

Denied by Destiny: Trapped in the Shadows of the Mate Bond

C 271 - 280

- Josie -

I hate the pack runs, more because I can't join in. It's the only time I am reminded that I am not

like them.

They can't help it, they are following the gut instinct of their very being. Why should they change centuries of tradition just for one person. They shouldn't and as much as I try, I try to not hold it against them.

But no matter how much I try, it still hurts. The pain still claws at my chest of not being enough, of not being complete.

This cabin in the meadows was my go to place during pack runs. They aren't meant to come out

to this part of the pack grounds, but I am not allowed to shoot...just in case I hit a wolf.

Orders from the Alpha, Dad. In here, I am tucked away. Not a dirty little secret, but more...kept out of harm's way and vice versa.

Lobo is with me as I chase him around the cabin, music blearing out as I try to work off the

frustration that was building within me.

I was always frustrated during the pack runs, but this time it felt more intense...what happened in the storage cupboard, or almost happened, tortured my mind for the rest of the day.

I change the music to the sound of calming, relaxation tones as I take a deep breath in. Letting

my body relax.

I roll my head from side to side...trying to find that inner peace. Something I haven't found since our guest arrived. He had a way of making me feel unbalanced, not in control...almost...anxious.

Closing my eyes I try to clear any thoughts but all I get are flashbacks of him climbing off his bike earlier...how I wanted to go to him. An unexplainable pull to him that I wanted to give into. I've never experienced that sensation before.

I hear Lobo moving around the cabin, sniffing at the skirting boards until he stops at the door...and starts to growl in warning. For the most part, Lobo was an extremely friendly dog...but mainly only with

me and Mum...even Dad. But any other males, he struggled with, he didn't trust. He tolerates Maya but only because she is female and tries to buy his affection with dog biscuits she secretly passes him in the kitchen when she is over.

I ignore him at first, it was night time and we were in the quiet meadows, a hot spot for nocturnal

animals. But as his growl descends into a menacing bark, I start to take notice.

Moving to my music player, I turn the music down, letting Lobo have full access to his canine hearing.

The pack members know not to stray this far from the usual planned route, just in case.

As I turn the music player off, I hear howling in the distance. As expected...it was a full moon tonight but what I didn't expect was Lobo to remain so persistent that he moves in front of me, to block me. His dog fangs on show, preparing to attack.

I reach behind me, into my back waistband of my leggings... reaching for my gun. I was going against protocol but I was vulnerable, the rest of the pack in the other direction and me alone with Lobo, the gun was my only line of defence.

Clicking the safety off, I aim the gun for the door, moving around Lobo and taking a step towards it. My trusted companion bends his head down, his back arching and his claws pawing on the wooden floor as he prepares to leap...fuck...my adrenaline was pumping through my heart. My heart felt as if it would break free of my chest.

I didn't scare easily, but he was right...someone was outside.

"Who's there?" I demand, trying to hide the tremor in my voice. This is what I was trained for, this is what I am prepared for...but when it actually happens...

The door slowly creaks open, and I take a step back, my gun rising at the intruder. Holding my

breath I prepare to pull the trigger back, just breathe Josie...just imagine they are a target board.

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A bullet biting through wood rather than flesh.

I slowly release the air held in my lungs through puffed cheeks, steadying my heart rate....only for Knox to step through the door.

He takes one look at me, an eyebrow cocking but he doesn't raise his hands in surrender...he

just looks at me dead in the eye. As if any sudden movement would push me over the edge and cause me to fire. I didn't see fear in his eyes, a stoic stare meeting me. As soon as my mind reconnects with my body, I take a deep intake of air.

"I nearly shot you." I sigh out as I lower the gun, placing the safety back on.

"I can see.." He deadpans.

"And Lobo nearly ate you." I roll my eyes as my body starts to relax, that heightened state of

adrenaline slowing down. Lobo growls by my side until Knox bends down on one knee and pats

his upper thigh.

"Come here boy.."

He can't be serious. The only male Lobo allows attention from is Dad and that's only

because he lives in his house. My pup learnt quickly that you don't bite the hand that feeds you.

My hand reaches down to stroke the top of Lobo's head to calm him down...I might find this house guest annoying but I wouldn't want him to ruin that pretty face of his.

