

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

Chapter 121

I steadied my breathing. Come on Grace. You can do this. I took a step forward, arms up in the position Rhys had taught me. I needed to go on **the offensive** or **else** Maizie would win again, and I was sick of losing.

I took two steps forward and swung my arm at the opening I saw on the left side of her head. I made contact and as she moved to block, I kicked my **other** leg out into her stomach.

“Good, Grace!” I heard Rhys call out from somewhere on the other side of the room, but I tuned him out. I was sure he was going to tell me **what to do** next, but I could do this without him. **I could do this.**”

Maizie recovered quickly, and I retreated a step, stumbling slightly. Maizie didn't hesitate, she took me right down to the ground, and next thing I knew, **it was** over. Damn it.

Maizie reached her hand out, and I took it graciously, allowing her to pull me back to my feet.

“I really thought you had me for a minute.” She admitted breathlessly as she grabbed her water and started chugging. “If you hadn’t lost your balance, it might have been a different story.”

I nodded, but I was mad at myself for stumbling. I wasn’t as hopeless **as I was** a couple **of weeks** ago when we had started, but **I** hadn’t come nearly as far as **I** wanted to.

“Good work you two,” Rhys praised, wrapping his arm around my shoulder, and forcing the water bottle into my hand.

“I can do better.” I answered, ignoring the compliment.

“You can go Maizie. Thanks.” Rhys dismissed her. She nodded, and I looked at Rhys in annoyance. It **was** just us now in the gym, and I knew **I** was **about to** be lectured about how perfect I was, but I wasn’t. I **was so** far from it, and that training session just showed it.

“I don’t think I deserve that look.” Rhys told me.

“I don’t want to hear how perfect I am.” I responded bitterly.

“I **wasn’t-**”

“You were. You do it after **every** training session, and I get it, I’m not completely **hopeless** anymore, but I also stumbled, and in a real fight that would have cost me my life.”

“You were never hopeless, Grace,” He breathed, pushing a loose strand from my braid out of

my **sweaty**

face.

“Be for **real**,” I bit back, not falling for his tricks again.

“Gracie, you have been training hard for two weeks. Maizie has been training her whole life. There’s a difference in skill **level**. She might be younger, but **she is** far from weak. She was trained by them to be a warrior; you were trained to be used. It’s going to take time, and that’s okay.”

“We don’t have time,” I answered in exasperation.

“We’ll make time.” **He** said seriously. “We control it from now on. Not them.”

“**You make it sound easy.**”

He gave me a **small** smile that told me he was trying to be patient but that I was testing him.

“Sawyer **gets** out of the hospital today.” He said/changing the **subject**.

My heart skipped a beat. Despite Maizie giving him back his energy, he had been slow to heal. His **wolf** hadn’t **recovered** in the way we had **hoped, but today, he** was deemed normal, and I was excited to see my friend again not hooked up to **machines**, and lifeless.

“What time?” I asked.

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When we decide to go get him. They want someone to walk **him** back to the **room**. He's still supposed **to** be taking **things easy**

“Well then what are we doing here?” I asked in surprise. “I didn't realize he was waiting **on** us!”

“Slow down,” Rhys laughed, grabbing my hand and stopping me in **my** tracks. “There is no **rush.**”

“I'm sure he does not want to spend another minute in that stupid room.” I argued.

“And I'm sure if **I had** stopped **you** earlier, you would have been mad at me for interrupting your training.”

I **rolled my eyes**. With Rhys, everything felt so natural. Since the night everything went down, everything had begun to feel **so** natural **between** us.

I **stopped** fighting the bond, and I **was** finally starting to figure out who I was. Rhys **was** great in giving me the space **to** do that. In fact, he **wanted to** be a part **of it**, and I **was glad**. I don't think I would have had the same courage to figure it out if it wasn't for him.

“I would not have.” I answered stubbornly.

“You would **have**, and then it would **have** postponed our whole day, and then **we** would be behind. And right now, I have **you all** to **myself**.”

He pulled me into him and kissed me deeply. I immediately caved, feeling **myself** melt into him. There was still so much of this man **to explore as** his tongue asked for entrance into my mouth, which **I** granted. His fingers tugged at my braids, and I entangled my fingers in his dark brown hair. **I could** kiss him forever. And it **wasn't** until we both were gasping for air did **we** break apart.

“I thought we had things to do?” **I** asked breathlessly, my hands still wrapped around his **neck**.

“You are my thing to do,” He smirked.

I rolled my eyes again. This man was nothing but trouble. If he had it his **way** I would be locked away in our room, never wearing clothes again.

“Come on, **let's** go **rescue** Sawyer, and then we can get on with our day.”

He pecked my lips again, but it left me wanting more. With him, I always seemed to want more. Which felt a little crazy. Since **the** night that Ethan betrayed us, I had barely left his sight, but it still wasn't enough. I was beginning to feel like nothing ever would be.

“If you insist.” He answered, his voice not hiding their longing, and I couldn’t wait for later **because** making him wait was always worth it.

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Grace practically dragged me out of the gym toward the hospital. I knew **she** would be eager for him to leave there, but I hadn’t **expected** her **to be** quite so **adamant** about it happening right this second. I mean, we had been working out of his hospital room for **two weeks now**. I was ready **to stop dragging** all of **my work** around and having to run back to my office every time I forgot something.

Between Sawyer, Grace, Leon and I, we had made good progress on a lot of things. We had managed to completely cut off all contact with **the Red Blood pack**. They no longer **were** receiving any intel on us as far as **we** could control it. Our security has been updated, our soldiers trained to look **in trees**, and how to spot Lycan. They had no access to our bank accounts or any supplies any of us or our allies had been supplying them. We had upgraded **our** weaponry, and **with** the help of Maizie and Michael, we had started pack wide training. If 6 months ago, you would have told me I would be **relying** on children to help run my pack, I would have laughed in your **face**, but they were trained in that pack. They had become our secret weapon. I also probably would have laughed at the idea of actually finding my mate. I had long since given up, but I was glad I hadn’t and

trusted my instinct. I just wish I could have helped Grace more in the beginning. But now, we had come so far, I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world. She **was my** strength and **my** weakness, and I **was** surprisingly okay with that.

