

Chapter 71 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

Melian POV

"It's fine, let's hear them out. They are obviously idiots to barge in here like this, so the least we could do is hear them out." I couldn't believe the words that were coming out of my mouth, yet there they were and I meant it. I was tired of being seen as this meek young woman who let everyone run over me, and it was time that my enemy saw that I was no longer a push over. Liam and Loki were ready to go on the attack until I put my hands on their shoulders to calm them down, and when the words left my mouth they both looked at me like I was insane.

I asked them to trust me, and we led our visitors to the twins' office. I asked Jason to come along for extra security, but for some reason I didn't feel like this visit was that of anything dangerous or threatening. The four visitors sat on the couch and the twins sat in the chairs facing them. I stood between them with my arms folded over my chest. "Why are you here? Can't you see we have a celebration to be at?" I asked them. Ryder started to speak and I held my hand in the air. I wanted him to understand that I wasn't speaking to him. I wanted to hear from the Alpha. He looked at Callum, and as if he expected it,

Callum spoke. "Alpha's, Luna, the reason for our visit is pretty simple. We don't want war any more than you, but we are willing to go there if need be. The fact of the matter is this, we want the land that belonged to Mystic Shadows. I want to expand, but the council is refusing to grant us access to it. That is where you three come in. We want you to ask the Elders to grant us permission to purchase as much of it as we see fit." Loki started to fidget in his seat, and Liam must have linked him to settle down.

Liam leaned forward and placed his elbows on his knees, and laughed at Callum. "Are you fucking serious right now? You attack us without provocation, you kill our best friend, our Beta is still in a coma, yet you want a favor. You are as delusional as your little mate here. We will do you no favors, we are not friends, we are not allies. YOU and all of the Dark Star pack are the enemies of the Blood Moon pack. You made one hell of a mistake coming here tonight of all nights. I will NOT make the same mistake in letting you go this time." Liam growled. Loki stood up and was ready to attack. Jason and Tim were on each side of the twins in a battle stance. The auras that were filling the room were heavy and almost crippling.

Lisa was the first idiot to stand up and try to speak. "Loki, if I ever meant anything to you, you both would both stop this nonsense and help us. It's only fair after what you both did to me just because of her!!!" she screamed. I could feel what was going on inside Loki, and it was a

dangerous mixture of anger and guilt. I wrapped my arm around his waist and whispered in his ear, "Calm down my love, she is just trying to rile you up." He started to calm down but not by much. I stepped forward and addressed the situation.

"Look, Lisa, I know you think you are cute and intimidating but you're not. You are nothing but childish, spoiled, and entitled. I'm trying to understand your sense of entitlement, because you come from a shitty pack, where you had shitty parents and shitty friends. You have zero "tea to spill" about my mate, so sit your ass down. Mr. Daniels, I trusted you. You were kind to me when I needed it, but I guess that was a ruse. You are no better than the rest of them. Did Scott know you were related to the Alpha of Dark Star? Jenna, you had me fooled in that bunker. I thought you were genuinely a good person. That you too were just a victim of the men in my family, but in reality you are just as fucked up as they were. I'm beyond happy that Maddix will never be exposed to your or Michael's toxicity. He will be raised by the good side of the family who will adore him and make sure he grows up safe with a healthy mind. Last but not least, Callum. You are awfully arrogant to be able to waltz into a strong pack unannounced and demand things from them after all you have done. An amazing man and human being was killed because you put your trust in my twisted family. What makes things worse, is that you accepted this dimwitted psychopath as your mate. As my husband has stated, none of you will be leaving here this time. Not alive anyway." I stated as calmly as I could. Outside, I was the epitome of calm and collected. Inside I was shaking like a leaf and was praying that Ruby didn't take over.

After I spoke, I noticed Ryder and Jenna lowering their gaze, and the look on Lisa's face was that of shock. Callum, on the other hand, looked like he wanted to jump at me and rip me apart. Liam stood up as if to protect me, and told Tim to call in some warriors to transport our visitors to their holding cells at the barracks. Callum stood up and walked up to Liam, and they were nose to nose. Callum started to speak but was interrupted when Tim ran back in and yelled that we were under attack,....again. Liam pushed me back and shifted while Loki and Jason followed suit. The three large wolves were snarling at Callum, Ryder and the girls.

Tim tried to usher me out and I refused to go. I wasn't backing down. Not now, and never again.

Ding Dong The Witch Is Dead

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"Luna, you must come with me! You need to get to safety." Timmy yelled to me. I shook my head and screamed, "No!!! Not this time! I fight along side my mates! I'm fighting for my pack! Either fight with me, or go help them! Either way, I'm not leaving them!" Without another word I

shifted, and Ruby let out the loudest growl I had ever heard. As soon as I shifted, Lisa did too. Jenna started to run for the door, and one of the warriors who had just come in caught her before she could make it out.

She started to shift in his arms, and tried clawing at his face. With one swift movement, he snapped her neck and threw her lifeless body to the ground. Ryder let out a pained growl, and jumped to attack Edward, Jason's wolf. Edward was too quick for his wolf and moved out of the way before he could clamp his jaws onto Edward's neck. Edward jumped at Ryder's wolf and they were fighting for dominance. Ruby grabbed the scraggly wolf by the tail and pulled him off of Edward.

As Ruby was dragging him across the room, it felt like we had been hit by a boulder. Lisa's wolf, Tammy, had rammed us in the side, causing my grip to release from Ryder's wolf, Malcom. Ruby snapped her head towards Tammy and snarled at her. She slowly stalked towards Tammy as if she was hunting her prey. She knew she had fucked up, and Ruby was about to show her how much. In a snap, Ruby was on top of Tammy, biting and clawing at her. Tammy's blonde fur was becoming soaked with her own blood, and Tammy tried to submit by exposing her neck to Ruby.

