

one of the guards," he says, making me feel sick.

He then turned back to the grave he was cleaning and made my way to the back. The first grave I came to belonged to a woman kneeling down. I set to work. When I finished hers, I moved to the next and looked across the rows; the weight of what my mother had done settled heavily on my shoulders.

It was hard to comprehend how she could do such a thing to her own people. After turning back to the grave in front of me, I noticed that it had the same last name as the woman's grave beside it and that it was a child's grave. 3 months old, the child was barely given a chance to live. My heart broke as I stared at the picture of the little angelic face on the headstone.

I was the daughter of a serial killer. I had bad blood. My hands were tainted by the blood of the woman who carried me. I scrubbed the grave and cleaned it before moving on to the next and next. With each one, the pit of my stomach became deeper. The skin on my fingers was bleeding from the wind, and my hands were chapped from it. It was impossible for me to stop. I had to undo what she did to remove the taint she had marked on them. When I finished the row, I moved on to the next and the next when suddenly feet stopped beside me.

I was caught off guard by his growl, and I forgot entirely that I hadn't checked in with Clarice. Looking around, I noticed it was almost dark outside.

Taking the scrub brush from my hands, he snarled, "Damn it, Ivy, look at your hands." I snatched it back from turning back to the grave; if I could just clean them all, it would undo it. My mind was consumed with what she had done; I didn't know what else to do, didn't know how to take it back.

The King snarled, snatching the scrubbing brush and tossing it in the bucket. The water splashed against me, and I could see guards coming in our direction.

"You didn't check-in; Clarice is now in trouble for covering for you. Why are you out here? You disobeyed me," he snapped before bending down and gripping my arms. He shook me. Though my eyes stared blankly. Couldn't he see the blood on my hands? What she did? How it tainted me, I needed it off. Needed to erase it, erase her. She didn't deserve to be remembered, not after what she did. She was an imposter. The woman who raised me was a monster; I was the monster she gave life to.

"You're sunburned; your skin is blistered," he hissed. Trying to drag me toward the castle, I thrashed, yanking out of his grip. "Ivy!" he snapped, reaching for me as I grabbed the scrubbing brush. I could take it back; it would go away. I just needed to clean them. His hand gripped my arm, and the growl that left me made him and everyone near me freeze.

"Ivy?" Kyson whispered, and I looked up at him.

"She killed them. I loved her, and she killed them. How could she love me and kill them?" I cried. All the hurt from the years of torture made so much sense now. It was punishment for being hers. Karma came back and took vengeance on Abbie and me. Everything that Abbie endured. I endured was because of what she did because I was the monster created by a serial killer. And all because I loved her when she deserved love. I loved a monster, and I called her mum.

Kyson POV

Clarice lied to me; she knew where Ivy was, but she did not check in like she was supposed to, which infuriated me.

"Where is she?" I snapped at her, and she took a step back from me.

"Outside helping Peter," Clarice told me.

"I will deal with you when I get back," I said, turning toward my guards.

"Fucking find her," I ordered them, and they took off.

"She isn't doing anything wrong, my King; she is only helping clean the graves," Clarice said in Ivy's defense. Hearing that only infuriates me further.

"You let the daughter of their killer, clean their graves, the disrespect, Clarice, fucking think," I roared at her, and she narrowed her eyes at me before pointing an accusing finger at me.

"You listen here, Kyson, I have watched you grow, I helped fucking raise you, you do not speak to me like that. That girl is not her mother, and if you are too blind to see it, then you have no right being her mate," she snarled at me. My fist smacked down on the bench, and she jumped before glaring at me. This old woman was putting her foot out of line if she thought she could speak to me this way.

"You are a bloody idiot. That girl has suffered enough. Stop punishing her for the crimes of her mother. She didn't kill Claire," I growled at the mention of my sister's name, and I felt the urge to shift rush through every cell in my body, making my skin vibrate. Turning on my heel, I walked out before I hurt the woman. She was right about helping raise me. Clarice was more my mother than my real one. She did most of the raising since mum was always busy being Queen, but that didn't mean she could tell me what to do.

Walking outside, my men were all standing at the top of the graveyard. Shoving past them, I growl when I don't see them grabbing her. Searching the rows, I find her at the last one and stop beside her. I growl, and she looks up when I notice her hands. Her fingertips were bleeding, and she was covered in mud, the heat emanating off her skin I could feel even with the cool breeze.

Taking the scrub brush from her hands, I snarled, "Damn it, Ivy, look at your hands.". But she snatched it back from me before turning back to the grave. Grabbing the scrubbing brush back, I tossed it in the bucket. The water splashed against her, and I noticed a few of the guard's step closer and I glared at them, making them take a step back.

"Kyson!" Damian snarled through the mind-link.

"Quiet, you don't interfere when I am dealing with her," I ordered, ignoring him.

"You didn't check-in; Clarice is now in trouble for covering for you. Why are you out here? You disobeyed me," I snapped at her before bending down and gripping her arms. She turned to dead weight in my hands, so I shook her, her skin so hot it was making me angrier seeing how sunburnt she was.

"You're sunburnt; your skin is blistered," I growled at her. Trying to drag her toward the castle, but she started thrashing and managed to yank out of my grip. "Ivy!" I snapped at her disobedience, reaching for her, about to toss her over my shoulder. Gannon and Damian moved closer, and I growled at them.

"I'm not fucking hurting her, now step back," I ordered as she grabbed the scrubbing brush before she frantically started scrubbing. She hiccupped a cry, making me look at her.

"Ivy?" Ivy whispered, and she looked up at me. Her eyes were raw red, her eyes whites now bloodshot, and her tear marks etched into her skin like blood staining her hands. However, her following words made me realize something was wrong; I should have paid attention to the bond instead of my anger, though that was still there simmering in my veins.

"She killed them. I loved her, and she killed them. How could she love me and kill them?" Ivy cried and I looked at the graves before looking back at her. I swallowed down the emotion that tried to choke me upon seeing her frantically scrub the skin off her fingers as she tried to clean the tombstone. Clarice's words came to me.

"She is not her mother," Clarice is right. Her mother never shed tears over the lives she took. Ivy was not that sort of monster, and the guilt on her face was proof of that. I didn't know how to help her. Looking at her like this, I could see the error I made. Ivy was as much a victim as the rest of them, only she was a living one. She had to live with her mother's sins.

Kneeling down beside her, I grab her hands, dropping the scrubbing brush. "You're not her,"

"I am, I am. She made me, can't you see?" Tears burned my eyes at seeing her so distraught and feeling helpless.

"No, you aren't," I tried to tell her, but she wouldn't listen, rambling about having to take it back, that she needed to clean them, they needed to be clean. I looked to Damian, wanting to know what to do, only to find him gone before he dropped beside her, trying to get her to go with him. Still, not even then would she move intent on cleaning the other 50 or so graves in this row.

"Get me a rag," I tell one of the guards.

"Sorry, my King," Dustin asked.

"I said get me a rag," I told him, taking the scrubbing brush from her fingers again.

"Stop, I will clean it, stop," I whisper before sitting in front of the grave. I pull between my legs before grabbing the scrubbing brush. That was almost down to the wood that held it together. She had worn the bristles down from scrubbing. Ivy tries to take it from me again, and I growl at her before locking my legs around her and using the calling to calm her. The moment I do, she lashes out, hitting and clawing at me.

"I'm cleaning it, stop, or I will force you inside," I warned her, and she stopped when she saw me start scrubbing the tombstone. When I look up, I notice all the guards are gone. They all return only with buckets and cleaning brushes a few minutes later. Dustin hands me a fresh scrubbing brush before taking his bucket to another grave when some of the kitchen staff also come out with Clarice, cleaning buckets in hand, and I grip Ivy's chin, forcing her to look at me.

"See, they will be cleaned," I tell her, pecking her lips, which were just as blistered as her skin. I turned her face to see all the guards and workers that had come to help.

"They aren't here for me. They're here for their Queen," I whispered to her.

"Where I should have been," I tell her grabbing the scrubbing brush. It took an hour for us to finish

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them, but not one stopped until we had cleaned them all.

Kyson POV

Ivy kept trying to help, but I would just tuck her closer until, eventually, she gave up. Instead, she pressed against my chest, listening to my calling for her and only moving when I would move to the next. No one left until the last grave was cleaned. Only then did Ivy let me scoop her up in my arms to take her back to our quarters.

"I will make her something to eat," Clarice whispered as we walked up the hill through the cemetery. I nodded to her and listened to Ivy hum the song that seemed to comfort her. Over the last few days, I heard her singing it or humming. She knew it word for word; she never got a word wrong. The Kingdom's Anthem. Placing her in the room. I moved across to my old quarters, going into the space that was for Azalea before we never found her. My sister set it up for her in hopes we would find the missing child, yet we never did.

Moving to the dresser, I picked up the silver jewelry box and opened it. Removing the bracelet inside, I set it on the dresser before taking the small box back to the room, winding it up so Ivy could hear the song being played. Her song, the one she knew by heart.

When I walked into the room, she sat huddled by the fire, shivering despite her skin being burned. I sit behind her, pulling her against me, placing the box in her hands, and opening the lid. The music starts, and she looks up at me, her brows furrowing before recognizing the tempo matched the song she sang.

"Where did you get this?" she asked, peering inside the box.

"Azalea's room," I answered, and she gasped before trying to pass it back. I shake my head.

"You can have it," I tell her.

"No, no, take it," she says, placing it in my lap before rushing off. I sighed, rubbing a hand down my face before setting the box on the bookcase and going in search of her.

"Why would you give me that?" she sobbed.

"Because you like the song, and Azalea won't use it," I tell her finding her crying under the clothes she had made a nest out of. I tried not to smile at her nest. Knowing it was the werewolf side appearing suddenly, she frantically tried to place the clothes in order. Completely unaware, she was building a nest.

"You need a bath," I tell her while reaching for her, but she growls at me. Mumbling to herself and rearranging the clothes, she was ripping off the hangers.

"Bath now, you make your nest on the bed; I am not sleeping on the floor," I tell her, and she stops looking at her hands before looking around herself.

"I wasn't; I was.." I could feel her confusion at her actions.

"You were, now come," I tell her, and she looks at the clothes she was shredding to bits before blushing, having not realized. I know she deliberately fights her urges, and I swear she sometimes

forgets I can feel her.

"Bath, then bed, now come or do I need to make you," I tell her while crouching down in front of her. She seemed confused, and I groaned before grabbing her. Ivy snarled at me for removing her from her makeshift den biting into my arm, making me chuckle. My laughter only enraged her as she bit me more brutally on the chest through my shirt which made me hiss at the sting. Her actions only amused me, knowing she was acting on instinct and not of her conscious mind.

She wouldn't let me bathe with her, so instead, I showered, watching her while she bathed. By the time she got out, I could smell the food Clarice had placed in the room. We dressed quickly, and I had to lock the closet door to stop her from going back in there before she climbed into the bed.

Grabbing the tray, I set it between us though I was surprised when she picked up raw meat, which I knew Clarice had made for me, seeing as I am Lycan and we prefer meat raw.

However, I had never seen Ivy once pick up raw meat. I watched her, finding it rather disturbing seeing a werewolf eat it; they were part human. Yet, more so than usual, she was acting out of sorts, making me wonder if the calling had some strange effect on her since I shoved her out of my life.

Nevertheless, I said nothing, just glad she was eating. Now I just had to wait for her to fall asleep to heal her a bit. She wouldn't let me touch her more than slight brushes or when I managed to force her to accept my touch. However, I figured it best not to push my luck with her odd behavior and the meltdown earlier.

When Clarice knocked on the door, I grabbed the now empty tray and walked over to the door, opening it and giving it to her.

"Hungry, my King?" Clarice asked, and I peered back at Ivy, who was attacking my pillow like it was a threat in her sleep.