I opened the door to **Sawyer's** room and was surprised to see Maizie sitting on the edge of his bed, just **casually** chatting away, **since** she was **usually** very **focused** and **intense**.

"Hey," I announced our arrival, hoping **we** weren't interrupting anything.

"Oh!" Maizie squealed, jumping off the bed, her **face** turning red in **surprise**. "Alpha King, Luna Queen, I'm sorry, I just **came to** check on **Prince Sawyer**, didn't realize you guys would be coming here after training."

I raised my brows and gave Grace a look as she stared at the **two** of them trying to figure something out. I had thoughts **myself**, but none that I was ready **to** share in case **I was** wrong.

"No big deal," I waved her off. "I'm glad my brother got to have some company for a bit that wasn't us."

"I'll uh just be going," Maizie stammered. We might spend a lot of time together these days, but I still made her quite nervous, and I couldn't help but relish in that fact.

“It’s okay,” Grace told her gently. “You can stay; **we** actually came to take Sawyer back to the Packhouse officially. You will probably be seeing more of him since he lives on the Alpha floor.”

“You live on the Alpha floor?” Maizie squeaked in surprise as she whirled around to look at Sawyer. It was the most unsettled I had **ever** seen her, she usually had emotions completely in check.

“Well, yea,” Sawyer let out a small chuckle. “I am Rhys’ brother.”

“Rhys’ brother,” Maizie mumbled under her breath as she processed what was happening before saying for everyone to hear, “Well, I guess I will **see** you up there. I have to go help with the other kids. Bye!”

And then she was gone.

“What was that about?” **Grace** asked the question that I was wondering myself.

“I have no idea,” Sawyer answered with a frown, staring at the door she had disappeared through before changing the subject. “But she told me you almost took her out today, so that’s pretty cool.”

Grace rolled her eyes, a gesture that I was becoming very familiar with. “But I didn’t. **So, let’s** not make **a** big deal over nothing.”

“But that’s progress, **Grace**. That’s amazing you’ve picked

up on

“I can do better,” **Grace** brushed him off. “**Are** you ready to

So much so **fast**.” Sawyer encouraged.

get

of he

He smiled. “You **have** no idea.”

“Oh, I do, but blame your brother,” She jabbed her elbow at me. “**We would** have been here **sooner, but** he **didn’t tell** me.”

“**We** had things to do!” I argued back.

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“**Yea, yea,**” Grace waved me off as a nurse came in to **disconnect Sawyer from** his IV and hand us **his** release papers.

“**Well, I’m just glad I get to leave.**” Sawyer said, **ignoring our** little argument, **which** I was grateful for. “I am sick of these **white** walls, and constant **beeps. I am ready for my own** bed, and **to get** to do **things** again.”

“**You’re still supposed to be** taking it **easy.**” I reminded him.

It was his **turn** to brush me off, “**Yea, yea,**” **He** repeated what Grace had said just minutes **ago.**

“I’m serious **Sawy,** if you push it, I will bring your **ass** right back here.”

He ignored my warning as only a brother can do. “You wanna know something weird? I haven’t seen Arlo **since** the fight, is he okay?”

Grace and I exchanged a look. **Sawyer** had been so protective of Maizie, making **us** promise not to hurt her, **not** that Grace **would** have allowed **it**, **but we** hadn’t told him that Arlo had tried to challenge her and the other kids. We hadn’t been **sure** how to handle it, honestly. Neither of **us wanted to punish Arlo** for caring about **Sawyer**, but also challenging kids and then **my** mate, had been a little too far. So, for now, he just **wasn’t welcome at the packhouse, which** sucked because **we** could **have** used his help with some of the things **we** were doing.

“**He’s um...** keeping his distance right now.” Grace **answered** hesitantly. We both had agreed when the **time came** to talk about it, **she would** be the **one** to tell Sawyer. **It** would be **better** coming from her.

“Why?” **Sawyer** frowned. “Did something happen?”

“Yes, but it’s not what you think,” She said quickly. “He was really upset that you had been hurt, and he tried **to** challenge the kids **for their ‘freedom’ and** then me when I wouldn’t allow it. He was able to calm down and walk **away**, but **since** that’s not **really the** energy we need right now **while we are** housing the ‘enemies’ kids, we asked him to stay **away** for a while.”

Sawyer narrowed his eyes at us. “He tried to challenge the kids, or did he **try** to challenge Maizie?” **He** asked through gritted teeth.

“I mean, he didn’t exactly know who did it... But based on what Rhys told me, he knew it was **a** girl... And Maizie is the obvious choice, but I didn’t **let** him step into the room. And even though he didn’t like my word, he wasn’t dumb enough to challenge me. He knew that would be a death sentence.”

“You’re too kind.” Sawyer growled. “Just wait until I get my hands on him!”

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“**Sawyer**, Rhys said, **his** single word, laced with warning.

“He **can’t** fight children!” Sawyer shouted. “He **can’t** fight her!”

“And **he** didn’t.” I said feeling calmer than I felt. I had known he was going to be upset by the information, but I hadn’t thought it would **be** quite this bad I hadn’t thought that he **was** going to yell at us.

“It’s bad enough he wanted to.” Sawyer grumbled, crossing his arms angrily.

“It is.” I agreed, placing my hand on Rhys chest to let him know I had this. “It was not a good look for him. And we handled it. At least for now. **But** unfortunately, Arlo is our access to old research. We know very little about what exactly we are facing, as you very well know, so now **that you’re healed** and the heat has hopefully simmered down, we’re going to need him to cooperate with us. He was just worried about you.”

“It still doesn’t give him the right...”

“I know.” I said softly, placing my hand on his. “But we need his help.”

“Wait is that why you moved **the** kids up to the Alpha floor?” **Sawyer** asked, sliding into his coat now.

