

CH 9

Jay-la POV

Jay-la declined to have dinner with her parents in the pack-house dining room. She had not dealt with them yet, and was still upset with both of them. Had yet to go and have it out with them, was going to have to do it at some point. It was on her to-do list. She knew they were unhappy about it; she'd been blunt with them when her mother had mind-linked to her and asked why not?

Told her 'I don't want to. I'm still mad at you and father. Until we discuss what you did, there will be no dinners.' And had severed the link. They were just going to have to deal with it. She had let her mother dress her for her dinner with Nathan, but at the time she'd just been happy her mother was okay, and very confused about being gifted to the man himself. Not to mention, Kora had taken it upon herself to Mate his wolf. Got no say in that at all.

Now she was clear headed and able to think straight, she was mad at both her parents for allowing Abbey to do those things. Abbey was another issue altogether, and she had not seen that woman since their altercation, she'd been keeping well clear of Jay-la. Probably a wise decision considering the events of that night. How many, it had taken to get her and Kora under control.

She was in the Alpha suite prepping to cook dinner when Stephen mind-linked to her and asked if she'd had a chance to speak to Suzy. She'd not, would likely only take all of ve minutes. Told him she would do it now.

Did just that, called Suzy, she picked up after a couple of rings "Jay-la is everything all right? You and the kids haven't been home."

"I know, I'm sorry I didn't call you. I will pay for your time. My mother was ill, and I needed to see her. I left in a hurry. My apologies Suzy, I should have called you, but wasn't in any state to call anyone, not even my oce actually."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. Is she okay?" she could hear the concern in Suzy's voice, she was all about family.

"She is now. I need a favour Suzy, a big one at that."

"Hmm."

"I'm currently in the state of New York, was hoping and I know it's close to Christmas, and you normally take that time of the year off, but I would really appreciate it if you could come here and help me with the children?"

"I don't know Jay-la, that's a long way, clear across the country."

"I will pay the full ight and transfers as well."

There was silence for a long time. "My break would start in 5 days."

"I know, it is a massive favour. I can send for you, a full escort to pick you up and bring you here. Would rst class sweeten that deal any?"

"Hmm, not really. I am sorry I like spending my Christmas with my mum and sister."

Jay-la knew this, took Christmas off every year without fail. She thought on it for a moment and wondered how Nathan would feel if she invited that whole family here. They already had one human here, why not a few more. "Would it help if I brought your whole family over here? A white Christmas?" she asked. She was technically the Luna, and she could make that decision, she supposed. And it was for Stephen, to bring his human Mate here. If Nathan didn't like it he was going to have to deal with her and Stephen tripping across the country to try and sway her.

"I don't know, I could ask, I suppose, and get back to you. Can't guarantee anything though, mum's pretty set in her ways. Doesn't really like to travel."

"Please ask and get back to me."

"Where in New York State would I be telling them we are going to? If I can get them to agree?"

Jay-la smiled, "near Rochester, about an hour away."

"I don't know where that is."

"That's alright, like I said I can have someone come get you and your family. I'll organise and pay for everything, just let me know what they think."

"Okay, I will ask when they get home from work."

"Thank you, Suzy."

Mind-link back to Stephen with the details of her call. He sighed, sounded like he wasn't convinced she was going to come 'Stephen, I will help you with Suzy. Just' sighed herself 'might take a few weeks. She is big on Christmas with her mum and sister, might have to wait till the new year.'

'Do you think if I went there she would date me?'

Smile to herself 'you are very good looking, but Suzy might not want to start a relationship right on Christmas, and.'

'And?'

'And her last boyfriend was a real jerk, it only ended like a month ago.'

'Who is he?' he grated out, and she could feel his wolf Rafe in there.

'Calm down.' She chuckled a little 'nothing like that, just a bit of an asshole is all. Cheat on her before they even got together properly. She is going to call me later. I'll let you know when I know. You will have to be patient with her.'

'I can do that.' He agreed.

She ended that mind-link to start on dinner. The children were all at the kitchen counter colouring in, it almost felt like they were back in their apartment in L.A. Just her and the three of them. They liked the idea of Suzy coming out as well. She was also hoping that it was going to help Nate feel a bit more comfortable too.

She had been their nanny a long time, trusted her. Shook her head at the thought that she was Stephen's human Mate, and odd coincidence if ever there was one.

She was watching the children talk and laugh with each other, while they were all waiting on their dinner to cook. She'd gone through the kitchen and seen what was in there. There was plenty of food in here, the pantry was fully stocked, as had been the fridge. From the look of the pots and pans, Nathan must actually come in here and cook meals for himself. They weren't brand new or completely spotless and unused as she'd expected them to be.

Being the Alpha, she had expected him to eat in the pack-house dining room or have meals prepared for him all the time to eat in his oce.

Kora was sitting inside her mind watching her pups, loved watching them as much as Jay-la did. She was also happy being Mated to Havoc, knowing the Goddess had gifted her the father of her pups made her happy, it seemed. Jay-la could also feel Kora was wanting to go off and spend time with Havoc. Her wolf wasn't so happy with Nathan, but liked her own Mate, a lot. It was a weird feeling.

