

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

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"No, he just redirected his anger onto you." I roll my eyes, shaking my head...stopping when his hand cups the side of my face. "Then it worked Red."

"Knox." I sigh out, this man was giving me whiplash.

"We were interrupted last night, in the nightclub." His hands fall onto my hips as they pull me onto his lap, my body now straddling him. "You need to heal."

"I'm healed. I believe you were on me like this last night...do you want to know what was going through my mind?"

"The wound shows otherwise." I can feel his nose smelling at my hair as I continue to unravel the dressing to show bruising.

"And no...not right now. I need to get some more medicine for you..." I go to move off him, the wound still needing my attention.

"It can wait..." He grips my chin within his thumb and forefinger, those dangerously deliciously brown broody eyes devouring mine. He pulls me into his lap more, I can feel his arousal beneath me. Typical male, he was on the brink of death a few hours before. He rolls my hips into him, the temptation alone taking all my willpower...a moan escaping me.

His mouth touches mine, his tongue running across my bottom lip...wanting access.

When it comes to him, it seems I have no self control. My lips part just enough for his tongue to plunge forward, a hand tangling in my messy bun from behind. I try to fight the kiss at first, he was still recovering but having been inhaling his scent throughout the night my resolve isn't as strong as it should be.

His intoxicating presence under the watchful glow of the moon testing me. He was meant to be my patient throughout the night, not a male that seems to have already stepped into my dreams at night. A male that has the power to break me.

A knock on the door breaks our lips apart, his hands remain on me but for once it is me that moves away...I know that knock. That is the knock of my Dad.

Straightening my clothing and sorting my even messier hair bun I move to the door, Knox's eyebrow risen as he watches me compose myself.

"Morning." I greet Dad with a whisper as I open the door ajar.

"I wanted to check on the patient...have you been in here all night?" His eyes fall upon me as I yawn, rubbing at my face.

"Yes, I needed to make sure he didn't get an infection."

"And how is he?" Dad takes a step through the door, his eyes falling upon Knox resting on the bed...pretending to be asleep.

"I was just checking his wound, redressing it." His eyes scan the room, to my horror he smells the air.

"I'll get someone to watch him, you need to rest Josie."

"I'm fine, I need to get to the hospital this morning, I'll rest after that."

"You work half your shift." He demands.

"Dad!"

"No, Josie...half your shift. If you aren't back for lunch, I'll come and get you myself." I bite down on the argumentative response...he meant well and just worried about me.

"Have you heard from Jace?" I whisper as my eyes scan the corridor outside in the hope he had returned in the night and I just hadn't heard him.

"No, not yet."

"He'll be alright Josie." Dad reassures me with a gentle squeeze on my hand.

As Dad walks away I close the door, my back resting against it as I sigh out, my eyes turning to Knox. Worry making me feel nauseous.

How can Dad be so laid back about Jace's erratic behaviour, and how can Jaxon just let him leave.

"What is it?" Knox calls out to me as he starts to stand up off the bed.

"I need to find Jace, can I borrow your bike?"

"You can ride?" He uses the wall as support to walk towards me, a hand gripping at his side.

"I'm a fast learner, can I borrow it?"

"No..." He growls out as he closes the gap between us.

"No one rides it but me. So...I'll take you wherever you need to go."

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- Josie -

By mid morning my eyes were heavy and I was struggling to stay awake. Of all days, today I had left to write my reports on the recent treatments of patients that had been signed off Doctor Abel's care in the past month. Hindsight can be a bitch...if I had known I wouldn't have slept last night, I would have done these days ago. With no office of my own, I use Doctor Abel's to complete the paperwork before moving to my store room to complete my inventory of stock that I need to re-order. Thankfully we haven't got any patients in today to attend to, and I can keep my head down.

Moving to the store room, I check through my jars of herbs, making lists of what needs to be reordered as I tally off stock levels on my paperwork before submitting it by the end of my shift. I could easily gather most of the herbs in the meadow and woods, but Doctor Abel likes to order in...to make sure everything is done correctly. I think that's one of the reason I look up to him so much, he never cuts corners...no matter how easy it can be to do so. He stays true to his character.