“**Yea,**” Rhys answered. “We figured that if Arlo, one **of our** closest allies, had these feelings, others would too. This way we could protect them a **bit better**. Also, the security to **our** suite has been updated, both to the floor, and our **rooms**. It **was necessary** after Ethan broke in, and now **with** the kids. It’s not a long-term solution, but it’s working for now.”

“Has anyone **else** tried to challenge the kids?” **Sawyer** asked.

“No.” I said gently. “But also nobody has really had access to them, but **us**, Alana, Leon and Heather. Maizie and **Michael** are the only **ones at this time that we** allow to leave the floor and there are rules to it.”

“Any other secrets **you’ve** been keeping from me?” Sawyer asked bitterly.

“Actually, **yes**,” Rhys answered, and I looked at him in surprise. I hadn’t expected him to tell **Sawyer** anything **else**, but I could feel through **our bond** that **he** was feeling guilty.

“Well get on with it then.” Sawyer grumbled as **we** started walking back to the packhouse.

“Caleb is back, and he has a daughter...”

Sawyer froze **just** before the double doors that would have led us **back** outside.

“I’m going to need you **to repeat** that.” Sawyer said after a long moment.

“Caleb is back, and he has a daughter. You **are** an uncle, **Sawy.**”

“**Tell** me you’re kidding me... There’s no fucking way.”

“It’s not common knowledge yet,” Rhys told him uneasily. “But he saved my life in the battle, and he’s... different.”

“After **we** fell for the Ethan **act**, no offense Grace, you’re telling me you fell for **Caleb’s?**” **He** asked in disbelief.

“**Out** of line.” Rhys growled at his brother.

I gently squeezed Rhys’ hand. I understood Sawyer’s point, but he hadn’t **seen Caleb**. He hadn’t heard his story the way we **have or seen how he interacted** with Sammy. He **was** going off of what he knew his brother **to be**, not who his brother has **become**, and it was **different**. **I probably wouldn’t have believed** it **either** if I hadn’t **seen** it for **myself**. Sawyer would have to do the same **as we** had I mean, **Caleb** hadn’t even **flirted with me once, and before he tried to take me for himself**.

“**He’s changed.**” I said **simply**, “**But you’ll have to see it for yourself.**”

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“**You better hope he isn’t** using you both after all we’ve learned these last couple of weeks.” **Sawyer** warned.

“**We aren’t** being stupid,” **Rhys** glared at his brother. “You haven’t seen him in any of our meetings, and **we** aren’t just letting him free. He’s contained to the **Alpha** floor.”

“You let him on the Alpha floor?!” Sawyer raged, and

at this point I was beginning to wonder what Rhys **was** thinking in telling him.

“Yes, that’s why I wanted to tell you before we go upstairs, and you happen to see him.”

“You trust him around all those Lycan kiden

“His daughter is one of those Lycan kids,” I said, trying to soften the blows a little. I couldn’t imagine the brother I thought I would never **see again, not** only coming

back, but coming back with a daughter. I mean, I had a fake brother come back, and that was traumatizing enough.

“You banished him.” Sawyer hissed, as he started to walk again,

“I did.” Rhys said sadly. “And he learned some hard lessons.

But

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you would be happy **he’s** back.”

“He’s still Caleb. And sooner or later he’s going to fuck up. And

You’re going to banish him again.”

I smiled sadly at him and Rhys. This was fear talking. This **was** I don’t **want** to believe in the good and that people change because I don’t **want** to **get hurt** again.

We climbed the steps up to our floor in silence. Everything in my life had changed in the last **few** months, and as soon as I had thought it was figured **out**, everything changed again. So much of my life had been the same, to **be** fluctuating **so** much the **way** it **was**, **was** completely out of my comfort **zone**. **I was** barely hanging on most days, but I **was also** the most determined I had ever been. Rhys made it abundantly clear **that I was** to be his Luna **Queen, and the** last thing in the entire world that I wanted to do was disappoint Rhys. And I knew that **Sawyer** was already worried that Caleb would disappoint **them** both.

We opened the door to our floor, and it **was chaos** as usual these days. It was lunch time, Caleb, Maizie, Michael, and a **thirteen-year-old, named Carly**, were all in the tiny kitchen making grilled cheeses for lunch. The rest of the kids were running around or lounging on the couch, trying to be **patient**.

Sawyer's breath hitched, and he froze as he stared into the kitchen. I don't know whether he **was** more surprised to **see** Maizie or his brother right in **front** of him, even though we had just talked about both being there.

Caleb looked up and smiled when his eyes landed on Sawyer. Despite, Caleb and Rhys being twins, Caleb and Sawyer had always been **closer**.

"Brother!" Caleb exclaimed, dropping his spatula and coming **over** to greet **us**.
"It's **so** good **to see** you!"

Caleb opened his arms for a hug, but Sawyer, surprising us all, reached out, but instead of hugging him, shoved **him** backward right onto his ass.

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Caleb popped right back up, but the stunned look on his face didn't disappear quite as quick, **as** I jumped between them, **a** hand out **in each** directions

"Good to see you too," Caleb mumbled under his breath.

In the past, that would have been all it would have taken for Caleb to start a fight, but Sammy was watching, and I knew he was trying to be better than

before.

"Dad?" Sammy's voice held the question we were all wondering.

“I’m okay, Sweetie,” He soothed **as** she ran over and wrapped her little arms around his waist. “Uncle Sawyer was just having some fun.”

Sawyer’s face paled as he stared at the little girl who looked so much like her dad it was a little unnerving.

“Sawyer,” Caleb’s voice turned a little nervous **as** Maizie called the other kids over for lunch. “This is your niece, Sammy. **Sammy**, this is your Uncle **Sawyer**. He’s my brother, just like Uncle Rhys.”

“Why did he push you?” She asked innocently with a little glare toward Sawyer.

“**He** was mad at me.” Caleb shrugged. “Brothers do that sometimes, and I kind of deserved it.”

