

Chapter 71 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Tatiana's POV

"How are you alive?" she choked out while taking a step back.

"I have my ways," I shrugged. "Why do you seem so shocked?" I asked while taking another step forward.

"I-I'm not," she gasped as she nearly tripped over her own feet trying to back away.

"Finally," Hayden exclaimed and walked behind Kathleen.

I think I must have looked very confused when he grabbed her hands and locked them behind her back because he immediately began explaining.

"I knew she had something to do with your disappearance all along," he said as he tightened his grip. "You can't imagine how much I have fought every instinct in my body to not rip you to pieces every time I laid my eyes on you," he growled, directed at Kathleen.

"Let me go," she hissed. "You have absolutely no proof! Besides, when I kill someone, they usually stay dead."

"Funny," I chuckled dryly. "You didn't kill me though."

"That is what I am saying! Make him let go Tati!" she pleaded, her poker face back up.

"Now where would the fun be in that?" Chad asked from behind me. "There is one good reason why you didn't get to kill her little Kathy. I saved her and you failed."

And just like that, at the sight of Chad, her face fell, and her true self came out.

"I should have known you didn't have the balls to do this," she yelled. "I should never have trusted a coward to do the job."

"And there she is," he grinned. "Now, Hayden, as much as I believe that you have a good hold on her, you need to hold your breath real quick."

"Hold my-"

"Just do it," he quickly said and so Hayden complied just as Chad threw a glittery powder in Kathleen's face, and within seconds she collapsed in Hayden's arms.

"What the..." he muttered.

“Sleeping powder,” he explained. “It will make the next thing we need to do here so much easier, but before that happens, I think you should both go say hello to your mate,” he smiled softly, and I mentally thanked him.

Hayden didn’t hesitate, and I had to choke down my laugh as I watched how he literally threw Kathleen away from his arms. She plummeted to the ground with a thud, but before I could even process it, Hayden had swiped me up from the ground and taken me into his arms.

“I knew you weren’t dead,” he whispered, his voice breaking a little. “I knew there was more to it than what it seemed like.”

“I’m so sorry,” I immediately said. “I’m so very sorry.”

He put me on the ground, grabbed my arms, and pulled me away from him so he could look at my face.

“Don’t be sorry,” he smiled. “You are here now,” he said and wiped a tear from my face before he turned his head to look at Gabriel, who still looked at me like he had seen a ghost.

“Gabriel,” I whispered softly as I freed myself from Hayden’s grip and walked over to him.

He stood still, not saying a single word as I slowly but surely put my arms around him.

“I’m here,” I cried as I felt his hot tears land on my head. “I’m here,” I repeated, and I continued to repeat it until I felt his arms move and finally grab me tightly.

“You are really here,” he mumbled.

“I really am,” I assured him.

“It is really you,” he croaked out.

“It really is.”

“I almost didn’t believe it when Hayden told me and yet…” he trailed off.

“I am here now,” I said, smiling as he pressed me harder against his chest.

“You are here now.”

I was so focused on hearing Gabriel’s heartbeat that I nearly didn’t register when Hayden’s arms engulfed us both. I knew we had stuff to do, that we had things that

needed to be explained, but for now, all I could think about was being there with them; to feel them relax and finally be able to breathe.

“It still hurts,” Gabriel muttered under his breath. “Why does it still hurt when I have you right here?”

“That would be my fault,” Chad said from the side.

Both the guys let go of me and looked at Chad, who was currently in the middle of picking Kathleen up from the ground.

“How did you do it?” Gabriel asked.

“Magic, right?” Hayden stated, as if he already knew the answer.

“I would love to explain everything to you, but first we need to find a place where we can put her and it needs to be a place no one will find her,” he said in a strained voice.

Gabriel and Hayden shared one look before they both spoke in unison.

“Zaya’s tower.”

We didn’t stick around to chat, as we all began making our way to Zaya’s tower. But it wasn’t as easy as it had sounded. Not only were there even more guards than there had ever been, and it wasn’t only Kathleen who had to stay hidden, it was also me.

If anyone got to know that I was alive, then soon everyone would know and that included Killian, and if he knew... He would stop his plan which would ruin everything we had been planning. This was our only chance to take him down for good, so everything needed to go smoothly.

“I will go distract Conrad,” Hayden whispered. “He is the one on the watch around the tower.”

“Then what about you?” I asked.

“I will meet you there once I have the opportunity to get there without raising suspicion, but for now, you need to go.”