My body was now starting to feel just as heavy as my eyes from over tiredness. I didn't ever ask for special treatment but I must say the thought of working this afternoon with no sleep... let's just say I am grateful that I am finishing at lunch time today. Or so that was the plan.

"Josie?" Doctor Abel's low voice calls out to me from the hallway.

"In here." I chime out, slightly perturbed by his tone. He sounded unlike his usual self.

"We have a transfer coming in from the emergency rooms, can you prepare everything." He orders as I step out of the store room to find him putting medical gloves on. I watch him as he places a disposable apron, frustration exuding off him. "Doctor Abel?" I take a closer step towards him.

"He is really starting to piss me off. He's decided to go on a long lunch and leave us to stitch up the patient." He growls out as his eyes dart to me.

"I'm sorry, I'll have to cancel your leave this afternoon." He slams a glove back down as he accidentally pierces a hole through it from being too aggressive with placing them on. I reach for another pair, helping him to feed his hand through without damaging them. "That's fine, I'll do what I can to help." I start placing PPE equipment on myself in preparation for the incoming patient.

I can't believe the Head Doctor in emergency is holding it against us that we treated two warriors without his knowledge at the time.

I can't believe he would let his personal grievances get in the way of his medical care, of his doctor's oath. That he thinks having a lunch is more important than a patient's care.

"Follow my lead, and do as I order." Doctor Abel looks at me as we stand by the elevator, watching the floor numbers on the display. As soon as these elevator doors open, the patient will be ours.

"Yes Doctor." Adrenaline courses through me, memories of no sleep leaving me completely as my body ignites back to life.

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"Steady Josie." Doctor Abel warns me as the lights of the operation theatre shine brightly above my head. Their heat causing my brow to sweat and my eyes to become a little unfocused. "Like this?" I push through.

"Yes, take your time. The patient is steady for now, let's keep it that way." I can't see his mouth through the face mask, but I can hear the smirk behind his words.

Things had deteriorated quickly with the patient...somehow he had landed on a branch during the nightwatch, puncturing through his stomach and we were still trying to stem the bleeding.

How the hell the staff downstairs missed the signs of internal bleeding are beyond me.

They offered to transfer the patient back to them to perform the operation, but Doctor Abel stepped up. I've never seen him like this, never seen him exude so much anger and power. He refused to give the patient back, causing an uproar from the emergency department. The department's staff member's eyes on us from the watching room above as we currently perform the operation. I've never experienced so much pressure in all my life as I do right now. Not even with shooting.

I was in awe of Doctor Abel's medical knowledge, as he showed me how to check for internal bleeding, how he was now letting me stitch the patient back up.

"Do you want to put some of your bandages over the stitches?" He asks me, my eyes lifting up as I finally place the utensils down. My hands still trembling from what I have just achieved.

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"What do you think?"

"No Josie, what do you think?"

"Erm.." I pause to think on the next best course of action. My eyes scan the room above, his dark aura causing hospital members to now leave the viewing platform. He hadn't been there a moment ago, but now he was and his face was thunderous. "I think..." I try to concentrate back on the room but it was hard knowing Dad was about to tear into me.

"Josie, eyes on me. Forget he is the alpha and your father...it is just me and you right now...we are in control. What do you want to do?" Doctor Abel's voice calms that rising sense of guilt for letting Dad down.

He's right I need to get prospective. This patient was who was important at the moment, Dad will understand... he'll have to.

"I want to wait. I will check on the patient and decide whether to place bandages on him at another time." I respond confidently.

"Very well. Then he is ready to be escorted back onto our ward." Doctor Abel orders at the theatre staff that had been monitoring the machines and helping us throughout the operation.

As the patient is moved, he removes his medical mask and gloves, placing them into the trash bin.

"Well done Josie, that was excellent." His hand grips on my shoulder.

"I can't believe that just happened." I take in a deep breath before blowing it out through my cheeks. My mind buzzing with what I had just accomplished.

As Doctor Abel leaves the room I glance back up, Dad's eyes burning into me. His anger radiating off him. Removing the gloves and apron off me, I toss them into the bin before following Doctor Abel.

Dad finds us, back on our ward as we set the patient on new monitors to keep a track of his vitals.