“Well pushing people is never nice and you never deserve physical punishment. Come on **dad**, you know **this**.” She lectured cutely, causing Grace **to stifle a** giggle just behind me.

“You’re right. And Sawyer’s sorry, so why don’t you go grab your lunch from Maizie, I’m going **to** talk to my brothers **for a few** minutes, **and** then I’ll **come** hang out with you and Jack.”

The little girl looked at all of **us** before finally landing on Sawyer. She raised two fingers to her eyes and turned them **to Sawyer, and** I raised my brows **at** her boldness. She **was** fiercely protective of Caleb which I **was** lowkey **glad** for **because** someone needed to be.

“Well, she’s definitely your kid,” Sawyer muttered.

Caleb smiled softly as he looked at her on her **way** to find Maizie. “Yea, she **is**. She is the best thing to **ever have** happened to me.”

“Hopefully she isn’t a fuck-up like her dad.”

A flash of hurt crossed Caleb’s face before he pushed it away the way we were all trained to do with **our** emotions.

“I thought you of all people would be happy to see me?”

“You thought wrong.” **Sawyer** snapped at him.

A quick look at **Sawyer** showed that he was furious and getting tired. We needed **to** wrap this **up** or he would push too far and end up **exactly** where we had just left.

“Sawyer...” Grace placed her hand on his shoulder, her tone sympathetic.

“**No!** He left! He doesn’t get to waltz back in here as **if** everything is fine!” Sawyer shouted causing all of kids to look at us.

“Is everything **okay over** here?” **Maize** asked **as** she/wiped her hands on **the towel** she had **clipped** to her waist.

“Fine.” Sawyer answered through gritted teeth.

Maizie ignored Sawyer’s attitude, and the fact that she **was** surrounded by not **just** 1, but 3 **princes**. “Well then **whatever** this **is**, break **it up**, or **do it** somewhere **else**. **You’re** scaring the kids, and I won’t **allow** that.”

“I’m going to **my** room,” **Sawyer** grumbled, and nobody moved **to stop** him, but **we all** watched him **go**.

I honestly was really surprised by his reaction. I had been so sure that he was going to be happy that Caleb was back... But **clearly**, I was wrong.

Maizie whirled back around and pointed at both Caleb and 1.

“Why would you blindside him like that?” She whispered angrily. “You knew he was fragile!”

“Remember who you’re talking to.” I growled softly, not appreciating the disrespect.

“**I** don’t care if you are the Alpha King or the King of fucking England, you don’t get to make a scene in front of the kids or treat your brother like **his feelings** don’t matter. You chose to handle this poorly, so you deal with the consequences.”

She then turned on her heel and headed back to the small kitchen she was using to serve all of the kids lunch. **I** stared after her, a little **shocked** before turning to Grace to see her reaction.

Grace however just shrugged and said, “**She’s** right. We should have told him **as** soon as he was strong enough to know. He could have processed before seeing **Caleb** in his kitchen.”

I rolled **my eyes**. She had suggested telling him a while ago, but I had asked her to wait, and low and behold my mate was right. Fucking shocker.

“Come on, **let’s** go, we **have** a meeting to get to.” I said, placing **my** hand on the **small** of **Grace’s** back.

“I have to shower **first**,” Grace rolled her **eyes**.

I smirked. It was not a fact I had forgotten as I guided her to our room.

“**Are** you still mad?”

A small frown creased **Grace’s** face. “Mad at what?” She asked.

My smirk grew. “Nothing.” I told her as I set my finger on the keypad to let **us** in.

She looked up at me with narrowed eyes as our door swung open.

“What **are** you up to?” She questioned.

“Why would you think anything is up, my love?” I played innocent, **it wasn’t** time **yet** for her surprise. We still had a lot of day left before tonight.

“You’re being weird.” She answered, scrunching her nose up in the cutest way. Damn. I **was** falling harder and harder for her every day. “And **aren’t you** worried about Sawyer and his reaction to Caleb? Do you think we should move Caleb **downstairs?**”

“We haven’t told anyone that he’s back yet.” I reminded her **as** she grabbed a light **blue** sundress and a long **sleeve** white **tee to go** under it.

“Well, maybe we need to be more translucent.” She answered.

“Maybe when we have more information.” I conceded. “But for now, I think our **best** option is **to get** all of our ducks in a row and then lay it all out.”

“Aye Aye sir,” She smiled, saluting at me.

She slipped in the bathroom and began to shut the door, but I caught it.

“Am I not invited to this shower?”

She laughed, a sound I would spend forever trying to replicate, **even** if it **was** in my **face**. “No. We have things to do, **remember? And if you come in here** with me, **we’ll never** get through any of them.”

I pouted, but she didn’t fall for it. She **just** gently removed my fingers, shut the door, and clicked the lock into **place**. **A few weeks ago**, I would **have never** imagined **Grace** to have this level of confidence. But **ever** since **the** night of the attack and Ethan’s betrayal, she **was** a **new person**. **And because of her so**

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Rhys’ office had been turned into the evidence room. We had two whiteboards that were covered in post-it notes and lines and diagrams **that connected** different bits of information. I hated this time of day the most. Every day at 2pm, we had 2 hours put aside to research and then **at 4** we would talk about it. **The** problem was, I couldn’t read very well, so I was utterly useless during this time. **Rhys** was kind and gave me things to work on so I could keep learning but I was doing kindergarten stuff while Rhys and Leon combed carefully through old texts and as well as any of the things that we were tracking secretly from the Red Blood pack, like money movements, contacts from inside and out of the pack. We now had eyes on the city as well. We couldn’t do anything to protect the citizens yet, but we would. On top of everything we were tracking,

there was also everyday details that needed taken care of. We had our own. finances to worry about, we had pack members that needed us for things, we had trainings, and workouts and trainings to run, schedules to keep **up with**, and not to mention 50 kids to care for and figure out what to do with. And as much as I loved having **all** the kids around, having them all sleep on the Alpha floor wherever they could find space, was not practical or safe. They deserved more than that. All that to say, there was so much to do **and not** nearly enough time to do it.

