt snort at him, 'no'.

No, he didn't want to go to that length either. If she found out, so be it, hopefully it wouldn't hurt her and Jo-anne's friendship.

He stepped out of the bathroom and looked right at her. "You should probably go home to your father," he told her.

"What?" her eyes widened up at him in shock.

"I'm sorry Miranda, I don't want to do this." he indicated to the room "anymore."

She stood up. "You are mad at me. For sleeping with another Alpha," she snapped, sounding irritated.

"No I'm not," he shook his head "didn't bother me at all, that you took on an Alpha and a Beta at the same time." he corrected her, letting her know he understood very well she had allowed both of them to fuck her at the same time. "that's the problem."

Miranda walked over to him. "I don't want to go back West."

He frowned down at her. "Why not? It's your pack."

"I don't...I wont. Can't I just stay here, please?" she grabbed onto his arm and shook her head. "Don't send me back there."

West was frowning now right at her. Sounded like she was pleading with him, as though she really did not want to go back at all. "What's wrong? Why not? Your family is there."

"Please, West, keep me here. Let my father think we're still the same. That...well I'll be your Luna at some point in time."

"You are not going to be the Luna." he informed her again of what she already knew.

"I know that...West please. Don't send me back to that place." he could hear it in her voice. There was fear, she really didn't want to go back, afraid to go back.

"Why?" he asked

"My father...is going to Mate me off if I go back and I don't want that...If I'm here with you..." she trailed off.

"Has he picked a Mate for you?" West was actually curious about that.

She nodded up at him, "It's wrong West. I don't want him." she shook her head "neither does he...please West." she practically whispered, there were actual tears glistening in her eyes.

He sighed, "Alright, you can stay here on one condition."

"Anything West." she nodded up at him, looked relieved.

"You actively start looking for your Mate. Every mating ball we hold or are invited to. You will attend."

"Barring my father's, agreed." she nodded.

She really did not want to go home, something was going on there. He wondered if this was the reason she'd crawled into his bed and then left with him. She had come with him for her own reasons, it seemed, one he'd never cared to ask about, probably should have, he now realised.

"You have this room, I'll find another." he told her.

She just nodded up at him, West went off to get dressed. Was walking out of the room when she called out to him and thanked him for letting her stay. He could hear it she really meant it. Was grateful to him. He just nodded to her and stepped out of the room.

Probably should find out just what was going on over there in her father's pack, nothing he knew about and they'd been in an alliance for several years now. But there was definitely something wrong there. Probably accounts for why she'd not gone home with them, and was still here.

The man had not been happy about her outright refusing to leave, but she had stood there in front of the pack-house and said no, shaking her head. West had stood and watched the argument, as had his whole Alpha Unit for that matter. But he had not intervened, he'd been about to when Ricky's hand had touched him. 'Let her stay.' he shot down the mind-link. He'd obviously picked up on something, West had not, used his Gamma ability, likely to feel the situation out.

So West had simply let her, he wasn't as heartless as he made out. When she'd grabbed onto his arm and stood there next to him, told her father that West wasn't mad at her and told him West said it was okay to stay, he had nodded in agreement.

The man had glared right at him. Looked furious too, but he needed the alliance with West's pack more than West needed them. So he had stalked off and gotten in his car to leave. Her brother hadn't said anything, had looked impassive for the first time ever. Had been happy to see his sister when he'd got here but wouldn't look at her at all now. Almost as though he couldn't stand the sight of her.

The future Beta however, had looked more than relieved, he'd been the last to get in the car, something was definitely going on over there. He'd watched the future Beta look right at Miranda, bow his head slightly and smiled right at her. Seemed proud of her for standing up to her father. Or that was the impression West had gotten.

She had hugged West's arm and thanked him for letting her stay, then walked back into the pack-house. His eyes had turned right on his Gamma, who'd shrugged 'Felt really weird is all. And she was scared. Better she stay here for now.' is all he'd said and strolled off into the pack-house as well.

Now today, she'd again begged to stay really been upset about it, whoever it was she was to be Mated off to she did not want it, had said it was wrong and that neither her

nor him wanted it. If that was the case, then how could her father make them. He didn't know.

She'd pleaded with him, didn't even care that she was no longer going to be in his bed. Just had desperately not wanted to leave the security that being here was obviously providing her.

West mind-linked the head of the pack-houses Omega's and asked her to have his belongings removed from his room and into his Alpha Suite, just his. Made sure the woman understood that Miranda would be staying put and not moving in with him to the Alpha Suite.

T.J. was about to get his way, his Alpha in the Alpha Suite. What he was going to do in there with all that un-needed space he didn't know. Prowl around and hopefully not destroy shit in the empty rooms. Annoyed by them because they were empty.

Chapter 38 - Her Alpha's Orders

West POV

T.J. was more than shocked to see him come out of the Alpha Suite across from his own suite, dressed and ready for morning training, but then just smiled at him as he walked down the hall. "What brought this on?"

"Nothing, I just didn't want Miranda in my bed anymore." he replied simply.

"Could have just moved her to another room?"

"Wasn't it you," he said pointedly, "just the other day, nagging me about using the Alpha Suite." he finished, irritated by the man's question.

T.J. put his hands up. "Hey, I didn't make you do it."

Training and a shower, then he was off to visit Lark's new chew toy. Heath.

His eyes met Wests. "You killed her yet?" he smirked right at him.

West's jaw tightened as he unlocked the cell door and yanked it open, walked over and punched the man so hard he was swinging from that hook. The man spat blood and locked eyes with him. "Not yet, huh! I wonder how long it will take?"

"I would keep that mouth shut unless you want a broken jaw."

Heath actually laughed "Break it, you'll still."

West, with all of Volt behind him, hit the man so hard teeth flew from his mouth and he lost consciousness. He would never hurt her. West stalked out of the cells and back to the pack-house, banged into his office, really wanted to beat the living hell out of something.

That mans insistence? Was it just a word game to enrage him? Or did he know something else? Sat down in his chair, might have to be in control next time. He'd been goaded into a rage and he knew it. T.J. was right about the man trying to fuck with his head. The problem was West was letting him get in.

Definitely couldn't go in there alone again, might just kill him and he'd promised Jo-anne he wouldn't. Needed to approach him in a different matter. Sighed and rubbed his temples and asked the guard on cell duty to let him know when the prisoner was awake. Got an affirmative.

Buried himself in work til lunch time, when he walked over there to the cells again, only this time his mother was with him. She had strolled into his office and stated she would be having a word with the prisoner and sat herself down on the couch and had not left his office til he'd gotten word the man was awake. He was still curious about her conversation with T.J. and when he asked she'd looked up at him, smiled and said "now son, that is mine and Terence's business." and said nothing more.

"I hear you moved into the Alpha Suite."

"Mm," was his only reply.

"So, when do I expect Jo-anne to move in with you?" said it as though it was expected of him.

West had stopped walking altogether. "Excuse me."

"Oh, son, I am not so stupid. I just keep my mouth shut most of the time where you are concerned." she put her hand on his arm and tugged him back into walking along with her. "I smelled you all over her in the hospital."

His jaw tightened, but he said nothing. This was not the time or place to be having this conversation. "Lets discuss it another time."

"Why, I cleared the way already. We're alone, son."

He stared at her a little surprised and she smiled right up at him, "Luna, remember. So when can I expect her to pick up her Luna training?"

"Mother, it is not like that," he stated flatly. Jo-anne hadn't even so much as mind-linked him about what had happened. Probably regretted it the minute she'd woken up and realised it was him and not T.J.

"Hmm. Well, perhaps it could be, if you sat and talked to the girl. She never hated you. You know that right."

"I know," he nodded. "Doesn't mean I have any right."