"Josie...a word!" His deep demanding voice orders at me from behind as my eyes look up at Doctor Abel, who was standing by the patient with me.

I move, walking into the privacy of Doctor Abel's office as Dad follows me, closing the door behind him.

"When I give a clear instruction..."

"I was about to leave, honestly Dad...but then the patient was transferred and I couldn't leave. You wouldn't have expected me to leave him like that."

"Alpha! Please let me explain..." Doctor Abel barges into his office, immediately defending me.

"I cancelled Josie's leave this afternoon, I just couldn't do without her." The warmth of pride warms my chest as I hear that he couldn't have coped without me this afternoon.

"Surgery, really Doctor Abel?" Dad asks him, his tone too incredulous for my liking.

"Blame the emergency room Dad, they failed in their care with the patient, not us. We were the ones that saved his life, that caught the internal bleeding." My hands shoot into the air, I can't believe this...we had just saved a life. So what if I was a few hours late, I was scheduled to work all day but was ordered back early because my own brother decided to attack Knox, resulting in me playing night time nurse. Why was Jaxon not being reprimanded for his actions....

"That I will bring up with the head doctor but.."

"No Alpha. This is a power struggle he has with me. I can fight my own battles here." Doctor Abel shakes his head, again...standing his ground.

""You are certain?"

"Yes Alpha, I am on top of it." Doctor Abel offers out before leaving us alone.

"Very well, but Josie, you are to gather your belongings.."

"Dad!"

"No Josie, I gave you a clear instruction to only work to lunch time. I'm sure another staff member could have stepped in. What if your lack of sleep caused you to make a mistake during the operation and put the patient's life in danger?" "I would never..." His words hurt more than they should.

"You remind me of your Mum at this age." He sighs out, pinching at the bridge of his nose.

"I do?"

"Yes she used to work in her pack's hospital, she..like you, had a natural flare for wanting to help the wounded. Look Josie, I'm proud of you for wanting to help but you need to remember that you are, foremost, our daughter. A member of the Alpha family." "I know this Dad." I understand what he is trying to say, he worries for my safety and I am aware of the irony of being good at shooting and also helping to heal.

But he doesn't understand...as long as pack members are protecting the borders then it is my place to protect them by helping them heal. I can't go out and fight, but I can fight for their lives in here.

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- Knox ~

If I sleep any longer, I think I will go mad. I'm not a sleeper, I'm not a rest person...there's always been too much at stake to take my eye off the ball. Plus, I get bored if I'm not moving, if I'm not thinking. I'm a strong werewolf, I was created to move, it's in my DNA.

So having spent the last few hours staring outside the bedroom window...I was done. I needed to get out of the room before I throw something at the window.

As I head downstairs, my steps are a little slower than usual. But, shit, Red has done a good job.

I can feel a dull ache and itching of the skin as it heals over, a sign that it has almost completely healed.

To think not even 12 hours ago I was losing blood, my rib cage on display. I don't know how she has done it, not even with the assistance of hospital staff or hospital equipment...but all by herself with a few bandages. Reaching the lower level, I move towards the main living room to find Red's dog, Lobo, sitting at the window watching outside. If I hadn't spent the entire morning doing the same, I would reprimand him for his laziness.

He doesn't react to my presence until another walks in behind me, a low growl suddenly aimed in our direction.

"How are you?" Jaxon's hand rests on my shoulder from behind, his shoulders sagging as a deep sigh escapes him.

"I'm fine, nothing a hot shower won't now fix."

"Look...."

"I don't want to hear sorry, I just want to hear that you are putting measures in place to sort it. I thought we had it in control?" I lower my voice as I could hear Alpha Kaia and Luna Rosa talking in their own hushed tones nearby. "We did, we do." Jaxon is quick to reply but now I'm not so sure.

"Because if I didn't step in, when would you have stopped?" My mind casts back on Red's pained face last night as she fought his command. A command he should never have placed upon her in the first place.

Waking to find her solemnly sitting by the window, watching the sunrise...I didn't expect her to remain with me. To watch over me as I slept.

The group night out had ended rather dramatically indeed; from peacock dick daring to threaten her, Jace disappearing, and my hands roaming her figure in the cloak room.