I wondered if she was going to accept the submission, but I begged her not to. "Ruby, don't. She wouldn't give you a chance to submit at all if the shoe was on the other foot. Put her out of her useless misery." The only reply I got from Ruby was her tearing into Tammy's exposed neck and ripping it apart. She stepped back as she watched Tammy shift back to her human form, and Lisa's lifeless body lying in a pool of her own blood. Callum's wolf shifted back to his human form and wailed in agony. Zeus, Rocko and Edward all shifted back into their human form. Ruby and I were confused by their actions. Why didn't they end him too? Liam walked up to Ruby and placed his hand on her snout. Loki came to her with something to cover me in and asked her to shift back to me. She was hesitant but gave in to her mates. Loki covered me and said, "It's done. He is our prisoner now, and will pay for the things he has done by pain of living without her."

I was angry. I wanted them all dead. It was because of him that we lost Nick. It was because of them that Rico was still in a coma. "NO! Kill him!" I screamed as I started to sob. "He doesn't deserve to live!" I slumped onto the floor with the blanket tight around me, and continued to sob. Jason and Tim dragged Callum outside to give the command to his men to stand down. My mates tried to console me, but there was no use. What was supposed to be a happy day, and eventually a finish to all the bullshit, was now nothing but agony. I stood up and walked away from my mates. I needed to put on some clothes and find my nieces and nephews. Three of whom are now orphaned. I needed to talk to Rebecca, Grace and Roxy. Most of all, I needed some guidance. I think killing Lisa brought everything full circle for me and reality smacked me in the face. Maybe some of what I was feeling was shock, but for the most part, confusion and sadness had consumed me.

Leaving our bedroom, the halls of the packhouse were chaotic, to say the least. I felt like I was in a daze and just being led by instinct to my destination. As I prepared to walk into the nursery where everyone was, I caught the scent of my mates. I sighed and turned to face them. "Melian, is there anything we can do for you?" Loki asked. I glared at him and replied, "Kill Callum."

Loki's shoulders drooped and Liam said, "You know we can't right now. We have to do this the right way. Just as we did with your situation."

I scoffed at him and said, "My situation? You mean the fact that my family beat and raped me and left me for dead? That situation? I get it Liam, we have to follow Royal Council protocols, but why do they have to decide who or what happens to those who hurt us beyond repair? Why do they get the pleasure of deciding who lives or dies when they weren't the ones damaged in the situation? So please, don't ask me to be happy about having to follow the Royal Council's decision right now. We were provoked, and you can only poke the wolf for so long before it bites back." I turned the doorknob and walked into the nursery, leaving my mates standing on the other side of the door. I felt bad that I was taking my anger out on them, but if I couldn't express it to someone I trusted, then I would end up taking it out on someone else. I knew they could take it, even if they didn't fully understand it.

I stood at the door and watched the little ones playing, and the babies being fed. They were the innocence that I hoped would bring light in the darkest of hours. I went and sat on the floor with Trinity and Maddix and played with them. Rebecca sat with me and put her hand on my knee. I fought the urge to breakdown, and looked at her and whispered, "I need help, Bex. It's all catching up with me, and I feel myself starting to spiral. I just want it all to go away." She took my hand and squeezed it. She laid her head on my shoulder and whispered back to me. "I'll be beside you every step of the way, and so will your mates and brother. You have so many people who still love you, Mel. You are going to be alright, I promise." I squeezed her hand back and thanked her. I also told her that we needed to figure out what was going to happen with the twins and Maddix.

Grace, who was feeding Riley, lifted her head and said, "Luna, I would like to take in the twins, if that is OK with you and your family." Rebecca and I looked at one another, and knew we had possibly found our solution.

Creating Beauty From Tragedy

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Rebecca POV

As soon as Mel walked into the nursery, I knew things were about to collapse for her. A person can only take so much and she has obviously reached her limits. I watched her for awhile as she played with the kids, and I decided to go and comfort her. Let her know that I was there for her unconditionally. As we were playing building blocks with Maddix, she admitted to me that she

needed help. She wanted to talk to someone that wasn't family, and wouldn't sugar coat anything for her just because she was now the Luna.

I knew exactly who to go to, but was unsure if she would go along with them since that person was a man. Peter might as well be one of the girls though, because he was very flamboyant and very in love with his husband. He and I went to school together from kindergarten all the way through high school. He went on to college to become a therapist who specialized in helping people come to terms with their sexuality and needed help coming out. I know the situation was different, but I know she could trust him, and that's what she needed. I would talk to my brothers about it to see if it was a good idea, and then would bring it up to her.

To distract her from what she was feeling, we got on the subject of Eric and Michael's kids. We needed to make sure they were taken care of, and would do just that. With Melian being the new Luna, and having many new responsibilities on top of everything else, it was kind of out of the question at the moment for her to take on full-time responsibility for them. Grace heard us talking and asked if she could take on the responsibility of the twins. I had no problem with it, and thought it would help her with her grief. They were already familiar with her, so they wouldn't have to get used to someone else. Plus, she was part of the family and not a stranger. Mel said she would go over it with Jason, and let her know once they talked. Grace was alright with that, and said she would still continue to care for them during the day until she could take them home. Riley and Regina needed that stability, and Grace needed that comfort.

"Rebecca?" I heard my name called. I looked towards the door and there stood a tall gentleman I hadn't seen before. "Rebecca Carter?" he asked. "Yes, I'm Rebecca Carter. How can I help you?" He started to step into the room, and the guard blocked him from entering. He threw his hands up in defense and said, "My name is Cordell Jones, I was told to speak to you regarding your husband, Jason Carter. I am with the Royal Council." I asked Grace and Melian if they could keep an eye on Trinity and I walked Cordell into the hallway. "What does the council want with Jason?" I asked.

He ushered me over to the chairs that were in the foyer and started to explain. "Well, Mrs. Carter, your husband and sister in law are entitled to the life insurance that was carried by their father and a portion that was carried by their brothers. However, in the case of Eric and Michael's children, the majority would go into trust funds until they are of age to receive their benefits. We have been trying to reach out to your husband by phone, but haven't been successful. So, the council sent me to deliver the message. I was informed that your husband is indisposed at the moment, and was directed to you. I chose to speak with you first as your husband is the eldest, and I will speak with the Luna after."

I was completely dumbfounded. Who would have thought those idiots were smart enough to invest in life insurance? "I'm sorry to sound clueless, but are you sure about all of this?" I asked. He gave a snarky laugh and assured me he was being truthful. He even showed me the paperwork. "Are those figures correct? Surely this is some kind of mistake. I mean, I don't mean to come off as rude, but those men were the most selfish, self-centered men I had ever met."