But rather than touch fur...my fingers meet thin air.

Lobo hesitantly approaches Knox, slowly sniffing his scent before licking him on the neck, his tail wagging uncontrollably. I watch in astonishment as Knox pulls my dog into his chest, and starts patting under his belly. What just happened...

"What are you doing here?" I coldly ask him, he shouldn't be out here...why was he out here. He

was also petting my dog, my dog...

"Ooh it's icy in here, isn't it boy." He ignores me and lifts Lobo's snout up to his face, putting on a voice that most people use around animals. That patronising type of voice...my dog has had a personality transplant because he's enjoying every second of this male's attention.

"Lobo, his name is Lobo...and you didn't answer my question."

"You weren't at the pack run." Are his words a question or a statement.

"You shouldn't be out here, no one is allowed this side of the grounds during a pack run."

"Why not?" He looks up at me, as he stands back up...Lobo nibbling at his fingers as he stands

at his full height. He was the size and width of the door...he blocked the soft night glow from the moon completely.

"It doesn't matter." I respond after realising I had just been gawping at him and not replying like a

normal person would.

I turn from him to put the music back on, for my hands to do something.

He didn't look as well kept as usual and if anything it made him even more sexy...his hair was windswept, his clothes slightly crumpled from being on the ground while he went for a run in his wolf form.

He would have shifted in front of non pack members, that takes a lot of confidence...a lot of strength in character. A lot of trust in my Dad and brothers not to turn on him in wolf form with the might of a gathered and shifted pack around them. But why was he here? The pack run was far from over, yet he seems to have abandoned it to search for me.

"It's a sign of insubordination for the alpha's daughter not to be on a pack run." His voice calls out to me as my back is turned to him, my hand placing the gun down on the table.

"It was my alpha's idea for me to be tucked away in here..." I murmur.

"Why?"

I turn, expecting him to be by the door still...but I gasp as he has moved closely towards me at an alarming speed. My body crashing into his hard chest, as his arms grip at my waist to keep me steady. Tingles erupting across my waist from his touch.

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- Josie -

His hands remain gripped on my waist as he steps me backwards, until I hit the table. A bark snaps him temporarily out of his lustful haze before he moves to the door, opening it and clicking his fingers for Lobo to leave us. As soon as the door is closed he turns to me, deep brown broody eyes meet sharp silvery grey.

He moves back...leaning into me, a coldness finding me as one of his hands moves off me to the table behind me. He reaches for my gun before pushing it aside.

"The safety is on." I murmur under my breath, my eyes watching his neck as he leans across me. A neck with no mark...I feel my own mouth opening, wanting to taste his skin. ""Wouldn't was a misfire."

"A misfire?" I start to respond until the air is whooshed out of my lungs as he lifts me up. His hands gripping around my waist still, as he hoists me up on to the table.

He moves me at such a speed that before I realise what he has done, he has already parted my knees, moved in deeper towards my crotch.

His hands moving down to cup my upper bum cheeks. I could feel the heat pouring out of him, that leather and sandalwood scent cocooning me.

"I shouldn't be here..." He states in a hushed tone as a hand reaches up, placing a loose strand of hair behind my ear.

"Then why are you?" I could feel my chest rising, it was becoming more difficult to breathe. The air around us restrictive. "It seems...." He starts, his thumb moving across my jawline before resting upon my chin.

"It seems what?" I swallow hard, he had a way of making speech difficult whenever I'm in close proximity like this to him.

I can hear my own heart rate spiking, he must be able to hear it, to sense it. He is a powerful wolf, there can be no denying that.

He keeps his aura hidden, I've made that out already, something about him is elusive...maybe that is what excites me. He had a mysterious broodiness about him, leaving me wanting to find out more.

His thumb moves slowly across my lower lip, I let it pout out...before wetting my lips with my tongue to taste him. His eyes widen at my movement.

"I hope you know what to expect Red, I don't do half measures." He says huskily.

"I don't accept half measures." I look up at him through my eyelashes, letting my legs wrap around his back, pinning him in place.

His hand moves to my neck, holding me in place as his lips descend on to mine.

As his lips crash into mine, his grip around my neck tightens in a dominate gesture, a safe under his touch manner and I melt under his hold. There's something hot about a man wanting to take charge, that makes me want to surrender. Whatever game this is, I was prepared for the long haul.