Oh the cloak room...now that was worth having my ribcage split open only a short time afterwards. Images of her lips, her wanton pants, of our closeness.

I stifle the groan as blood travels south, I needed to get in control of my desire for her.

I move past the growling dog in front of me who might not be as forgiving as his owner. Jaxon doesn't answer me instead keeping his eyes on the dog.

"You're up, just in time for lunch." Alpha Kaia walks in with a soft smile, yet her eyes showing signs of tiredness. Also of a sleepless night.

She moves towards me, gesturing for me to sit down...which I do, slowly and letting out a wince. Her eyes dart to Jaxon, anger registering upon them until Maya and Cleo enter, both hurling themselves at the couch as if it was a fucking bouncy castle. An elbow knocking my side as they do, winding me.

"Careful ladies, we have a wounded soldier." Alpha Kaia reminds them.

"Aw, want us to look after you?" Maya feigns a sympathetic voice. "No...definitely not." I click my tongue as I rub at my side.

"That's right, my bedside manner isn't as good as Josie's...is it." Maya shoots me a glare, was she testing me in front of Red's Mother and Brother. Had Red been telling her things.

"Yes, where is Josie...she should be back by now." Hearing his owner's name, Lobo barks out before moving over to me, surprisingly jumping up on the couch and laying on my lap.

His eyes do not move off Jaxon, a warning rumble even leaving his chest as Jaxon moves, just as Alpha Hector leaves his office with Alpha Orpheus.

Hector's eyes fall upon my strange set up on the couch, maybe staying upstairs would have been the better option after all.

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I'm an Alpha trainer, not a dog whisperer.

"Where is Josie?" Hector demands of his eldest born, Jaxon.

"I don't know, still at the hospital."

"She better not be, I told her to be back by now." His thick aura is unleashed upon the room. His usually controlled demeanour slipping. Figures that the female child would stress him out more than the males. And with Jace's disappearance and Jaxon's underlying issue... that really is saying something.

"Hector!" Kaia reaches for his arm to calm him as she follows him towards the front door.

"She hasn't slept." He roars as he storms out through the front door, all of us taking a breath as he leaves. I hadn't even realised I was holding on to it.

I watch Kaia as she pulls her phone out of her pocket and presses a button before raising it to her ear.

"Anything?" Luna Rosa walks in, wiping her hands on a tea towel.

"No, still nothing. What did he say?" Her eyes turn to Jaxon, a pointed look aimed at him.

"I told you, nothing Mum. Honestly."

"I'm sure he's okay Kaia. He's just cooling off..." Luna Rosa tries to reassure her.

"But cooling off from what? It's completely out of character for him." She lowers her phone, typing out a message before heading with Rosa back towards the location of the kitchen. Alpha Oprheus following them.

Alpha Kaia was right, this is out of character for Jace. Jaxon, it wouldn't surprise me if he took off for a few days, but Jace...it is very odd.

I pull my own phone out of my pocket, Lobo grunting as I move my legs before I start typing out a text.

Hey Jace, not sure what's going on but call me, or at least let one of us know you are safe.

I hit send, before reaching for the remote and putting the motorsport channel on.

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I was now regretting coming down for lunch as Maya continues to argue with me over the television. We are channel fighting over motorsport and a baking show.

I'm this close to losing my shit, just as the front door opens and her scent wafts in...calming me.

She steps in, closely followed by Hector who starts leading her towards the stairs. Her eyes fall upon her sleeping dog on my lap, a humorous smile edging in at the corner of her lips. I can't help but mirror it as I gaze upon her beauty. "Sleep!" Hector demands.

"I need to check Knox's wound first." She half spins, looking at Hector with raised eyebrows.

"Fine, that...then sleep."

Grateful for the excuse to head back upstairs, I climb the stairs with more ease than coming down them, Red following me from behind.

As I rest back in the guest room, she checks my bandages...her hands surprisingly colder than usual as I take in her appearance.

She did look tired.

"How was your shift?" I ask as her fingers leave those tingles once more. Her head was down as she inspected the wound...my nose inhaling the scent of her. "Amazing, I got to perform an actual operation." Her head tilts upwards her beaming smile greeting me.