He assured me once more that it was legitimate. I sat back in my chair and wiped my hands over my face. I asked him if he could meet me again in an hour so that I could retrieve my husband and sister-in-law. He agreed and I told him to meet us in the library. The twins' office was a murder scene, and I didn't think it was wise to take a member of the Royal Council there.

I hurried back to the nursery and told Grace I was sending in the nannies, because I needed Melian for awhile for something important. She said everything was fine, and to go do our business. I helped Mel off the floor and took her to the sitting area that I had just left and sat her down. I explained everything to her, and she stiffened up. "I don't want anything from those monsters. You and Jason can have my part if you want." She said. I shook my head and gave her a suggestion.

"No, no sweetie. Jason and I don't need all of that money. What we were allotted was more than enough. If you don't want to keep it personally, think about using it for something useful. Something that might benefit others as well. Towards the pack. Don't just throw it away. Take something awful and make something beautiful from it." She took in my words thoughtfully, and nodded her head. We needed to go find our husbands and fill them in before meeting again with Cordell. She was hesitant about facing them after the way she reacted, but came along with me anyway.

Finally Some Positivity

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Loki POV

After making sure Callum was secure, we addressed his men. They were being held by our warriors, and we wanted to give them the opportunity to relinquish their loyalty to Callum and join Blood Moon as warriors, or be imprisoned for attacking us without provocation. We weren't going to inform them about the imprisonment part until after we saw where they stood. During this attack they definitely lost more than we did. We had no deaths and only a handful of injuries. They, however, had close to 15 deaths and many injured.

We walked onto the training field and stood before those being held. I stepped forward and addressed them. "For those of you who don't know me, I am Loki Young. This is my brother Liam Young and we are the twin Alphas of Blood Moon. Now that introductions are out of the way, we want to have a little discussion with all of you. Who amongst you all was forced to fight for Callum? If you are, please stand up." I instructed. Out of approximately 30 men, 21 stood up.

"Please sit back down. I am gathering the rest of you who came onto our territory willingly and attacked our people. So the question is, were you in it as a warrior wanting to defend their pack against the 'bad guys' or were you in it for greed like your alpha? Either way, the 9 or 10 of you who weren't forced will be locked up for the Royal Council to question, and they will decide what to do with you." I said. One man yelled out, "On what grounds do you have to hold us? We were just following orders." I chuckled and replied, "On the grounds of attacking a pack without being provoked. Without having justifiable reasons to attack. It is against our laws and the council will deal with you accordingly. Anyone else?" No one else spoke among those who were heading to the barrack cells.

Liam took over and said, "Now, for the rest of you who were forced. Can you prove that you were forced? Are there witnesses in your pack who can verify your claims? Please raise your hands if that is possible." Out of 21, 18 raised their hands. "You three who didn't raise your hands, step forward." The boys stepped forward and we looked them up and down.

"How old are you boys?" Liam asked. The oldest looking of the three stepped forward. "My name is George, alpha. I am 15. Those two are my brothers. Jack and Henry. They are 12 and 13. We can't give you proof that we were being forced because we are orphans. We have no one to vouch for us. Alpha Callum said he would kill us if we didn't obey him," the boy said. Liam's face went hard, and he motioned the boys back to where the others sat. I then stepped back up and gave them their choice.

"Those of you who were forced have two options. 1. You can renounce your loyalty to the Dark Star pack, and become citizens of the Blood Moon pack. We will allow you to train and become real warriors after 6 months, so that we can evaluate whether your loyalty will remain and is true. Or, the second option is you can go back to Dark Star and live your life. Dark Star will be investigated by the Royal Council, and it will then be determined what will happen with the pack. If the council so chooses to dismantle the pack, you will still be welcome here under the same terms. Once you have made your decision please approach either Alpha Liam or Myself. We will remain here for the next 30 minutes. Please make your choice before we leave.", I informed them.

Without hesitation, the three boys approached me and said they would like to stay. The only problem was, we would have to find an adult to foster them. We can't just house minors without adult supervision. It did give me an idea about maybe starting an orphanage though. I knew the perfect person to run it as well. It would have to be something to mention to Liam and Mel. By the end of the 30 minutes, all but 10 men knew what they wanted. They wanted to relocate here. The 10 who were still undecided had families and wanted to make sure their families could relocate with them. I thought the answer would be obvious, but I guess I needed to clarify myself to say that their family was also welcome. In the end, all of them chose to relocate. Some even told stories about things going on at Dark Star that were questionable. I told them to make themselves available to the council when they arrived.

Just as we were finishing up, we saw Rebecca and Mel walking across the field. Rebecca had a smile spread across her face, Melian's face didn't show much emotion. However, she did pull us both into a group hug and made it clear she wasn't ready to release it just then. She finally pulled

away and apologized for being so stand-offish with us. She said we needed to talk later, and we promised her we would. Rebecca called us over to her and Jason and explained the situation with Cordell and the insurance policies. She said we were to meet him in 15 minutes, and Liam started to usher us back to the packhouse.

Before we entered the house, Liam and I pulled Mel aside. They wanted her thoughts before we spoke to him. She explained that she didn't want the money for herself. That if she chose to take it, she wanted it used for something good for the pack. Finally, something good is going to happen to all of us. I took the opportunity to mention my idea of an orphanage for kids who need a home. Her ears seemed to perk up at the mention of that and she actually smiled a genuine smile. "I think that is a fabulous idea. It would be a great start to bring something positive out of a shitty situation."

Improvements

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Melian POV

2 WEEKS LATER

Since meeting with Cordell, we have been making so many updates and improvements to the pack. Construction had started on the orphanage/group home. We decided to name it Nick's Place, and Grace has agreed to run it. She enlisted the help of 4 of our best girls from the packhouse to help her. Everyday she comes to me with new ideas and plans that she wants to implement once it's opened. To make things easier, we even hired 2 cooks and 4 maids to help her out. George, Jack and Henry were helping wherever they could, and Grace had grown quite fond of them. Liam, Loki and I decided to take care of Maddix as our own, since Grace had taken in the twins, and I have to say, the three of them bonded quickly.