Seems they were both conicted on Nathan himself. Or perhaps Jay-la's own reservations on him, were ltering into Kora. It was possible, they did agree on most things, though for the past six years they'd only had to concern themselves with each other and the children, nothing and no one else.

Both Lilly and Rosalie were happy with their dad, so they were going to leave that alone. She was not going to bring up what Nate had mentioned today around the girls. If they were happy she was going to leave it that way, no interference. Let them be happy it was good for them to want to be around their father.

But after dinner and they were bathed and in bed, she was going to have to sit down with Nate, she wanted to know what news he'd seen and what he had actually heard, needed that information before being able to talk to him, to answer his questions. As tough as that was going to be. Knew that he didn't want Nathan in the room for it either. Had called Nathan 'he' she did understand that, Nate did not know the man.

Not only that, she'd been with Tim for the past two years, and all of a sudden he was just gone, and Nathan was now here. They were living with him right away, whereas Tim had rarely ever slept over even. He'd always been good to the children, never once raised his voice around them, always had a smile for them and had been in their lives for two years, dinners and movies, going to the beach and he'd been with them at Tony and Laurens.

She could only wonder what the children made of that. Pulled her phone out and text him while she was thinking about him. "Sorry Tim, my mother was injured and I had to leave suddenly. I'm ne, I'll call you soon."

It wasn't much, but she didn't want to end things with him in a text message, told her didn't want to do it over the phone either. But going there in person, Nathan had told her he would be right there next to her, if she insisted on going to do it in person. Knew that would be very uncomfortable and extremely awkward. Jay-la had no doubt that he would do it either.

Recalled Havoc going ballistic with Tim in her apartment. She'd not known what he was to her then, but he had and had not been happy about it at all. An angry beast he'd turned into. She understood that now, after hearing that Sophia had not been faithful, had suffered the pains of betrayal before. Would have had to do it again if she'd slept with Tim. They had known what she was to them and so would have felt if their Mate was with another, though she would have been none the wiser of it. It would have hurt him.

Sighed, she didn't really understand why Sophia had done that, most Mate Bonds were good and strong, solid. She'd heard there were a few that just didn't work out and cheating did happen. But not often did you hear of it, usually occurred when they were chosen Mates, and then came across their Goddess Gifted Mate. Sometimes their need to Mate to their destined Mate still presented itself.

Some could still scent their Destined Mate over their Chosen Mate and this is what destroyed their Mate Bond, and caused cheating or that's what she had read in some of the wolfen law books, there were other reasons as well.

Some wolves were already in relationships where they loved their partner, got swept up by the Mate Bond, but still loved the other and ended up wanting that more. Some were raised without the respect of the Mate Bond, understood it but didn't care that much about it. Some simply didn't believe their Goddess Gifted Mate was right for them, but due to each indivual packs laws some were not allowed to reject their Gifted Mate even if they wanted to, so both cheated in those instances.

Who knew which one Sophia was, likely one of them, but only Sophia knew why she did what she did.

Everyone here was raised to respect the Mate Bond, but none were made to abide by it. If one wanted to reject the other for one reason or another, it was their choice too. Though the one having to accept the rejection could take their time in doing so, in making that decision if they didn't want to. To see if the two could be drawn together and if it could work out. If with time, the one issuing the rejection would feel their bond and let it grow, change their mind. It was encouraged but not forced upon them. A rejection could be issued and accepted right away if they so choose to.

She heard Nathan enter the Alpha Suite, she'd already told him she'd be making dinner for the children, trying to make Nate feel more like their normal life, where she or Suzy would cook. He'd asked what time he should be there to eat with them. She'd estimated it.

Watched him walk into the kitchen, he looked uncomfortable, she realised. He knew she was going to sit down and talk to Nate after dinner and that Nate did not want him in the room, "Can I help with anything?" He asked as he walked towards her.

Jay-la nodded "You could help by setting the table, he was fteen minutes early.

"Alright." He nodded.

Jay-la knew that his mother had cooked meals for her Mate and their children, at least three days a week, had heard him whinge about it often enough growing up. He preferred to eat in the pack-house dining room with his friends.

Not even moving out of his parents' Alpha Suite at eighteen had stopped her from demanding he eat dinner with the family three days a week. All other meals were acceptable in the pack-house dining room, due to training and her Luna schedule.

Jay-la asked the children to help set the table, the girls hopped down to do so. Nate stated "I'll pack up." And cleared away the colouring books and pencils. Her eyes followed him and she and Kora both sighed at the same time. She could also see Nathan watching the boy. 'He'll come around, just needs time.' She mind-linked to him.

'I hope so.' Was all she got in return. Didn't sound convinced at all. Actually, sounded concerned about it. He was the Alpha, and it was unlike an Alpha to show concern so openly around anyone. Liked to portray themselves as strong and condent at all times, show no signs of anything that could be used against them within or outside of their pack.

She wondered what was going on inside of his mind, or with Havoc for that matter, 'Havoc's quiet.' Kora told her. Those two could talk at will through their Mate Bond and though Kora had shut him out earlier, more than once now, it was mostly just to allow her and Jay-la to think freely.