"No, Ivy was," I tell her, and she seems taken aback, pulling a funny face before looking in the door toward the bed.

"Maybe she is going into heat?" she asked though I could tell even she wasn't sure.

"I thought?" Clarice doesn't finish and shakes her head.

"Right, I will leave you to it. It has to be the heat only thing that makes sense," Clarice murmurs, walking off muttering to herself. Shutting the door, I walked back over to the bed and climbed in, thinking to myself. Ivy had no appetite and yet was offered raw meat; she ate it like she was starving.

My brows furrowed as I glanced down at her tucked into my side. Yet if she was going into heat, what did that mean for both of us when she wouldn't let me touch her, and did that mean she would soon shift? The heat wasn't just agony for a she-wolf, but with me being Lycan, I would go into it with her, which I have heard is just as painful.

With so many thoughts running through my head, I struggled to sleep. Eventually, I was sucked into the oblivion of rest only to wake up to realize Ivy had shut the alarm off. Squinting at the brightness in the room, it must have been late in the morning, and I sat up looking for her.

Only she wasn't in the room. With a growl, I tossed the blankets back. I searched all the adjacent rooms before leaving it entirely, furious that she left it without telling me.

"Where is Ivy?" I asked the guard by the doors leading out.

"I haven't seen her, my King; I thought she was in her room with you; I only just came on shift," he answered. I shake my head. How had she managed to slip past the guards?

"Find her," I snarled, and everyone in the corridors took off in search of her. I pushed out the door.

"Peter!" I called, seeing him come toward me up the path from the stables. He glanced at me before glancing away at my state of undress; I had my sleep shorts on.

"Where is Ivy?"

"She's helping me in the stables," he said, and I growled, which made him take off as I stalked toward the path fuming when panic rushed through the bond, so I started running.

Ivy POV

It was early in the morning when I slipped out without the King waking; I had shut off his alarm when I woke before deciding to help Clarice in the kitchens; I looked over at Peter, the stable hand boy, as he came in. He stopped by the counter and leaned on it. Peter was only young, with a mop of curly hair. He kept shoving his fringe out of his eyes.

"Clarice, is Gannon or Dustin around? I need help to move the barrels from the shed into the barn." Peter asked.

"Barrels?" Clarice asked questionably, and Peter sighed.

"Yeah, the empty wine barrels. Jamie wants me to cut them in half so he can make garden beds out of them, but I need to cut them and paint them for him," he said with a huff, clearly not enjoying being given extra chores by the gardener.

"Do it in the shed," Clarice tells him with a shrug.

"Can't, there is not enough room; it's full with the furniture from the east wing," he whined.

"Well, you will have to go look for them. I do not know where either of the"

"I can help," I offered. Being outside sounded great, and Clarice hardly let me do anything to help besides peel potatoes, saying I shouldn't even be helping. However, with Abbie gone, I was constantly bored and still hadn't forgiven the King for marking me or healing me while I slept. I also hated that he used the calling on me to force me to submit the other night.

"The King will pitch a fit if he finds you in the stables working," Clarice said.

"Let him, I am helping Peter," I tell her, and Peter's eyes lit up at the offer of help.

"Ivy, he will lose his mind if you get hurt," Clarice said, grabbing my hand gently.

"It's fine, Clarice; I will deal with the bloody King if needed," I growled before grabbing Peter's arm and tugging him out the door.

"Are you sure, my Queen? I don't want to get in trouble," Peter said nervously as he worried his lip between his teeth.

"Yep, I want to go outside anyway, sick of watching people work and not letting me help," I tell him, dragging him through the castle. I knew the King was asleep still, so I didn't have to worry about him sending someone to look for me for a few hours, anyway.

A few hours passed, and we managed to create enough room to drag the old wine barrels out, then we re-stacked the shed, making it more accessible in the future. I watched as Peter cut the wine barrels with a chainsaw. Peter wouldn't let me try because he was too worried the King would be angered if he found out, so I watched. He did, however, let me help paint them.

When we were finished. Peter headed up to see the gardener so he could let him know that we were just waiting for the paint to dry when I heard a loud squawking distance, which caused me to look toward the pier that extended over the lake. The only thing I saw moving was something flapping, so I suspected it was a bird. Stepping cautiously onto the wooden dock I crept to the end, wary of the deep blackened water. Upon reaching the end, I saw a Swan flapping his wings frantically and

squawking in the water as he tried to fly away. But, he appeared to be caught in something as he tried to take flight.

Turning away from the poor thing, I began calling out to Peter, but he was nowhere to be found. In a kneeling position, I held onto the wooden pier as I tried to grab the swan by its long neck, so I could pull it closer. The bird seemed to be caught in some netting or something. When the creature shrieked and flapped its wings as it tried to free itself, my fingertips grazed the surface of its face. As its wing became stuck, I leaned over a little, attempting to save it as the swan began getting dragged under. "Stop flapping," I growled at the silly swan.

I was just grasping the feathers of the back end when my weight and angle overbalanced me, and I screamed, tumbling into the blackened water. While I kicked and flailed, trying to reach the surface and reach for the wooden pier, I tangled myself in the mesh netting that the swan was trapped in.

When I breached the surface, I was sputtering and choked on the water as the swan flailed frantically and took off.

"Peter!" I rasped. Screaming as loud as my burning throat allowed.

"Peter!" I tried to scream as my legs became more tangled, and I tried to stretch my arm out to reach for the pier, only to be pulled further away.

When I was dragged under by the weight of what I was caught on, I choked on the water that was spilling into my mouth. The water filling my lungs. I knew I was drowning, could feel my lungs filling with water as I tried to reach the surface. As my effort began to die out, calm swept over me. It was an odd sensation. I knew I was dying, yet calm washed through me and peace as I drowned.

It wasn't until I breached the surface that the pain hit; hands gripped my waist, and I was hauled upright, and I gasped a pained breath only to be ripped back under because my feet were still tangled. I tried to blink through the murky water, my eyes stinging while someone untangled the mesh from around my legs. The moment we breached the surface, I panicked, sputtered, coughed, and locked my legs around their waist.

As I shoved him under, he coughed and spluttered before a furious growl ripped from his throat, and I was turned so I wouldn't be able to push him beneath the surface again.

"Calm down before you drown us both," the King snapped at me while I sucked in much-needed air. My lungs felt like they had been put through mincer-like razors sliced through my chest with each agonizing breath.

As I struggled to catch my breath, my breathing was harsh and raspy when I saw the guards running in our direction down the steep hill leading from the castle.

"I'm going to turn you around. Don't push down on me," Kyson growled, and I could feel the movement of his legs behind me as he tread water. He turned me around, and my legs locked around him, but he grabbed them, pulling me up higher so he could still move his legs freely.

He sighed, pressing his head against my collarbone, and my teeth chattered.

"Why would you get in the damn water if you couldn't swim?" he breathed out angrily. His tight grip and the way he trembled made me realize how angry he truly was. While I was too busy learning how to breathe again to care too much about his rage.

"The swan was tangled," I said before coughing; my throat and nose were burning with each breath.

"You nearly killed yourself for a damn swan?" he snapped at me.

"I fell in," I growled angrily at him. Who in their right mind would deliberately jump in the water when they can't swim? My fingers dug into his shoulder when he floated onto his back; the guards on the hill had stopped, though kept a watchful eye on us until the King waved them away. King Kyson growls at them and I held onto him as the King moved further out. The water was soothing on my skin, my lungs not so much.

"How can you not know how to swim?" he said with a shake of his head, like he was appalled at this information. I don't bother answering, and he growls.

"I will have to teach you one day or get Damian or Gannon too," he stated, but I was fine never going near the water again, preferring land to drowning again.

The King swam further out, and I let my legs untangle from him now, just wanting to hop out when he suddenly pulled my hands from his shoulders when we were just over halfway to the other side. I freaked out, kicking and trying to reach him as the King moved away and I started panicking again. He smiled before he stood up.

I huffed, thinking I was drowning when I realized the water here was only knee deep, and my face heated at my idiocy. Kyson laughed at my embarrassed face, and I splashed him sending him a glare.

"This side is shallow," he chuckled before bending down and grabbing me. He shook his head and clicked his tongue before pinning me with his glare.

"You let me sleep in and left the room without me," he growled before sitting in the water and pulling me onto his lap.

"You wouldn't let me go if I had," I told him, and he nodded but said nothing. He gripped my chin gently with his fingertips, tilting my face toward his. The calling washed over me, and I sighed instead of fighting against it, and he leaned his face closer, his lips molding around mine. Turning my face away, he growled before gripping my chin tighter and forcing my mouth open so he could kiss me. His tongue swept over my lips before he nibbled on my bottom one. He then became angered when I didn't answer his kiss.

"Stop fighting it," he snarled, breaking the soft skin on my lip when he bit harder. I wondered how he could stand to touch me after the horrible things my mother did; I wanted the bond before he broke it,

and now I no longer felt worthy of it. The King sighed before pecking my lips and pulling away.

"We should head inside; I have meetings this afternoon," he whispered, and I nodded, I was just happy to get out of the water. The King led me back toward the castle, and I shivered at the coldness of the breeze caressing my goose-bumped skin.

We went upstairs to our room, and I went to run a bath, wanting to warm up. Goosebumps covered my skin, and the cold had started to sink into my bones, making them ache when the King came up behind me.

"No, you shower with me," he said, gripping my hip. I went to protest when he grabbed my hip tighter, tugging me back against him, his other hand going to my throat as he dipped his face into the crook of my neck; he purred softly. My eyes fluttered shut before I shook my head, fighting against the urge to give in to him.

"You shower with me," he purred before his lips covered mine, his tongue tangling with mine, and his hand moved from neck to my breast as he squeezed it, only to pull away when I don't respond the way he wanted.

"Stop fighting the bond, Ivy. Let it reforge. Why do you keep fighting it?" he murmured against my lips. How could he ask that? He shouldn't want the bond, not with me, anyway. He growled, nipping at my lips. The calling washed over me like a tidal wave before I could resist it or stamp the urges down. I bit him, and he groaned, my teeth raking down his flesh, and I knew it was his doing, knew he was using it against me, and I hated him for it.

"Don't fight me, and I won't use it," he mumbled, picking up on my anger as I sank my teeth into his chest. Kyson moved, spinning me around and shoving me into the sink basin, his hands gripping my hips as he turned me and placed me next to the sink.

The King pressed himself between my thighs, his erection pressing against me, and he groaned while I tried to shove him away. The calling grew more potent, and tears pricked my eyes when he gripped a fistful of my hair and tugged my head back. His tongue invaded my mouth, and I moaned into his mouth, the bond rushing to the surface as he forced it out.

A whimper escaped me as I tugged him closer, my claws slipping free and scratching down his chest. Needing him closer as arousal flooded into me, making my pussy clenched as arousal flooded me. My entire body buzzed from the bond in anticipation. His hand moved between my legs. He rubbed my throbbing pussy, cupping it with his hand and making me moan softly as my arousal spilled onto my thighs. All too soon, he pulled away, making me growl.

"You don't leave without telling me," he purred, and I nodded, anything to get his touch back. I reached for him, and he leaned down and pecked my lips, the bond forcing my hands to his chest, needing his touch. Wanting it, and craving him. He then pulled away and turned the shower on. I stared at his back as he removed his clothes, glaring at him because he riled me up and used the calling on me to force out the bond, then stopped as soon as I answered it.

"You will learn, Ivy," he murmured. It was then I realized he was using the bond to punish me and for what, leaving without telling him?

"In the shower," Kyson said while stepping under the water; I growled at him before stalking out of the bathroom and going to my closet. I heard him growl but ignored him, embarrassed that he tormented

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me that way, and I let him.