The door creaked open, and Maizie and Michael slipped in. Michael was a quiet kid, but a bit of a wildcard in my opinion. There was **something about** him that made me a little nervous. He was a kid still at only 17, same as Maizie, but he had been screwed over so many times in his short **life**, he was **a heck** of a lot angrier, and that scared me a bit. It made him a little unpredictable. He didn't trust us, but he also didn't trust them, so he was stuck between **a rock** and a hard place, and all we could do was try to be kind to him and all the other kids. Make them feel wanted, even if I was kind of sort of trying **to** kick them off our floor.

We let them help though. It was nice to have another girl in the mix too if I was being honest, even if she was younger than me. She was everything **I** wanted to be. She was brave and bold and confident in ways that I never even dreamed I could be. She had been through so much, and yet, here she **was** thriving, and I wanted to be just like her. And like her, I was determined to be braver than I had been. I could do this.

“Grace?” Rhys’ voice cut through my thoughts causing me **to** look up.

“Hm?”

“**Are** you okay?”

Every eye in the room turned to stare at me and I felt heat flood my cheeks.

“**Yes.**” I answered, my **voice** meeker than I intended.

Rhys narrowed his eyes at me, and I felt him reach through the bond to attempt to **decipher** what I **was** feeling. But the **truth was**, I didn’t really **know** what I was feeling. I wanted to be useful to my mate, but I **was** useless. I couldn’t read. I couldn’t do anything. I wanted to be bold. I wanted **to be like** Maizie, but I was still me. I had no reason to be confident. I had nothing to give anyone. And I was sort of **lost in that** feeling.

Almost everyone went back to what they were doing after an awkward moment, but Rhys’ eyes never left mine, and I squirmed in **my** seat, pretending to go back to my lessons. I had to do this to get better. To be **a** worthy mate.

A pair of boots entered the **edge of** my vision, and I looked up in confusion **to see** Rhys standing there with his hand stretched out toward **me**.

“What **are** you doing Rhys?” I asked, my voice barely a whisper.

“**Are** you **just** going **to leave** me hanging or what?” He asked with a smirk.

I took his hand hesitantly. We **were all supposed to** be studying right now.

“We’ll be back,” Rhys announced, but I just looked at him in confusion, and nobody **else acknowledged us at all or** even bothered **to look up**.

“Where **are** we going?” I whispered as he opened the door.

Rhys **just** smirked, shutting the door behind us.

Suddenly, I **was** pushed into the wall, and I let out a little **gasp**, but Rhys **was** sure to also be gentle **as** he **caged me** in.

“Rhys, what **are** you doing?” I **gasp**ed.

“Well, if we didn’t have **guests** in my office, I would have **given** you a repeat of the lesson we had **a few weeks ago**, **However, I chose the next best place to please my mate** and remind her that she **is very** wanted.”

His mouth met mine hungrily, and I caved immediately. I was putty in his hands. His **to** mold, his **to** shape, I would **do anything** for **him**.

He pulled away all too soon, and I felt heat flood my cheeks again when I realized we were in the middle of the hallway.

“What was your last lesson?” Rhys urged.

“Rhys...” I whined, not wanting to do this now.

He nibbled on my lip and pulled away again.

“What was your last lesson?” He tried again.

“That I am yours.” I answered, distracted by his hands grazing my over the sensitive spot on my sides.

“I want you, Gracie. And I understand that you are feeling inferior and not good enough or whatever, but you are mine. Do you hear me?”

I nodded, but it wasn't good enough.

"Words, Gracie." He ran his thumb over my lip, and I wrapped my fingers around the untucked part of his shirt.

"I hear you." I whispered.

"You have come so far." Rhys continued. "Stop doubting yourself because this wouldn't be happening without you."

Yeah. We wouldn't be at a war we couldn't win if I hadn't walked into the same room as Rhys.

"Stop." Rhys commanded, forcing me to look at him.

"What?" I asked.

"If you hadn't walked in, I would have been far more blindsided in all of this. You opened my eyes. You changed my life for the better. You **are** the reason I am alive, Grace, in more than one way."

Fucking swoon.

Chapter Comments

DeliliaLayla

Please let the bindings be removed soon

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The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

Chapter 126

My lips met Grace's again. She melted at my touch. All I wanted to do was kiss her. Take her right here, right now. I slipped **my** hand under **her** dress and pushed her farther into the wall. There was nothing about this woman that didn't arouse me, and I regretted not being allowed in her shower just a couple hours ago. I had barely been able to focus on anything **since we sat** down in that office.

"Ahem."

I jumped away from Grace as her cheeks turned a bright red, and you fidgeted with her dress, pulling it down as low as she could.

I turned to glare at my brother, who stood in the doorway of the hallway, arms crossed and a scowl on his face.

"Can **we** help you?" I asked in annoyance.

"I thought you were working," Sawyer grumbled in irritation. "I didn't know the hallway was off limits."

“We **were** working.” I shot back. How dare he insinuate that I didn’t work hard?

“Yea, looks like it.” **Sawyer** rolled his eyes, clearly still in a mood.

“What are you doing up?” I asked. “You’re supposed to be resting.”

“What does it look like? I came to help.”

“Sawyer...” Grace’s timid voice cut in sympathetically. “You need to rest. You’ll be **back** soon enough.”

“You haven’t rested since you killed your ‘brother’, so I don’t want to hear it.” **Sawyer** snapped at her.

“**Hey!** Uncalled for.” I snapped at him. “Out of line, Sawyer!”

“Rhys.” **Grace** soothed, her hand on my back, immediately calming my wolf.

“Just go on in, **we’ll** be in a moment,” I said through gritted teeth, annoyed that he had interrupted our moment, but also that I knew he had unintentionally wrecked **Grace’s** confidence again.

“Maybe I should go back and help with the kids...” She said when the door shut behind **Sawyer**.

“You belong in that room, Gracie. Especially during the discussions. Your **memory** is **impeccable**, and you **offer** a different **perspective**. You lived in **their** pack.”