His touch creates an explosion of sparks across my lips and neck, my skin burning up with uncontrollable thirst that needed quenching.

His tongue licks across my lower lip, testing my resolve...testing how I like it. He was in for a bit of a surprise.

My hands reach up, tiptoeing across the back of his neck before firmly pulling him down into me. My thighs entrapping him like a starved beast.

My tongue pushes out, in return licking across his lower lip before my mouth sucks on his lower lip...and gently biting down on it.

I see the fire ignite in his eyes, a red tinge take on those broody brown eyes as a wanton growl emits from his chest.

His hands are pulling at my waist band, snaking their way into my lower core as his free hand snakes up my back and balls my hair, pulling my head back...exposing my neck to him.

I moan out as his fingers touch across my lower core, his thumb circulating around my clit.

"Dripping...wet..." He pants out before licking across my throat, his teeth gnawing at my chin.

His lips...why do I feel like I've kissed these lips before.

Pleasure erupts into my mind as he intrudes into my lower core, his fingers pushing in before retreating...his tongue searching each part of my mouth.

As soon as I get used to his lips, he does something below to cause my knees to go weak...it's a good thing I'm on the desk because he'd be holding me up otherwise. He finds that spot, that spot that George can never find. My body grumbling under his assertive fingers as he continues to press inside of me.

I can feel my orgasm coming, my lower abdominal muscles tightening before he pushes me over the edge in a hot, breathless and steamy encounter that rivals my best nights...if not beats them.

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He keeps his rhythm up as I ride it out, I selfishly take what he wants to give me. His lips don't leave me until he removes his hand from my leggings, taking a step back to take me in.

I move, wanting him to give the same level of pleasure he just created on me. I move off the table, pulling at his belt...already undoing his zip when he grips my wrist.. "No wait." He stops me.

"I want..." I smile up at him through my eyelashes, he didn't need to act like a gentleman. What he just did wasn't very gentlemanly.

"I shouldn't have done that." His free hand grips at my other wrist, holding both hands away.

"What?" I pull my wrists from him.

"I lost control...I'm sorry Red, shit..." He combs his fingers through his disheveled black hair.

Cold, suddenly I feel unexpectedly cold.

I need distance between us, his rejection was like a knife to the chest, through my heart. I hadn't even caught my breath back and he was already regretting it.

Not even waiting for the soberness of the early morning air for him to think back on what he did the night before.

"What do you mean?" I take a step back, wrapping my arms around my chest.

"You're just..."

"What?" I can feel my jaw tense in growing anger.

""You're too young for me."

His words bring a flashback to my mind, a flashback of when I was 16 years old... three years ago.

I knew I had kissed those lips before, he was the one in the nightclub, my first ever kiss. The male that kissed me, then pushed me away. He had used those words then, he uses the same pathetic words now. "Get out." I seethe at him.

"Red.." He takes a step towards me, but I place my hand out...stopping him from invading my space again. What have I just let him do to me..

"Get out." I repeat, this time louder.

"Josie, listen." He tries to plead, but this was him. He's the one that keeps coming to me.

"It's you, it's you that keeps intigating this. It's you that can't seem to stop yourself. So next time, do us both a favour and leave me the fuck alone." I roar out.

I could hear the anger in my voice as it shakes. I reach for my gun, his hands trying to calm me...to stop me, to hear him out but this was the second time this male has rejected me.

Bullshit, this was absolute bullshit...and using my age, again...complete bullshit.

My legs do the marching for me, the night air a cold kiss upon my skin as I push through the long wild flowers of the meadow.

This place now a bitter memory for me. He's just barged in on my sanctuary, and tarnished it for me. That was my happy place. What an absolute arsehole.

With a soft whistle into the blackness, Lobo is by my side in moments, escorting me back to the alpha house just as pack members start to congregate out front in their wolf form.

They watch me, even Dad's wolf stops to turn at me. I shouldn't be here, especially with the gun gripped tightly in my hand down by my side.

Shit...

I'm half way up the stairs before Dad, dressed and back in his human form releases his command on to me. Stopping me dead in my tracks.

