

## Growing Up

Days before their eighteenth birthday, Fiero's sister, Lysandra has shifted to her Lycan but what surprised him more was that she was mated to the grumpy werewolf elder.

After they all ran off towards the forest and left him alone in the middle of the grass field, he puffed and took a step back before turning around. Then he waved his hand and spoke to himself.

"Go, run free,"

Then he paused as he realized something.

"I don't think that is appropriate..."

He then scratched his chin and spoke.

"Run free is not for sisters who run off with their mate but for deceased pets... I was wrong... but who cares?" he mumbled.

"Pfft, never mind,"

Fiero made his way back to the villa where his mother and cousins were waiting. They all approached him when he entered the villa's front door.

"How was Lysandra?" his mother asked.

Fiero stood in front of his mother and answered.

"She's a dog now,"

Roe narrowed her eyes on her son and crossed her arms over her chest. Fiero saw his mother's reaction and shook his head.

"What I mean is she's a Lycan now, Mom. Dad went after her after she took off with Lord Philip." Fiero told her and then he noticed how his mother wasn't even surprised.

It made Fiero think that their parents must have known something about his sister and the werewolf elder.

"Why was Lord Philip there?" Zander asked, confused about what happened.

Fiero, Zander, and Ivan all looked at Roe, waiting for her answer. Roe let out an audible sigh and answered.

"Lord Philip is Lysandra's mate,"

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After all the revelations about Lysandra and Philip, the events in the Alpha's son's birthday, and what happened in the day after that, Fiero felt like everything was dumped on him all at once he felt his mind was going to blow up.

So, when he had free time, he drove towards the Beach Park Filyevskiy to unwind. It was more than an hour's drive and it was just enough for him to have a moment to himself.

But when he got there, just as he set up his folding chair and parasol, facing the water, a portal appeared and Zander stepped out of it. Seeing his older cousin, Fiero groaned.

"Come on. What are you doing here?" Fiero asked, whining.

"I saw you leave earlier. I saw this place in your head so I followed," Zander replied as he sat on the ground next to Fiero.

"Did it ever occur to you that I want to be alone here?"

"No," Zander responded to what Fiero asked.

The truth was, Zander knew that Fiero was overwhelmed by what just happened in a span of a few days. He doesn't want him to be alone in times like that that's why he barged in uninvited. Zander felt like it was his responsibility to look after his younger cousins.

"You came here and left Ivan? Wasn't he your responsibility?" Fiero asked.

"I made sure Ivan was asleep before I came here," Zander answered.

Fiero looked at his cousin.

"You made sure? You mean you compelled him to sleep?"

"Perhaps,"

Zander answered.

Fiero inwardly groaned and slouched down his chair. He then looked at the still water in front of them. There was a moment of silence between them as Zander just sat there and enjoyed the cool breeze against his skin.

After being in complete silence, Zander opened his eyes when he was bombarded with Fiero's thoughts about his sister and her mate who was older than her.

"So, how are you taking all of this?" Zander asked.

Fiero heaved a deep breath before answering.

"Like I have no choice,"

Zander smiled.

"Well, you are right. But are you happy about it? For your sister, I mean?"

Fiero looked at Zander.

"Put yourself in my shoes and answer your question,"

Zander chuckled at what Fiero said.

"It will take time to adjust but if she is happy then I am happy," Zander said.

Fiero huffed and looked forward.

"I am still in the adjustment period,"

Fiero's adjustment period went on couldn't help but be civil with the werewolf elder whenever he visited his sister. Slowly, he accepted the fact that even after high school when they were in separate colleges, he joined the couple in checking out Salem.

Since Fiero is at Cambridge University and his sister is at MIT, he often visits her but made sure to not visit when Philip was visiting. He realized to give the couple time alone and not meddle with them anymore.

He was quite doing well in Cambridge on his own, making friends with both human and supernatural. In the early years of his studies at the said university, he showed exemplary performance in his chosen course and he gained wide popularity among his classmates and professors.

Fiero also developed an interest in entrepreneurship so he took some minor subjects as he somehow wanted to have his own company to run despite being the future Alpha of the Crimson Shadow Pack.

His parents are all supportive of whatever he wants, whatever profession he wants to pursue. He was glad to have that kind of parent that's why studying and making something for himself has been like a walk in the park.

One day, after his last subject for the week, he was on his way back to his apartment when someone called him. Fiero turned around and saw one of the humans in his class that he had gotten close to.

"Oh, hey Gobert,"

"What are you doing tonight?" his human friend, Gobert asked.

"Uhm, sleep?" Fiero replied.

Gobert clocked his tongue against the roof of his mouth. He has known Fiero for quite some time now and he knew that the guy was all study and rest, not much of a having fun kind of guy.

He remembered that the only time he left the area was when he visited his sister. He doesn't even have a girlfriend, nor does he have one, which is why he is determined to take him out and introduce him to the ladies he knows.

"The guys and I are going out in the pub tonight, and you are coming with us," Gobert told him.

As he expected, Fiero let out a sigh. He was about to shake his head but Gobert beat him to anything he was about to say.

"I am not taking no for an answer. I will see you tonight. I will get you and drag you out of your apartment," Gobert said, leaving Fiero gawking.

Gobert smirked and patted Fiero's shoulder.

"I still have a class, I will see you tonight,"

Gobert pressed and jogged away from him.

'He is persistent,'

Fiero heard his Lycan speak.

'Yeah,'

'Just go out with him, you won't die from having fun,'

His Lycan said, making Fiero think about going out to have fun.

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When Fiero thought about what his Lycan said that having fun wouldn't get him killed, he thought he had a point. What harm can having fun do to him? So, he joined his friend Gobert in the pub for a couple of drinks.

He thought, yeah having fun once in a while is harmless, but boy he was wrong.

When they were on their third bottle of beer, some frat boys from their college came into the pub and they started making fun of Gobert. As it turned out, one of the frat guys was Gobert's high school bully and he brought his bully attitude to university and still targeted poor Gobert.

Fiero intervened as he couldn't take someone being bullied. One thing led to another and the next thing Fiero knew, there was a brawl between him and the frat boys, and not only did they trashed the pub, but he also ended up with a broken bottle stabbed into his abdomen.

Scared for Fiero's life and his life, Gobert drags him out of the pub and stuffed Fiero into the backseat of his car. He then frantically drove the unconscious and bloody Fiero to the hospital but then met with traffic.

"Come on... Come on..."

Gobert mumbled as he nervously tapped his fingers against the stirring wheel, the same time praying that his friend, the only person who stood up for him survived.

"Come on! Move it!"

Gobert yelled, pressing the horn repeatedly.

"You can just drive me back to my apartment,"

When Gobert heard Fiero speak, he was startled, especially when he saw him sitting in the backseat, looking okay.

"Fiero!"

"Hmm?"

Fiero responded as he removed his bloody shirt. Maybe it was a habit that Fiero casually removed his shirt after getting hurt, but when he heard a loud gasp from his friend, that's when he realized that Gobert didn't know that he was not human.

He slowly looked up and met Gobert's wide eyes.

"You... You ... You..." Gobert stammered as he looked at his clean abdomen.

"I can explain,"

Fiero said, and before he could continue what he was about to say, Gobert passed out, his head hitting the horn causing the loud sound. As the other motorist started to complain, Fiero hissed and then he unbuckled Gobert's seatbelt and pulled him to the backseat.

He took Gobert's hoodie and wore it before he put a seatbelt around his unconscious body, and then he slipped into the driver's seat. He buckled up and drove away as the traffic started to move.