"Ivy, don't make me come get you," Kyson called out, and I snarled before burrowing under my nest, seething at what he did. He would pay for that; he had caught me off guard. I won't let it happen again.

"Ivy!" he growled, and I reached up, locking the closet door.

Kyson pov

Ivy was driving me up the wall; I couldn't even kick the damn door down because I didn't know if she was directly behind it or not. All night I waited, and damn did she test my patience as I swallowed down the amber liquid, letting it scorch the back of my throat while I glared at the door.

Moving off the bed and away from my stare off with the closet door separating me from her. I meandered toward the small bar area in the corner, growling and muttering under my breath as I poured the last remnants from the bottle into my glass.

Her discomfort was beginning to make me nervous, her scent growing stronger as it permeated from under the door. Grabbing my glass, I moved back toward the bed, pausing for a second by the bookshelf. My eyes moved over the shelf before spotting the book we were reading before everything turned to shit. Moving the small jewelry box off the shelf, I accidentally dropped it, the lid cracking open, and the music started playing. Bending down, I scooped the small box off the ground when I noticed an engraving on the side of it. The inscription was only small in the back corner of the small box.

Azalea. I. Landenna.

12.3.2004

Love Mum & Dad.

My brows furrowed, and I glanced over at the door. Ivy and Azalea shared the same birthday. Shaking my head, I place the box before looking back at the door and grabbing the book off the shelf before moving to sit by the door. I opened it up to where the ribbon lay between the pages before reading aloud. Her growls and snarls quietened, and after about 5 minutes, I heard her move within the confines of her closet.

I knew she was cozy, yet I could also sense her discomfort at being there. It was a weird sensation to feel from her. Almost as if it was her safe place but also a place that tormented her. Her emotions fluctuated between peace and panic, and I knew she was claustrophobic. Had witnessed her distress not only through the bond when she nested last time but also seen it for myself. Yet as much as she hated the closet. It was almost as if she was scared of the outside world past the door.

All noises stopped inside the closet, and I could hear her heart pounding as she drew nearer to listen to the words I spoke. My purr reverberated around the room, echoing off the walls as I called her to come to me. Her anger and fear amplified as she fought a war within herself. Fighting against my calling for her, I toned it down a little, giving her the choice to fight it or answer it, yet still encouraging her to come to me. However, reading simultaneously was also a little tricky trying to maintain both tasks. Coughing, I took a sip of my drink before resting my head back against the wall.

"If you come out, I will read to you," I told her. She didn't answer straight away. When she did, it wasn't the answer I was hoping for.

"No, you will use the bond against me," she growled.

"You are my bond Ivy," I tell her, turning my head to look at the door handle. I twisted it, but she still hadn't unlocked it.

"Don't you want the bond?" I asked her, wondering how she could fight so hard against it, refuse me when I was hers as much as she was mine.

"You broke it," she said, and the sadness through the bond stung me.

"And I am trying to fix it," I replied, closing my eyes as I leaned my head back.

"It wasn't just yours to break," she stated.

"And I said I am trying to fix it," I repeated.

"And what if I don't want you to?"

"It's not up to you, I told you already. You are mine; I meant that Ivy, I won't let you go again," I told her, becoming annoyed that she dared challenge our bond. I didn't understand what she wanted. She wanted the bond. I broke it, and now I am trying to fix it. What more does she want from me? I can't go back and take it back.

"Until you find something else to hate me for. Or I do something you don't like, then you will cast me aside because you can, and there is nothing I can do about it," she murmured.

"You hurt me," she whispered so softly I nearly missed it.

"I didn't mean to break your hand Ivy, I didn't know it was there," I snapped at her; I bloody healed it, for god sake.

"I'm not talking about my hand, Kyson. I know you didn't do that on purpose." I growled, annoyed, shaking my head.

"You think broken bones hurt, scratches, wounds that refuse to heal for months on end. They hurt, but they also mend when the skin closes over. After you're left with a scar, a distant memory of what was once painful. Yet that hurt ends," she pauses, and I pick up my glass, draining the last of it about to break the handle and drag her out, tired of playing these games of hide and seek. Standing, I went to grab the handle when she spoke again.

"Do you have any idea how humiliating it is to allow yourself to trust someone, only for them to throw it in your face?" I paused, wondering what she was on about now.

"Are you going to finish, or are you going to make me guess?" I asked her, gripping the door handle; the metal creased as my grip tightened around the brass knob.

"I trusted you; I allowed myself to love you despite knowing better than to get my hopes up. Mrs. Daley taught me to know my place, and you made me believe I could find that with you. That I was free to choose that place. Freedom. My version of freedom for years was death. I was ready to die on that podium that day, be set free. Convinced it would be better than the life handed to us. Then you showed me another sort of freedom," I paused, letting go of the door handle. My fingers creased into the metal as I stared at the door.

"I realized I was never living. We were already dead waiting for our vessels to die, and you gave us our names back, our lives back, for a while anyway. Then just as quickly as you gave it to me, you took it

away. The ultimate puppet master with a god complex I can't compete against. You took it, and I wished for freedom again. I wished you left me to die that day; it would have been the more humane thing to do than give me hope only to show me how foolish it was to have it in the first place." My heart twisted painfully in my chest as I felt the truth behind the words she spoke.

"Now that is pain, and nothing haunts me more than knowing you have the power to send me back to a place when the only freedom I will long for is death," I bit my tongue and swallowed, feeling guilty.

"I made a mistake. I blamed you because you were there to blame, not because you did anything wrong. I see that now," I tell her.

"I get why you hate me Kyson; I am the by-product, the spinoff version of my mother-

"You are not your mother," I tell her cutting her words off. That much, I was sure of. Ivy laughs, and my brows furrow.

"My mother was a monster. Therefore I am,"

"No, you were just her last victim, only you survived to live with what she took from you," I tell her. She falls quiet. Yet I meant the words I spoke and wished she could feel me the way I feel her guilt and heartbreak.

"You have your freedom with me, Ivy," I tell her.

"Prove it," she murmured. I sighed, wanting her to come out, to stop ignoring me because it was driving me insane. Ignoring my own instincts to drag her out, kicking and screaming and forcing her to submit to the bond.

I sat back down and let her be, instead, picking up the book and continuing to read to her. She fell quiet, and after a few chapters, I heard the door unlock, making me look at it before the handle twisted. Her scent wafted to me as the door cracked open, and before I could muffle it. The calling slipped out, my purr resounding yet not forcing her, leaving her choice, just enough to coax her out if she chooses. Letting her know I mean no harm, so I let it be instead of stifling the sound. I heard her bones cracking from lying on the hard ground and felt the ache to go to the comfy bed.

Glancing up at her, she had an armful of my clothes, her werewolf side reappearing stronger no matter how much she fought against it. At least she had changed out of the wet clothes and was now wearing one of my shirts. The bond was reforging and solidifying despite her attempts to ignore it. "You can take them to the bed, or you could let me sleep next to you," I tell her, and she walks partway to the bed before stopping and glancing between the bed and me like she was fighting against what she knew she needed and wanted. Her urges are all over the place. I remained still as much as it killed me to do.

"You won't use the calling on me, I mean no more than you are now?" she asked, and I could feel her uncertainty. Yet she hated the calling as much as she liked it.

"No, but I can't help it sometimes. It reacts to your emotions," I tell her. Ivy chews her lip and nods once before moving toward the bed again. She climbs in, dragging my pile of clothes with her to burrow down in. I sighed before turning the next page, expecting to sleep on the couch when she spoke.

"You can sleep in the bed," she said, and my eyes flitted to hers. My eyes flickered, and I heard her

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heart rate pick up. My skin rippled as I stood, my instincts becoming excited that she was letting me near as I moved toward the bed before crawling in beside her and reopening the book. Ivy moved closer, her claws scraping down my ribs as she wiggled closer to see the tiny pictures in the corners of the pages. Fighting the urge to drag her on top of me, I continued reading content enough with her beside me.

Ivy POV

I awoke to whispers reaching my ears, groggily rolling over; I looked toward the King who was standing by the door. Beta Damian's scent wafted to me, so I knew it was him he was speaking with as I tried to listen. Stretching out, my back cracked as I yawned. That was the best sleep I had had in days, actually waking up and feeling rested. Sitting up, I noticed the King had the jewelry box in his hands, and I tilted my head better to listen to what they were speaking about.

"Find me anything on Azalea, everything you can find," The King told him, and my brows pinched together, wondering what he wanted with a dead child's information. My stomach dropped, wondering what he was trying to dig up. More reasons to hate me?"

"Something isn't right, and she..." the King shakes his head. "Something doesn't add up," I hear him tell Beta Damian when the King looks over his shoulder at me. Beta Damian takes the box from him.

"I'll see what I can find out," Damian tells him, and the King nods before shutting the door. He turns to face me before wandering over to a coffee table and retrieving a tray of food and placing it on my lap. I stared down at the steak and salad before he grabbed his own tray and came to sit by me.

"What was that about?" I asked the King as he took his seat.

"I need him to look into something, eat your lunch," he says before cutting into his steak, though his steak was bleeding. My mouth salivated hungrily, and my belly rumbled. Though I was a little shocked to learn, it was already the middle of the day. I cut into my steak and popped a piece into my mouth. The hunger instantly died down, no longer wanting to eat as I forced myself to chew and swallow. The King watched me curiously as I tried not to be rude and spit the meat out onto the plate. Forcing it down was like trying to swallow an apple whole as it lodged in my throat.

"Can I ring Abbie?" I asked him, and he nodded.

"After you eat," he said, nodding toward my plate. I scrunched my nose up at it, ever since finding out he was my mate. My taste buds had changed. Stuff I usually like no longer held any appeal to me. Everything changing, yet I still hadn't shifted. It really irked me that so much changed, and yet it didn't appear to be for the better.

"I'm not hungry," I told him, placing the plate on the bedside table, and went to get up. The King growls. He cuts off a piece of his meat before offering the fork to me, holding it to my lips. The same thing happened; my mouth water instantly, making me wonder why his food smelt different. It was hardly cooked, if you could call it cooked at all, more like seared on either side and practically raw. Yet I opened my mouth and almost moaned at the taste, my appetite coming back despite tasting the blood filling my mouth as I chewed.

Reaching for my plate, the King placed it on his lap before giving me his. "Eat," he said, tapping my plate with the fork. My brows furrowed as I looked at the plate. Kyson didn't partially look like he liked my steak much but said nothing as he ate except to tell me to eat.

"All of it," the King said when he finished his leaving only the salad. The steak was huge, and I was struggling to eat the entire thing after getting through half of it. Forcing another mouthful down, yet

also savoring the taste. I watched the King pull his phone from his pocket and scroll through it.

"I can't eat anymore," I said while trying to cut through another. The King up from his screen before looking at the half-eaten steak and sighed.

"You hardly ate anything yesterday. Eat half of it, and you can call her," He said; I glared at him. A growl emanated from me, and he arched an eyebrow at me.

"Ivy!"

"I will eat two more pieces. I can't eat much more. You will make me sick," I snap at him.

"Three,"

"One!" I retorted, and he sighed. "Fine, two more mouthfuls then," he growls, turning his attention back to the phone. I quickly ate, wanting to speak to Abbie; it felt like a lifetime ago since I heard her voice. When I was done, I snatched the phone from his grip, and he growled at me but took my plate, setting it back on the tray and placing it out the door before he came back to sit by me, looking over my shoulder as I scrolled through the letter A's. Yet some of the names have similar spelling which confused me.

"No, back up," The King said, clicking on her name for me. "You can video call her?"

"What's that?" I asked, listening to the phone ring. He took it from me, pressing a button, and the screen changed, and I could see myself on the screen. "Now, you will be able to see her if she can figure out how to turn her camera on. Gannon did show her, so hopefully, she remembered," Kyson told me. I nodded. The phone rang out, and I glanced at Kyson, who sat up. He dialed her number again, sitting up before passing it back to me.