"Josie." His command is strong, it shouldn't actually affect me when I think about it but it does. Both of my parent's does, not that they use it often. So why is he using it now.

Rigid under the power of his aura I turn to face him, his face softening and his aura dropping.

"Josephina?" He doesn't call me that much nowadays, I preferred the name Josie...but every now and again he uses it.

"Don't' Dad, not right now." I was close to breaking in front of him. I could feel the tears building in my eyes, preparing to spill over.

"Alright. But you know the rules, the gun has to go in the safe."

I look down at my hand, I had forgotten I was even holding it still. My eyes furrow at the sight of it in my hand, I was losing control...all my hard work gone in a second just for one kiss and an orgasm. Not again, never again.

With a nod, I move back down the stairs, Lobo in tow as I head towards the basement.

"You'd tell me, if somebody hurt you?" His voice is a whisper before my brothers walk in laughing amongst themselves.

No.

"Yes Dad, of course I would."

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Knox ~

I've been keeping my lead low for the last couple of days, staying out of the alpha house as much as possible.

Yes I was avoiding Red. It was better for the both of us if I stayed well clear of her, and the house that she lives in.

She was too young for me...I had ten years on her. Ten years of sweat, of bleeding my own blood...yes, she was too young.

Judging by the warm hospitality still shown to me from the alpha family, she hasn't said anything to them. I stepped over the line, but in that moment I couldn't help myself.

She seems to have some sort of ability to suck me into her...a magnetic pull that threatens to pull me under. As soon as I walked into that cabin, there was a hazy mist of her scent and sweat, which only made her intoxicating scent more potent. Too intoxicating.

If she were anybody else, I would have given into my desires, without a care...to hell with the consequences, I've not denied myself before. But something seemed different about her.

I still couldn't understand why she wasn't on the pack run. Why she wouldn't be with her family as a simple of leadership in front of the pack, and more importantly...why did they let her. I couldn't shake that feeling of being kept in the dark about her. There was something, and I'd find out what it is. "Why wasn't your Sister at the pack run the other day?" I ask both Jaxon and Jace as we come to the end of a long day shift on border watch.

I don't miss the way they both look at each other...my question was old of the blue having spent an entire eight hours with them not mentioning her once.

I might not have mentioned her but as I watched the vast landscape ahead of me, scanned the trees for signs of movement...she was all I could think about. The anger that had flared up in her when I told her to stop. I didn't want to, fuck...I wanted to be so deep in her that she would never want another man.

"She was doing training elsewhere.." Jace shrugs his shoulders, trying to pass it off as not a big deal.

"During the pack run? When the entire alpha family are present?" I press, my eyes watching them both intently.

"You know Josie... Jace, did you check the numbers?" Jaxon tries to shrug it off as part of her character, something I'm not buying. I know these males too well. I've trained them for the last year to be the strongest alphas amongst their peers. You don't share a year's worth of sweat, blood and tears without getting to know one another.

"Yes, it would work." They change the topic quickly on me, moving on from my question. But I'm not buying it.

Even when I leave the border at the end of the shift and head back to the alpha house to change for dinner, I come across pack members who also watch their words around me.

Each time a group of them makes small talk with me, I enquire as to how they feel about the alpha's daughter not being at the pack run...followed by awkward uncomfortable responses on their part, before they make excuses to scurry away. Very peculiar.

My levels of irritation are escalating as I enter onto the path that leads to the alpha house, my motorcycle already in view. I can't ant wait to get on the open road again, leave this pack. Let my mind be clear again. Out of sight, out of mind.

I stop just as I reach the clearing by the alpha house, to find her inspecting my motorcycle. Holy shit! She was wearing her leather jacket, a picture of perfection as she touches the back seat. Those soft gentle fingers of hers that have the gift of healing warriors, trailing across my leather.

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My wolf stirs within me, he wants to move me, wants to go to her...to touch her.

I hold him back, no...I refuse to give into his desires, his wants.

Two males approach her and I take a side step, watching from the shadows as they call out to her. These were the two shits that I took out in training for picking straws to flirt with her. A growl rumbles from my chest as she turns to interact with them, she shouldn't even give them the time of day.

From my close distance, I hear them apologise as they bow their heads but don't turn their necks in submission, which is what I would expect from them if I were her. She was the alpha's daughter after all.