"Really?"

"Yes, I'm still buzzing from it. Doctor Abel had so much faith in me." She chimes out as she starts wrapping new bandages around me, my arms held up high.

I can't help it as my wolf shoots forward, a rumble of dissatisfaction of another male being near her. The bitter feel of jealousy igniting within me.

She chuckles, before tightening the bandages and pumping the cushions behind me.

"Did you want me to get you some food?"

"No, I'm not particularly hungry, I just wanted a break from these 4 walls and to chill in front of the television...then I forgot Maya was here." "What did you want to watch?"

"Motorsport."

She leaves and I think it is to go to sleep herself, when she returns with her laptop. She fires it up and plugs the power cable in...loading the motorsport channel for me to watch.

As the channel loads she leans back against the pillow next to me, her eyes starting to droop.

I don't wake her, I let her sleep...the sound of her breathing comforting my wolf as I watch, but not really watch, the motorsport channel.

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-Josie~

I wake up feeling warm, something I never feel. My mind is stirring but my eyes are still closed, trying to force my mind into submission.

My body was still exhausted but my mind was trying to wake up, trying to register something...trying to think.

Then I realise...it doesn't recognise my third arm gripping at my waist, pressing my back against a wall. I didn't remember having a third arm. That's because I don't.

My eyes almost win against my mind, that call to sleep becoming stronger thanks to a heavenly scent of leather and sandalwood comforting me. Leather and sandalwood.....

My eyes shoot wide open, it dawning on me that I had fallen asleep next to Knox. I look down to find his arm placed across my stomach as he lays behind me, spooning me.

No wonder I was so warm, I didn't sleep next to anyone. Not even George. It just wasn't a thing for me.

A clearing of a throat makes my eyes dart to the door, Jaxon resting against it, his arms crossed over his chest. Not looking pleased.

"Do I need to worry about this?" A finger points between sleeping Knox and me.

"What?" I peel Knox's arm off me, gently moving as not to disturb him.

"Is there something going on?"

"With Knox? I just fell asleep." I try to push past his line of questioning...I don't think he buys it though. That's the thing with the triplet bond, you get a sense of the other's emotions. Luckily I was still waking up, using that in-between confused and tired state of mind to hide against the bond.

I wasn't ready to be asked questions like that, I didn't even know what Knox and I were. Yes I was gutted last night when he curtailed our kissing session but it was the right thing to do, especially with the door about to be knocked down by the club's security. Then a shit storm happened, leaving him injured and me making sure he kept breathing.

"What's going on...what time is it?" I play dumb, ignoring Jaxon's intense stare.

"I was sent up to find you for dinner, lo and behold I couldn't find you in your room. Didn't think to ever find you asleep in here...what will George think?"

"Did you not hear? As long as Knox is here I don't think George will be popping in." And that's how I want to keep it for now. I was so angry at George for the way he behaved last night. His attempts to make me jealous completely backfiring. "Why not?"

"They had a disagreement last night in the club." I stand up going to move past Jaxon, but he grips on to my elbow, preventing me from moving past him.

"What happened?"

"Another time. I need a shower..and some food. Can you wake Knox up, he hasn't eaten all day and will need to refuel."

"Since when do you care whether Kit Knoxbridge eats?" Jaxon quirks an eyebrow at me, his body pushing off the door as he starts to follow me. "Since you attacked him last night and mauled him almost to death.." I turn on my heel, uncontrollable anger expelling out of me as I yell into his face. "It wasn't that bad."

"He might say that to you Jaxon...but his injuries were more severe than he let on. Is he an Alpha?" I lower my voice, checking that nobody was nearby. "No, I don't know...why?" Jaxon shrugs his shoulders, a frown forming upon his face.

"His level of healing is comparative to that of an alpha blood. He has to be, otherwise he wouldn't have survived the night."

"Come on Josie." Does he think I'm joking, that I would sit up all night just for the sake of it. Yes I did find it rather peaceful to watch Knox sleep, but I shouldn't have needed to. He never should have given him the injury in the first place. I thought he was over this, on top of his it.