I glanced at him, his face, his body, and took it all in before I stole a quick kiss.

“Go now,” he smiled once my lips had left his. “And Gabriel,” he added. “Don’t leave her side.”

“I won’t,” he assured him and waved him off.

We watched in silence as Hayden slowly made his way over to Conrad and once Hayden started walking with him in the other direction, we headed straight for the tower. It wasn't until we were inside behind the closed door that I could finally breathe.

"Now we just need to go up," Gabriel said, and headed for the stairs.

"Up?" Chad questioned and eyed the stairs. "Fuck me," he exclaimed.

"You look strong enough to handle that," Gabriel shrugged.

"I might be strong but that," he said and nodded toward the stairs. "Would drain anyone."

"We can switch halfway," Gabriel quickly said. "Now move before someone notices us."

With a deep sigh, he set in motion, and sure enough, once we were halfway up, Gabriel took Kathleen and swung her over his shoulder, not even trying to be careful with her.

"Don't look at me like that," he huffed. "She deserves a few bumps on the head," he grumbled, and earned a laugh from Chad.

"I can't say I disagree there, Tatiana," he chuckled.

"Of course, you would agree."

"So should you," he said. "After all, you were the one she betrayed. Not us," he pointed out.

"I know."

Once we were up and Kathleen had been put in a corner where she could be tied up, I looked around a bit.

"If you think it is empty, it's only because Zaya has managed to protect this place with a spell," Gabriel explained as he saw the confusion written all over my face. "She can even hide herself. It is pretty cool actually. Terrifying, but cool."

"Oh," was all I managed to say.

I hadn't been gone for long yet, so many things had changed.

"So, you wanted to explain some things?"

"Yes, but we need to wait for Hayden before I do it," I said, looking out the small window.

I had so many memories here. The wall that I had blown to pieces more than once, the many hours spent trying to control my powers or all the potions and spells Zaya had tried to teach me. That was how my life was before it got turned around and now, instead of being here to make progress within myself, I was here to hide my former best friend who betrayed me and now was the reason everyone had to think I was dead.

"I'm here so we don't need to wait any longer," a heavy-breathing Hayden spoke from the door.

And so, my explanation began. Everything from Chad being the rightful heir to Killian, to Kathleen being behind the attacks. Some of it they already knew and some of it they didn't. Not that it surprised me much, seeing as both of them were warriors and they weren't exactly stupid either.

After I had explained how Chad managed to hide me and mask me to fake my death, they began to tell me how they had found out about Kathleen and Chad.

"So, there is a big book with my name in it?"

"There is yes," Gabriel nodded.

"Now, as much as I want to continue discussing all of this, that is not the question I want to be answered," Hayden said as he wrapped his arms around me.

"You want to know how we fix the mating bond between you?" Chad guessed.

"Yes."

"The witch I got the potion from also gave me one to reverse it when the time was right, but I am afraid to inform you both that that time is not now."

"You can't be serious," Gabriel groaned. "Do you have any idea how painful this is?" he half-yelled.

"No, I don't have a mate, so I don't know," Chad admitted. "And I am sorry that you have to keep this up, I truly am, but as far as everyone in this pack knows, Tatiana is still dead, so if you two suddenly get your connection to your wolves back or seem overly happy, then they will know that something is up."

"What about my mom and dad?" I asked out of nowhere.

I hadn't even given them a thought after I left the hiding place where Chad had kept me. "Can't they know?"

“That would be a huge risk,” Chad said carefully. “I really don’t think it is a risk worth taking. Besides, if I am correct, Killian should already be on his way, so it won’t be long now before you can finally come out of the shadows.”

“So I just have to be patient?”

“I’m afraid so.”

“And what about us?”

“You two will have to inform your Alpha and Luna that war is coming, and it is coming now.”

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Hayden’s POV

“We have reason to believe that Killian is on his way as we speak,” I said as soon as we entered the sacred hall.

“And how do you know this?” Shane asked.

“I can’t reveal that, I am so sorry, but all I am asking is for your trust here.”

“You have never given us a reason to doubt you before, Hayden, but if we take this further then everyone will be on high alert,” Talia softly said.

“As they should,” Gabriel intervened. “We already know that he will come here, so no matter what, everyone should prepare as much as they can. As Hayden already said, we can’t tell you how, not yet at least, but he isn’t wrong. Killian is on his way here with his warriors and if I’m not wrong about this, he will be here sooner rather than later.”

“I don’t know,” Shane sighed. “We have scouts further away than the border so if that was true, wouldn’t we have heard something?”