"Hmm, I see. I'll come back to it, in what, say 2 weeks then." there was a half smirk on her face.

He knew she was talking about the full moon that was coming, "Don't get your hopes up mother, T.J. will be her Mate and you know it."

"Unlikely." she shrugged it off.

They walked the rest of the way in silence. She wrinkled her nose at the rotten stench of rogue scent, that came off of him and stared right at the man hanging from the hook. He looked right at her. "Oh, you brought your mummy with you."

"Enough!" his mother stated flatly, and rolled her Luna Aura at him, only to have him laugh.

"I'm a rogue Natalia, that won't work on me anymore."

"Heath, do you recall, why I picked you to raise that little girl?" she got right to her line of questioning.

He was glaring at her all of a sudden, but said nothing.

"I think you do." his mother folded her arms across her chest "shall I remind you." it was not a question, a pointed statement.

"Don't bother." he replied.

"Your Mate," she ignored him, "she had just died, giving birth to your first born...a little girl I believe, who also died."

"Shut up." he snarled at her. So the man had a weak spot, West thought.

"You were at a loss. To loose both a Mate and a child is a terrible thing." she actually sounded sad for him. "then a miracle, little Terence finds a baby girl out in the snow, and name her Jo-Jo."

"Enough." Heath was suddenly yelling at her.

"What was your Mate's name, Heath?" she asked calmly.

He was thrashing and straining at his bonds. "Fuck you." he snarled at her "Shut the hell up."

West was more than interested now. He'd never looked into man's history, never saw a need to, but right that minute, he was more than interested in the man's reactions.

"Jo-anne, I believe...I chose you, Heath, because Terence had already nicknamed her."

"Fucking shut your mouth." he screamed at her.

His mother ignored the man, "what you called your own Mate, Jo-Jo."

Heath was staring at her, West could see the pain in his eyes, he couldn't hide the pain of the loss of his first Mate, made West wonder if Karen was chosen or Goddess-Gifted to him. Might have to look into that.

"I gave her to you, because I thought you would love her like your own, be able to get passed all that grief and live, knowing you had something to live for, a memory to hold on to. A name sake for your lost Mate. She even has the same grey eyes as your Mate, doesn't she?"

"You chose wrong."

"I did, it seems, but why? You loved that little girl. I saw it every day for many years. What changed you?"

"None of your business."

"Hmm," she turned and looked at West, he just shrugged, she shook her head, turned back to Heath ". None of my business...Do you know? Heath, that her birth mother is somewhere in this pack. What do you think is going to happen when she finds out what you did? To her little girl."

"You don't even know who it is," he spat.

"Don't I? Are you 100% certain of that?" she was staring right at him.

That was an interesting statement. West wondered if his mother did know who Jo-anne's birth mother or father was, for that matter. He did not know, it was not documented anywhere he knew of.

"You don't, its all bluff."

"Hmm, you want to hope so." she smiled right at him "Because she's not so small, not so weak, a good strong warrior of a woman now. The news is not yet fully out about what you did, but I know she has seen her child's injuries."

“She never wanted that brat.”

“Maybe she had her own reasons, but somehow. I’m betting that woman would feel pain at the thought of the loss of her child, like any mother would. West here is going to do his mother a favour today and tell everyone of your crime, including your Mate and 2 other daughters.”

“Leave them out of this.”

West smiled, oh he hated Karen. “Of course mother, what time suits you.” He would make sure the first link was to that bitch and her daughters and hold so darn tight she or they couldn’t close it off.

His mother turned and smiled right at him. “Now son, suits me just fine. Don’t forget to mention he’s a traitor to this pack. Let’s word it this way, tried to kill his own daughter, a Luna Ranked wolf, who you’ve willingly accepted back into the pack, are happy to have home.”

West nodded he actually didn’t see a problem with that at all. He didn’t want Jo-anne anywhere else but in this pack. Had never wanted her to leave him, even if he’d been an ass-hole the whole time and knew what she had done had been for her own sanity.

Opened that pack wide mind-link, it was going to cause him a headache, but he would deal with it. Once he felt he had everyone’s attention, made his statement to them didn’t even really need time to think about it “I your Alpha, have a crime to report to you all. Heath Morris, attempted to kill his eldest daughter, Jo-anne Morris. My former Mate, who I have accepted back into my pack. Glad she has come home to us once more. Heath is now considered a traitor to this pack for attacking a Luna Ranked wolf. The former Luna to this pack, your pack. He went rogue and is now captured and in the cells awaiting punishment. Lenience granted from his death sentence, which you all know to be the penalty for such a crime in this pack, Lenience granted to him by his own daughter, Jo-anne. Who is saddened by this turn of events, but does not want him executed. A generous and forgiving daughter he has.” he cut the link and looked at his mother.

She smiled right up at him, “Now son. There is the true Alpha in you that I raised. Well done, I’m very proud of you.”

He felt a swell of happiness inside of him. Last time they had talked she had questioned him and his ability to be the Alpha. He was glad to see she was proud of him. Even Volt was happy. She was proud of him. ‘ Did good.’ his wolf told him.

“What’d you tell them?” Heath yelled at them. No longer a member of the pack, he had not received the message.

“Well, I guess you’ll never know, seeing as you’re not a pack member anymore, Mother is there anything else you want?”

West watched as she turned and looked at Heath. “No, not right now, lets go have lunch, son. I’m hungry.” she walked over to him and slipped her hand around his arm, and they left the cells together.

“I’m not sure how Jo-anne will feel about this mother.” he sighed. It had to be done and he’d felt concern come from her through the link, almost instantly.

“She’ll deal with it, West. That girl...” she shook her head “is resilient, to say the least.”

West nodded, she was at that.

“ Do you actually know who her mother is?” he asked out of curiosity.

She just looked up at him, but said nothing. Even if she did, she was not about to impart that news to him, that was perfectly clear to him.

T.J. had been waiting for him by his office. His mother let go of his arm. She knew T.J. wanted a word with him. Already Jo-anne had approached him with concerns about back-lash at her stepmother and sisters, and that the pack was going to treat them differently. Which they likely were, side effect of being a family member of a traitor. Jo-anne it seemed, was a big ball of bloody compassion. For people that didn’t deserve it in his eyes, she didn’t want harm to come to anyone.

T.J. had told her it was an Alpha decision, that West was not likely to rescind it. Which West was not. Jo-anne had not been happy about it but had to deal with it.

The whole pack now knew what that son of a bitch had done to his own daughter. That the one he had attacked, had managed to convince him, the Alpha of the pack, not to kill him for his crime. Now knew that he was alive only because the one he’d tried to kill, did not wish harm back.

West still thought it was too forgiving of her, but so far T.J., in the past 24 hours had not been able to convince her. West didn’t think that anyone was going to be able to. So it was likely that Heath was to live out his life rotting in his cell, to be T.J. and Larks chew toy, not to mention Wests personal punching bag.

West was never going to allow her near the man, no matter how she felt. Forgive him or not, West would never forgive that man for harming her.

Chapter 39 - Her Alpha's Orders

Jo-anne POV

No, no, no, she shook her head, hearing West's voice inside her head, telling the whole pack what her father had done to her. It would put her sisters and her stepmother in the line of fire. Wolves did not like traitors or even their family members. Her heart was racing inside her chest.

Jo-anne left her room, ran down the hall, heading right for his office. He had to take it back, or pardon her sisters and stepmother. She could see his door was open, and ran right inside without even knocking. Only T.J. was there, behind the man's desk.

West was not there, where was he? She had to beg him to change his mind, find a way to get him to listen to her. Her panicked eyes met T.J.'s.

She really wished she could speak already, had to use the mind-link 'T.J. he has to take it back.'

'No he doesn't.' he leaned back in West's chair and folded his arms across his chest.

'It's not right, Karen and my sisters, will be hated by the pack.'