These younger males act like school boys around her, but she needs a man. A man to guide her, to call her out on her bullshit... like the pack run. Am I the onle one that finds her non attendance an outrage. Am I the only one that is prepared to call her out on her bullshit? I shouldn't have kissed her, I shouldn't have gone near her. I shouldn't have looked for her during the pack run, I should have kept running.

But I couldn't fight that animalistic urge, that crave to kiss her. I had to taste her, just one taste. I wanted more, of course I did...she's fucking gorgeous, her body made for me to explore. I didn't even want to wash my hands.

I couldn't help myself, I've never felt that pull before, those tingles as she laced her hands around my neck and pulled me deeper into the kiss. Her legs that wrapped around my back, her strong grip in her thighs that I didn't want to break.

I can't let her in, I'll only lose her. Everyone that gets close to me suffers. She's too young for me, too naïve. She's too well protected and that's how it should be, she needs to keep safe.

I can't have her get close to me, I chose the life of a lone fighter a long time ago. This was my decision to be alone.

Only through connections did I get the opportunity to train alphas, then that led to starting my own training programme. They need to be prepared, so that they don't have

the same fate as me. Share the same heartache that has haunted me for too long. Even just watching her now, my wolf calls to her...that heartache preparing to spill over again. Even though I buried it decades ago.

My eyes remain on her, even as the warriors move away. That pain in my chest returns, the one that hit me as I rejected her and she stormed out of the cabin. I've upset her, I know I have.

I've been a dick to her from the moment I arrived in this pack, in her pack. She looks hot as hell stood by my bike in her leather jacket as she pulls her phone out and types away on it. She was my fiery red for a reason, but I'm the one now on top of her target list.

I move, a desire to check her wellbeing greater than my own desire to stay away from her. I'm closing the distance between us, until Doctor Abel rushes up to her.

What is it with these males battling for her attention. A low rumble vibrates through my chest as her hand reaches up to touch his shoulder. His hand overlapping hers and squeezing it. She leaves with the doctor in the direction of the hospital, her arm linked with his...a fire of jealous rage threatening to overwhelm me.

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- Josie -

"Can you check on the lab results with the emergency room."

"Of course, is there a problem?" I look up from my paperwork as I sit opposite Doctor Abel at his desk.

"Only the Head Doctor going to the Alpha to complain about us."

"Us?" My eyes widen in horror. If anyone thinks that the Alpha being my Dad affords me special behaviour here at the hospital, then they were wrong. It was one of the conditions of me starting here, Dad made it very clear that he wouldn't be afraid to pull the plug on my training here if he thought I was putting the patients or the doctors at risk.

If anything, his eyes would be watching me more than the most senior of doctors here.

"Well, me then. The two warriors, we should have sent them downstairs as soon as they arrived." He sighs out as he signs a document for his approval before handing it over to me to send off.

"That was my fault Doctor Abel, I just got so excited.." I was annoyed at myself for not stopping and thinking of the right cause of action at the time.

I just knew I could mend the wounds and gave into that inner drive. I didn't think of the consequences at the time, only my own excitement to practice my medical training.

"To see blood?" He chuckles out as he looks at me from over his report.

"I suppose my department can be somewhat boring at times." He continues.

"No, I didn't mean that Doctor Abel."

"How many times Josie, it's Abel. I wish you would stop using the Doctor part."

"Would you have other staff members call you just Abel?" I raise an eyebrow at him.

Doctor Abel was very likeable and we seem to have a natural rapport, I guess build from our time working together. I'm also aware that he has put his neck on the line for me with Dad for letting me work here. Something that I haven't forgotten. "No." He smirks at me, his caramel eyes sparkling with amusement.

"Well then." I smirk back at him.

"Yes but you are the alpha's daughter, it feels...inappropriate."

"It would feel more inappropriate to not call you doctor. You earned that title, it's only fair I use it. It would be different if you were from this pack...but you aren't. So I have no issues calling you Doctor." I gently smile back at him, it was how I felt. I didn't like special treatment, yes I am the daughter of the most powerful alphas alive today but I don't let that get to my ego.

"Very well. But if the emergency doctor gives you any stick, direct him straight to me." I won't, this wasn't Doctor Abel's fault. He stood by me, let me attend to the patients, I won't let his reputation be smeared for it.