When she didn't answer again. He took the phone from me before leaning against the headboard. He opened something else on his phone and typed away. I peered over to see what he was doing, watching as he typed quickly.

"I messaged her mate," Kyson said, before patting the spot between his legs, wanting me to sit there.

"What did you say?" I asked him.

"Come, I will show you," he said and I rolled my eyes but crawled into his lap. He pressed his lips to my shoulder and opened his message up.

"I need to teach you how to read, try and read that," he said, and I peered at the screen. My brows furrowed. I recognized Abbie's name this time, and I recognized the letter's but couldn't make sense of how they fit together.

"I can tell Abbie's name," I answered, my face heating up, that I couldn't do something that was so basic to others. "Why. Isn't. Abbie. Answering. Her. Phone." Kyson said, pointing to the words. Kyson leans forward before reaching into his bedside drawer and pulling out a bigger phone.

"This is a tablet, like my phone, but bigger," he said before scrolling through it. "I had some reading apps put on it for you. It will help you identify different words. Kind of like a game. I want you to use this when you aren't doing anything. But it also has a voice to text," he says, opening an app. He clicks on the little microphone picture in the center of the screen before speaking into the tablet.

"Kyson loves Ivy," he spoke, and the words he spoke came across the screen before reciting them back to him in a robot voice.

"You can also type words into it, and it will read them to you. Copy the text on my phone says into it," he says, bringing up a small keypad on the screen. He hands me his phone, and I place the tablet on my lap before copying the letters when Kyson leans over my shoulder to peer at the screen.

"You need to put spaces between the words," he murmurs, his breath warm on my neck as it fanned over me. I shivered involuntarily, and he purred softly at my reaction.

"I don't know how," I tell him before he hits a long blank button on the keypad. "That one. Now redo it," he says, deleting everything I just painstakingly typed into the screen. Remembering to use the space button this time, I typed his text message again into the tablet. When I was done, Kyson pressed the speech button, and the phone read out what I wrote, and I smiled that it said what Kyson read from his text message.

"Good, you will get the hang of it, and I will read to you of a night, so you should pick it up quickly with some help." I glanced at the bookshelf since he finished reading *Treasure Island* last night. I was eager for him to read me another book.

His phone vibrated in my hand, and I glanced at the small screen. "He is going to mind-link her to get her phone. He said he isn't with her right now," Kyson told me, and I nodded before typing his new message into the tablet to read it to me again while the King watched behind me. A few minutes later, another message came through.

"What does it say?" I asked him.

"Says to try her now," he answered before pulling me back against him and fiddling with his phone. It started ringing, and he turns the camera thing on, and my face popped up on the screen along with the King's chest behind me. It rang a few times before she answered.

"Finally, you rang," she squealed excitedly, though her face never popped up on the screen. Kyson had to talk her through how to do it before finally I got to see her. She cried excitedly, waving to me and gushing about how much she missed me.

"Where are you? You look like you're outside?" I ask her, looking at the scenery behind her.

"At the cabin, I was hanging out washing and didn't hear my phone. Plus, I ran out of credit. I have been trying to reach you for days; I have been so worried about you. Kade said the King caught you

before you could get to the bridge." She said.

"And someone could have told me how to hang up, too. I rang the castle phone, but it went to some message machine and ate all my credit," she explained.

"Your mate hasn't put credit on it for you?" Kyson asked her over my shoulder. She squinted at the screen, and her eyes went wide. "Sorry, my King. I didn't see you in the background," she said, becoming a little nervous now she realized he was behind me.

"It's fine, Abbie; I'm not angry with you," Kyson told her, and she chewed her fingernail and nodded but didn't say much, knowing he was behind me. I sighed.

"So, do you like it there?" I asked her, and she shrugged.

"Yeah, it's not bad. But he comes during the day, but it has been two days since I saw him. He says he is always busy with work and sleeps there sometimes," Kyson growls behind me, and I peeked over my shoulder at him, but he shakes his head, and his hand goes to my stomach, tugging me back against him.

"What about the people in his pack? Do you like them, did you make any friends?"

"I haven't met them yet, he said soon, but I need to stay at home first. He thinks I will go into heat soon because I keep getting the worst stomach cramps. I asked him to take me to see a pack doctor because I don't think it is that. My chest feels really tight and hurts, I actually thought I was having a heart attack last night. It's not just my stomach, and I feel fine of a day when he does come here," Abbie said while she moved around. The King growls behind me again, and I peer over at him, wondering why he was becoming so angry. He said I could talk to her?

"But I like it other than that, but I am hoping he will take me to visit you soon. He promised I could," she tells me, and excitement bubbles in my stomach at the idea of seeing her.

"If he can't, Abbie, I will send Gannon to come and pick you up to bring you here," Kyson tells her.

"Really? I never got to say goodbye to Gannon; he walked off," she said excitedly before her face fell when she mentioned Gannon's name.

"Yes, if he can't bring you here, I will send Gannon. I will put your phone on my plan, so you don't run out of credit too. That way, you can ring Ivy whenever you like," Kyson tells her.

"Oh, oh, I hear a car. I think he is here." Abbie babbled excitedly. "I love you, but I have to go," she said.

"Love you too," I tell her.

"More than life," she says.

"More than life," I reply before she hangs up. With a sigh, I handed the phone back to him, and he glared at it.

"Everything okay?" I asked him, wondering why he was angry.

"Yes, it will be," he says before kissing my shoulder.

"I need to go speak with Gannon," He says abruptly, and I hop up, wanting to get out of the room

myself.

"What are you doing?" the king asked when I also climbed off the bed.

"Going to help Peter," I tell him.

"No, you aren't leaving..." He paused before pinching the bridge of his nose.

"Just stay away from the water and take Dustin with you, please." he then says, coming over to me and pressing his lips to my forehead before he grips my chin forcing me to look up at him.

"Don't wander off," he says and I nod. Not like I had anywhere to go anyway.

Kyson POV

I felt sick knowing Ivy wasn't beside me where I could touch her and feel her warmth as I stalked through the halls searching for Gannon who wasn't answering the Mindlink. Every cell in my body called out to her, telling me to go back to my mate and covet her away from the rest of the world. However, I had to remember Ivy didn't want that. I wasn't even sure if she wanted me after the heartache, I caused her. One thing was becoming more evident to me, though, her instincts were growing stronger, and I knew she would soon shift. It was inevitable, and I was just waiting for it to happen.

"Where are you?" Damian rushed through the mind link, making me halt my steps in the middle of the corridor.

"Looking for Gannon, I need to speak to him about Abbie," I told him, jogging down the steps toward his room.

"He's with me. Come to the office; it's important," Damian said, cutting off the link abruptly. I growled, turning on my heel and stalking toward the front of the castle to my office. Pushing it open, Damian had boxes of files scattered all over the floor. Dustin was also rummaging through paperwork, and I spotted Gannon passed out drunk in a chair by the window. The smell of liquor hung heavily in the air, and it was so unlike Gannon to get himself into this sort of state. Clucking my tongue. I turned my attention to Damian and Dustin just as Dustin handed Damian what appeared to be a picture.

"Here's another one,"

"How the fuck did we not figure this out?" Damian muttered under his breath. He suddenly ran his arm over my desk, swiping everything off it, and it crashed to the floor as he and Dustin started setting out documents and pictures.

"Marissa isn't her mother; you were right," Damian said, and I walked over to the table.

"The man pretending to be Ivy's father Jason Clenton was King Garret and Queen Tatiana's gardener. Marissa was a staff member inside the castle, but everyone assumed she was a cleaner or cook. We could never find any documentation of what position she applied for," Damian said while sliding a document over to me.

"Okay, but did you find anything on Azalea?" I asked him.

"That's just it. Azalea never existed in any files: we don't even have her birth certificate, but we have this," Dustin said, handing me an application form for a job. I glanced over it, noting Jason's name on top of the document.

"For a gardener position?" I ask, shaking my head, wondering what this was supposed to mean.

"Look in the notes, down the bottom and the date. We were so busy looking at Marissa's files we never thought to check anyone else's, assuming they were killed when she opened the gates for the hunters. My eyes scan over the document to see some handwritten notes by the King or Queen.

The applicant has a partner wishing to apply for a nanny position. It then listed Marissa's name and her mobile number. It was dated three days after Azalea was born. Dustin hands me another document. It was our old staff applications. Inside were her identity documents, a criminal history which was squeaky clean, but down the bottom was a part saying. Applicant admits she has a 7-year-old child and can't work weekends as her babysitter works on Saturdays and Sundays. I glanced at her records from the King and Queen and her start date. My eyes went to Damian's and Dustin's. "Abbie's parents had to be watching her?" Damian nods his head.

"Azalea would have been 7 when Marissa started working here. 9, when my sister died, which wasn't long before she ended up in the orphanage." I told him, glancing back down at the paperwork.

"Yes, she worked for the King and Queen for two years. Azalea would have been two when she went missing, which matches everything else; your sister was killed 7 years later, making Azalea 9 at the time. And we found something else," Damian said. Handing me a diary that belonged to the Queen. "Where did you get this?" I asked him.

"When we visited the Kingdom with Ivy, we found it in a shoebox in the shed. They were mainly working diaries with appointments, and that was stuffed down the bottom. Dustin and I found it today when we looked through the box."

"My eyes scanned the page, and I gasped. A picture of a small child sitting on the Queen's lap eating a strawberry from her mother's fingertips was crammed between the pages. Marissa stood nearby in the background, watching them in her uniform. "That was taken two days before the attack; look at the date. More importantly, look at the name." Damian said.

Azalea Ivy -Rose Landeena 2 -years old.

"Ivy is Azalea, and you're positive?" I asked, wanting to be 100% sure this time everything. However, even her instincts, so many things clicked into place, and I couldn't understand how I was so blinded to what was right in front of me this entire time. We assumed she was a werewolf because that's what Ivy thought she was, what she was listed in the orphanage, and what her kidnapper parents were.

"One way to be 100% positive, though I am positive, Ivy. Is Azalea. Though you will have to check," Damian said while pointing to the following line in the diary, which listed Azalea's meal plan, her feed times, and routine all inside this little diary. Along with identifying characteristics, height, weight measurements, and mentioning a birthmark. A strawberry-shaped birthmark on her inner left thigh along the crease at the apex of her legs. My brows furrow, trying to remember if I noticed any mark on her there, but I wasn't really paying attention when I had my face down there, too busy enjoying the noise she made and the taste of her flesh.

"In the back of the diary were some things the Queen listed, complaints she had warned to her husband about Marissa," Dustin said, turning the diary over and upside down before opening the back page.

"Marissa was warned numerous times for calling Azalea Ivy instead of using her name. She was also whipped three times on separate occasions when she was caught telling Azalea to call her mummy," Dustin said, pointing out the different notations made inside the diary.

"Ivy's Lycan. She's fucking royalty!" I murmured, horrified. Some part of me hoped I was wrong though I also wished I was right, not wanting her to be too tied to that evil woman, but now this just made things a hell of a lot more complicated.

"What have I done?" I whispered. Damian folded his arms, watching me before rubbing his chin. Dustin fell back in the chair he was sitting in and scrubbed both hands down his face.

"We will work it out. She'll forgive you," Damian said, and I shook my head.

"I blamed her!" I roared, punching the desk. The wood creaked and groaned, splitting down the middle whilst I tried to rein control over myself.

"She'll forgive you, Kyson. You aren't only to blame. We all should have figured it out," Damian said, and Dustin nodded, putting his head down.

"She is a Lycan. I could have killed her by tossing her aside, Damian. She could have fucking died!" I yelled at him.