'So?' he sounded so uncaring.

'T.J.' she practically begged him, 'that's not right, it isn't their fault.'

'No, I guess not. If they all renounce him formally here in this office and sever all ties with him, problem solved.'

'T.J. they're never going to do that. It will tear them apart. You can't ask Karen to reject her mate, do you know what that will do to her?'

'Yes. Free her from the burden of her traitorous Mate.'

Jo-anne really wanted to just scream at him. He knew that was not what she meant. But the pain of a bond breaking was supposed to be dreadfully painful. She had been lucky enough to have the goddess gift no pain to her when she had severed ties with West, but she doubted many were that lucky.

Jo-anne couldn't physically scream at him yet, but she really wanted to. Stood staring at him, 'Help me T.J. please, they're my family.'

'No they are not.'

'Yes, T.J. they are. My sisters. Please, you have 2 sisters of your own. Help me to save them.'

'They can save themselves, Jo-anne. Let them do what they want.'

'Would you sever ties with your father?' she shot at him, angry for his uncaring manner towards her family. She knew he didn't really like them, but they were still her sisters.

'If my father tried to kill one of my sisters. I would kill him without hesitation, Jo-Jo.'

Jo-anne just stood there and stared at him, he actually meant it, she could tell from his tone. He was not kidding, he would kill his own father. How could anyone even consider doing something like that? That was completely insane. It would hurt him as well as his mother and his sisters.

'I don't...What if...' she didn't know what to say to him.

'You don't understand. Well, it's simple Jo-Jo, a man who can kill his own child, will kill anyone inside the pack, so he can no longer be trusted. It is that simple, has to be put down.'

'But what if there is a good reason?'

T.J sighed heavily and stood up, walked right over to her, looked down at her, tilt her chin right up to make her look at him. 'Tell me Jo-Jo, what is a good reason to kill your own child? If you can find one, perhaps you can change my mind.'

Jo-anne stood staring up at him, how was she supposed to answer that question? She didn't know, frowned, she couldn't answer that question.

'Alright Jo-Jo did you do anything to that man to warrant such an attack on you?'

She shook her head. No, because she had done nothing and she knew it.

'Then, Jo-Jo, there was no good reason for his murderous intent, now was there.'

She could see his point but still, it wasn't right, her whole family would suffer just because he had hurt her. It was very unlikely that Karen or her sisters knew anything about it until this very moment.

'My sisters, and stepmother don't deserve this T.J.' she pleaded up at him. And when he said nothing she knew he was going to do nothing to help her, turned to leave and go find them herself. Only to have his hand land on her arm. 'No Jo-Jo. I can not allow you to go to them while still injured. Please, if you insist on talking to them, use the mind-link. Go back to your room for now.'

She couldn't believe it 'and if I ignore that?'

She watched as he sighed heavily 'I'll make it an order.'

Her eyes widened up at him, he would never.

'Please go back to your room.' he released her arm and followed her out of the room, stood and watched as she debated ignoring him. She looked at him and he was staring right at her. She turned away from him, bit her lip. She already had a bunch of orders on her. What was one more? Took a step towards the front door 'screw it.' she thought, then she found Ricky and Cole right in her path.

'Excuse me.' she mind-linked them.

'Sorry Jo-anne. Beta's orders back to your room.' Ricky informed her.

She turned and looked at T.J. he just raised an eyebrow at her. Then he turned and walked back inside the Alpha's office. She had no choice, it seemed. She turned and went back to her room. Both Ricky and Cole walked her all the way there.

'I just want to see my family.' she told them at her door, hoping they would understand.

'I'm sorry, Terence's order is as good as Wests Jo-anne.' Ricky looked at her, seemed a little like he understood her need but couldn't help her.

She stepped inside her room and closed the door. Sank down on her couch and sighed, tried to open a link to her stepmother. It was severed instantly. She tried again only to be rejected again. She'd never established a link to either of her sisters before, they'd not had their wolves when she'd left and had no idea how to connect to them. Without being in their presence to actually see them to direct it at them.

She stood this couldn't be it, there had to be a way to go and see them. Had to be away out of the pack-house, she could use the omega stairs and head through the woods get as close as she could to their house, T.J. would never need to know. She walked over to the door and opened it to find Ricky leaning on the wall still. "Going somewhere?" he asked.

She banged the door shut, on guard, it seemed, to prevent her from going anywhere. Well, there was one more way. One she knew was going to piss them all off, but so be it. They can't stop her from seeing her family. Walked over to the window and pushed it up all the way. It was only about 10 or 12 feet to the ground. Glanced at the door. That was the Gamma out there. Shit if he was trying to sense anything he might pick up what she was about to do.

Getting back inside the pack-house would be the bigger problem. There was no way from the ground to get back up here. She'd have to come through the pack-house which would alert them to her having gotten out. And with Ricky out there in the hall, that meant they would know she'd dropped from the window.

West would likely go ballistic, did she really want his wrath aimed at her. She closed her eyes. She knew why he hated her near balcony's and being up off the ground. Hell she

could well imagine the rage he would direct at her, when he found out. Opened her eyes, and walked away to flop down on her bed, she'd have to find another way.

She stayed in her room all day, didn't leave it for a single second, and when T.J. walked in with food at dinner time she just rolled over and away from him, still lying on her bed. She had pretty much been there all day. He sat down on the bed next to her. "I got your favourite," he commented.

She highly doubted it, she'd been gone a long time, and her tastes weren't all the same as before, she wasn't even the same person she had been, the last time she was here in the pack.

"Come on Jo-Jo, don't give me the silent treatment."

Jo-anne could give him the silent treatment all she liked, she didn't have her voice back yet, so he would just have to deal with it.

He sighed "you need to eat something, how is Clova going to heal you if you don't eat properly." he leaned right over her, "Jo-Jo please. I only did what I did to protect you."

She doubted that, what harm was there in her going and seeing her family, to try and explain to them that she hadn't wanted West to do as he had done. Her family was of no threat to her. Never had been.

Heard him sigh, "Don't be like this Jo-Jo, I don't like it."

Well, he should have thought about it before he put guards on her. To make sure she couldn't go anywhere at all. She'd been forced to come back here. Leave her happy, peaceful life to be locked up in this room like a prisoner. Huh, she was as much a prisoner as her father was. It hurt more than a bit.

"Jo-Jo." he reached out and touched her. She shifted away from him, he didn't try again. Got up and sighed, "Please eat something, if not for you, for Clova." and then he left the room. She stared across the room. She was hungry just didn't want company.

Sat up and looked at the tray he'd placed on the bed, when he'd stood up. There was a cup of tea and a plate of roast pork and baked vegetables, even a slice of mango cheesecake. She did like all those things, it would not make up for him putting guards on her and keeping her in her room though. She sat and ate absently. She didn't understand why she couldn't go and see them. What if she didn't go alone? What if she took someone with her? A compromise maybe. She got up after eating her meal, to return her tray to find no-one outside her room, looked both ways to find, though the door was not guarded, Cole and Ricky were sitting on the stairs leading up to the 2nd floor. Just moved further away.

She ignored them as she walked down the hallway, she watched Ricky's eyes glaze over and glared right at him. Dibber dobber, she thought, then continued off down the stairs and saw T.J. step out of the Alpha's office and turned away from him. She was not going to talk to him. She could at least find someone else to go with her. Perhaps Ella would go with her.

Put the dishes in the sink and the tray away and turned around to find T.J. walking towards her, she sidestepped him and continued back out of the dining room and saw Miranda coming this way, Grabbed the woman and tried to mind-link her, couldn't and frowned tried again.

"Oh, I'm not actually a full-pack member." she seemed to understand Jo-anne was trying to talk to her.