“But **so** did Maizie and Michael.” She mumbled under her breath.

I grabbed her chin and forced her to look at me. “And they will be useful to talk about the program **they were kept** in, but you had a **different experience and** that is worth something too.”

With one last kiss, I pulled Grace back into the room, smirking because I knew she **was** slightly hot and bothered, but that just boded well for our **later** surprise. I couldn’t remember ever being so excited about literally anything in my entire life. But it would have to wait. We had business to conduct now.

“Okay, let’s get to it,” I said as I sat back down at my desk. “**Does** anyone have anything **new** to add to our boards **today?**”

A chorus of no's and not really's met my ears, and

ran my hand tiredly over my face.

nts from the

Since the first day, there was very little to add to our evidence. We didn't know what to ask our three Lycans. There have been no mov Blood Moon pack. We had surveillance set-up nearly everywhere, but none of it was really helping us yet. I had two of my top security tracking anything weird and looking for patterns. But after several weeks, it was clear that they were being more careful for the time being and had all but disappeared off our

radar.

“Do you have to die to become a Lyman like Vampires do?” Grace asked as she stared at the picture of a vampire that Maizie had drawn on her paper.

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Out of the corner of my **eye**, I saw Michael stiffen.

“What?” Sawyer frowned, looking up from the notes he was reviewing that Leon had handed him.

“I’m asking how the process for changing into a Lycan happens.” Grace clarified, her eyes darting around as everyone stared **at** her.

“You don’t have to die,” Michael spoke up after a long moment, his voice quiet. “Some do though. Sometimes, leadership finds it easier to convince people to their cause if death was the reason they turned. They say they were doing a favor to whoever they changed. But theoretically, it should only take a bite by **the** Alpha Lycan to change anyone. But I’ve never seen them use that method either.”

“How do they typically change them then?” Grace asked with bated breath.

“Well lately...” Michael swallowed hard before continuing, “Lately they have been experimenting to see what creates the strongest creatures.”

“Experimenting how?” My voice was cold as ice, but if what he was saying was true, then we were in deeper shit than any of us thought.

“They want to know the differences between born Lycans, made Lycans and... Hybrid Lycans.”

“Hybrid?” **Grace** breathed.

“Yes.” Michael answered, looking sick as hell by what he was divulging. “They’ve been partnering with witches and vampires, and they **are** using all sorts **of** methods... Such as draining them then biting. Infusing them with magic at the same time. Several people have been burned alive with that method. Simultaneous attacks. If they think they can create something... They try.”

It was sickening. The whole thing was sickening.

“Who gets to be the test subjects for these things?” Sawyer asked, also looking pale and clammy, and I **wasn’t sure** if it was what **we** were learning or if he was pushing himself too hard right now.

“It depends, but usually the kids... The younger the better in their minds... It’s easier to try things on kids. But if they **can’t** use kids, they **use** humans... Since they have no abilities to fight back.”

“No.” Grace gasped in horror.

“Well, what do you expect?” Michael snapped at her. “They go for the weakest available, like any good villain.”

“It’s not that we don’t believe you,” I said firmly, locking **eyes** with Grace who nodded, “It’s just that it’s too horrible to think about it....

“Well, try living it.” Michael snapped again.-

“Look, drop the attitude. Thank you for sharing, but this is heavy shit. You as **a** child shouldn’t have to carry that weight. But you do and are. And that fucking sucks. But stop being mad at us for not knowing. That’s why we allow you **to** sit in on this and help us research. We want you to know that we are trying, but we expect you to not give us shit when we learn things because this isn’t the world **we** grew up in. We **were** raised to be Warriors. **Grace was** raised to obey and be used. We don’t know about the programs, so **give us** time to process, and stop being rude about how we do it.”

Michael crossed his arms angrily, leaning back against the wall, He was unpredictable at best. But it **made sense** given all the shit he had been **through**.

“You got chosen for this mission because you tried to protect them, didn’t you?” Grace asked after a long **moment**.

His resolve fell away, and his **face** paled slightly before he said, “There is no protection from them. We **are on** the los about 3 months ago.”

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After Michael dropped those bombshells, Rhys ended the meeting. Everyone had been silent as **we** processed everything. **And** we were all wondering the same thing: **was** he right? Did we really not stand a chance? Or were we catching everything at the right time?

Alana stood behind me **as** she did my hair and make-up. I wasn't sure what Rhys had planned for the evening, but he had told everyone that we were bet working this evening and would not be available in an emergency. Obviously, the last part wasn't true, but it had made me giggle when he said it. He had a way about him that always seemed to make me smile and giggle. Things that growing up, I never imagined my future having.

“You look beautiful, Grace,” Alana swooned, and I felt a blush creep up face.

“All because of you,” I tried to turn it back to my friend.

“Oh please,” She brushed me off, but I noticed the tiredness in her movements and for the first time the bags under her eyes. “This is all **you**, honey. Now come on, I have just the dress for you.”

I turned slightly as she held up a teal, one sleeved, floor length dress. It was simple and elegant, and I was sure it couldn't possibly be for me.

“It's beautiful,” I breathed, afraid to touch it or **even** look at it too long.

“Come on, go put it on.” She urged.

“No, it's too fancy.” I argued. “I couldn't possibly.”

“Rhys picked it out for you, so **if** you want to tell him you don't like it, I'm going to make myself scarce.”

“He picked it out for me?” I squeaked causing Alana to laugh.

“Yes friend, for you, now come on, we're running out of time!”

I took the dress and carefully pulled it on, and then looked in the mirror again. The dress fit perfectly. It hugged my body in all the right places. **My make-** up was natural except for the red lipstick that stuck out like a **sore thumb**, but also didn't look bad, **just different**. And Alana had done my **hair in** two dutch braids on the top of my head leading into my ponytail. I wasn't sure how Rhys **was** going to feel about it **up, I knew** he tended **to** prefer **it** down, but **I** preferred it to be out of my face.