Things seem to be coming together, but I still look over my shoulder occasionally. I started counseling with Rebecca's friend, Peter Harper, and let me tell you, he is a character. I didn't think I would feel comfortable with a male therapist, but he makes it so easy to talk to him. As for Rebecca, she finally announced to everyone that she was expecting. She had told Jason weeks ago, but they wanted to keep it a secret until things died down around the pack. She was starting to show, so the baby didn't give her much choice. I was going to be an aunty again, and I couldn't wait. Rico had finally woken up and was getting better every day. He was back to work, but Liam insisted on light duty only for awhile. No training until the doctor said so. Rico wasn't pleased with that, but between the twins, myself and his sister, he had to give in to his fate. It was kind of funny watching him pout.

Being married to two hard-headed Alphas had its challenges. Especially with me also being stubborn. No matter what, though, we always make sure we are all in sync with each other before we go to sleep. We never go to sleep mad at each other, and if we have any disagreement we solve it right then. Letting things fester isn't healthy for normal relationships, let alone one like ours. Loki had linked me to ask me to come check out the new cell house. Everything was finally finished, and the twins were super proud of their design. I grabbed my jacket and went out the door.

I passed some of our newest pack members, and greeted them happily. I noticed a gentleman in the distance watching me. He came from Dark Star, and looked like he hated the world. He gave me the heebie jeebies, so I tried my best to keep my distance from him. "Luna?" I heard Rico call for me from behind me. I turned to face him and smiled as he approached. "Rico! Haven't we gone over this? It's just Mel. You are family. Even in public." I laughed.

"Yea, sorry. Erm..I have a dilemma, and you are the queen of dilemmas, respectfully. Do you have a moment to talk?" I nodded my head, and linked Loki to tell him I would be a bit longer because Rico needed me for something important. "Let's sit," I said and pointed to the stone wall by the fountain. We both sat, and Rico looked as nervous as a cat in a room full of rocking chairs. "You going to tell me what's going on?" I asked. He pulled his jacket tighter around him and said, "I found my mate, but they aren't sure what they want to do. I would be their second chance mate. I don't mind that part, but I am conflicted too. I was very close to their first mate." My mind started to race, trying to figure out who it could be, and then it clicked.

"Grace?" I asked. His eyes clinched shut and he nodded his head. "What do I do Mel? I care about her a lot, I always have, but how do I go from being like a sister to my life partner? She kissed me when we found out, but now we are both confused and probably over thinking it." he confessed. I thought about it for a minute and then replied, "Here's what we are going to do. After I finish up with my husbands and see their prize building of a cell house, I want you to meet Grace and I at the coffee bistro. I'll do my best to help you both figure this out." He flashed that toothy smile of his, and thanked me. I gave him a hug, and he went his way and I headed to the cell house.

I walked at a faster pace because I was starting to get cold, and when I saw the building they had just finished, I froze. It was massive. "How many people do you plan on locking up in this monstrosity?" I asked Liam as I wrapped my arms around him. He scoffed and made a point to inform me that there were more than just cells in there. "There are also state-of-the art interview rooms, small efficiency apartments for guards who haven't found their mates, and a whole basement for making people talk with special toys." he said proudly. I rolled my eyes and simply replied "You silly boys with your special talking toys." He asked if I wanted a tour and I politely declined.

Loki came up to us and looked at me and asked what Rico needed. It wasn't my place to say anything, so I didn't tell them. I just told him that Rico was having a girl issue. Which wasn't a lie. Loki started to laugh because he knew I was dying to spill the beans, and said, "Mel, babe, we already know about his situation with Grace. Good job keeping his secret though." I scowled at him and he blew me a kiss. They both told me they loved me and went back to work.

I blew them kisses and turned around to go towards the coffee bistro. No sooner as I did, I ran straight into Mr. Grumpy Face.

Accepting Happiness

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MELIAN POV

After bumping into Mr. Grumpy Face, I balled my hands into fists and squeezed my eyes shut. I released my breath and gave him a fake smile. "Oh, excuse me. I didn't see you behind me. I apologize for running into you," I said to him. His body stiffened and he replied, "It's perfectly fine, Luna. I was actually coming to speak to the Alphas, but I need to speak to you as well. Do you have time to speak to me?" I looked at him curiously and nodded my head.

"Sure, what can I do for you, Mr.....?" I asked and he quickly responded with his name, "My apologies. It's Christopher Reynolds. I arrived not long ago from Dark Star pack. I have kept my distance because of the reputation my former pack has brought upon us that hail from there. I know I have been standoffish, but I promise you that most of us who relocated here, to Blood Moon, are nothing like Callum and his family. I was the librarian in Dark Star, and books are my life. I am also a historian, and I specialize in shifter history. The library here is very minimalist, and I wanted to speak with you about the possibility of changing that. I have many old books that I have collected over the years, and I would love to contribute by adding them to the library here."

I was taken back by his offer, and I agreed with him that our library was less than what it could be. It was massive, and we did have some research materials, but the casual reading overtook all the good stuff. In my opinion, history and research information was far more interesting than the romance novels and autobiographies. "Mr. Reynolds, I apologize if I came off as unapproachable, or if we have made you feel uncomfortable here. That was never our intention of making anyone feel unwelcomed, and if there are pack members who are making you feel this way, please let us know immediately. We will not tolerate it. I promise you. As far as the offer for the books, we would appreciate any donations you feel compelled to share. Just let us know when you would like them to be picked up." I said.

He nodded his head and turned to walk away when something dawned on me. "Mr. Reynolds? Wait. How would you feel about becoming the new head librarian and historian for Blood Moon? Our current librarian is ready to retire, and we need a good replacement. You will have free reign to arrange, decorate and add anything you wish." I called out to him. He stopped and looked back at me and replied, "I would be honored, Luna. I will come speak with you

tomorrow, if that is OK?" I told him I looked forward to it, and made a mental note to look into who was giving our newest members a hard time.