Jo-anne needed an escort, Miranda was a good choice, though she wouldn't be able to explain it to her that was annoying, let her go was going to need someone else. Waved her off apologetically and moved on.

"Jo-Jo, if you need something, I can go with you." she heard T.J. say to her.

Ignored him completely and headed off up the stairs. She knew Ella would be upstairs having dinner.

"Jo-Jo," he called out, seemed annoyed. Well, he could join the bloody club.

She took the stairs two at a time, and then turned and headed up to the 2nd floor. Ella would be on the 3rd floor. She pushed past both Ricky and Cole, still taking the stairs two at a time. Both of them were looking at her curiously. And from the second floor she could see not only T.J. watching her, West had stepped out of his office and was also watching her. She stopped on the half landing and looked at Ricky and Cole, then T.J. and West. Flipped them all off and turned to continue to her destination.

Didn't care about the consequences, she was over all their shit. Had flipped off her Alpha and his Beta. Flipped off the Gamma and Delta. Disrespected the lot of them, but what could they do about it scold her is what. She was already in lock down, wasn't allowed to leave the pack, wasn't allowed to live anywhere else but that bloody room and she wasn't even allowed to have anyone touch her. The only thing left to him was to put her in the cells for a night and well, hell, she'd agree to go willing to see her father.

Moved down the 3rd floor hallway to knock on the Delta Suite, Ella opened the door and smiled at her "Whats up Jo-anne."

' They're all a-holes.' she shot down through the mind-link.

'Still can't talk?'

Jo-anne shook her head. 'Can we get out of here for a bit? I'm not allowed to go anywhere on my own, it seems.'

'Not surprising though, is it?' she indicated Jo-anne's neck.

'It's got nothing to do with that, they don't want me to go near my sisters or Karen. I wanted to go and see them and was marched back to my room and was guarded all day from leaving.'

'West can be such a dick.'

'It was T.J.'

'What, no? That man would never.'

'He did. Can we just go for a walk or something?'

'Sure. But are you allowed?'

'I don't know, guess we'll find out when we try to leave the pack-house by the front fucking door.'

Ella burst out laughing 'Alright, let me get my shoes on.'

Ella pulled a pair of boots on and then stepped out of the suite, linked her arms through Jo-anne's "Where to." she grinned right at her as they walked down the hallway.

T.J. was just coming up onto the landing, looked right at her, was frowning.

"Where off for a walk, Beta Terence." Ella informed him, all smiles.

"Where too?"

He was blocking their path and it was clear he was not going to move until he knew where. Ella laughed "night swim out at the lake."

"Neither of you are wearing swimmers" he narrowed his eyes at them both.

"Oh my, must mean skinny dipping time." she giggled and pulled Jo-anne around him, who was also trying not to laugh now. "Girls only. You perv." she shot back up at him.

Found Cole staring right at her with narrowed eyes as they came down to the 2nd floor landing 'Jeez Jo-Jo, you weren't kidding were you.'

'Nope.'

‘Man, it’s almost like when you Mated to West, this lot always tracking your every move.’

‘Huh?’

Ella snorted ‘Did you not know? Always one of them trailing you at a distance.’

Jo-anne frowned right at her. No, she had never noticed. ‘Well this will piss him off, let’s actually go skinny dipping.’ The man hated her being naked in front of others back then, but he couldn’t bloody stop her now, she was no longer his.

‘Sure I’m up for it, I’ll call the others.’

‘On the way home, you think, we could stop by Karen’s.’

‘I don’t see why not.’ she shrugged.

They walked all the way down stairs and right out the front door. She could feel eyes on her, didn’t really care to be honest. Several of their friends joined them on the way to the lake.

All 6 of them did actually go skinny dipping, it was very freeing, not something she had been allowed to do ever. Well, she had before mated to West anyway. She and the girls used to sneak out on those hot summer nights and come down here and just hang out. Swim about and cool off. Talk about who they all thought they might be Mated off to when 18.

Lots of giggling and splashing, today was just a nice relaxing time and they talked about anything and everything, but their Alpha and his a-holes of a unit. Not that anyone could listen the entire time, they were in a 6 lined mind-link she’d opened herself and kept open so they could all freely talk and hear each other.

The girls all thought it was weird that she could do a multi mind-link, and sustain it for hours. None of them could do it, but she’d always been able to, even as a 16-year-old in school. Never had an issue with it. Didn’t even cause a headache which the library books had said it would normally do, sustaining a multi mind-link for long periods of time was taxing, or supposed to be. Not to her.

They stayed at the lake for an hour or so. She didn’t want it to get too late, and have to wake Karen to talk to her. She and the girls all headed back, but only she and Ella headed for Karen’s house. It was her old home. She knocked on the door, Ella was standing next to her. The door opened and Karen stood right there.

Stared at her for a long moment and then just slapped her right in the face, Jo-anne touch her own face in complete shock. Turned her eyes towards the woman, as she was yanked backwards. Ella slapped her right back, and snapped a flat palm into the woman’s chest, “Don’t you ever hit Jo-anne.”

Jo-anne stood there. She had not deserved that, but she guess she could understand a bit. After West's announcement, 'Karen I just wanted to see you and my sisters. Make sure you were all okay.' she told her stepmother through the mind-link.

"Just leave, you are not welcome here."

'Please, I didn't want any of this to happen.'

"Then you should have stayed away." and she slammed the door shut.

Ella turned and looked at her, "Jeez Jo-anne, that's going to leave a mark."

'Better go before T.J. gets here.'

'Shit, I forgot about that connection you have. Come on quick.' they turned and left in a hurry,

Karen's house was quite a bit away from the pack-house. So it would take him a bit to get here and if she was somewhere else, perhaps he wouldn't suspect where she had been. They were moving quickly through the streets and took a couple of short cuts through a few yards, when Jo-anne saw the playground and pulled Ella right to it.

Shoved her on the round about and jumped on it after running it around and setting it off spinning. T.J. appeared in the park a few minutes later, looking at them, narrowed eyes on her, her hair was out and the spinning would stop him from getting a good look at her. Though she knew he was not fooled. Would have felt the sting in some way to her face. Who the hell knew how it worked? But he always knew.

Ella yelled out to him "Hey you." and then jumped off and left Jo-anne on it, spun it again and then ran over to him. 'I'll distract him, you run like the wind back to your room.' her amused voice came down the mind-link and then jumped on him, wrapped her arms and legs around him and was kissing him. Even Jo-anne looked on shocked. T.J. looked more than shocked, didn't seem to know what to do with her. His hands up in the air as if to show he wasn't doing anything wrong. Bloody woman was going to get herself in trouble.

Jo-anne hopped off and stared at them for a few seconds. Not only was Ella kissing him, she was rubbing herself all over the pack Beta, grinding up against him. 'Run Jo-anne' Ella shot through the mind-link.

'Your insane.' she shot back with a giggle and ran as fast as she could away from the park, wondering what would happen? She knew T.J. did like the girl and Ella definitely liked touching him. Shit they could end up naked right there in the park. Well, she was sure Ella would enjoy herself.

She was about half to the pack-house when Ella's voice appeared in her head, 'better run faster he's coming Jo-anne.'

'Managed to get you off him, did he?'

A roar of laughter came down the link. 'It was a struggle for him, I'm a Delta, I think he forgot that.' she was so amused with herself 'and well, Jo-anne, hmm. Fucking huge he is. I'm gonna get him one day.'

Jo-anne could see the pack-house, was racing up the stairs when she heard him yell her name. She shot through the door laughing so hard, she nearly fell over, didn't care who saw her and bolted for her room, banged right into her room and snapped all the locks into place, still laughing and leaned on it.

He was banging on the door a few seconds later.

'Come on T.J. why chase me when Ella was more than happy to mate you?'

'Open this bloody door.'