"I thought you weren't doing that shit anymore, that the program has helped you."

"It has...I just got caught up with Jace leaving that's all."

""No word?"

"No, nothing."

"Why did he leave?" I narrow my eyes at him, surely he must know the reason. He must know and isn't letting on. The twins knew everything about each other.

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""He didn't say..."

"Jaxon..."

You would tell me?"

"Josie, he really didn't say." Perhaps that is the case, for Jaxon to have gotten so angry last night, he was using it to hide behind the real issue...he was hurt.

Walking into my room I find Cleo sat on my bed scrolling through social media on her phone. I look around the room for Maya but hear her laughter downstairs, something that by now might have woken up Knox. She probably did it on purpose. I close the door behind me, Cleo's eyes falling upon me.

"There you are." A smile enters her lips but doesn't travel up to her eyes.

"Sorry, I dosed off. I just need a shower, are you okay?" I move to my ensuite and start my shower, letting the flowing water heat up.

"Yeah, I just tried Jace but he isn't answering." I hear her respond as I place a towel on the edge of the sink.

"He isn't answering anyone." I step back into my room, sitting next to her on the bed.

"He always answer me." She murmurs under her breath, her eyes darting back to her phone.

She's right, he's always answered her, no matter where he was...if she called, he always answered.

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"What is it?"

"It's a soufflé." Maya's death stare finds Knox across from the table.

"Is it?" He uses the back of his spoon to dab at the half risen soufflé.

"Hey, don't hate the baking." She clicks her tongue at him as she goes back into the kitchen to fetch the second tray of soufflés, that haven't risen as well as they should. But for her first try, they look pretty good. Apparently she drew inspiration from the baking show she was arguing with Knox to watch.

Dinner together had been just what we all needed. We needed some jokes and tales of the old times to have break from the worry of where Jace had gone. Even Auntie Rosa was giggling when she spoken about the trouble Jaxon and Jace used to get up to when we were little.

I'll never forget the time the boys switched and Auntie Rosa and Uncle Orpheus thought they had Jace for entire week, when they actually had Jaxon.

"You never?" Ares asks in astonishment.

"I did...I was in so deep that I had to eat spaghetti every night." His face turns into a grimace as he sticks his tongue out, remembering the taste. He hates spaghetti, which is Jace's favourite meal of all time.

Maya walks in with the second tray of soufflés, she places one in front of Dad before he abruptly stands up, knocking Maya into Jaxon's lap.

"What is it, what's wrong?" Mum's spine straightens as she watches Jaxon slowly stand up, placing Maya back on her feet.

"Something is wrong...at the borders..." Dad's eyes turn to Jaxon, their eyes turning into a mind-link.

"We need to go." Dad orders out, Uncle Orpheus naturally standing up and preparing to follow him out of the door. This isn't his pack but we are his family.

I don't miss Knox also standing up and preparing to follow. Any sign of an injury gone, as he stretches his broad shoulders out, preparing for a fight. My eyes can't help but roam over him satisfactorily, even at a time like this. "Kaia, stay here..." Dad makes the mistake of trying to command Mum. He knows better than that.

"No, we are down without Jace." Mum dabs the side of her mouth with her napkin before pushing off her chair. She was right, without Jace, they were an alpha born down.

"I can come."

"No." Jaxon immediately responds.

"You need me." I'm already on my feet.

"No." He growls back at me in warning.

"Jaxon."

"I can't protect her and protect the pack." Jaxon grunts at our parents.

"When are you going to get it into your thick skull, I don't need protecting." I'm already half way across the room heading towards the hallway, in the direction of the basements to my armoury. "Fine, but Knox you don't let her out of your sight."

"Jaxon."

"Those are my conditions, take it or leave it."

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Knox ~

I observe and don't comment on Josie entering some kind of weapons vault in the basement of the alpha house. She selects her usual gun but I watch in horror as she empties the bullets and changes them to silver ones. "What are you doing?" I grip her arm firmly, her head whipping to mine as she holds the gun still in her hand.

"If it is a real threat..." She starts but I cut her off. No, the world could be ending but there would never be a reason to use silver bullets...not on our own kind.