Before I could say anything, the doors behind me opened with immense force.

“We have,” Zaya exclaimed as she rushed into the room. “He is coming from the south. The scouts saw him and barely managed to escape without being seen. Alpha Shane, they are coming, and they are high in numbers!”

“How high?”

“High enough,” she said, shaking her head. “We need to call in the warriors now. We don’t have time to wait. For all, we know, the attack could happen within an hour.”

He silenced for a second as he locked eyes with his Luna before nodding.

“Then that is what we will do. Call in the warriors, get them ready, and make sure that every woman and child get to the bunker.”

“I am already on it.”

“You still won’t tell me how you knew before she did, will you?” he asked me.

“I can’t. But I promise you that as soon as the opportunity opens, I will let you know about everything.”

“Okay,” he groaned. “I have learned over the years to listen to those working under me, so that is what I will do, but I will expect a conversation as soon as this is over, that is if we come out of it alive.”

“Shane...” Talia exclaimed.

“I am sorry, but it is the truth. Killian’s army is big and he is stronger than most and if I didn’t know better I would even go as far as to say that he is a second Tyson.”

“I will go and try to contact her,” Talia said as she quickly got up from her throne.

“No!” we all yelled at the same time.

“I won’t have this discussion again!” she hissed. “This is as much my fight as it is yours!”

“You are right, but we have a secret weapon. You don’t need to do that, so please do not put yourself in harm’s way like that. It would be better if you used your powers on the battlefield instead. Goddess knows we need it,” Gabriel pleaded.

“I am assuming you can’t tell me about this either?” Shane questioned; his brows raised.

“You are correct in your assumptions.”

“Fine, anything that keeps you safe is what I will agree to do, so don’t do it, Talia,” he ordered.

“You can’t order me around as you can with others, Shane,” she huffed. “It doesn’t work like that. You and I are equals.”

“I know, and I’m sorry for sounding like that, but we simply don’t have time to discuss it. Besides, think about what would happen if they came here while you were out of it...” he trailed off. “You would be a sitting duck and they would easily destroy you.”

She opened her mouth to protest but rather quickly shut it again.

“I didn’t think about it like that,” she whispered. “Okay then. I put my trust in what you are telling me, Hayden.”

I nodded and headed straight for the door. I needed to find both of my dads. They were both warriors and if I had learned one thing, it was that saying goodbye before a fight was better than to just assume that everyone would return home safely. Because in war, nothing was certain but one thing. There would be casualties.

Within an hour we had lined up every warrior we had. Women and children had been hidden away for their safety and every loved one had gotten to say goodbye just in case. I really wanted to go to Zaya’s tower to say goodbye to Tatiana, as would Gabriel and it took everything in us not to go, but it would have been a big risk and a risk that wasn’t worth taking. Not when it came to her and her safety. This time I was determined to keep her safe and sound, no matter the cost. And besides, I knew she would eventually join us on the battlefield.

“Are you ready?” Gabriel muttered under his breath as he came to join me.

“As ready as one can ever be,” I said, my tone stiff. “And you?”

“I’m ready to get this over with,” he sighed. “Once this is all over you need to promise me that we will all three take some time to ourselves.”

“Sounds like a plan,” I nodded. “Do you have anything specific in mind?”

“I was thinking about the cottage our parents always took us to when we were kids,” he shrugged. “I did some digging, and it is still standing and, as far as I know, it is still in my family’s name. Seeing as I’m the only one left, it now belongs to me.”

I felt a hit in the pit of my stomach. He usually didn’t talk about his family at all, so the fact that he mentioned it this casually was a complete surprise.

“I think that is a good idea,” I said, offering him a small smile.

“Good because I need you to make me another promise,” he said, scratching the back of his head while looking down at his feet.

I had a bad feeling about what he would say next, so instead of speaking I just nodded and waited for whatever he was about to say.

“I want you to promise me that you will go there with her no matter what happens. I also did some paperwork that says that if I die, the cottage will belong to you.”

“Gabriel, don’t.”

“No, I’m serious here, Hayden. This is all I have left of my family, and I want you to have it,” he whispered. “I’m not saying I am going to die today, I’m just... Being prepared, that’s all.”

“Fine, if you are willing to make me the same promise,” I stated, straightening myself. “If I don’t make it today, I want you to take her there.”

He looked at me with a frown on his face.

“I suppose that is only fair,” he said after a little while. “Then-“

We were interrupted by Alpha Shane brushing past us. His facial expression was strained as he continued to walk in a straight line until he was standing in front of everyone.