'Nope. I'm fine.'

'What the hell happened?'

'I don't know what you're talking about. Good night T.J.' she cut the link.

Could hear him growling outside her door still.

'You make it girl?'

'Barely.' Jo-anne replied to Ella. 'I owe you one.'

'Yeah, one Beta. Now I'm all hot and bothered, guess I'll have to play with vibrator Terence.'

Jo-anne snickered 'You name your vibrator Terence?'

'I did.'

Jo-anne sighed and shook her head, guess the girl really did like him. Part of Jo-anne wondered just how much of a fight he put up, a little, none at all, hell Ella was a complete package the man should just mate her already. She flopped down on her bed still smiling to herself.

Her head whipped around when she heard one of the door locks unlock, 'shit.' he had the damned keys. Bloody man just couldn't let it go. She hopped up from the bed and

rushed to the bathroom, closed the door, no freaking lock. Turned the shower on and got in clothes and all. There was no time to take them off before getting in. took them off in there.

There was a banging on the door “Jo-Jo, get out here.”

‘I’m in the shower, come back later.’ she mind-linked him.

‘ If you think I won’t come in there,’ he shot right back.

Now that was interesting, she knew he was not interested in her that way. But he wanted to play it that way, dropped her voice turned it all sultry ‘T.J. you want something from me, I am naked.’ She knew it was wrong and playing with fire, but she was willing to bet he’d back off first.

There was quiet, but she could feel his annoyance down the link. ‘or should I come to you.’ she teased and turned the shower off. Felt almost shock from him as he realised she was going to come to him. She grabbed the towel but didn’t wrap it around her, just held it to her front and opened the door, a sweet smile on her face. He was right there.

Backed up real fast, she smiled right at him and leaned on the door frame. Hadn’t realised he was not the only one in the room. West was standing by the room door. It was his angry snarl that drew her attention to him. Her eyes widened at the sight of him. She had not been expecting him.

His eyes were on her, well, the towel to be precise. He looked pissed when his eyes finally moved to hers, his jaw was tight and ticking like crazy. Saw his eyes move to her cheek, the hand print would still be there, her eyes moved to T.J. and found him with his hands on his hips staring at the ceiling.

“Put some bloody clothes on.” West grated out between gritted teeth.

‘I sleep naked.’ she answered him honestly. She did, mostly usually just in panties.

A snarl came from him, his hand reached out and latched onto T.J. and pulled him from the room and closed the door with the both of them on the other side of it.

She sighed and pulled the towel around her properly. Walked over and locked it, not that it seemed it would stop either of them from coming in. Then went and flopped down on her bed, buried her face in the pillow and laughed. Shit, one of these days she was going to get in so much trouble.

Chapter 40 - Her Alpha's Orders

T.J POV

Oh, he was bloody furious with Jo-Jo now. Not only had she still been trying to get him to take her over there, to see that son of a bitch this morning. She'd now gone and actively defied him about it. He was right this minute stalking his way to the cells, West stalking with him.

Neither of them were happy about the report that had come from the cell guard that she was there right this very minute trying to convince him to let her into see the prisoner. Just three days since the attack, had only gotten her voice back this morning too.

West had been staying away from her, til now. Worried about Heath's words, T.J. knew it. He'd left T.J. in charge of dealing with her. And her attitude had gradually gotten worse in those two days. She was insistent on seeing the man, had begged and pleaded at first, which he'd declined to entertain, not even with those bloody tears in her eyes.

When she'd told him she would get West to do it, he'd outright laughed at her, he was not going to. Was she so blind that she couldn't see that West wanted to kill the man as much as T.J. did, and he'd told her as much. She'd not gone to West about it, knew he'd not been lying about it.

Not once had she brought up that kiss with West either, seemed to have just blipped right over it, like it had never happened. It was odd, but who knew what she felt about it? T.J. knew that if Jo-Jo walked into West's office and did that again, kissed the man all soft and tender and asked him to let her see that man, while kissing him he'd bloody well give her exactly what she wanted. His need to keep her in his arms would make him do it. Would sway the man easily. She had no bloody idea the hold she held over him.

West's eyes had been peeled for her everywhere she went, was insisting on T.J. taking her anywhere and everywhere she wanted to go, had a need to know her every move. Heath had rattled him good. T.J. was more than a little surprised that West hadn't put her in lock down inside the pack-house for safe keeping. Inside his Alpha Suite at that. Though T.J. thought that was more out of self preservation, than anything else.

Now this, after just this morning she'd yelled at him about seeing Heath. Had bloody called that man her father again after he'd already warned her not to do it ever again. He'd yelled right back at her. They'd been standing in her bedroom doorway. He had been barring her way out of the room. Everyone could hear them, it was very loud.

Jo-Jo had actually not backed down or even away from him. Had stepped right up to him, pushed past his Beta Aura, he was shoving at her trying to make her back down, like it was bloody nothing to her at all. Poked her finger in the centre of his chest and screamed at him to get the hell out of her way, her eyes had been glowing right up at him.

He'd shot his hand out to stop the on coming Alpha Unit, who he could hear were running up the stairs at the sounds of what could be escalated into a full blow fight on the first floor of the pack-house. They had been in the Alpha's office before he'd come up here and West had started leaving the door open, after her attack, to keep an ear out for her movements.

Jo-Jo had sized right up to him and was pushing right back at him. Lark was up and all attention, though it seemed more curious than anything, knew the girl didn't get angry, or not that he'd ever seen, had always been the most placid creature.

Something else he felt in his wolf, he wanted to run with Clova, actually wanted to spend time with her wolf.

But this morning they had been going toe to toe with him, without thinking about the consequences of who was in front of her. A part of T.J. was itching to take a step back from her, but if he so much as moved an inch, it would be his downfall, it would show not just her but all those curiously watching on that this one girl was stronger and more powerful than the pack Beta.

The raw power that was pouring out of her, and her aura being pushed at him, was a good match for him, and he didn't think this was all of it either, just the tip of the iceberg.

"No." he had grated out, refusing to bow down to her. When she had struck out at him and tried to take a piece of him, he'd had enough, had rushed at her with all his strength, kicking the door closed behind him, snarling at her all his anger and displeasure seen and heard. He was the damned pack Beta and her attitude was outright disrespectful.

He'd slammed her into the ground to her utter shock and yanked her over to her stomach and grabbed both her wrists and shoved them up behind her back and leaned right down to her ear and snarled "Don't you dare challenge me girl."

All the fight had gone out of her, and she'd sobbed "I just want to see him."

"I said no, and I mean it Jo-Jo." he'd snapped at her, and then had gotten up off of her and stalked out of her room, slammed the door so hard he'd heard the frame crack and stalked off to the Alpha's office, Ricky and Cole trailing him.

His eyes had fallen on West. "We have a problem." he turned to Cole. "Shut that fucking door." he'd snapped and the man had obeyed, didn't help that his Aura was rolling off him in waves at everyone in the room.

"I heard." West nodded.

"But you didn't see." T.J. had snapped at the man.

West had raised an eyebrow at him, and he knew it was not just the words, but the fact that when he'd said it, his aura had rolled right at his own Alpha, West could take it. Ricky and Cole, on the other hand, it wasn't likely to be going down so well with them. He closed his eyes and took in several long deep breaths to calm himself and pull himself together.

Apologised to both the Gamma and Delta, they just shrugged it off, seemingly uncaring, though he was certain they'd both had their necks bared to him, an unfortunate side effect of his royal bloodline. Which he did try to keep under control.

Then he stood and explained to West what he'd seen and how a part of him had wanted to bow down to her and retreat. West had stared at him, more than a little shocked, but didn't say anything much.