"You look stunning." Alana breathed.

"Thank you."

"Come on, your mate is waiting." Alana encouraged.

I could feel Rhys' anxiety through our bond, but I wasn't sure why he was anxious at all. He wasn't one to generally show his **feelings**, unless it was anger, but this was different. I wondered if **we** were going to a big event that I didn't know about.

Alana led the way down the millions **of steps**. **As we crossed** the family room, **several people** turned to stare, but no one said anything. The **crisp** winter air nipped at my bare skin as **I** stepped out onto the front steps. Rhys **was** standing by his Range Rover staring out into the woods, but **as** soon as **he** felt me, he turned.

His gaze raked my body hungrily, and I could tell he **approved**. Not that I would **ever** truly dress for a guy, **but** I did appreciate the **way** he was looking at

1. me.

Alana slipped back into the packhouse **as** Rhys met me at the bottom of the stairs. His hand held out for **me as** if there **was** nowhere else he'd rather be.

“Grace,” He started, his voice husky, “You put the sunset to shame. I have never laid **eyes** on anything **more** beautiful in **my entire life**, and to know **that you** are all mine is a privilege that I will never forget.”

I melted. Rhys had a way with words that I could never match. Maybe it was just because I had spent so much **of my life refusing to say anything, but I felt** as though there **was** nothing in my vocabulary that could ever explain to him how **I felt**.

He opened the car door, and I climbed into the backseat. I hadn't **even** thought to ask about **where we were going, but now that I** was in **the car, I suddenly** felt very nervous.

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“Where are we going exactly?” I finally got the courage to ask **as** he climbed in behind me.

“What’s your favorite color?” He asked, changing the subject, not so subtly.

“I uh don’t know.” I stumbled

over my words.

“You don’t have a favorite color?” He asked in surprise.

“I’ve never thought about it,” I answered honestly. “Maybe yellow.”

“Why yellow?”

“It’s a happy color.” I answered. “**It’s** the color of the prettiest flowers, and the leaves in the fall. It’s the color of the sun, and it has a warmth that is part comforting in all the ways and pleasing for the eyes. It makes me smile when I see it. So, yea, I think yellow is my favorite color.”

Rhys smiled at me. His eyes sparkling with a light I don’t think I had ever seen in him before.

“What’s your favorite color?” I asked, realizing I had no idea either.

“It’s yellow,” He answered, completely cheesing, which completely threw me off. I had never once seen anything that made me think that his favorite color was yellow.

“No, it’s not.” I laughed. “It’s red.”

A

He raised his brows at me in surprise, amusement written all **over his face**. “What?”

“It’s red.” I answered confidently. “Your room, well **our** room has **red** all over it, and when **you** have **to** wear a tie, **it’s** red. And the **only** shirt **you** own that isn’t blue, white or black is red.”

“Okay,” He said with a lopsided grin as he leaned in closer to me, his **face just** inches from mine. “**You** caught **me**. It’s **red**.”

“Why did you say yellow then?” I asked feeling breathless **at** his proximity.

“Because you said yellow, and I love you.” He answered, his eyes flickering to my **lips**.

A

My heart thundered in my ears. He had **never** outright said he loved me before. He had said he wanted me. He had said I was **his** fated mate. He had said that I was more beautiful than the sunset. He said his favorite color **was** yellow because it **was** mine. He had said **so many** of the right things in **such** beautiful ways, but I love you was my favorite.

“I love you too.” I breathed.

Chapter Comments

The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

Chapter 129

Rhys lips crashed into mine. I had no idea how he had managed to **twist** his body from his seat to be to over me, but I didn't care, 1 didery sare was in the front seat

driving us to an unknown destination. I didn't care that everyone could see us as we passed, I didn't care **that** it was rightha uncomfortable; I was grateful for the seat that was holding me up. My hands roamed his body, and my lips parted to grant him entrance. A wannE VASTAA in my core, and I wanted mote, even though I knew now wasn't the time, and it was quite clear, he wanted more too.

"Okay lovebirds, we're approaching."

We pulled apart, both completely breathless and not wanting to stop. My face heating again now that I was more than a little aware that we weren't alme.

"Look out the window." Rhys coaxed.

I turned and felt my breath catch. We were surrounded by snow in what looked like the middle of the mountains. I frowned slightly. I didn't **think** we had been driving that long, but I couldn't remember ever seeing mountains in any direction of the packhouse. Had I just been not looking for it? **Or had** been more wrapped up in Rhys than I had thought?

"Where are we?" I asked in confusion.

"Does it matter?" Rhys smirked, offering me his hand with a mischievous smile.

“No, I guess not,” I answered hesitantly taking his hand. We **were** clearly near the top of a mountain. There was trees in nearly every direction. Birds were flying around freely, and wildlife could be seen in all directions, and for the **first** time **since** that night I killed Ethan, I felt a stir in my soul that just wanted

to run.

Slowly a cabin came into **view**, and I looked at Rhys curiously. “Whose house is that?” I asked **as we pulled** into the long drive that **led** up to it.

“Mine.” Rhys answered casually. “Well, **ours** now. I haven’t been here in a long time, but I had **someone come scout** it out and clean it up for us, so we could have a few days away from everything.”

“Like a vacation?” I asked in surprise.

“Not like, it is a vacation.”

“But we’re at war!” I exclaimed **as the car** came to a stop.

“Yea, and if I waited for every war to be over, I would never **get** a break.” Rhys answered with a slight chuckle as he pulled me toward the door. “And as far as I know, you’ve **never** had a vacation either.”

“No,” I answered uneasily. “The only place I **ever** went was the city a handful of times when I was child, and that **was** only **ever** for a short **period** of time.”

“Perfect.” Rhys smiled and I shivered as I stepped out of the **car** and the cold air hit me.

“But why did I need to dress so fancy for a vacation?” I asked. “And I didn’t bring anything with me... What will I **wear**?”

“Nothing,” Rhys smirked, leading me up the pathway to the cute little cabin

“Rhys!” I exclaimed in horror.