"No...Does your Dad know you have these down here?" I can't help my tone be anything but horrified by what I am witnessing. Surely her parents would give her free range on these, or even let them be stored in their house. "Of course, how do you think I got them."

One by one she places each silver bullet within the gun magazine before loading it into the gun. She doesn't wince once from touching the silver bullets, no marks on her finger tips...not even a sign of holding silver. Which for our kind is one of the most lethal substances still around today that can kill us.

"How did you just do that?" I snatch her fingers into my hands, inspecting her soft skin for painful marks of burns.

"Do what?" She looks at me as if I have gone insane, that I'm the one acting weird.

"How did you touch them...get rid of them." I push the gun away, my voice demanding.

"Knox." She rolls her eyes at me which only winds me up even more. She doesn't understand their full danger, that having them here for security is the complete opposite of being safe.

"You don't need them with me around, I wouldn't let anything happen to you."

"I'm following protocol, what's gotten into you. Surely you train the alphas with silver bullets?" No, never. That has never been an option for me. Ever.

"Josie, you don't need them. I won't let you out of my sight." Whatever she was hiding from me, I couldn't deny this overwhelming need to protect her. Even the thought of her carrying silver bullets, even to use on others of our species terrifies me. What if she shoots in error, hits a pack member.

"This is what I am trained for." She places the gun's safety on, my eyes watching as she places it behind her. My level of anger only rising at her disobedience, of her lack of caution for her own safety and that of her family's pack.

"You don't need them." I seethe out through gritted teeth, my hand snaking up to grip at her throat.

"This is the Dark Phantom pack Knox, this is my family's land. I will do as I please." Her jaw tenses as my thumb trails across it.

"Not when it puts you in danger." I respond firmly, the thought of her getting hurt making me feel sick. If there really was a threat out there tonight it would take them seconds to disarm her and use the gun on her. She'd be dead in seconds, no one can survive silver bullets. I've seen it first hand.

"I'm not in danger, now remove your hands." She seethes out at me, her teeth biting down on her bottom lip. I could smell arousal emitting from her, but she was trying to fight it. If we weren't needed elsewhere I'd have her here, she was bloody tempting even when trying to look angry at me.

She pushes past me, closing the vault and moving up the stairs. Still ruminating with the notion of her carrying fucking silver bullets in the gun now stuffed in the back waistband, I follow her.

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Stepping out of the alpha house into the main courtyard area, we find two warriors remaining, the rest no doubt already racing to the borders. "Shouldn't you be at the borders?" Josie demands of them.

"We were told to escort you miss."

"Unbelievable...very well." She nods at them before turning and whistling, Lobo seconds later, running out of the front door to be by her side. "Which direction miss?"

"The Meadow, I know that area like the back of my hand. I'll know if something is abnormal." She orders before breaking out into a run, Lobo by her side.

We reach the meadow, the uncut grass and long wildflowers the perfect location to hide ourselves whilst keeping an eye on the woods that lead to the borders. There will be guards already on the border, but if they have been ambushed by an enemy, us remaining here will be the best option to take them out.

The two warriors take the lead, both in their wolf form, as they hide in the meadow Lobo by Josie's side but keen to join them. She's even hushed him a few times when his growling became too loud.

"You can shift, I don't mind." She whispers, her eyes not leaving the woods in front.

"We can both shift...I told you, you don't need a gun." I respond with a smirk as she freezes when my shoulder gently presses against hers.

"I head up training with weapons, this is me being war ready. Don't worry Knox, I'll keep you safe." She returns my smirk, her attitude too humorous for my liking.

"I promised Jaxon I would remain by your side."

"I'm quite capable..."

"I don't doubt that, but I gave my word. And my word is final." One of the warrior's wolves look back in our direction, his snout sniffing the air before a low growl leaves him.

"I don't need babysitting." She chides, angling her body away from me, giving me a good view of her ass in her leggings.

"Who else is going to watch that fine ass of yours."

"Shh, they'll hear you." She shakes her head as my eyes roam the length of her. Her intoxicating presence temporarily blinding me from our mission.

Stay low, and stay quiet.