They were looking into her glowing eyes thing, but it seemed all manner of shifter creatures could have glowing eyes for whatever reason suited their species, though most only glowed when using some sort of power related to their species, like a siren when it used its siren call, it's eyes would glow along with the use of the call, but not any other time. It was not quick work at all.

He'd even put in a call to Beta Jeremy to query about his own mate and her glowing eyes, glowed at certain times, mostly when she was using her ability to control water. And well, he'd laughed height of orgasm. Joked about, at least he knew he was pleasing her. T.J. had laughed and teased right back, well I hope they never not glow for you. Which had set Jeremy into hysterics, as though he thought it would never happen. But again, nothing useful to him. He did say he'd go and speak to his Granny. She was a mountain of information. But nothing had come back on that front.

Now it was just hours later and the woman had outright defied him, made her way over to the cells in secret, had not used the front door or passed by the alpha office windows either. Did she think that he or West wouldn't be notified about it? Was she so blinded by her own purpose that she'd forgotten both he and her Alpha had said no?

They could see her now, standing there pleading with the guard, practically begging him to let her in. He stood firm, smart man, likely knew the consequences. He'd also been the one to mind-link them to tell them what she was doing, and still she was out here.

T.J. was going to rip her a new one, seems she needed it. Anger was rolling off of him and every time he heard her say the word 'father' it notched up his anger even more. West hadn't said a word but he could feel the man was also angry having to come out here and deal with the situation.

It was almost like Jo-Jo didn't even know they were coming, his hand landed on her arm and she appeared shocked to see him, even tried to pull herself free of him "let go." she'd snapped at him.

"No, we're leaving." he'd jerked her towards him and away from the guard and the cells. She had dug her heels in, so he'd pulled her harder using some of Lark's strength to make her move and she'd stumbled "Move it." he'd yelled at her.

"No." she had yelled right back and to his dismay, kicked him in the back of his knee and it had buckled and he'd fallen down on to it, a snarl had ripped out of him and Lark, for the attack on him. His head had turned and his eyes landed on her. She was glaring right at him, he still had a hold of her arm, hadn't let go even when he'd fallen. When he stood up she'd turned on him, something he had not expected.

Didn't even know she had the training or skill to do so. She had spun her body around and slammed into him as she had yanked with all her wolf strength on his arm and he'd been flipped right over her body and onto the ground, and then she was on him trying to pin him using an arm bar move.

She was damned lucky they were connected as they were or he'd have ripped her head off. It also helped that West stepped in and pulled her up off him. She seemed to have forgotten in her anger that he was not alone. That her own Alpha had been standing right there. Both of West's arms were around her, locking her arms to their sides and she was pinned tightly to his chest.

"Watch it Jo-anne, your attacking the Beta." he'd growled at her, not liking the disrespect she'd shown any more than T.J. had himself.

"Get off me." she screamed at West as T.J. had gotten up off the ground.

"Calm down and I will put you down." the man stood a good 8 inches taller than her and her feet were off the ground. She was struggling to get free regardless, but West was not letting go.

T.J. was looking right at her, her fists were all balled up and she was glaring right at him, those damned eyes of hers glowing right at him. He saw Clova suddenly appear and his eyes widened as he realised she was about to attack her own Alpha with her wolf.

Her head snapped back and T.J. heard the snarl rip out of West when her head made contact with his face. T.J. grabbed her and yanked her out of West's arms, as his Alpha Wolf surfaced at the attack on his body "Back down Volt." He had a hand up to the wolf, whose eyes were on the girl.

Shit, maybe this was what Heath was talking about. He could see that Volt already had claws out 'fuck' "Volt it's Clova." he rolled his Aura at the wolf to gain its attention. He could take the hit if it came to it. The beast seemed to register what he'd said, looked from her to him and then back to her, and thankfully, after an angry snort, retreated and gave back control to West. Who looked no less pissed to be honest.

A snort of what he could only discern was amusement came from Clova, who was standing behind him. T.J. turned on her, slammed her up against the nearest tree by her shoulders "Are you crazy?" he yelled at her.

She snarled right at him and then all fangs out tried to bite him right in the face. His had snapped back, she was bloody fast and pissed off, it seemed, even Clova's green eyes, he noted, were filled with flickers of glowing silver.

"ENOUGH." West roared at the two of them, all his Alpha aura flooding over the two of them. Lark snarled inside his mind, he didn't like it, Clova retreated away back inside of Jo-Jo. It seemed forced back by her Alpha.

West dropped his aura the second everyone was calmed down. "What the hell is wrong with you?" he yelled at her. "I could have, Volt could have..." he didn't finish his sentence, but T.J. knew what it would have been 'killed you.'

"I just want to see him, please let me." she pleaded at him, then looked right at T.J. "please."

His wolf's hearing picked up laughing, coming from inside the cells. Heath, he could hear everything, including the fact that West and Volt had nearly attacked her. ' Fuck, maybe this is exactly what he meant', he thought.

"No, the man is dangerous," T.J. told her. Her eyes had turned to the cells at the sound of the man laughing. She knew it was Heath.

"Dad," she yelled.

"Let it all out Jo-anne," he yelled right back, and then laughed almost hysterically.

They were odd words to be spoken, unless he knew...knew what she was, that bastard knew. T.J. pulled her from the tree and yanked her away from the cells, she couldn't be anywhere near the man.

"Terence." West's voice, Heath's words had not been lost on the man either.

"I'll come back."

"No, Now. She can walk back on her own."

T.J. turned around and looked at him, he had blood coming from his nose, where she had headbutted him, hadn't broken anything though or he'd straightened it already. T.J. was not happy about the statement, she shouldn't be walking around by herself at all.

Then she was out of his grip, pulled herself free and was running at full wolf speed past both him and West for the cells, screaming for her father. T.J. shot after her, grabbed her and spun her around away from the cells and threw her away from them.

She slid to a stop, down on the ground, rolled over and when she looked up, he knew shit was about to get very real. Fury, utter fury was what he saw in those eyes and they were ablaze, glowing silver and green, her breathing was coming in short sharp breaths. Then she opened her mouth and Clova roared right at him, with all her fury, to be heard a full blown challenge right at him Alpha to Alpha, because that was what she bloody was, it was obvious right this very minute. Though he'd suspected before this moment, now it was perfectly clear.

"NO." he heard West yell.

But it was too late, she was already coming for him. He didn't want to hurt her, she was his little Jo-Jo. He had maybe 5 seconds to make a choice, him or her, and he knew deep down he couldn't hurt her. He dropped his hands, even Lark didn't push forward. Neither was willing to hurt her.

"Terence." he heard West yell his name the moment his hands dropped, knew instantly T.J. wasn't going to fight her, would rather die himself, than hurt her. He loved her too much to hurt her, could never.

The body that stepped in front of him, came from no where. He hadn't even known she had been there, it was his own mother. Her Royal Alpha aura rolled right at Jo-Jo "stop" she said softly, not even mad. Put a hand out to Jo-Jo's on coming rush, and she slid to a stop right in front of his mother, stared right up at his mother.

No wolf could defy the royal wolven family. His mother's blood was pure royal blood, unlike T.J.'s who was only half royal.

He could see Jo-anne just staring up at her, almost like in a trance. "enough Jo-anne," she said softly and reached up and touched her face. "calm down, my child." Clova receded away.

"I..." tears welled and spilled over and fell down her cheeks "I..." and then she was out, her eyes rolled back in her head and she collapsed. His mother caught her and sank down on to her knees and sighed softly. "I'll take her back to the pack-house"

She turned and looked at T.J. "Are you alright my son?"

T.J. nodded. She reached out a hand to him. He took it, she had likely just saved his life and he knew it, as did West, who was looking right at the two of them. She stood and it seemed effortless for her to pick up a fully grown woman and carry her. "Take better care of yourself son. I'm not going to lose you too." she said, and walked off. She nodded to West "Alpha."