"You didn't know! You just need to get her to mark you, and it will be fine. Ivy being Lycan, can go into heat any day now, Kyson, and she will mark you, which will reforge the bond completely. She won't be able to help herself. You said it yourself. The bond wasn't completely severed for you, so it couldn't have been for her either." Damian tried to reason.

"Your words are making it worse, Damian. She would have been in agony. No wonder she fretted the way she did," I said, dropping into my chair and placing my head in my hands.

"You can't take what you did back, but you can make it up to her, Kyson," he replied, but I didn't see a way possible.

"She barely lets me touch her!" I snap at him.

"Yet she is acting on instinct mostly these last couple of days. It is only a matter of time before she shifts," Damian says, and I sighed before looking up at him and shaking my head.

"If she doesn't mark me beforehand, her shift will be excruciating since I put stress on our bond. She would already be weakened," I scoff, shaking my head at how badly I fucked everything up. Damian and Dustin say nothing, knowing I am right. What could they say other than I fucked up? Now I just had to hope she would forgive me for it.

We were in the middle of packing everything up when I realized something looking over at Dustin.

"Wait, you should be with Ivy. She wanted to leave the room earlier," I told him, and his head snapped up.

"You could have told me, shit, she is probably wondering why I am not around," Dustin says, getting to go in search of her. I shake my head.

"It's fine; I can feel she is fine. She must still be in the room" I breathe.

"I suppose I should go see if I can find this birthmark before I tell her if she lets me touch her," I huff before walking out of my office to go in search of her.

Kyson POV

Anxiety filled me as I approached our room, wondering if she snuck out without any of the guards. However, I was pretty surprised to walk in and find her sitting on the floor in front of the fireplace. One of my books is open on the floor beside her and the tablet in her hand. Her tongue poked out the side as I watched her press her fingers to the touch screen before holding the tablet up to listen to the words.

Once she is done, she sets the tablet down to do the following sentence. Stopping behind her, she doesn't look up until my shadow blocks out the heat from the fireplace. Only then do I realize she is shivering, and goosebumps cover her skin. I bend down and pick up my book, and she sighs. "I was going to put it back," she said, her teeth chattering. *Pride and Prejudice*. I hand it back to her, and she takes it.

"You can touch whatever you like, Az" I pause, almost calling her Azalea.

"Whatever you want, just ask Ivy. What's mine is yours," I tell her, and she nods, taking the book from me and finding her page.

"I thought you wanted to go for a walk?" I ask her, sitting down behind her and propping my arm on my knee. I lean back against the armchair, trying to figure out how to ask her if I can not only look between her legs but also tell her she isn't the daughter of a monster. Before she could answer, though, Clarice opened the door, bringing in our dinner.

"What chapter did you get to, my Queen?" Clarice asked her, bringing her tray over and setting it on the coffee table.

"Only page eight," Ivy says with a frown.

"You'll be able to read by yourself in no time," Clarice nods; however, I did notice that Ivy never batted an eyelash at Clarice using her title. Almost as if she had come to accept it. Ivy thanked her, and I saw how she subtly sniffed the air before frowning when she realized the meat was what I class as burned or ruined. I swap our plates, handing her mine.

"Can you ask the kitchen staff to prepare Ivy's meals the same way as mine from now on?" I asked Clarice.

"From now on, my King," she says, her eyes flicking to Ivy, who was typing away again.

"Yes, Clarice," I tell her, and she glances between the both of us.

"And you're sure, my King," Clarice asks, and I sigh. News clearly travels fast. I hadn't been here five minutes, and the entire castle was aware, which meant I had no choice but to tell her tonight.

"Positive,"

"Very well, my King. Enjoy your book, Ivy," Clarice tells her, but Ivy wasn't even paying attention too busy typing into the device. Clarice smiles before leaving. I eat watching Ivy let her food get cold before taking the tablet from her.

"Eat first. Your food is going cold," I tell her, and she growls. Ivy folds the corner of the page and shuts the book. I internally cringed. My biggest pet hate was folded book pages, and it was the first edition, making it all the more cringe-worthy, but I remain quiet, knowing if I said anything, she would probably have no idea what I am talking about when it comes to book editions.

Ivy picks up her knife and starts cutting her meat, devouring her food hungrily. She shivers her entire body shuddered from it, and her teeth chattered, yet her skin was flushed like she was overheating. I reached over her, touched her head to find her skin blistering hot, and the moment my hand came in contact with her skin, she sighed, pressing against it. Yet her scent hadn't changed, so it couldn't be her going into heat. I moved my hand off her head, and she shivered again before going back to her food.

"Did you find Gannon?" she asked. I nod, watching her; she eats ravenously like she has been starved, which made me nervous; I was the same before I shifted.

"Yes, I did. What did you do today?" I asked her.

"Nothing, I couldn't find Dustin, then I got distracted with the tablet and trying to read the book," She shrugged. Ivy went back to her food when she was nearly finished, and she started to slow down. Chewing slowly, exceptionally slowly, and her face pales before she jumps up, running for the bathroom.

"Ivy?" I called, setting my plate aside when I heard her gag. Rushing into the bathroom, I found her head in the toilet bowl as she threw up.

"You alright?" I ask, grabbing her hair as she continued to be sick. She eventually falls backward on her butt.

"Must be the stupid fruit salad, been feeling sick since eating it," she groaned, clutching her stomach before laying on the cool tiles. I flush the toilet before stepping over her and turning the shower on.

"The fruit salad?" I asked.

"Yeah, I think some of the fruit was off; it tasted funny?" I nod before gripping her shoulders and sitting her upright.

"I don't think it's the fruit salad; I think you may be going to shift soon," I tell her.

"I can't shift; I would have already," she murmured.

"Well, I would say that is wrong; you are just a late bloomer since I hurt our bond," I tell her, peeling off her jumper. "I don't want to shift; I don't want to shift without Abbie!" she panicked, sitting upright. I grip her shoulders, stopping her from getting to her feet.

"I am right here with you, Ivy," I tell her, but she pushes my hands away.

"No, I want Abbie," I grit my teeth and look away. I was angered that she would rather Abbie than me, although I know it's my fault. Taking a deep breath, I face her, cupping her face in my hands. "Abbie isn't here, but I am. So calm down, you won't be alone," I tell her, but her eyes brim with tears as she starts having a panic attack. She started breathing rapidly and shallowly. "No, No," she shakes her head.

"Shh Ivy, calm down. Let's just get you in the shower first," I tell her, but every time I went to remove

more of her clothes, she would slap my hands and tell me not to touch her.

Unclipping her bra, she growls at me. "Get out!" she snaps.

"Ivy?"

"Get out, this is your fault, now get out!" she screamed at me. Her eyes blazed brightly, almost glowing as she panicked. I chew the inside of my lip, knowing it is just the shift bringing on her sudden change in emotions; it truly does bring out our monstrous side. Yet I could feel her resentment towards me and hurt that I was the reason she was delayed.

His lost lycan Luna by Jessica Hall Chapter 81

Chapter 81

"I won't touch you then, okay, but I am staying. You're not shifting on your own," I tell her, fighting the urge to stifle her worry by using the bond and calling. She looks away from me.

"I said get out" she whispered before wiping a stray tear. My heart pinched at her defeat and I knew she blamed me for this; I blamed myself.

"I will find you some clothes," I tell her, getting up off the floor and walking out. I found her some of my clothes and set them on the bed before standing by the bathroom door and listening.

I was only met with silence and the sound of the running of the water. I knock on the door, but she doesn't answer.

"Ivy, I am going to come in, okay." I call out to her. I wait, but she doesn't answer, so I gently push the door open to find her clothes scattered on the floor and her sitting in the bottom of the shower directly under the water. Her skin turned red from how hot she had changed the shower temperature.

"Ivy?" I asked, crouching beside her just outside the shower spray. She turned her head to the side so I could see her face, and her eyes glowed. Why couldn't her shift wait one more day so I could explain?

"It's so cold," she murmurs, and I nod.

"Yes, then you will be hot, then cold again" I tell her, and she nods, tucking her face back into her knees. I look at the window and click my tongue and shake my head. There was no moon high in the sky tonight.

"Come on, we can lay in front of the fireplace; I will move all the bedding over there," I tell her holding out my hand to her. She lifts her head and looks at it.

"There is no moon tonight," she says, and I press my lips in line that she had noticed. I nod my head.

"I will be right by your side. I'm not going anywhere, but I do need to ask a favor you probably won't like," I tell her. Ivy looks at my hand before sighing.

"What is it?"

"Let's get you dry first," I tell her. Her eyebrows pinch together before she takes my hand, and I pull her to her feet. She wraps a towel around herself, shivering and teeth chattering although her skin was flushed. I hand her one of my shirts, and she dries herself. While Ivy does, I move the furniture in front of the fireplace before dragging the mattress and blankets over. Turning to face her, she was hunched over while rummaging through the drawer for underwear. Her other hand clutched her stomach.

"Ivy," I call out to her. Ivy looks over at me before retrieving a pair and slipping them on. She walks over to me before lying down closest to the fire and tugging the duvet over herself. I grab her book, bring it over and kneel on the mattress beside her.

"You should try to sleep while you can before the pain becomes too much; I can read to you if you like," she rolls over to face me. "If that was supposed **to make me feel** better, it didn't," she says but yawns. I chuckle, placing the book on the pillow.

"Have you got any birthmarks?" I ask her, and she yawns again before she nods.

"Yes, on my leg, next to," She pauses. "Looks like a smudge," she says.

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"Can I see it?"

"What? No," she says, rolling herself tighter in her blanket. "Why?" she says, glaring at me.

"I won't do anything, I promise, I just want to see it, to confirm something," "Something like what?" she demanded.

"Your identity," she snorts and rolls her eyes.

"Great, what now, is my father the boogeyman or grim reaper?" she scoffs.

"No, Ivy. I believe your father was the King," she scoffs, then laughs. "That isn't funny, Kyson,"

"I know it isn't funny because if I am right and you are the King's daughter, that also means Marissa wasn't your mother, and you are the stolen princess from the Kingdom of Landeena," I tell her. She **stares at me** in shock before shaking her head.

"No, Marissa is my mother," she replies though she was confused by my words.

"We believe Marissa was your Nanny, and she took you when she killed your parents,"

"Is this some trick? Are you really that cruel to think doing something like that would be funny? Is this some punishment of yours?" She chokes out, tears brimming and spilling over and down her cheeks, her lip quivers, and I could feel through the bond she honestly thought I was saying this to hurt her more, she didn't trust me, and my stomach sank at that thought.

"I know I fucked up, but please, Ivy, just let me check. I swear I won't ask for anything else; I just have to be sure; I wouldn't have told you if I didn't believe it was true," I told her.

"Yet you were quick to believe I am my mother's?" I sigh and nod.

"I was angry, and what I did was wrong, but please, Ivy. I just want to be certain,"

"Well, you will find out when I shift tonight then, won't you?"

"That's why I need to know; if your Lycan Ivy, I could have killed you when I ignored our bond, which could affect your shift; the fact you are shifting makes this is dire. So please, I know you don't want me touching you, but I need to see. Because if you are, I want to be prepared if you don't faze properly."

"Excuse me? Any more terrible news you want to give me tonight, Kyson?" she snaps before groaning and hunching over. I tugged her to me, pulling her onto my lap rolle

d in her blanket. She whimpers, and her entire body shudders for a few moments before relaxing while I rub her back. She then lurches forward in my arms, tripping as she tangles into the blanket. She got to her feet and raced for the bathroom to throw up.

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Getting up, I followed her. Her skin was clammy as she ambled to the sink basin to rinse her and brush her teeth. Leaning on the door frame, I watched her, and she wet her face before wetting the back of her neck. She stopped beside me when she went to leave, and I stepped aside, letting her pass. By the time she got back to the bed in front of the fireplace, her teeth were chattering. Goosebumps covered every inch of flesh as she huddled beneath the blanket.