I finally arrived at Coffee & Thyme, the bistro I was meeting Rico and Grace at, and noticed they hadn't arrived yet. I was greeted by Hazel, the owner's daughter and she led me to my normal table. I like to come here for small meetings with my mates, my brother or sometimes even my therapy sessions are there. I loved the atmosphere, and the coziness of it. It helped that Hazel and her Mom Astrid made the best creamy apple cider and homemade pickles.

I always ordered extra pickles for my sandwiches because they were so good. Today, though, I ordered a flatbread veggie pizza for the three of us. Instead of pizza sauce, Astrid uses a spread made of cream cheese, olive oil, avocado, basil, thyme, oregano and garlic with just a small squeeze of lemon. She then tops it with onions, peppers, tomatoes, artichoke hearts, olives, and mushrooms. Once it's baked, she sprinkles the top with arugula, feta cheese, and a sweet vinaigrette. I know it sounds weird, but it is heavenly. I ordered a carafe of coffee, and asked for several different flavored creamers to accompany it.

Just as Hazel walked away with the order, Rico and Grace walked in. I waved them over and they both gave me a nervous grin. They sat across from me, and looked as if they were about to be scolded by the principal. I chuckled at them and said, "It's OK you two, no one is going to bite your heads off for being mates." They seemed to relax a bit and I told them that I had ordered us a pizza and explained what it was. They both seemed excited about it and thanked me.

We made small talk until the food arrived, and then began to eat. I learned that neither of them were upset anymore about being mates, they were more concerned about what others would think. Namely, Roxy and the twins. I assured them that the twins were on board and happy about it, and I was pretty sure that Roxy would be elated. She loved both of them like they were her own. As we were talking, the twins walked in, and came straight to our table.

"Hey guys," Rico smiled. Liam and Loki smiled back and sat down with us. Thankfully, there was enough pizza left over for them to have some too. Loki asked Hazel to bring him and Liam a frosty glass of their new juniper IPA beer, and they helped themselves to the pizza. They joked around with Rico a bit before Grace said to us, "I can't go through this with Rico without all of your approval. I need to hear from others that Nick would be OK with me being mated to one of his best friends. You knew him best, and you know how he would feel about it." Loki stopped mid-chew and Liam nearly choked on his beer. Liam gathered his thoughts and blurted out, "Of course Nick would be fine with it. He wanted you to be happy no matter what. Even when he was alive, all he wanted was your happiness, Grace. He loved Rico like a brother, and would want his happiness a priority as well. So, if you really think about it, maybe Nick convinced the goddess that you two would make each other the happiest. So, be happy." He sat back in his seat, proud of his epiphany, and smiled at the couple.

All Loki and I could do was sit and nod our heads in agreement. Grace finally accepted that Liam could be right, and told Rico that she accepted him as her mate. However, he would have to be alright with her running the orphanage still, and the fact that she was going to be raising my brothers' twins. He agreed and even said that he had no problem with them moving into the

orphanage with her. That way, nothing had to change for her. She cupped his face and crashed her lips onto his, and, without saying another word, they got up and left. The three of us knew where they were going, and felt happy that our friends chose happiness over everything.

Inner Demons

Chapter 77 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

Rico POV

The talk we had with Mel really helped ease both of our minds. After we left, we went for a walk to just talk and figure things out. We decided that until Nick's Place was finished I would stay with her in her room, which was next to the nursery and close to the boys' room. We ended up having a movie night with George, Jack and Henry and then she left to get them settled. The twins were already in the nursery sleeping, so I decided to sneak in and check on them. Riley was in a green sleeper with alligators on them and Regina was in a little yellow nightgown with a daisy pattern. I couldn't get over how cute they were, and that I was going to instantly be a dad figure to them. I have always wanted a large family, but I would be happy with whatever happened. This whole situation is such an amazing feeling, but for some reason I still felt a little guilt and sadness. There was once I caught myself wishing that Nick was here so I could share this with him, and then I remembered that it's because he wasn't here is why this happened.

I promised Grace from the beginning that I never wanted to take his place in her heart, but to create a new place next to him. I promised to strive to be the man she deserved and needed. Not just to her but to the kids also. I made sure both babies were covered with their blankets and then went to Maddix's crib to check on him too. I have really come to love this kid. He is super smart and just the sweetest little guy. I was asked to be his godfather, and I quickly accepted.

After I made sure all the babies were secure and comfy, I went back to Grace's room. She was already in her pajamas and sitting on the couch drinking a cup of tea. I had patrol duty in 45 minutes and I just wanted to spend every second with her before I had to leave. I already knew a lot about her, but there were little things that I was clueless about. Like, I didn't know that the smell of lavender gave her headaches, or the fact that she loves the smell of mud. Those weird little quirky things I have been learning about her have really made me feel closer to her.

It came time for me to have to go, so I softly kissed her lips and said goodbye. I couldn't wait for this short shift to be over so that I could come back and crawl in bed with her. Just having her close to me helped relax the turmoil I had in my head since the attack. After I closed the door, I went down the hall towards the kitchen. I heard laughing and realized it was the twins and Mel. I

stopped in the doorway and stared at them joking and making food. The love and respect they have for one another is a beautiful thing, and one day it will be Grace and I. I was sure of it.

"Hey Rico! Going out for duty?" Loki asked. I nodded my head and wished them goodnight. Walking across the wet grass towards the cell house, I noticed that my sister was lying on a bench by the training gym. She had a blanket with her, so I knew she was there for a reason. "Monica? Why are you out here? Why aren't you at home?" I asked. I noticed she was crying and had a bruise on her left cheek. My wolf, Manny, started to stir. She sat up and answered me, "One word, Monty." I pursed my lips and took a deep breath and replied to her, "Uncle Monty. What the hell did he do now? It's obvious he hit you, but why?"

She shook her head and said, "He didn't hit me, momma did. He came in drunk and tried to steal money from her purse. I happened to walk in and catch him and started to yell at him to put it back. Mom heard me yelling and came to see why and when I told her, she accused me of lying, saying that Monty would never do that to her. I told her that I wasn't lying and that I couldn't believe she chose to believe a drunken bastard over her own child, and that's when she slapped me as hard as she could. I cursed at her for doing it and she ended up slugging me with her fist the next time for disrespect. I grabbed my blanket and left. I ended up out here on this bench until I figured out if they were sleeping or not. Then I'll go back in." I nodded my head and told her to go back to the house now. It was dark and things were always more dangerous at night because rogues could hide in the darkness. She agreed and walked away. This was something that I would have to handle gently so that nothing else happened to Monica. Monty was a snake and I wouldn't put anything past him.