Besides...it wasn't him that dragged them through the corridor and threw them at my feet.

No, that would be him, the one I'm avoiding at all costs.

Does he even know how he made me feel, rejecting me like that...after he was the one to kiss me first. To touch me.

He's the one that keeps finding me, staying in my home...why hasn't he gone yet. Why is he even still here.

"Josie?" I look back up to find Doctor Abel staring at me, his forehead furrowing.

"Hmm?" I had spaced out again.

"The labs.."

"Right, sorry."

Closing his office door behind me, I make my way to the lower level...my anger at the house guest only building. Why does he keep taking over my thoughts, I can't stand him. Even when I'm not in his presence, his taking over my mind. The reminder of him pushing me away at the nightclub only too fresh in my mind again as it replays in my mind. I've been revisiting that memory time and time again, trying to remember all the details of that night...what I did wrong. Only for him to hurt me again.

I was alone, minding my own business during the pack run... he sought me out. He intruded on my space...only to then regret his actions.

I need to get out of here for a few days. It's clear he isn't going anywhere any time soon, and I can't be under the same roof as him, even within the same pack grounds.

I need space, I need to not see that motorcycle outside my home every goddess damn day. I hadn't told anybody, not even Maya.

Preparing to call Maya to give her the heads up that I would be staying at Uncle Jude's for a few days, I find Jace walking towards me. His smile disappears as soon as I bark at him.

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"Hey, when is your friend leaving..." I angrily grunt out, barely looking up from my phone.

"Friend?" Jace stops in his tracks, assessing my mood. He had a way of understanding my emotions...call it the triplet sibling link. But Jace had always been in more tune with it than Jaxon, or so that's how it seemed. "Knox?"

"He's staying longer now, Dad blew his top when he heard what the warriors have been up to. Did you have any idea?"

"No of course not." I tut out, rolling my eyes before hearing a car approach towards us.

I'd recognise that car anywhere...a Red Thorn pack SUV, which meant Luna Rosa was returning home. Rosa was Beta Riley's sister and she was the Luna of the Red Thorn pack,

where Uncle Orpheus was the Alpha. The car pulls up beside Jace and I, the window rolling down to a tattoo covered Alpha. His eyes scan me, before his eyes darken.

"Who do I need to kill?" Uncle Orpheus seethes.

"What?"

"You're so tense Josie dear, is everything alright?" Auntie Rosa peers over her mate to look at me. I hadn't even realised until they called me out on it, but my entire body was tense, my hands clenching around my phone. "Josie doesn't like our guest..." Jace steps in front of me, bending down as he looks into the car, into the back seat.

"Hey Ares. No Cleo?"

"No, she will join us later. What house guest?" Uncle Orpheus responds looking back to his son, the future alpha of the Red Thorn pack.

Ares was six years younger than us, whereas Cleo only had a two year age gap between us and used to play with us a lot as children. Even now, I consider her more like a sister than a cousin. A sister that has different parents and lives in a different pack... "Our trainer, Knox. He and Josie seem to butt heads." Jace moves away from the car, nudging my shoulder with his.

"I'm not...he's not..." I start only to cut off as Orpheus cuts the car's engine..his eyes watching me intently.

The alpha and luna of the Red Thorn pack had been in our lives since we were born. Rosa was a pack member here until she was marked by Orpheus and moved away with him. Yet, her parents and brother remained here, so she visits a lot. Which I love, as does Mum. She and Auntie Rosa are very close, just as close as Auntie Alora and Mum. Proof that you don't have to be related to be family.

"Just give me the word, and I'll sort him out..." Uncle Orpheus gives me a dark look before a small smile edges onto the corner of his face as he steps out of the car and pulls me into an embrace.

He was scary looking with his arms, chest and neck covered in tattoos...but under that fierce looking exterior, he was protective and loving...well to me anyway.

Auntie Rosa was the complete opposite, long blonde flowing hair, her signature floral patterned dress on as she embraces Jace and moves onto me. If uncle Orpheus represented darkness, she would be the light.

Her hands remain on my cheeks as she looks at me, concern laced within her eyes.

"I'm fine honestly Auntie Rosa, nothing I can't handle."