Lying down, her mind was churning. I could feel it, feel her confusion yet also curiosity but also her **fear** of knowing the truth. Her pain writhed through the bond, the cramping, nausea. One thing I am glad is long over and gone for myself. It's just the initial shift, your body preparing itself. Your first shift always sticks with you; it is excruciating. **Hers made worse**

"It makes no sense," she murmurs, barely audible even to my ears. I roll on my side, peeling the blanket back. She was bundled in like a human burrito. "What doesn't?" I ask her.

"If it was true, why would she take me? Why not kill me?"

"Unfortunately, not everything makes sense, Ivy, and I don't think I want to make sense of that woman's mind; if it made sense, we would be like her if we shared her mindset," I **answer,**

Ivy sighs, and her big cerulean blue eyes peer up at me. "And if you're wrong?"

"I'm not. I was the first time; I am sure this time, Ivy," I answer.

"But if you are?"

"Then nothing, you're still my mate, and you are not your mother," I tell her. She snuggles down in the blanket, only from her nose up peeking out from the blanket.

"My body heat will help regulate your temperature. The bond calls for it now. It recognizes me, Ivy. Don't suffer just because I was a prick. You have me and the bond; use it. I won't force you to do anything unless you ask me to," I tell her.

"Why would I ask you too?" she says, like I am absurd.

"The calling, Ivy. I know you don't like me using it, but there is a reason male Lycans were gifted with

"Yeah, to rape the women," she says with a roll of her eyes. She was half correct. It is barbaric when you look at it from that perspective, but not the main reason because it only works on your mate or the person you marked as your mate.

"I would never rape you. Do you think that little of me?"

"I don't think much of you when you use it to get what you want," she says. I sigh.

"It's not used just for getting you to submit. It helps calm the bond. Calm your bond to me, Ivy. Yes, it can be used in a sense as an aphrodisiac or calm you, which is my only intention to calm our bond, forge it," I tell her. She clicks her tongue, and her eyes flit away. She shudders, and her teeth chatter.

"If you mark me, you would be able to feel me better. Once the bond is forged for Lycans, we can even get a sense of each other's thoughts. It goes beyond just feeling each other's emotions,"

"How so?" she asks.

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"I can tell when you're hurt, like your hand. For example, mine hurt too. I can feel your curiosity to know if I am right about you being Azalea. Yet your apprehension at also knowing, I can tell that I scare you," I admit before swallowing.

"But I haven't marked you?"

"No, but I have marked you. Once you mark me, there is nothing you would be able to hide from me, Ivy, I will feel and sense everything when it comes to you, but that goes both ways. You will also feel everything I feel." If she didn't mark me, she would be in for a long night, yet I doubt I would convince her.

"Marking me will strengthen you," I tell her in a last ditch effort.

"I don't want strength, Kyson; I am sick of being strong. Sick of biting my tongue, sick of answering to someone, sick of the mold everyone put me in, I am tired. Strength? Strength isn't physical; it's enduring. Enduring of everything when all you want to do is nothing but crumble and let it go; it becomes too heavy. Abbie and I were each other's strength, each fighting to hold on for the other; I don't need strength, Kyson. I need peace," she says with an exasperated sigh.

"More than my life?" I whispered to her, and she nodded. I knew it had to have meaning because they always said it to each other, though I was curious about how it started.

"Yes, nothing means I love you more than my heart is still beating for you; we stopped living for ourselves. Instead, we lived for each other. You go, go, so you keep fighting because you can't bear the thought of leaving the other behind." Ivy answers.

"Like a pact?"

"Yes. We made it when we were 15,"

"What happened when you were fifteen?"

"Abbie went missing. She didn't come up from the cellar. She was supposed to be cleaning the mop buckets, so I looked for her. I found her in the cellar, her tunic torn, her thighs covered in blood. Abbie was standing on a chair with a rope around her neck. She wouldn't tell me what happened, but I knew. She told me to leave, but I grabbed the other chair and climbed up beside her and loosened the noose, wrapping it around my neck too." Ivy answers, her eyes getting a faraway expression like she was trapped in some memory. The fear through the bond made me clench my jaw. That pact had so much to answer for.

"I told her more than my life. Mine wasn't worth living either if she wasn't in it, that we would go to together because her life was worth more than mine,"

"And she got down?" I asked, the calling slipping out at her distress, and she lifted her eyes to mine when it washed over her.

"Helping?" I ask her, and she sighs but nods.

"So obviously, she didn't kill herself," I tell her, wanting to know what happened as much as what I was hearing sickened me. It was distracting her from the fact she would be shifting.

"No. We both jumped, but the rope didn't hold our weight," Ivy said, and my stomach dropped before Ivy turned her head and lifted her hair. The back of her neck has a scar it was faint, and that spot didn't

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grow any hair through the scar tissue.

"Abbie has a scar behind her left ear where the rope cut into her. Instead of death, we both got a headache when our heads collided." Ivy chuckled. How she could laugh at something so horrific, like it was nothing said enough for what those two girls endured.

"And that's how it started?" I asked. Ivy shrugged.

"Afterward, Mrs. Daley started singing for us to cook dinner. Abbie didn't want to go up, so I helped clean her up. I swapped her tunic for mine, and we went to cook dinner." Ivy says before pulling her **face** from the blanket so I can see her better.

"I got 12 lashes for that ruined tunic, but what it cost Abbie was worse, so for her, I wore it. Then we cooked dinner. We saw Mrs. Daley get paid by the butcher who hurt her. After that, where Abbie went, I went, where I went, she went, more than my life. If she **were to** endure it, I would too," Ivy says.

I needed to get Abbie away from Alpha Kade, but it explained why the pair of them were so close. They were dependent on each other. I chewed my lip; Mrs. Daley was lucky to be alive. She would never walk again after the lashes she received, yet that was even too kind. She won't be

left breathing when I send Gannon back for her. And god help the butcher when Gannon learns his name.

Silence fell over both of us, yet she didn't rebuke me using the calling. Yet as the night dragged on and her pain got worse, she moved closer before letting me under the blanket with her. Her legs kicked as her pain worsened, yet it was taking forever. It wasn't until the early morning hours that I struggled to handle seeing her like that as she rolled and turned, trying to get comfortable.

"Ivy?" I called to her as she turned over closer to the fire. Her eyes blazing brightly like jewels, her pupils fully dilated with a silver hue through them. She groaned, kicking off the blankets, her skin heating, and I knew she was close to shifting; I would never forget the burning sensation that enveloped beforehand.

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"Make it stop, make it stop," she cried before she screamed, and I heard her back cracking. Gripping her arms, I yanked her on top of me. Her skin was so hot she was burning me. Her feet scratched down my legs.

"Ivy, let me help," I told her, and she screamed, her spine breaking and realigning under my palms. I tug her shirt off. Ivy pants, her nails digging into my chest, and I feel her feet changing, her toenails turning **to claws as they raked down my flesh, tearing me to pieces**

"Ivy, let me help," she writhes but nods her head, and I flood her with the calling just as her fingers break, her claws sinking deeply into my chest like hooks. My blood runs down my side. At this rate, she would bleed me out if I remained in this flimsy skinsuit. The sound of her femur breaking and her scream would always haunt me.

I turn her head so her ear is flat against my chest so she can listen to my heartbeat and feel the vibration of the calling; she calms some but was still in agony when her claws dig in deeper, and I could feel them grating across bone, they were in that deep. Pulling her hands off my chest, her claws slip out.

Longer than a werewolf's claws and about three inches long. Blood gushed out of me where she got me, so I shifted beneath her, my bones breakin

g quickly and just in time before she clenched her hands, her claws raking down my chest, only this skin was more durable. My hand moved up and down her back as I tried to calm her down when the door opened. I knew everyone was worried; her screams were deafening.

"Get out!" I ordered at whoever it was, and the door quickly shut just as her bones started breaking again. The shift was going back and forth, prolonging her transformation, and I couldn't get her to mark me; she was entirely out of her mind with the pain.

"Shh, breathe, Ivy," I whispered, hugging her close, using my temperature to bring hers down as absorbed what I could through the bond.

"Kill me, kill me," she begged, and I shook my head, hugging her closer.

"Please, just kill me," she cried.

"I can make you shift, Ivy. But it will hurt like hell; it would be quick" I tell her as her spine ridges against my hand and her legs lengthen, her feet touching mine, fur sprouting along her naked flesh as she sobbed. "Make it stop," she cried, and I clutched her face in my hands, tilting her face up toward mine. I gasp at the sight of her eyes. There was no doubt she was my Azalea.

"I will make it stop, love," I tell her as tears spill down her cheeks. I couldn't let her remain like this longer than necessary when I could command her to shift.

I flood her with the calling, numbing her best I could before kissing her lips. "Shift!" I command. Her lips part, and her face reddens as if she is choking before every bone breaks simultaneously.

Fur replacing her soft skin, clawed hands replacing her petite one, and the sound was horrendous as she shifted in my arms. Her scream chilled me to the bone, but within seconds, she was lying on my chest, only she wasn't Ivy. Her fur was a deep gray; it was almost blue, and her eyes glowed like jewels as I turned her face in my hands to mine to look at her. A sob left my lips when I saw the Landeena bloodline eyes staring back at me.

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The Landeena's all shared one quality. Their eyes remained the same color, blending into their natural eye color while most Lycan eyes bleed black. Ivy turned her head to look at her hand, turning it over to find it wasn't a paw before looking at me in shock that I was right.

"I am a Lycan?" she murmured, flexing her fingers before tilting her head at the sound of her voice in this form. I chuckle, **tears streaking** down my face as I play with her ear sticking upright on her head. A purr leaves me as I pull her higher, burying my face in her neck.

"You're home, Azalea," I whispered to her, sitting upright and pulling her in my lap so she could see herself, her long bushy tail wagging from side to side, and I grabbed it, showing her and she grabbed it with two hands tugging on it before she giggled. She let it go and looked down at herself and gasped.

"I'm not hers," she sobbed, and I knew she meant Marissa's. Relief flooded her, but also sadness that her life was a lie.

"No, you are the missing Princess, Azalea Ivy-Rose Landeena, now Queen of the Landeena Kingdom," I whispered to her while running my nose across her face, her fur tickling my nose as I try to stop my emotions from choking me.

"My Lost Lycan Luna," I tell her with a chuckle, hugging her tighter and purring.

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Ivy POV

I had no idea how long it had been since I shifted. I knew while shifted; I spent most of the time on the phone with Abbie after Kyson rang her for me; she remained on the phone till I could no longer keep my eyes open, and the help of Kyson's calling eventually lulled me into oblivion. Abbie was just as shocked as I was about being Lycan but thought it was hilarious that I could lick my own eyeball, which I discovered accidentally. Who would have thought Lycans had such long tongues?

However, the feel of my bones breaking and dislocating woke me, though the transition back was nothing compared to the shifting. Although it still made me whimper when I felt the expanding of my spine sending a shudder through my body.

Kyson's huge hand on my back caressed me softly, and I blinked, trying to wake up from where I lay. The rumbling resonated from deep within his chest; even asleep, he still purred, using the calling as a sedative, and I blinked rapidly and yawned before rubbing my eyes. Still, I didn't want to move off his chest, content with just lying here wrapped in his warmth. His fur tickled my nose, his clawed fingers tracing the ridges of my spine gently as I felt the transition come entirely to an end.

His purr grows louder, and I melt against him, relishing the sound and the beat of his heart, mine beating in time to the sound when he pulls me higher. His tongue runs over my mark, lapping at it. Arousal washed through me instantly, making my toes curl, but I was still pissed off with him. As much as I enjoyed his touch, I was still angered by everything. Kyson rolls over, shifting as he does so.