“Thank you Belinda, I don’t think.”

“You both would have died.” she stated flatly “Lucky for you two, I was out taking a walk, huh!”

He nodded and walked over to T.J. “Yes, we have a problem.” he finally agreed with T.J. about Jo-Jo. This was the first time he’d seen her like this and it was out now, she was Alpha-blooded. Part of her lineage uncovered for him and West, the guard, likely Heath, definitely his mother and anyone else who had happened to be close enough to hear her challenge.

“Might want to keep your mum around and close.”

“Yeah.” T.J. nodded though he doubted she would want a part of this. He watched her walk away carrying the unconscious woman. She had brought Jo-Jo to a complete standstill, her royal aura so powerful, more powerful than Jo-Jo’s, whatever she was. He sighed heavily. It was probably time he went and had had a chat with the woman he believed to be her birth mother. Not that he had told anyone about that, not even West.

Honestly didn’t think it was going to go down so well at all.

CH41

West POV

Sitting listening to T.J. tell him he’d felt the need to bow down to Jo-anne, that was new. He was hard pressed to make his own Beta bow down. The man was royalty after all. So the question was what the hell was her bloodline? To hear she’d challenged him, walked through his Aura like it was nothing. Made West wonder how much he had rolled at her. West had been able to make her bow down. Not that he liked the memories of it. But even here in the pack now he’d made her bare her neck once.

So how was it that T.J. felt she was stronger than him? It was not possible, he had to have been going easy on her, but to hear she had gotten so angry with him over going to see her father. Challenged him about it, meant she was very determined to see him. He supposed they were going to have to keep an eye on her, or take her over there under full supervision, but he didn’t want that, the man would get inside her head for sure.

She loved him and would likely believe every word he said, including that West was going to kill her. West just knew he would tell her as well. Try to drive a wedge between them anyway he could. West was trying to stay away from the girl, but damn, seeing her half naked the other night had nearly killed him. A tiny bloody towel held in front of her, all her side and long legs exposed for him to see.

But it had been for T.J., not for him. She'd willingly come out of that bathroom half naked for him. Smiling at him seductively, West had hated that moment, even though he'd seen T.J. back away from her and avert his eyes from her near nakedness, it had still been for him. Not for West. She'd looked at him completely shocked to see him too, had not expected him in her room.

Though she had not attempted to cover herself at all, she probably didn't care, he had seen her naked before, though not as a full-grown woman. And Volt had been more than interested in mating her on the spot. The only thing that allowed West to maintain any control over his wolf had been the fact that T.J. had been in the room. And both he and Volt knew what she was likely to be to him.

Though it had not stopped the snarl of disapproval coming from his wolf at her willingness to be naked in front of someone other than him and Volt. And telling her to put clothes on did not help, shot straight back that she slept naked, didn't particularly surprise him. Most wolves did, or wore very little run hot all the time. Naked was the most comfortable option. Volt had been the one to drag T.J. out of that room. If they couldn't have her, neither could he or Lark, for that matter.

Selfish, he knew, but he had always been a possessive, selfish ass-hole, nothing had really changed there.

To hear from the cell guard, she was out there trying to see her father, after going toe to toe with T.J. about that very thing pissed him off. T.J. too, the man's anger was rolling off of him. His sweet little Jo-Jo didn't seem so sweet anymore, all grown up and defying orders, though her not seeing her father had not been a full order, more of a request to respect his and T.J.'s request. She'd decided to ignore them.

T.J. latched on to her. West didn't particularly like the way he man handled her but she had snapped right back at him, dug her heels in and then, to West's complete shock, attacked him, and managed to bring him down at that. He'd not known she'd even known those moves. Had to step in, pull her up and off his Beta and pin her to his body, she did not stop struggling the whole time and that head butt he'd not been expecting had roused his Alpha Wolf to fight mode instantly.

T.J. knew Volt was going to attack her without thinking about it. Had pulled her clean out of his arms before Volt could start ripping into her. Yelled at Volt about it being Clova, and that had been the only thing that had saved her. If it hadn't been, his wolf would likely have tried to go right through T.J. to get to her.

Clova had snorted at them, amused it seemed that he'd backed off, wouldn't hurt her. It was very odd, T.J. had turned on her and yelled at her, and to his horror Clova had gone the pack Beta, tried to bite right into T.J.'s face. He'd barely gotten out of the way.

West had flooded his full Aura over the two of them and roared that it was enough. T.J. hadn't really reacted but Clova had receded, though he did note Jo-anne did not bare her neck to him afterwards or collapse in pain, in anyway. Very odd.

He'd yelled at her, couldn't help himself. Volt had been ready to attack her, she could have died by his hands. Just like Heath had said. She was back to pleading to see her father.

He could hear Heath laughing inside his cell, only to have her yell out for the man and his reply "Let it all out Jo-anne." the man had yelled right back, then began laughing hysterically. Let what out? They were just outside the cells and Heath could hear everything that was being said. Everything that was going on, including that Volt, had surfaced and T.J. had had to talk his wolf out of attacking her.

But what was she supposed to let out? T.J. was already dragging her away. West wanted to go right in there and get that information but he knew the man would goad him and he needed to have T.J. there to stop him from killing him before they got the answers out of him.

Then she was gone, ripping herself from T.J.'s grip, and sprinting for the cells calling for her father. T.J. had shot after her before West could even move, she'd been so damned fast and he'd not been expecting it either.

Watching as she slid across the ground when T.J. threw her away from the cells, the minute she'd rolled over, he'd felt the change in her, anger was pouring out of the girl and when she looked up at T.J. her Aura was pouring out of her, it was Alpha proportions of an Aura at that, he'd staggered back a step not expecting it.

When Clova had roared right at T.J. West, damned near panicked, she didn't know how to fight and was no match for T.J. hell West could barely handle the man and sometimes couldn't at all. She was outright challenging him to an Alpha duel, so to speak. "No." he'd yelled, trying to stop it, as the Alpha of the pack, he could put a stop to it for the moment and address it later.

Clova didn't care about his Aura. He was rolling out with that one word, didn't even flinch, his eyes shot to Terence. He saw the man register the challenge and only briefly be conflicted by it. The minute she charged, he just dropped his guard, he was not going to fight her, not even try to defend himself.

Bloody fool was going to let himself die to make sure she didn't get hurt. "Terence," he'd yelled to the man, trying to make him snap out of it and at least defend himself. Not that the man had listened at all. West was on the move to try and get to her before she did something she would really regret.

When Belinda, Terence's mother, stepped right in front of her son, had come from no where, he'd not seen her, felt her aura though, stumbled to a stop and was forced down

on his knee his neck bared to her, bloody powerful she was. But what else could he expect from a royal princess! “ Stop,” she had said softly, didn’t even raise her voice. He saw her lift a single hand in front of her to match the word and to his relief Jo-anne backed peddled so as not to hit the woman and she came to a stop right in front of her, stared right up at her almost in a trance it appeared, didn’t seem to be able to take her eyes off the woman “enough Jo-anne.” and reached out to touch her face ever so gently “calm down, my child.” she told her keeping her voice soft, he felt the minute Clova and Jo-anne’s aura receded away, a moment later so did Belinda’s the woman was still staring right into Jo-anne’s eyes.

He heard Jo-anne try to get words out but couldn’t and then she just collapsed suddenly. West was up in a shot but Belinda simply put her arms around her and guided her down to the ground, heard her sigh softly, “I’ll take her back to the pack-house” she stated, before turning to look at T.J. and asked him if he was alright.

West watched her reach out for her son. Never once before would she have ever seen him come so close to death. Not even in battle, but today he’d been ready to lay his life down for Jo-Jo and West wondered how his mother actually felt about that. It was something a Mate would do. Always willing to die for each other. West wondered if Volt would have stayed put inside him at the thought of his own demise at Clova’s hands. His wolf was watching but gave no opinion on the matter.