"I don't doubt that." She smiles softly.

"Come inside." Jace starts walking, his arm draped around Ares's shoulder as he picks up some of their bags. Ares was thirteen year's old, prime age for Jace to tease him.

As we enter the front door, my eyes fall upon the one I was trying to avoid at all costs. Conscious I was surrounded by alpha blooded wolves, I keep my breathing calm...they would notice a hike in my heart rate. Notice, how much he angers me.

"Ah, Uncle Orpheus, Auntie Rosa, this is Knox...our house guest." Jace wiggles his eyes as he drops the bags on the floor and introduces Knox.

"Ah the trainer, I've heard good things." Orpheus states as he extends his hand out, Knox shaking it with a nod.

"I imagine it depends on who you have been speaking with." Knox responds, his eyes flickering to me slightly...which of all people, isn't missed by Auntie Rosa.

As Uncle Orpheus pulls Knox away to start asking him questions, Auntie Rosa moves in closer to me, her hand touching my arm.

"He's a little old for you isn't he?"

I don't respond...my spine only straightening as my hands clench by my side, my heart rate spiking.

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-Josie-

Dinner was...painful.

Not only did we have Uncle Orpheus interrogating Knox about his training programme for Ares's future as Alpha, but I had Auntie Rosa's eyes on me the entire time.

Waiting for me to slip up and look at Knox...I didn't, I did everything I could to not look his way.

As much as I hate him right now, Auntie Rosa had a thing with new people, especially males. It takes her a while to trust them and I wouldn't want to inflict her judgemental stares on anyone, not even him.

Half way through the meal, Cleo joined us...as always Jace the first to embrace her before quickly stepping back, and remaining quiet for the rest of the evening.

Which was very unlike him, usually it was him cracking all the jokes.

Cleo looked fabulous as always, she was a complete copy of her mother, whereas Ares took after Uncle Orpheus. Long blonde hair that curled at the ends, a figure to die for...her miniskirt only showing off her long legs much to her mother's dismay. Not one part of her skin was inked, but I just knew Ares would be a different story.

As soon as I announced that I was going out with Maya for the night at one of Uncle Jude's nightclubs, everybody started inviting themselves. It started off Cleo wanting to come with me, only for Uncle Orpheus to agree but Auntie Rosa to refuse...her decision then changed when Jaxon promised that Jace and he would look after her.

Knox somehow being added into the mix.

I was ready in record time, more because I needed the sweet taste of alcohol running down my throat to help me forget about my last run in with Knox. I needed to blow off some steam.

He might be at the club tonight but with three floors, the place would be plenty big enough for us not to run into one another. Besides, he took me for a bar person...which means as long as I stay in the middle of the dance floor, I have no reason to interact with him. I was dancing with Maya and Cleo when my eyes dart to the bar across from the dance floor, both Jace and Knox watching us, downing shots.

Jaxon was unsurprisingly talking to the club's security staff, they were members of Uncle Jude's pack...why he finds it so hard to switch off is beyond me.

I could feel his eyes on me still, and one look at the bar confirms my suspicions.

"What's going on?" Maya waves her hand in front of my face, gaining my attention back.

"Huh?"

"You can't seem to take your eyes off the bar."

"Jace is acting weird." I try to deflect her question.

""Define weird?"

"Okay fine, weirder than usual."

"You sure it isn't the hunky male sitting next to him?" Her head turns, my eyes following hers as we both watch him pour himself another shot. "As if."

"Then you wont mind if I buy him a shot?"

"Don't you dare." I grab her arm, a flash of jealousy rises within me.

"I knew it...what is going on?"

"He kissed me, the other night during the pack run."

"And..."

"And...one thing led to another."

"You fucked him?" She screams covering her mouth with excitement of some juicy gossip. I wait for her to calm herself before continuing.

"No, he helped a girl out that's all. But when I went to return the favour, he rejected me. Claimed I was too young for him." I move myself so that the bar was behind me now.

"What? The doucebag." Cleo responds as she continues to dance next to us. My entire conversation with Maya not far away enough from Cleo. I forget how enhanced both of their hearing is compared to mine.

"Well, he's clearly still interested." Maya states her eyes scowling behind me at the bar.

"What makes you say that?"