The minute she had been in that oce, Havoc had surged forward to hold his Mate, probably didn't like her shutting him out. It wasn't a normal thing to do. To close oneself off to your Mate. But they had just needed time to adjust or Jay-lay needed time to think and sort through her confusion and concerns. She had more than a lot going on inside her mind where her Mate was concerned. She was very confused about him.

She dished up dinner and the girls talked about the games they had played, and the friends they had made today. Were genuinely happy here in the pack, it seemed. That should rub off on their brother at some point, she thought. They were triplets and remarkably close to each other. Though Nate was the more dominant and protective one, they were all normally on the same page. This must be new for them as well. Not being on the same page about being here.

Told the triplets she would clean up and do the dishes, that they could go and play or watch TV, saw them all head out of the dining room. Nathan had been quiet all through dinner as much as Nate had been, though he got up and just started clearing away the plates. Jay-la stacked the dishwasher and turned it on.

She turned and found him leaning on the kitchen bench just watching her quietly. She knew that he was unhappy about what he'd heard today. No parent would like hearing that, human or wolfen alike. Stood and looked at him herself as confused as she was about him. He was still her Mate and she did love him, sighed and stepped over to him.

Slid her arms around him, and leaned into him, she'd ignored him pretty much all afternoon, got annoyed with him on more than one occasion, one of those he likely had no idea why, knew he would know every time Kora shut Havoc down his wolf would feel it and not like it, probably not a nice feeling. Was trying to comfort him.

Felt him hug her "I don't know what to do." He said softly.

"I need to talk to him. I didn't even know he'd seen the news. Felt that way." And she hadn't. "I did try to stop them from seeing everything. Not watch the TV and all. Didn't know about the adults in the school talking about it either."

"I don't blame you Jay-la. It's dicult, unfortunately, and he is worried. From what I heard, has a right to be. I'm a stranger to him as well."

She almost apologised." She said instead, a part of her felt a need to do so. Held it in and sighed "life is not easy." She had about that, certainly hadn't been for her.

"No, it's not." He agreed with her, it hadn't been for him either, still wasn't currently.

"Are you mad at me still?" he asked quietly as his chin rested on the top of her head, she t near perfectly into him she realised.

"Not right this minute." She admitted. She was herself also concerned about the upcoming conversation with Nate. It was the thing that needed to be sorted out rst. Her issues wouldn't be resolved with one conversation, or at least she didn't think so.

Felt his hand slide up her back, around her neck and then tilt her face up to look at him, didn't back away when he leaned down and kissed her, leaned into it even. It had always been nice when he'd kissed her, had loved kissing him, could be so damned turned on by it, whether it was soft and gentle as it was now. Or hard and demanding when he'd really wanted her or playful and bitey when they had just been having fun. It was as good now as it had been back then.

Pulled herself away from him a minute later and saw him smile at her, even knew why, she could smell her own arousal, it was lite but here, wouldn't take much to increase it either she didn't think and if she could smell it, so could he.

There was nothing wrong with their Mate Bond, one bloody kiss was all it took to make her want more of him. He knew it to, if the children had been in bed already, she likely wouldn't have stopped it at all, probably ended up naked right here in the kitchen. She might have doubts and concerns around him and how he actually felt about her personally.

But their bond would always draw them together, like two magnets, even with her doubts she still bloody wanted him with every bre of her being. Could it seem, forget about those concerns when he was touching her, kissing her, felt that skin on skin contact with all the sparks of their Mate Bond heating her skin wherever he touched her.

"Do they want dessert?" Nathan asked as she stepped away from him.

"They'll ask if they do." Jay-la told him, then laughed just a little "Actually they'll come yelling about ice cream, it's their favourite thing."

"What avour do they like the most?"

"Vanilla and Chocolate. Lilly won't ever eat strawberry, Rosalie will though, and Nate is like you. He will eat any avour ice cream. Likes the sugar."

Heard Nathan chuckle softly "I think he's more like you, from what I have seen."

"Oh, how's that?" She was curious as to how he came across that thought, hadn't really spent that much time with them at all.

"He's stubborn to the hilt. Like you."

"Mm, can't argue with you on that. You should know, they all can be at times."

"It doesn't really surprise me to hear that." He nodded "You're their role model, all that they know." Reached out to her and tugged her back into his arms, hugged her once more "I'm sorry Jay-la. That you had to raise them on your own. I truly am."

"Thank you." She nodded "I don't think I could have done it without Lauren and Tony, or Suzy for that matter."

"Your human family."

"Yes, Lauren delivered them actually." Shook her head a little "Right in Tony's oce at the university. Didn't realise I was in labour till my water broke. They came quickly. Not even time for the paramedics to arrive."

Heard him sigh "I should have been there."

"Unlikely no matter the past we have."

Saw him frown down at her as her phone rang. Moved away from him to answer it, sighed at the caller ID, it was Tim. She didn't want to have a conversation with Tim while Nathan was in the room. She didn't know what he would do. Would he just stand quietly and listen? Would he take the phone from her? demand that Tim go away and never call her again? Tell him that they were now together? She had no idea at all, only knew he had a temper.