“I’m kidding,” Rhys laughed. “I had Alana secretly pack a bag the other day. Everything **you** need should be in there,”

I breathed sigh of relief. I might love **the** guy, but that did not mean I wanted to be walking around naked for an undisclosed amount **of** time or **in** the **same** dress and panties that he had already been soaked from our little car ride shenanigans.

ich was **greatly appreciated**. **There** The inside of the cabin was adorable. **As** soon as **we** entered, I was met with the warmth coming from the **fireplace** **was** a couch and a love seat sitting catty-corner to each other, facing toward the tv and fireplace. On the other **side** w... a small **kitchen with a fridge, an** oven and some counter space with a sink that looked a little luxurious and out of place. There **was** a little **wooden spiral staircase** that **led up to a little loft** where I assumed our bed **was**, and just off the kitchen there was a door that led into the bathroom.

“Do you like it?” Rhys asked, watching my **face** closely.

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“**I love it,**” I answered. “But Leon is here, where is he going to sleep?”

“**I** actually have quite a few guards,” Rhys replied easily. “So, they’ll rotate around. There’s a house about a mile **away of** so that is bigger, to ma accommodate staff, and still have our own space.”

“I love that,” I answered, smiling up at him.

“Come on,” He led me toward the backdoor that led to the outside.

“Why?” I asked, not understanding exactly.

“Trust me?” He asked.

I nodded, not trusting myself to speak as he slid the sliding door open. The cold air sent a shiver down my spine, but I kept walking, **surprised there** was snow in our path. I looked around and I jolted in surprise. Roses were scattered all over the path and in the snow, leading to what looked to be a **caff’s** edge, and just past it **was the** most incredible sunset I had ever seen in my life. The way the light touched everything below us left everything golden. *I* had never seen anything so beautiful; it was **so** worth the cold.

Rhys suddenly dropped to one knee and turned me toward him, so **I** was facing him and I let out a small gasp as I realized what was happening

“Grace, **we** have had a wild start to our relationship. We have had to work through more things than most couple have to work through in a lifetime. And still want to stand by your side for the rest of **our** lives, through **every** challenge and every battle that is **to** come our way. I have already claimed **you as** my mate, and I would like us **to** take the **next** step and become **my** Luna **Queen** officially. **Gracie**, would you do **me** the **greatest** honor and become my wife

I could see the nerves swirling in his eyes, but he **was** my forever, and I couldn’t imagine life without him **anymore**.

“Yes.” I breathed out the single word, unable **to say** literally anything else.

He picked me up by the waist and twirled us around, and I leaned in to **kiss** his lips. I had **never** imagined getting married in my **life**. I had never **imagined** having a knight in shining armor. I had never thought the life I was creating for **myself was possible**. But it **was**. **I was here with my love**, and there might not be such thing as a happily ever after, but a happily ever now was enough, and **my god**, for the **first** time in **my** life, **I was** fucking **happy**.

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DeliliaLayla

Yesssss!!!!S

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The Unwanted Daughter's Alpha King

Chapter 130

Grace wrapped her legs around my waist, and I carried her inside. I was ecstatic that she had said yes, but her cold skin was seeping through **my** lorkes making me feel bad that I had chosen to do this in the beginning of winter on a mountain. I thought she would enjoy the view with the snow, but the **war**. so cold from even those few minutes, I worried I had made a mistake..

I took us right to the fireside picnic. I kicked the cushions as close to it as I could without catching them on fire. I wasn't even sure Grate knew what was going on until we sat down because her face had been buried so deep in my neck.

"What's this?" She asked, looking around at the picnic blanket, basket and cushions I had had Leon set up while we were outside.

"An indoor picnic," I answered as she tried to pull away, but I didn't let her. "Not yet. You're freezing."

"Rhysss," She groaned in exasperation.

I gave her a big squeeze and then gave in when I felt a prickle of anxiety through the bond.

"Thank you," She said quietly, crawling onto her own floor cushion. "This looks amazing. But how? It wasn't like this when we went outside..."

“Leon helped me set it up before he left for his post. I figured it was about time **I** took my girl on a date, since I’m literally marrying you.” I teased.

“Oh.” Grace looked up in surprise, the word escaping her **lips** before **she** could stop it.

“What?” I asked, wondering what warranted such a reaction.

“I just didn’t realize we had never been on date,” She answered, a slight blush creeping into her cheeks. “I kinda forgot about that being like a thing.”

I frowned. “What do you mean?” I questioned.

She looked at me like a deer in headlights as she grappled for words that I wasn’t sure I’d understand.

“I mean, we skipped this part. The getting to really know each other and the favorites. We **just** skipped right to the physical stuff **and** mortal danger rescues. But what if you regret that down the line? What if you decide that you actually hate who I am **because we** skipped the dates?”

I frowned. I had just asked this girl to marry me, and she was worried that I would regret it? Regret her? Feelings were new **to me**, and I knew **they** were new to her to, but I had no idea how to make her **see** that it didn't matter. That no one had **ever** made me **feel** anything before in any of the ways she had. She lit up my entire world. Without her, I wouldn't have ever found the light. Why didn't she get **that**?

"I'm sorry," She blurted out when I took too long to answer. "I shouldn't have said anything."

"No." I stopped her right there before she could go any further. "No. I want you tell me **every** thought that **crosses** the pretty little head of yours. We might have skipped the dating portion of our relationship, but I could never regret you. We **haven't** specifically dated... But **we have** spent ample hours together, more than just sharing a bed. I might not have known your favorite color **was** yellow. But I know your favorite food **so** far is chicken noodle soup without **the** carrots. I know that you like to sleep on your side, and you hate sleeping on your back. I know that when you're sad, you tend to isolate instead of talk about it. I know that your right wrist never fully healed, even after all this time, even if you've **never** once told me that. And I know you have 209 scars on your back alone. I didn't have to date you, Grace, to know you. To know that you are the one for me. And I can't wait to get to know you as you learn yourself."

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