"Girl, he hasn't been able to keep his eyes off you. Did you wear that dress on purpose?" She giggles.

"No." I shrug, but yes...yes I did. It was my lucky black dress. Short, tight and doesn't leave much for the imagination. I'm not an arrogant woman but I've noticed a few human males look my way tonight, well look at all three of us. "Shit." She groans in disgust.

"What?"

"George is here."

"What, how do you know?"

"Look over at Jaxon." I follow Maya's eyes to where Jaxon had been talking to security to now find him talking to George.

Shit, how did he know I was here tonight. I don't have the energy for him right now.

"Let's duck to the bar and hope he doesn't spot us." Maya says, pulling both me and Cleo in the direction of the bar which was now heaving with revellers wanting refills.

I don't know what she is playing at but rather than take us to the other side of the bar she pulls me right in front of Knox, his eyes roaming the length of me with that hunger as he sits coolly on his bar stool, before downing another shot.

Denied by Destiny: Trapped in the Shadows of the Mate Bond

- Knox ~

Why is fate tormenting me? I'm meant to be keeping my distance, not watching her dance like a sexy vixen across the dance floor in a knock out dress. A dress that only highlights her red hair even more.

I regret coming, because watching her and not be able to touch her is fucking with my mind.

It doesn't help that her brother, the one that usually lifts even the darkest of soul's spirits, is drinking himself into oblivion. I don't know what is going on with him all of a sudden, as soon as that blonde arrived during the meal...it's like he's had a personality shift.

"Another?" He grunts at me as he refills our shot glasses.

"What's up pal?"

"Nothing." He sneers, his eyes darting to the blonde on the dance floor before he downs his shot, refilling it instantly.

He could have fooled me.

Sod this, I'm not going to be the one to babysit a drunken Jace and carry his sad ass home when his legs give way.

I was getting ready to call it a night when the dick Red seems to have allowed herself to become attached to walks into the club...acting like a fucking peacock, as if he owns this place.

Maybe I'll stay for a few more drinks after all.

The girls move off the dance floor, heading to the bar... Red stopping right in front of me. My eyes roam the length of her, she looked good enough to eat tonight. But then again she looks hot in anything. I down my shot, my body oozing coldness...a mask for what I really want.

"Looks like lover boy is coming over." I callously say, as I look over her shoulder. My demeanour is stony, but it's nothing to the steely expression that forms upon her face and the perfected timed reply that stabs at my chest.

"At least he takes what he wants. Perhaps he'll dampen that achey fire between my thighs tonight." Anybody else might be gobsmacked by what she has just said, but not me. She knows how to hit back, and she hits back hard. Just the thought of him in between her legs has me refilling my shot glass.

My hand grasps tightly around the shot glass, any firmer and it will smash in my palm. My jaw tenses at her words, anger flashes from my wolf at the thought of somebody else touching her.

She's watching me for a reaction, this game between us I was currently losing. I take another shot, before biting on the inside of my cheek to stop words leaving my mouth.

He's at her side within seconds, his hands touching her and all I can do is watch on, wanting to break those fingers that brush against her skin.

Each shot that follows burns at the back of my throat, and I welcome the relief from the burning of my eyes.

"She's not that into him you know." Red's friend Maya climbs up on the bar stool next to me, flagging the bartender down to order a drink.

"Who?"

"Oh please, like you haven't been able to keep your eyes off her. Three vodka and oranges..." She orders before moving back to the daughter of the Red Thorn Alpha.

Both females move to talk to Jace but his mood only continues to sour as he downs another shot and moves away from the bar, heading towards Jaxon. I watch on as they exchange heated words, arguing about something. They never argue. Jace tries to move past him as Jaxon tries to talk reason with him, holding him back by his shoulders.

Looks like my night is over as Jace shoves past Jaxon, flipping him off as he storms through the exit, Jaxon on his tail. I go to move after them, to check out what is going on when my wolf stops my legs from moving.

"No, stay." He orders in my mind, in-between growling. The alcohol consumption hasn't helped with keeping him behind that veil...he had been pushing forward more and more with each shot I drank. Which I haven't notice during until now. Shit.

"Fine, I'll stay but nothing from you." I growl back at him, sitting back on the bar stool, my ride for the night having left through those doors.