I marched into the cell house with a purpose. I wanted to check to see how our new security cameras were working, and to spy a little on Callum. The guards said he had been talking to himself a lot lately, and I wanted to see what he was saying. I closed the door in the security room quietly so not to disturb the 2 guards who were sleeping. The guard on watch, his name is Brad, and has been working in the cells since he turned 18. He knew the old cell house like the back of his hand, and helped to design parts of the new one. "What's up, Brad? Anything exciting going on tonight?" I whispered.

He shook his head and said "Nah, even crazy Callum has been quiet. He has just been sitting in the middle of his cell like he had been meditating for most of the night." He pointed to the screen and I watched it closely. Something looked off, but I couldn't quite make it out. I walked out of the room and went straight for Callum's cell. He was in one of the Max cells that had no windows, and was made of see-through bulletproof plexiglass that was very thick. It had holes at the top and bottom of the panes to allow air into the cell. There was a heavy door as thick as the panes with a slot for his food trays. I kneeled on the floor and watched him. Brad was right. He wasn't moving. I couldn't tell if he was breathing either. The only people who had keys to his cell were the alphas. It limited the chance of someone letting him out if they were the only ones with keys. I called the alphas and Mel answered the phone. I asked for one of the twins and Liam got on the other end.

"Liam, I started my patrol at the cell house and security noticed that Callum hadn't moved in awhile. I came down here to check it out, and I couldn't tell if he was breathing or not. What do I

do?" I asked. Liam said they would be down immediately, and within 5 minutes they were there. Loki opened the door, and when he went to touch Callum, sparks enveloped Loki. "What the fuck!" Liam yelled and rushed to help his brother. He kicked Callum in the head and the sparks stopped. Callum fell over and started to laugh. When he looked up at the twins, his eyes were glowing white. I yelled at the top of my lungs for the alphas to get out immediately. Liam grabbed Loki and dragged him out and I shut the door quickly behind them. I twisted the key to lock it as Callum slammed into it. He released a screech that was deafening and unworldly. He started to scream at us through the glass, "We are coming for you! You can't stop the demons inside me alphas. You can't hide!"

Mammon

Chapter 78 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

Loki POV

What in the actual mother of the darklord fuck just happened? How didn't anyone notice him summoning demons in his cell? His walls are see through for shits sake. I was pacing a hole in our office floor trying to figure out what had just happened at the cell house with Callum. "Man, Loki, I really think you should go let Flores check you out." Rico insisted. I shook my head at him and told him that I wasn't doing anything until I could grasp what happened. My body was still tingling from the electric shocks, but there wasn't any pain. My heart rate had settled down quite a lot, and the only thing still buzzing was my head. If I were honest, I was more freaked out than anything. Yet, I didn't know how to let down my brave front and admit that to everyone. My anxiety was coming out as anger and frustration, when in reality I was scared shitless.

"Liam, I know this isn't a choice to be made easily, but I think we need to consult with Aunt Nadine. She has contacts who are witches and demonologists, and I think one of them could help." I mentioned. Liam jumped to his feet and started objecting immediately. "Bro, there is no way in hell we are involving her. NONE! I will talk with Rory before I talk to Nadine. She has solid ties to witches, not just contacts. Plus, I can trust Rory."

Our cousin Rory had found her mate recently during a trip into the human city to go wedding dress shopping with our cousin Leeanna, who was getting married soon. She was nervous to tell us because he was a witch. We didn't care what he was, as long as he wasn't practicing the dark arts, and he was good for her. In Liam's opinion, Luke and his coven were more reliable than anyone Nadine ever knew. I have to admit he wasn't wrong. I just didn't want to put more on Rory or Luke with their bond being so new. We know all too well what chaos can do to a new bonded relationship. It will either break it or strengthen it, and in our case we got the better end of the deal. We learned so much not only about each other, but what was going on around the

outside of our territory boundaries. "Fine, let's get a hold of Rory and see if we can meet. I'll have her bring Luke and his parents. Surely we can come up with something."

I didn't know if they would be awake or not, so I went and grabbed a snack in the kitchen. My adrenaline was disappearing and I was feeling nauseous and I knew if I didn't eat, I would get a terrible headache. I made myself a pastrami sandwich with mustard and pickles, and grabbed a bag of BBQ chips. I went to the fridge and grabbed a Coca-Cola and sat at the counter to eat it. The silence felt good, so I was going to enjoy it while I could. After I ate, I went back into the office. The only person left in there was Liam. "Did you call Rory?" he asked. I shook my head and thought it would be too late tonight.

Liam insisted that we call immediately because it was technically an emergency situation. An alpha wolf, who is supposedly possessed by a demon, isn't a good thing. If the demon becomes too strong, not even the most secure cells will hold them. I conceded to my decision to wait until morning and I picked up the phone and called my little cousin. Rory was an odd girl, but I think that's why her and I got along so well. She quickly answered and assured me that they were all still awake and playing card games. I asked her to put me on speaker so that Luke could hear the conversation. Luckily, his parents were also present, as was his grandmother. I explained the events that had happened with Callum, and I heard his grandmother gasp.

"Alpha Loki, my name is Gretchen Bastille. I am Luke's grandmother and am the former High Priestess of our coven. Proudly, my granddaughter now holds that title. Did I hear you correctly when you said that he summoned a demon to possess him?" she asked. "Ms. Bastille, it seems that way, but we aren't sure exactly how that kind of stuff works. That is why we are reaching out to your grandson and family. We would like to learn whatever we can," I replied. Without hesitation, Luke replied saying they would leave first thing in the morning and would be in Blood Moon by noon. I thanked them, and disconnected the call. I told my brother and the rest of the plan, and we both decided to go and try to get a little sleep before it got much later. A few hours of sleep was much better than none at all. Neither of us functioned well with no sleep.