She acknowledged him as she carried Jo-anne, not a small woman, as though she weighed nothing. He thanked her and was about to tell her he didn’t think that they could have done this without her. She’d completely cut him off and stated they would have both died, that it was just luck that she had been close by for a walk.

He was indeed grateful for her assistance. If she had not been walking by it was likely someone would have died. Though her assessment of the situation, he didn’t like that she had thought Jo-anne and Clova would have been more than a match for he and Terence. Maybe it was because she knew neither of them wanted to harm the girl.

He was a bit concerned about her passing out completely but she was breathing. He’d seen it for himself. Likely never used that Alpha Aura of hers, and over done it. Finally, he agreed with Terence that, yes, they had a problem where she, Jo-anne was concerned. She was very strong, his aura had done nothing to her, and he could see now why T.J. had said he wanted to bow down to her. Who the hell were her parents and where the hell had she come from? Abandoned in the pack woods a few hours old, to be what she was, she had to be a ranked member. Surely or maybe, he sighed, one of his pack members had been taken by an Alpha for his own selfish needs and that was why, the baby was abandoned. He really did need to get to the bottom of it.

Suggested that they keep T.J.’s mother close, he agreed. Though T.J.’s eyes had been on her as she walked away, he seemed to be thinking about something else.

West turned to the cells. It was silent, no more laughing, he noted. "Come on Terence. Let's go question that bastard, he knows something."

"Agreed, he definitely knows something."

They both walked into the cells and there he was looking at both of them. "Pity, I could have got rid of both of you, isn't my little girl amazing?" he was smiling right at them.

"What say you, West? To playing 20 questions, we can take turns beating him when he doesn't answer."

"I like that, 20 questions it is." he opened the cell door and the two of them stepped in, West pick up the Cat of 3 tails, that had hung on the wall, just outside the cell, on his way in. He saw Heaths jaw tighten and smiled right at him. "Awe Terence, I don't think he wants to play with us."

"Spoil sport, games are fun."

"That's what I was taught growing up." West smirked. " You want the first question?"

"Na man, I got to play with him last time, you go ahead."

He stood right in front of Heath, "So you know about her then, good tell me what you know."

"That's not how to play 20 questions." he snorted at him.

He was right, West thought, he had not asked a question. "What do you know?"

"A lot," Heath answered.

Hmm, according to the game rules, he had actually answered the question, looked to T.J and shrugged.

"Smug bastard. When did you know she was different?" Terence asked.

"Years ago." Heath smiled "I got kids, I can play this game all day." sarcasm dripping off every word.

West smiled, so could they "how many years ago?" he asked.

"Hmm, don't know. Well, over a decade ago, I guess." he shrugged.

"Before she was Mated to West?" T.J. asked

"Yep." Heath nodded.

"How old was she when you knew she was different?" West asked.

"Hmm, I don't recall exactly. But a child."

He was awfully forthcoming all of a sudden, hadn't wanted to talk about her at all, the last time. Why now? Maybe didn't relish being lashed again.

"Why did you never say anything?" T.J. asked.

"Why would I out, my precious little girl?"

West hated how he called her that, his precious little girl, he had tried to kill her. How she was precious to him. "Why'd you try to kill her?"

"That's my business."

His eyes moved to T.J. He really didn't like that answer. T.J shrugged "I didn't hear him answer West."

West nodded "Me either." watched T.J. step back saw Heath glare right at him. Took a step back himself to give him room to swing the Cat, and did just that, swung it with all he had, dragged it right across the man's chest, ripping him open and blood started pouring from him, heard the man scream in pain. "I didn't like that answer, just so you know."

Heath was breathing heavily, glaring right at him.

T.J. walked back over and looked at the man. "Don't ever call her precious, or your little girl. She is not yours anymore."

"Does it bother you at all, Beta? That she, your future Mate, was ruined by him, your best friend. At just 16."

West snarled right at the man and his hand was around the man's throat in less than a second and he was squeezing with all he had. He did not need nor want to hear about their past or a freaking moment in his life that he could not even recall.

T.J. was trying to pry his hand off him. "Let go West, it's what he wants."

"I'll fucking kill him." he snarled

"When we get what we need. I won't stop you. Let go."

West relinquished his grip, only to hear that bastard laugh. "I bet I can get you to kill me, before you get your answers."

West stalked away from him, though never took his eyes off the man. Oh, he was going to die, Jo-anne was going to have to deal with it. Was prowling around the cell trying to convince himself not to rip the man's head clean off.

"Bet I drag your bitch of a Mate in here and make you watch me beat the hell out of her before I kill you." he snarled.

"She's done nothing to you."

"Technically, neither have you. Yet here we are...You also have 2 daughters, don't you?"

"West." T.J. warned him, and he knew he was crossing the line, but that bastard was going to say all manner of disgusting things to West. To make him lose control.

"So you are a monster after all, Westley."

"I guess I am." he snarled as he stopped right in front of Heath and stared right into his eyes. "I dare you, say it again. And one of those three women you do actually love will be right here on the floor kneeling before me." all his fury at the man etched into every word. Let him think what he wanted about the words he'd used.

"West?" he heard T.J.'s worry and concern.

He ignored it, was focused only on Heath, who had finally snapped his mouth shut. He didn't think the man would risk harm to his Mate or his actual children, for that matter, "Wise decision, I don't think any of them would survive me."

He could feel T.J. watching him, his Beta hadn't like the nasty turn of events it seemed. West had never laid a harmful hand on any woman, despite what he had implied. He would not ever hurt a woman like that, the though disgusted him, sickened him.

Having one of them kneel before him was a youformism only. It just meant he would push his Alpha aura onto them until they were bowed low before him. So damn low they'd have their heads on the ground.

"I'm done, playing 20 questions, Heath. You will answer now or I will bring Karen right in here right now. Why did you attack her?"

"You really want to know. You won't like it, you know."

"Fucking tell me."

"Because you and he. Beat me and lashed me, it was her fault I got that punishment from you. So I punish my own child, as is my right, as her father."

West was staring at him incredulously. "That's fucking insane."

Heath laughed "Poor Alpha, didn't she tell you? I did tell her why, when I did it. She knew why. You should have just asked her...Or did my baby girl protect me, again."

She had not told him. Not told T.J. either. But she knew all this time. He didn't understand her. Why would she protect this piece of shit like that?

The hit that came from T.J. made West step back altogether, it was the man's word choice that had set T.J. off. He had already warned the man not to claim her as his own child.

"West forcibly sever this bastard from her," he grated out.

"T.J. it will kill her and she will hate us both."

"I'll fucking risk it." he seethed.

West, however, was not. He didn't want her to hate him. And if he forcibly removed the blood bond from her, it would cause her pain. If she would agree to it, yes he would do it. "We'll tell her the truth about him. Let her make the choice. It has to be her choice T.J. it will make her an orphan, no family, it could destroy her."

"I'll lay claim to her."

West's head snapped around, "The hell you will, you will wait till the full moon comes T.J."

"As her family West, not anything else."

"Oh and when the full moon does come, what the hell happens then? Don't be stupid." the man's head was all over the place. West grabbed him and shoved him out the cell. Followed himself and closed and locked the door. Shoved him all the way outside. They both needed to get away from that bastard and cool down.

"Go and check on Jo-anne, T.J. and calm down."

"Oh, I'm the one who needs calming down. After what you threatened in there," he snarled at him.

"I would never and you of all people know it. It was a carefully worded sentence to get the man to shut the hell up."

"It was vile, is what it was." T.J. snarled and then his wolf ripped out of him and he bolted off into the forest.