“They are here,” was all he said, and shortly after that Killian could be seen emerging from the top of the hill with his army right behind him.

“Well, well, well,” Killian chuckled from a distance, yet close enough for us to hear. “If it isn’t Shane himself. I was so sure you would hide behind your people and leave them to fight this out for you.”

“I’m not you, Killian,” Shane said, sounding way too calm.

“No, you indeed are not.”

He stopped speaking as he searched through our lineup, and it wasn’t hard to figure out who he was looking for.

“She is not here,” Shane spoke. “Your plan has failed, Killian.”

A laugh erupted from his throat, and it echoed all over the place, bouncing from tree to tree. He had a thing for dramatics, I had to admit that much. I couldn’t help but wonder if he would act this smug and self-righteous when I would be standing over him with his throat in my hands. This was the man who had tortured her for so many years. This was the man who had let her down, who had used her for his very own game, and who in the end was willing to kill her just to further his own agenda.

A coward. That was what he was. He didn’t look much like one right now, but it was easy to see his true self hiding underneath. He was a man who made others do his bidding, who didn’t like to get his hands dirty, and who would prefer to stay in the dark. Some would maybe be so bold as to call it smart, but not me. Not this pack. This would be seen for what it was. He would be seen for what he was.

“My plan failed?” he grinned, his canines showing slightly in the corners of his mouth. “I don’t see your lovely daughter anywhere. Where is she?”

I felt how the air shifted around us, how the entire row I was standing in tensed up. Even though I knew where she was, that she was safe and sound, my entire body, every muscle, and every nerve tensed and I wasn't the only one. Next to me, I could feel how Gabriel shook, how he nearly vibrated with anger.

"Don't you dare mention her," Gabriel growled. "Or even better, if you want to talk about her, then come down here as a man would instead of standing there like a fucking coward!"

"How dare you call me a coward!" he sneered, baring his teeth even more. "You will regret this."

And then all hell broke loose. With a swift movement of his head, his warriors shifted and were now running down the hill to get to us.

In the blink of an eye, everyone on our side had shifted too, and was heading straight toward them. This, for Gabriel and I, was the hardest thing we had to do, considering we didn't have much contact with our wolves, so we had to force a shift. Not only was it painful, but it was also draining.

Everything I usually didn't feel, I felt and just by looking at him, I could see that he felt it too. It wasn't until we were both standing on all fours that I truly knew how exhausting it actually was.

'Forcing me out now?'

Syx's voice was low and only half as charismatic as it usually was. This was the first time I heard from him since he decided to hide in the darkness.

'Take a look ahead and you'll see why.'

I didn't have to say more than that before I heard him purr of delight. He had spotted Killian and the second he did I felt a rush of energy run through me.

'He is mine.'

I eyed Gabriel, who nodded. He looked fine but before I had the chance to ask, he took off.

'You need to take it around on the right," he mind linked. 'I will take the left.'

'Trying to hit it with a back attack?'

'Killian is hiding out there for some reason. The faster we can take him out, the faster this will be over.'

I shifted my focus to my paws as I tried to run faster. All around me snarls and sneers could be heard. Even the small cries from those who had already been hurt reached my ears even though I had tried to block them out.

'I will rip his throat out,' Syx growled.

'Good to have you back buddy.'

As I neared the hollow spot just before the hill, my eyes searched for Gabriel. He was on the left, only a few feet away from Killian, but he was too focused on one thing, so focused that he forgot about his surroundings.

'Watch out!' I screamed through the link and watched as he barely managed to duck and avoid one of the two wolves that had snuck up behind him. Gabriel was strong, but I also knew that Killian's pack had been taught to play dirty.

I had to help him, besides there was no way I would be able to take down Killian on my own.

I only managed to take a few steps to cross the field, when a chocolate brown wolf jumped out in front of me and blocked my way. I instantly knew who he was. His scent almost screamed it for everyone to know.

It was Killian's Beta.

It was Kathleen's father.

Barring his canines at me, he growled, the low rumble barely reaching me. He began circling, trying to get me to turn my back to the middle of the field. He wasn't stupid, but neither was I and, where he had experience, I had knowledge.

It didn't take long for him to notice that I hadn't taken the bait. I couldn't stop the grin that now could be seen on my face and that was enough to provoke him.