We snuck back into our room, and Mel was still fast asleep. Her soft snores filled the room, and I couldn't help but release a laugh. She would protest until she was blue in the face that she didn't snore, but she most definitely did. Once we were nestled back in bed close to our mate, Liam passed out almost immediately. When he is overly stressed, he becomes plagued with fatigue. I wrapped my arm around Mel, and buried my nose in her hair.

I eventually drifted off into a peaceful sleep. I'm not sure if what came next was a dream or if I was actually hearing a message from the goddess herself, but it felt real. I was sitting in the middle of the thickest part of the forest, and was meditating while in my wolf form. I kept hearing words from the most ethereal voice telling me things that I needed to hear. Almost as if she was trying to give me hints on where to start and how to finish the situation with Callum. "You have started in the right direction, dear Loki." "It will take a powerful witch and your mate's wolf to beat the alpha demon." "It won't be easy, but you will succeed." "His name is Mammon, remember this." were the words that kept filling my mind. As I was memorizing what was being said, I was brought out of what I thought was just a dream. "Loki, it's almost noon, wake your ass up!" Liam yelled at me. I kept what happened in the dream to myself for now, and

hurriedly got dressed. Mel had an appointment with her therapist, Peter, and then Dr. Flores for a checkup. I was bummed that I wouldn't see her before these meetings started, but couldn't wait to see her when we were finished.

Liam and I rushed downstairs to the common room, and Rory and the others were there waiting for us. Rory ran up and hugged me, and I was so happy to see her. Seeing her and her mate together was kind of comical. Rory was super short at barely over 5ft, and Luke was taller than us. A small elderly woman made her way towards us with her arms spread open. She enveloped me in a hug, and said, "You are Alpha Loki, it's lovely to place a face on a voice." I nodded and then she hugged Liam. "Alpha Liam, I am Gretchen Bastille, I am Luke's grandmother, and I am here to do whatever I can to help. The demon you are dealing with isn't an easy one to banish, but it can be done. His name is Mammon, and he is extremely dangerous. He wasn't summoned, but sent to Alpha Callum. We are dealing with very dark magic here."

Breakthroughs and Good News

Chapter 79 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

MELIAN POV

Therapy with Peter went really well today. I had a couple big breakthroughs, and I was able to face them head on. Today we spoke a lot about what I remembered about my mother. I was very young when she died, and most of my memories of her get smothered by all the bad memories of my father and brothers. However, today, Peter was able to help me get through that wall that was keeping me from her. Once we broke through, it was like she hadn't left me years ago, but it felt very recent. I swore I could smell gardenias and coconuts. It was the smell of my mother's bath oils. I remember it well because I got in trouble a few times for getting into them. The more I walked down memory lane, the more I could remember. I can remember the way she walked, and how her hair fell over her shoulders. I can remember the way her nose would wrinkle when she smiled.

The only thing I couldn't remember, no matter how much I tried, was the sound of her voice and the sound of her laughter. Those are 2 things I really wish I could find in my memories. Another breakthrough was remembering why she told me I was born with the hair colors I have. It explained so much about things my father would spit at me as if they were insults. My great-grandmother on my mother's side was Fae. My great-grandfather was a wolf, and he was the alpha of a pack that had long since been forgotten. They were attacked by vampires, and my great-grandparents and their daughters were able to escape. They ended up being taken in by Mystic Shadows even though my great-grandpa was of alpha blood. That's where grandma met grandpa, and mom met my dad. When I was born, I not only had traits of the Fae, but I also had a

special wolf. Obviously, Ruby is very powerful. Mom called my form of hybridism a gift. That's why she gave me the name Melian. It means "dear or beloved gift" in Greek. I wish that it wouldn't have taken the worst things in my life to help me remember something that was important.

My time with Peter was up and I had an appointment with Dr. Flores for a checkup. I felt fine, so I protested to my husbands. They blatantly told me under no certain terms I was getting out of it, so to make sure I went. I left Peter's house and went down the street to the hospital. The receptionist told me he would see me soon and a nurse would be out shortly to take me to a room. It wasn't long at all and I went into the room and changed into the hideous hospital gown that was laid on the bed for me. Roughly 15 minutes later, Dr. Flores came in flashing his big smile that made me feel at ease.

"Luna, how are we doing today? Have there been any issues that I need to be aware of?" He asked. I shook my head no, and told him that if I didn't know otherwise, I couldn't tell I had ever been injured. He asked me to lay flat on my back and put my feet in the stirrups so he could check the healing down there. He already knew that it was, but I think he was more concerned that the mating with my mates may have caused some damage to me. The nurse assisting him was an older woman, who held my hand throughout the whole examination.

He pulled the sheet down over me, and sat up to ask me a question. "Luna, have you had any tenderness, mood swings, frequent urination, or fatigue lately?" I thought about it and told him that I had been very tired, and my mood swings were crazy. I also told him that I felt like I couldn't get enough water, even though I was drinking quite a bit. He nodded his head and placed his fingers under his chin. He looked at his nurse and shot a glance towards the cabinets in the room. She handed me a little cup and asked me to pee in it, but before I did, she had taken 3 vials of blood for testing. I went into the bathroom and peed in the tiny cup, and took it back to Dr. Flores. "Doc, is there something wrong with me? You are acting strangely." I asked. He gave me that big smile again and told me not to worry, that I was healthy and had healed well, but he needed to confirm a suspicion. He stepped out of the room, and returned 20 minutes later. He had a happy look on his face, but I was still nervous.

"Well, Luna, I got my confirmation. You are pregnant. I want to get an ultrasound to see if we just have one little one, or more. I will be right back with the machine. Congratulations," he said as he once again left the room. However, this time, he left me shocked and speechless. I was happy. Don't get me wrong, but how were the twins going to feel? Especially after we just took over as Maddix's parents. I had to stay positive and believe they were going to be just as excited as I am. Dr. Flores came through the door with an ultrasound machine and got it ready as I lied back on the bed. He had me lift the gown, and he pulled the sheet up over my underwear. "Alright, Luna. Here we go. This gel may be a little cold, but I tried to warm it a little," he said, and squirted a big glob on my belly.