The cracking of his bones made me grind my teeth as fur became hot skin and he rolled me on my back, his body pressed between my legs. His thick, muscled arms were on either side of my head. I watch as he shudders before turning his head, cracking his neck, and his eyes go back to their dazzling silver color. He smiled amusedly down at me before pressing his lips to mine gently. His tongue traced the seam of my lips before forcing it between them. His tongue brushes mine gently, and I sigh, kissing him back as he rocked his hips against me.

His hand moves up my neck, and his fingertips graze over my scalp as they slide through my thick hair, pulling me impossibly close as he deepened the kiss, his tongue demanding and dominating my mouth, tasting every inch and stealing the breath from my lungs. He pulls away and chuckles softly, dropping his head onto my shoulder.

"What?" I ask, wondering what he thought was funny. "Nothing," he chuckles, purring louder, and my eyes widen, realizing I was also purring and hadn't realized, mistaking the vibration as coming from him. My face heats, and he nibbles my lip, yet I couldn't seem to stop the noise even if I wanted to like I had no control over it.

Kyson lifts his head, his hand moving to my face, his thumb strokes over my cheek gently, my skin flushed with my embarrassment as I continued to purr like a damn cat getting its back scratched.

"Don't be embarrassed; it's normal, love. Your body is reacting after a shift. It recognizes our bond and wants to mate," he purrs, and I shake my head. I didn't want to mate. Yet the moment he said the words, I became instantly aware of the throb between my legs and the slickness of my thighs.

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making me moan. He shifts slightly, moving his hand off my thigh before sitting up, his arm going over the back of my thighs, holding them in place while his other hand slid down my thigh to my ass, squeezing it as he sat up. My legs were pinned in the same position held by his arm placed over them.

I try to drop my legs, not liking the position I was in with him staring between my legs. His hand palming and kneading my ass before I feel his thumb part my lips before

he dips his face between my legs, lapping at my clit. Kyson shoves his index finger inside me. My inner walls squeeze around it, and my hips buck at the sudden intrusion, his mouth sucking my clit as he dragged his finger back out, scraping my walls only to slide it back in.

My purr grows louder, my nerves screaming at the friction he builds; he glides his finger out before adding his middle finger, making my legs shake as he stretches me further. My walls clench around them, and he sits up, watching his fingers slip in and out of my tight channel, drenched with my arousal. Kyson growls his eyes hungrily watching his fingers delve inside of me, he curls them, making me cry out as he hits that sweet spot, eliciting endless moans.

My eyes close at the sensation when he continues dragging them in and out, curling them as he plunges them in deeper each time. I feel his fingers curl once again, his ring finger presses against my ass, and my eyes open to find him watching me. His pitch—black as the beast that resides within **surfaces**,

His fingers offered no reprieve as he plunged them in harder, dropping his mouth back to pussy before I felt him slide his ring finger inside me. I squirm, the feeling unnatural as he breached the barrier of the tight muscles of my ass. Despite the discomfort, my pleasure grew infinitely.

His fingers moving simultaneously while he sucked on my clit. My skin heats, my pussy throbs, and my walls clench, my stomach tightens at the pleasure. Tingles slivered and weaved up my spine, and my toes curled as I reached the precipice and shattered.

My moans echoed around the room as waves of pleasure rippled through me, my pussy clenching his fingers, which had slowed, allowing me to ride out the feeling as I panted and writhed. My entire body shook with the intensity of my release, rendering me limp and boneless as the last wave rippled through me.

Kyson slowly withdraws his fingers before lapping at my juices, his tongue causing aftershocks to course through me, my skin now oversensitive to the touch. He moves his arm, and my legs fall limply on the bed while I try to catch my breath. Kyson crawls between my legs, hovering above me, and I could feel his erection digging into my lower stomach as he leaned down and kissed me.

Forcing his tongue into my mouth and I was too exhausted to care as he made me taste myself. He growls, nipping at my lips, "I'll run you a bath," he purred against my lips, and all I could do was nod. My brain felt sluggish and liquefied. He laughed softly before climbing off me and wandering off toward the bathroom.

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Gannon POV

Last night, the King granted me special leave while Ivy was transitioning; I had been in the car ever since. I tried to ring Abbie to speak with her and convince her, but she never answered her phone. Abbie had been ignoring my calls since the last attempt. I am to report any issues, although I was angered that Kyson wouldn't allow me to drag her out because forcing someone from their mate was illegal if they wanted to remain with them. However, I was tempted to break that law; I would take jail time or lashings.

Kyson, I know, would be reluctant to hand the sentence down, but with pressure from the packs he governed over, it didn't look good for a king to go against the law he helped create, to stop Alpha's forcefully marking multiple women and stealing them from their mates, which is precisely why Kade never marked any of his wives technically they were free if they found their mates. But Abbie, he did mark knowing having a mate makes him stronger.

So, for now, my only option was to convince Abbie to willingly leave him. As stupid as it might be to try, I had to. Going against a mate bond was near impossible for she-wolves, and so far, my attempts to convince her of her mate's infidelity have failed.

We rarely came this far out. Even when invited to stay as we passed through it sometimes, we always stayed elsewhere, uncomfortable with being in packs, never knowing which side they were on. However, Alpha Kade had been good to us, always helped, but he was a shitty werewolf nonetheless, the way he kept women as if they were trophies or some possession, not a person.

My phone starts ringing, and I pull over to answer it, knowing I would need to type in the address soon anyway. Damian's name pops up on the screen, and I hit connect, placing it to my ear.

"You get the address?" I ask him, rummaging for a pen and paper in the glove compartment.

"Yes, I have it right here. Try to remain unseen, Gannon. It will raise suspicions if you get caught lurking without formal notice," Damian tells me, and I growl.

"What did you tell him?"

"That Ivy wanted to send a care package,"

"Fine, I will stop on the way and buy some shit in case; I can play the delivery boy." I snap.

"Good idea, but please don't kill anyone, for god's sake,"

"I'm just here to get my girl, that's it," I tell him.

"You can't force her, you know what will happen if you do," Damian reminds me.

"Maybe I am willing to accept the punishment, Damian,"

"Then what becomes of her when takes her away, think, Gannon. You force her, and she wants to go back then what. You would be disqualified from entering his pack, he is stuck there, and the King has to give you 1000 lashings and jail time, don't make him do that. You know what happened last time he

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did and nearly killed one of our men. It near destroyed him,"

"But that idiot forcefully claimed the girl; I am not claiming her, just taking her," I retort.

"Same difference, don't make me order you back, Gannon,"

"This Abbie, Damian," I breathe.

"I am aware, but our hands are tied, and he is the only Alpha we have an actual pact-bound alliance with," Damian says. I glare out the windshield.

"What's it going to be? Am I ordering you back, or can you contain yourself?" I snarl.

"Fine, I won't force her, but if he has hurt her, I will fucking kill him,"

"The King said he saw Abbie, and she was in good health besides the cheating on Kade's part,"

"Still fucking hurting her,"

"Gannon!" Damian snapped at me.

"Fine, I will keep my hands to myself, just give me the address," I tell him, worried he would order me back home after driving all this way. I jot down the address before hanging up and putting the address into the maps. It was indeed out of town, miles out. Nothing around her; he kept her from everyone, including the town.

I growl at the realization she was out there alone. Starting the car, I drive to the closest town before stopping at one of the general stores and filling a basket. I grabbed all her favorite fruits and candies! had forced her to try since she was sketchy taking anything from me at the castle. Although, towards the end, she really dropped her guard, and I had her agree to be with me only for that fuckwit Kade to show up and ruin it.

I looked for something else, but they didn't even have flowers in this shitty store. I would give her a book before remembering she couldn't read and swap it for a comic. Maybe she could interpret the pictures with any luck. Perhaps I can get her to come back with me and reject her mate and teach her to read myself.

It took me another half an hour to drive to the outskirts of Kade's territory. She was barely on the border as I pulled down the long dirt driveway. The place was surrounded by the dense forest as pulled up at the house. Although house would be too kind of a word, it was more like a shack, even that might be too generous.

I could see her at the clothesline, and she looked over her shoulder at my car as it pulled in, putting her hand up to shield her eyes from the sun so she could see better. I quickly stopped the car, sending a text like Damian asked to alert him when I arrived. Abbie looked at the vehicle nervously as I swung the door open as she slowly walked over. She lets out a breath of relief, making me wonder why she was worried about a random car.

"Oh, it's you?" Abbie says, walking over. "Why are you here?" she asks nervously, chewing her lip.

"What, that's it?" I asked her, raising an eyebrow at her. Her lips tug up in the corner before she rushes over, and I grab her crushing her against me. "Gosh, I have missed you," I tell her, and she nods, her skinny arms wrapping around my neck, and she shrieks when I lift her off her feet, hugging her tight.

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I bury my face in her neck, stealing a whiff of her scent.

"Why are you here?" she asks.

"To see

you, why else? You haven't been answering my calls, I tell her, placing her back on her feet. I stared down at her;

she had lost weight, which should be impossible with how skinny she already was. Her pants rolled at her hips to hold them up looked four times bigger than her. Her white shirt, I could tell,

was one of Kade's. Her pants were also too long as she had those rolled too at her ankles. She glances down the driveway nervously, and I look behind me.

"Expecting someone?" I ask.

"Kade hasn't been by for a couple of days. He said he was out of town, but" she pauses.

"But what?"

"Nothing, but sometimes this car comes and parks down the end. They never get out." She shakes her head.

"Probably just paranoid," she laughs.

"Coffee?" she asks, and I nod and turn back to my car, grabbing the bags out before following her inside. The porch creaked as I stepped on it, the wooden planks bending under my weight. The door even hung weirdly as she opened it, having to lift it like the hinges were busted. Stepping inside, it was tiny. The kitchen, bedroom, and living room are all in one little room.

"Where is the bathroom?"

"There is an outhouse out the back," she shrugs, turning the stove on before filling a camping kettle and placing it on the element. I stared around in disbelief at how he had his mate living. There wasn't even a bed, just a fold-out couch that was neatly made. I sat on the edge of it. The springs groaned, and I could feel the metal bar beneath digging into my backside.

"You should come back with me," I tell her.

"Not this again, Gannon, please" Abbie whines, and I growl before remembering the bags clutched in my hands. I hold them out to her, and her brows furrow.

"Take it," I tell her, and she sighs, walking over before grabbing the bags. She places them on the table and looks inside them, and her eyes light up as she pulls out some sugar clouds. Those I had noticed were her favorite; she immediately opened the bag and grabbed one out. She offered me the bag, but I shook my head. I didn't like sugary stuff; I only ever brought them for her when I took her in town once to grab supplies for Clarice and noticed her looking at them.

That was also when I found out she only had candy before her parents died and only on special occasions when they could afford it. So I always made sure I had a neverending stockpile on me when I would see her.

I watch as she stuffs another in her mouth before pulling her pants up as they slide down her hips.

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The lolly staining her lips red and coating them in sugar. I chuckle *before* watching her go to the tiny fridge and open it. I growl when I see it is nearly empty, besides half a bottle of milk and a block of cheese, Getting up, I check the cupboards to find them almost bare,

"Why is there no food here," I growl.

"There is, Kade, said he would come out soon to bring *more*," she shrugs, retrieving coffee and teabags.

"What the fuck have you been eating?" she chews her lips nervously and looks out the window at the forest.

"Have you been hunting your own food?"

"No, I promise, I didn't kill anything. I just took some bird eggs," she gasped, confusing my anger at being directed toward her for hunting.

"Bird eggs?" I scoff.

"I tried to kill a rabbit, but I couldn't do it, I swear," she stutters.

"I don't care about you hunting, Abbie. My point is you shouldn't have to. You are an Alpha's mate, not some fucking slave, or a dirty little secret," I snarl.