He jumped at me, his right paw lifted and his claws out ready to grab hold of me, but I wouldn't give him that chance. I made a zig-zag formation run to get him off course, but the way his eyes narrowed, almost as if saying 'got you', I knew something was up. And sure enough, when I landed behind him, on the spot he had been only seconds ago, and he landed on the ground where I had been, I finally noticed what was happening. Four other wolves that had been hiding out, had now gathered around me slowly and almost silently and started to close in on me. My eyes glided over each and every one of them trying to get a feel of their power or strength, but I couldn't. Unlike Killian and his Beta, they showed no emotion and no weaknesses.

There was no way out.

I was trapped.

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Gabriel's POV

I had been so focused on taking Killian down that I hadn't noticed the back attack they had been planning on me. Had it not been for Hayden, I would have been dead or at the very least hurt to a point where I might as well have been dead. The wolf to my right, the one who had jumped at me, had landed on its paws and flipped around quickly to attack again, but this time I was prepared. I glanced at the wolf behind me and watched how it slightly bent its legs preparing to jump, just like the one in front of me, and when they both lifted from the ground, I in a fast movement, rolled to the side to bring as much space between us as I could. I heard the thud followed by grunting from them colliding before I saw it. And when they finally managed to get back up and ready, I was no longer alone. Three of our pack warriors had seen what had unfolded and had hurried over to help.

'Go help Hayden,' one of them linked and, by the mentioning of his name I whipped my head around only to find him cornered.

I didn't think twice about it as I ran through the field avoiding every fight that had unfolded, but I stopped dead in my tracks when a white wolf cried out. I searched for where the sound was coming from only to find out that one of Killian's men had my Luna's throat in his mouth. He swung his head from side to side before releasing her and when he did, she flew through the air and landed only a few feet away from me.

'Talia!' I called out as I rushed to her.

She looked up at me, her eyes big, as the red color started to cover her white fur.

'I'm fine!' she assured me just as Hayden's dad, Kyle, came to her rescue. 'Go!'

I was torn. Not because I didn't want to go help Hayden, but as a warrior, you had a duty to protect your Alpha and Luna, and seeing her like that, not only made me want to stay, but also made me think, what if that was Tatiana and another warrior had to make this choice.

'Snap out of it!' Onyx sneered. 'You won't have to think about that being Tatiana if we don't win this, because then it will be her!'

It was the first time I had heard from him ever since Tatiana was presumed dead and he was right. He usually was.

I took one last glance at Talia and nodded before I dashed toward the place where I had last seen him, but now that I was running in the hollowness under the hill, my free sight had been blocked. I couldn't see him, but I could feel him.

'Hayden! Focus on my voice,' I tried through the link but I got no answer. 'I am coming! Just hold on for a bit!'

My body started to feel cold, and I could feel how every nerve began twitching. He was okay, he had to be.

I kept running, pushing myself to go faster while still being fully aware of my surroundings, until I finally reached the edge of the battlefield and the last place, I had seen him and, sure enough, he was still there, but luckily, he was no longer alone. Despite him limping a bit, he seemed okay, and I knew I had to thank our alpha for that.

Shane was fighting off three of the wolves, snarling and growling while throwing them around.

Hayden, who was making sure to keep his Alpha's back clean, had a fight of his own. I knew that scent. I had sniffed that scent ever since Tatiana had returned.

Kathleen... But in a male version.

It had to be her dad and Killian's beta.

I made my way to help Shane when I realized that something was off. Someone was missing.

Before, when Hayden was surrounded and by himself, four wolves had trapped him while the beta got ready to attack, so where was the fourth wolf?

I barely had time to register it, or the pain, as claws and teeth embedded themselves in my back and neck. I felt how they slid past my fur and got a hold of my skin before tearing it up.

I roared out, not just in pain, but in shock, as I could feel the blood already running down from my neck to my chest.

'Gabriel!' Hayden shouted through the link, his voice filled with shock.

I couldn't tell if it was his panic or my own that I could feel as I tried to throw the wolf off of me. The more I moved, the further his claws went into my skin and when I turned my head to the side to try and free my neck from his jaw I saw a black wolf nearing me, with a grin so big plastered on his face that I knew that if I didn't get him off now, Killian would take the opportunity to end me.

'That is probably for the coward comment you made earlier,' Onyx grunted, his voice strained.

'Now is not the time to tell me I need to learn how to keep my mouth shut,' I huffed and bend my legs just enough so I could get enough force to throw myself back.

If he didn't want to let go, I would take him down with me.