He took the wand and started to smear it all around. I could hear little heartbeats, and realized there were definitely more than one. "Luna, it looks as if you are around 4, almost 5 weeks along, and there are two little ones growing in there. From the look of it, they will also be identical. One placenta, two sacs. We won't be able to tell gender for several more weeks. I'm

sure you already know, but werewolf pregnancies are different than humans. Where humans carry to term at 40 weeks, werewolves are about 24. You are also carrying alpha babies, so they may even come a little earlier than normal," he explained. I nodded my head, letting him know I understood, then I sat up to ask him something important. "Dr. Flores, how long do Fae normally carry their babies?" He looked at me with a confused face and asked why I would ask about that.

I took a deep breath and said, "Because, today in therapy I remembered that my mother once told me that I was special because I would not only receive a wolf who would be very special, but because I was also of Fae decent. I am a Wolf/Fae hybrid, doc."

Daddies

Chapter 80 - Their Bullied and Broken Mate

Melian POV

Dr. Flores was in shock by my revelation. I think I would be too if I were in his shoes. He squeezed his eyes shut and let out his breath and said with a chuckle, "Looks like we both have some research to do, don't we? Until we find out for certain the ins and outs of a Fae pregnancy and birth, we will just monitor you closely. Sounds like a plan, Luna?" I nodded at him and promised to help him find out what I could. The only person I knew alive that might know something was Jason. He wasn't much older than me when mom died, but maybe she had told him more about our family than I knew.

Dr. Flores said he wanted to see me again in a week, unless something happened, and left the room so I could get dressed. He laid pictures of the ultrasound on the table for me as he left. I had to sit there to gather myself for a minute before I could even move. I was about to have 2 babies. Twin alpha babies who could possibly be born with Fae traits. What those traits would be is another mystery. I don't even fully know what mine are. Other than my hair and my stature, nothing else would indicate I was anything other than a wolf. I finally finished dressing and started my way out of the hospital. I felt like I was in a dreamworld.

On the way to the packhouse, I was hoping my mates were already back from their meeting. I ran into a few pack members and conversed with them briefly before politely excusing myself. Opening the door to the packhouse, I walked straight to our room and hoped that my mates were there. As the door to our bedroom opened, I heard the TV blaring. They were definitely home. I closed the door behind me and just stood there watching my mates as they watched whatever was on the TV.

For the first time in a long time, they looked slightly relaxed. I made my way around the sectional and plopped in between them. Loki scooted closer and asked, "How were your appointments? Was Dr. Flores happy with your healing?" I placed my hand on his cheek and gave him a smile. "More than happy actually," I replied. "Healthy and healed, and he was happy that I sought out therapy. He spoke highly of Peter," I continued. Liam shifted in his seat and looked deep into my eyes. "Spill it, baby. There's more going on than what you are telling us. Good or bad, we are here for you. Remember?" he said. Scrunching my face up, I let out a deep sigh. I had to tell them, wanted to tell them, but I was terrified of what they would say about the hybrid situation. Now wasn't the time to give into that fear though, so I got off the couch and turned to sit on the coffee table so I could look them both in the face when I started to speak.

"Well, first off, I need you both to hear me completely out before reacting or responding. Understand?" I started. They both nodded their heads and kept listening intently. "Good. As you know, I saw Peter today for therapy. It was a really good session, and I had a huge breakthrough. I was able to remember things about my mom that I couldn't before because of fear. Today I can remember the way she smelled, the way she talked and the sound of her laughter. However, I also remember her telling me about her family, and what I am. It explains a lot of things about me. Like my hair color, for instance. Apparently, I'm a hybrid, a Fae/wolf hybrid." I continued.

Loki started to speak, and I had to raise my hand to silence him. I was about to tell them the hard part. At that part, I was unsure of how they would react, and my heart started racing. I let out a breath I didn't know I was holding and pulled out the pictures from the ultrasound and handed one to each of them. "Here's the biggest revelation from today though, we are going to be parents....to twins," I finished and handed them the ultrasound pictures. I closed my eyes waiting to hear their response, but one didn't come. I opened my eyes and saw the reason why. Both of my big strong husbands were staring at the pictures with tears streaming down their faces. I didn't know how to feel. Were these happy tears? Angry tears?

I wish one of them would say something. My eyes kept bouncing back and forth between the two of them, and finally Loki said something. "Wow, this is a whole lot to take in. In both situations. As far as you are a hybrid, who gives a shit. You are our not only our mate, but our wife, and we married you because we loved you, mate bond or no mate bond. Now, you are making us fathers, and that is the greatest gift you could have ever given us. I just hope I can live up to what they need me to be," he said. He leaned over and gave me a kiss, and rubbed his hand over my belly. I knew he would be a great father, he was already a great father figure to Maddix.

Liam still hadn't said a word or took his eyes off the picture. "Liam? Please say something," I asked. He just took his hand and placed it on my knee, giving it a slight squeeze. "I'm going to be a dad, Mel. What an honor that is. What a gift you have given us. I'm in shock to be truthful. I'm beyond happy though, and like Loki said, Who cares if you are a hybrid, you are just Mel to us. The love of our lives. Mother to our kids. All of them, including Maddix.

This doesn't change anything where he is concerned. He is still ours, and he will never know any difference. I promise you that." He declared. I don't know why I was so worried. I should have known they would be happy, but you can never truly know in these situations. I asked them how the meeting with Rory's mates' family went and they explained everything that went on. This

Gretchen woman sounded like a hoot. I can't wait to meet her, and the rest. They told me to get ready, and we would go to dinner and meet with them again. I ask that we keep the pregnancy quiet for now, at least until this situation with Callum is over.

They agreed and I went into the closet to change. I put on a long sleeved, dark green maxi dress and put my hair in braids. I slipped on some flat slippers and grabbed a sweater. I knew we were going to be inside, but I was still cold. I guess one plus of being pregnant in the winter time was the extra heat from the pups. We went into the private dining hall where the table was already filled to the brim with food, and Luke's family stood up to greet us. A small older woman, who I assumed was Gretchen, came straight up to me and wrapped her arms around me. "Luna, it's nice to finally meet you," she said and then placed her hand on my stomach. "You are carrying the key to everyone's future in there, but first we need to kill the demon" she whispered.