We remain like this for at least an hour, watching all angles, keeping low and quiet. I can hear her heartbeat, hear it beat faster with each noise from the woods. With each branch movement in the soft evening's breeze, each nocturnal animal's fight for it's dinner, each deafening moment of silence...her heart beats, adrenaline preparing her to fight. Preparing her to shoot that gun, but not shift into her wolf.

Why doesn't she shift, the need for our wolves to shift constantly is always there, like the need to drink and eat. So why does she fight it, why does she deny it.

Movement in front jerks my head away from her. One of the warrior's shifts...his human frame standing up and walking back over to us.

"The Alpha has called it off, whoever was there... is long gone."

"Fine, back to your stations." She acknowledges the message. But again, why was it necessary. Why did a warrior wolf have to shift to deliver her a message in person, rather than her hear it herself through the pack link. From the mind-link of her own father. Why rather than shift and help lead the warriors was she allowed to remain in her human form and carry a gun full with silver bullets.

I had questions, questions I knew that I would have to dig for the answers. This entire pack was hiding something and from what I've already witnessed it all circles around the alpha's daughter, the fiery red head.

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

- Josie -

I've never sought male company to stay with me all night, but there is something suddenly cold about my bed, about being in it alone.

However, as I tiptoe across the landing towards the corridor that houses the guest rooms, something feels right.

Cleo and Ares have left, Uncle Orpheus and Auntie Rosa leaving as we returned from the false alarm at the borders. They have taken Maya home, offering to drop her off on their way.

Auntie Rosa gets easily spooked in situations like this and Uncle Orpheus always seems to find keeping her within their pack the best option.

I do my best to avoid the floor boards that creak, it's 3 am anyway...everyone should be asleep.

Even Knox.

Is this perverted? Walking on a sleeping man...crawling into bed with him. I've tried to sleep, but my mind won't let it go. Every time I close my eyes it's pushing forward, a desire to be near him. A frenetic pull that seems to have the ability to move past my bedroom walls. My hand reaches out to touch the door handle before I back away slightly. He'll have questions, I know he will.

I saw the way he watched me load the gun with silver bullets, how my fingers showed no sign of damage.... the silver not even leaving a mark on me. I shouldn't be able to, but I can.

I should walk away, not bring those kind of questions in my life, but I can't ignore an even bigger call to be with him. Something that I was finding increasingly hard, day by day, to fight.

With a deep breath in, I steady my nerves as I take a step forward and grip the door handle with my hands.

Opening the door I gently push it open, to find his bedside lamp on, his eyes darting towards me as I enter.

Goddess, have mercy.

He is sitting up in bed his upper half completely exposed for my eyes to devour, a laptop placed upon his lap as the lower part of his body remains under a loose fitted sheet. An eyebrow raises at my middle of the night intrusion.

"I just wanted to see if the wound is bothering you as you slept." A poor excuse, and one I'm certain he won't buy.

"No you didn't."

No I didn't.

"I didn't?" I respond a little too nonchalantly.

"No, you just can't seem to keep away from me, can you Red." His arrogant charming smile sends a bolt of lightning towards my lower core. If he hadn't kissed me the way he did in the club's cloakroom I would walk away, I would think this was one sided. That I was making things up in my mind, but I know it's not. I know he likes me just as I like him.

His movement does nothing to sate this rising state of arousal, so intense within me, that it was threatening to tip over the edge.

As he moves his laptop away from him, all the muscles in his stomach become taut and I can feel myself watching, staring...waves of saliva entering into my mouth.

"What makes you say that?" I enter further into the room, gently closing the door behind me. My blood was pumping so fast that I could hear its deafening beat in my ears.

"Because I can't seem to stay away from you either." He sighs out, his forehead creasing as he, to my surprise, pulls the bed sheets open, patting the side of the bed next to him. Without caution or a second thought I enter, that need to touch him, to smell him breaking at the seams.

"You say it as if it's a problem."

"It is a problem Red, I respect your family and wouldn't want to hurt them, to hurt you."

"Why would you hurt me?" He sure thinks highly of himself.

"I can't be with anybody, not in the way you would want."

"And you know what I want?" I scoff, his usual confidence making me melt but this time I feel slightly guarded to it.

"You want what every girl wants, babies, commitment, marriage.."