As he landed on the ground, with me on top of him, I surprised him just enough for him to briefly loosen his grip and I took that as my chance, just as I noticed Killian made his move. I rolled to my left and felt how his teeth and claws were torn away from me, but I wasn't fast enough, and I had miscalculated Killian's intentions. He didn't care that his own pack member was under me, he jumped at both of us, his jaws open in the most vicious snarl, ready to clamp down on my now half-exposed neck.

My eyes went to Hayden, who pounced at the brown wolf in front of him, trying to get to me, but he couldn't.

'I should have said goodbye after all,' I choked out.

'Don't you dare!' he nearly screamed. 'Do you hear me, Gabriel?!'

But it was too late. I closed my eyes and waited for the inevitable to happen, but then a voice filled with horror, a voice I wasn't expecting to hear, reached my ears and snapped me out of it.

"No!"

My eyes snapped open and immediately went to where the sound had come from and sure enough, there she was standing, her feet planted stiffly on the ground, her eyes watering and her mouth slightly open as she stared at me.

The blow I had expected to come from Killian, hadn't, and when I looked to the side, I saw him backing away, the smug grin on his face now gone. I took this as my opportunity to shake the other wolf away from me and as soon as I was once again standing, the wolf took off, earning itself a snarl from Killian, who was anything but impressed.

'It takes a coward to know a coward,' Onyx snorted in my mind.

'Are you referring to me or the one who just ran?' I asked.

'I said what I said.'

He didn't give me any further explanation, but deep inside I knew that he was talking to me as much as he was himself.

“You!” she shrieked and pointed at Killian while she walked with hasty steps toward him.
“How dare you!”

I jumped in front of her to stop her from walking straight into the battle area, but it didn't phase her at all.

“Gabriel, step aside.”

I shook my head. There was no way I would let her walk out there in her human form and she knew it, she just didn't care.

“If you want to go help, someone, go help Hayden. Kathleen's dad is not one to back down and besides, I need you to trust me to take care of myself. I am not alone.”

I could feel how Onyx started to whine in my head, but I blocked him out. She was right. She wasn't alone and not only did she have us, but she also had Killian's son on her side, something I was sure he wouldn't be as careless about as he was about his other pack members.

'You link me if you are in trouble,' I sent her way and watched as she nodded and before I could change my own mind I dashed off in the direction of Hayden, while trying to ignore the itching pain in my neck and back.

'That is what you meant?' Shane growled furiously through the mind link. 'You knew that my daughter was alive and didn't tell me?'

I watched how he threw the last wolf away from him before he turned to me, staring as if he had seen a ghost.

'If even one person knew about it, it could have jeopardized everything,' I explained as I ran past him and towards Hayden, who was still in a growling match with Killian's Beta. 'You know that as well as I.'

'I will go help my Luna now and make sure that she doesn't get to know about this just yet. If she does she will end up getting distracted, which could be fatal.'

Tatiana's POV

I watched him as he tried to make himself look bigger. The man, who for years had terrorized me, the man who kidnapped me, was standing right in front of me and I was for the first time ever, ready to stand up against him.

“You haven't changed one bit, have you? I saw what you just did,” I pointed out. “No wonder why he ran off. You were ready to sacrifice him to take out Gabriel, weren't you? You were ready to call it, what was the words you always used? Ah, yes, collateral damage.”

I took a quick look around us, not taking my eyes off of him for too long, because I knew who he was, and what he was like. He used every dirty trick in the book, hell he probably wrote most of them himself.

“You look shocked to see me? It must have been surprising seeing someone you thought was dead. Surprising enough to stop mid-attack but that doesn’t explain why you haven’t attacked me yet.”

I watched him and studied his body language as he slowly edged closer to me.

“It would be so much easier if you shifted so we could talk,” I pointed out and watched as he bared his teeth. “Or not,” I mumbled just as he charged at me.

I wasn’t scared, I didn’t move, because I had a trick up my sleeve, one that most definitely would catch him off guard and I was right.

As Killian was no more than a few feet away from me, Chad emerged from behind me, jumping over my head and blocked Killian’s path to me. The shock that plastered itself on his face was remarkable; like nothing I had ever seen before. It took a lot to surprise this man, and yet within a very short time, I had managed to do it not only once, but twice.

“You still don’t want to shift?” I asked, leaning sideways to be able to look from behind Chad.

I hadn’t expected much of an answer and the growl I got in return was enough. I knew they were mind linking. I could see it on his face, the way his expression changed, and when Chad stomped on the ground with his front paws, correcting his stance, I knew that playtime was over.