"I'm not; he is introducing me to the pack soon. It isn't safe. He is having issues with a neighboring pack," she stammers, turning back to her kettle that started whistling,

"Do you know how stupid that sounds? You're his fucking luna, and he has you living out here in squalor,"

"It's not safe" she defends him.

"The safest place would be by his side, don't you think, not out here along the border where anyone could get you," I argue, but she had every excuse under the sun to defend him, lies he had fed her.

It was like arguing with a brick wall. I fucking hated this mate bond bullshit. It made she-wolves blind to their mate's errors, gullible and all made worse is he only has to show her the tiniest bit of what she perceives as a kindness because she has known none and believes wholeheartedly that is how it works, that she should trust blindly because he is her mate.

"No, you're coming back with me" I tell her, grabbing her arm.

"What no, I have a mate, I can't just leave. He will worry."

"Worry? Where the fuck is he then, Abbie?" I yell at her trying to drag her toward the door,

"No!" she screams, thrashing in my grip. "Gannon, stop," she says before she starts crying,

"He loves me, he said he loves me, he will be back," she sobs.

"fucking love you. He doesn't," I scream at her.

Abbie whimpers, and I realize my claws had slipped out, nicking her skin, thankfully not deeply, and I let her go watching as it healed,

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"You have a mate out there somewhere. How can you say that?"

"No, I don't; I want you. Why can't you see that?"

"But I am not yours, I am Kade's mate, he loves me, and I love him,"

"If you think this is love, you are mistaken; you don't hide someone you love away, you don't force them to live like this," I snap at her. Her brows scrunch together. And tears well in her beautiful hazel doe eyes. She shakes her head before sniffing, wiping her hands on the front of her shirt. "You should go." she whispers, unable to meet my eyes.

I swallow, and she wraps her arms around herself, rubbing her arms as she turns back toward the kitchen.

"Abbie?"

"Gannon, please, just don't," she breathes.

"Tell me your happy here? Tell me something because this, this isn't right, I would take care of you," || tell her.

"I'm not yours," she says slowly, emphasizing her words.

"But you could be. You just need to ignore the bond, Abbie. See-through his bullshit," I tell her, but she

shakes her head.

"It's temporary he will be back soon," she says, pouring the hot water in her mug and jiggling the teabag. I click my tongue, unsure of another way to convince.

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"You were willing to be mine before Abbie," I tell her.

"That was before I discovered my mate, and you're a Lycan it would never work,"

"I would change you, it would, but you need to reject Kade and come home with me,"

"I can't, he...he... He loves me,"

"But do you love him? Think about Abbie. If he wasn't your mate, and you are locked up here, would you stay or come back with me?"

"That's not fair," she says.

"Answer me,"

"That would be different," she looks around at the place.

"You live in a castle. Who would choose this place over that?" she finally says.

"Fine, then if he wasn't your mate, who would you choose, him or me,"

"But he is my mate!"

"Exactly, the mate bond tells you to love him, to stay with him it is not a damn choice, but if you had one," she bites her lip.

"I don't know! I... please you have to leave, you're confusing me, stop. It all needs to stop."

"Come back with me, even for a little while, just come back, come see Ivy, you wanted to see Ivy, right?" | begged.

"It's unsafe; I have to stay here; Kade will take me to see her. He promised he would,"

"I'm fucking Lycan. What safer place is there to be then by my side?" I curse while shaking my head and pinching the bridge of my nose in frustration.

"He's my mate," she says though even she looked confused at what she wanted. And that stupid marking on her neck I wish I could remove so she could think clearly.

I move toward her, and she backs up, her bum hitting the kitchen sink. "Come back with me,"

"I can't, Gannon,"

"But you want to, don't you," I ask her, and she looks away.

"I can't leave my mate. It would hurt him if I did,"

"What about the pain he causes you?"

"Ah, not this again, he wouldn't do that; I'm his mate," she says, trying to push past me.

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"No! Just go. You can't force me. It's against the law. I may be stupid, but I know that much," she says, looking away.

"You are not stupid, misguided, yes, but not stupid, Abbie, don't say that," I tell her.

"Leave; I have asked you too, so please, Gannon, don't make this harder than it has to be," s
he says, and I sigh. I pull my phone from my pocket and glance at the
time. I was only granted an hour here, and I was already 15 minutes over.

"When you change your
mind, you ring me; I don't care what time it is; I will come for you. Do you still know my num
ber?" she nods.

"My number Abbie," she sighs and rattles
it off, knowing it by heart. I kiss her forehead before nodding. "Answer my calls," she nods.

"I will okay, just leave," she says, and I chew my lip before turning and walking out the
door. When I got in the car, I started the engine and looked up to find her
standing on the porch watching me; she waved before looking away, and
I turned the car around before leaving. When I drive over the boundary, Damian rings.

"What?"

"Are you on your way back with her,"

"She wouldn't come. There is no food in that place. It is a shit hole,"

"She has to come willingly. You can't take her,"

"It's fucking bullshit; I should command her;" I tell him.

"You do, and she will always question whether or not she made the right choice," Damian tri
es to reason. I growl, and eventually, he hangs up when I come to the town
I stopped in. I nearly drove through before I cursed and pulled into the grocery
store. I filled a trolley with different foods before driving back, unable
to get the thought of her eating bird eggs and whatever she could find in the forest out of
my head.

Pulling up, I quickly unloaded them. I could see her asleep on the fold-out bed through the murky tiny window that had a crack in it. I place the groceries on the porch before knocking and walking away, unable to trust myself not to drag her out kicking and screaming. I turn the car around, tearing out of the driveway, but catch a glimpse of her. She glanced down, staring at the groceries before looking back at my retreating vehicle.

I would be in so much shit for going back and being late, but I couldn't leave her with no food, and Damian would lose his mind. Stuck in my thoughts, I knew Kyson wouldn't break a law that would put the Lycan Kingdom at more risk of war, but maybe he would for Ivy? If she knew, I had no doubt she would go off about Abbie living like that if she knew what Kade was doing behind Abbie's back. I would find a way to tell her; I would accept the backlash from the king when she does.

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Chapter 88

Ivy POV

Thad spent most of the day asleep, waking in the late afternoon. Somehow waking to feel more tired despite spending most of the day sleeping. Unusually exhausted, it was an actual struggle for me to keep my eyes open as I chucked on the first things my hands landed on. Not caring what I looked like, my hair looked like a haystack when I looked in the mirror.

Who would have thought shifting would be so exhausting? I hoped it wasn't like this every time I shifted. Grabbing Kyson's phone, I tried to ring Abbie, but she didn't answer. Chucking the phone on the bed, I pulled my hair into a messy bun, deciding to look for Kyson. Stepping out of the room, Dustin was waiting by the door.

"Morning," I tell him. Dustin laughs.

"You mean afternoon, my Queen." My brows furrow as I look to the window to see the sun casting the sky in colorful hues. I sigh.

"How long have I been asleep?"

"Only a few hours, I heard you up earlier with the..." Dustin suddenly looks straight ahead, looking somewhat awkward, and my face flames as my brain registered why he suddenly became awkward.

"Wait, you were outside the..." I looked back at the door.

"I hear nothing, my Queen,"

"Well, clearly you heard something," I tell him, looking at his blushing cheeks. I don't know who was more embarrassed him or me. I was mortified. Clearing my throat, my eyes go to the end of the long corridor. "Have you seen the King?"

"He is in his office, my Queen,"

"Ah, enough with the Queen stuff. I think we are past the formality with what you overheard, more on a personal level, don't you think?" Dustin chuckles.

"I heard nothing," Dustin says, his lips hooking up in the corners as he stared straight ahead, trying not to laugh. I shake my head and click my tongue. "Come on then, let's find this King of mine," I tell him before stalking off down the hall. Dustin rushes ahead, opening doors, which annoyed me. It then became a race to beat the other to the door, it was annoying having everyone do everything for me. Finally beating him to the next one. I sit open and smack into the King's chest. The air expelled from my lungs. It was like running into a brick wall. I stumble back, and Dustin grips my arm to steady me. I clutch my head, and Dustin lets me go, placing his hand behind his back and standing straighter.

"And where are you off to in such a hurry?" the King asks, staring down at me. He had an amused smile on his face as he stared at the pair of us. I rub my forehead where I run headfirst into my mate like a damn bulldozer.

"We were looking for you" | groan.

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"Well, you found me," Kyson laughs, and I slap his chest, forgetting how much stronger and quicker I am now that I had shifted, resulting in me hurting my own hand. Kyson shakes his head, draping his arm over my shoulder and tugging me against him, walking me back the way we came and toward the stairs leading back up to our quarters. As we crossed the foyer, Clarice was walking down the steps.

"Ah, there you are, my Queen; I left your afternoon tea upstairs on the table for you," she says.

"Thank you, Clarice," I tell her about to walk up the steps when I Beta Damian called out to the King from down the corridor, and we stopped. Kyson leans down, pressing his lips to my head, and I purse my lips. "I'll be up soon," Kyson murmurs before walking off toward his Beta.

"Is something going on?" I ask Dustin, staring off after the King. Dustin says nothing, and I look over at him.

"You're not allowed to tell me, are you?"

"The King has everything under control," Dustin says, and I bite the inside of my lip, looking at the King's office where he disappeared into.

Curious if it was about the missing women, I walked toward his office only to hear arguing. Dustin grips my hand and tries to steer me off back toward the stairs while I stare over my shoulder.

"The King doesn't want you in there right now, my Queen,"

"Ivy! And I want to know what's going on," I tell him when I hear something smash in his office. Dustin tries to grab me when I rip my arm out of his gentle grip. Escaping Dustin, I shove the door open to find the King shifted, and he had Gannon pinned on the desk, who was also shifted. They appeared to be fighting while Damian picked himself up off the floor. His lip was bleeding, and I saw the healing bruising on his chin as someone had hit him.

"Gannon snarls and shoves the King before swinging at him only for Kyson to punch him, and Gannon hits the ground. The pungent aroma of alcohol in the room emanating off Gannon told me he was drunk. He growls, trying to get up but stumbling.

and Damian goes to get between them when Kyson glares at him, and Damian back away with his hands up.

"Stand down. She will see sense soon and come back, stop this," The King ordered Gannon.

"This fucking bullshit, shit, and you know it," Gannon snapped at him.

"My hands are tied, you know this," Kyson says, letting him go, glaring down at Gan.

"You're the fucking King. You can make him give her back."

"I wonder what Ivy would say to that. Would you give her the same excuse?" Gannon sneered at him.

"If I knew what?" I asked. Stepping through the gap in the door where the King could see me.

"Nothing, Ivy. Go back to our room, Love." Kyson says before glaring at Dustin behind me.

"Don't glare at him. I want to know what's going on and why you are all fighting," I demanded to know.

Gannon goes to say something, and the King turns a furious growl tearing out of him, but the look on Gannon's face shows he didn't care what the King would do, or maybe he was too intoxicated to

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realize the trouble he was about to get in for speaking out after the King clearly didn't want him to.

"Dustin, get her out of here and keep her out!" Kyson snarled, and Dustin grabbed my arm, trying to pull me from the room when Gannon spoke, making me stop.

"Kade is mistreating Abbie," Gannon said. My heart sank at his words, but just spoken to her the night before, and she seemed fine. Turning to face him, Dustin tried to yank me out, but I shoved him off, feeling terrible when he smacked into the wall. I turn to Kyson, wanting to know what he talking about when the King snarled,

pivoting and punching Gannon so hard it knocked him out cold. I gasped, my hands covering my mouth as Gannon was suddenly sprawled on the floor.

"Ivy out!"

"Where is Abbie Kyson?" I asked. My shock turned to anger.

"With her mate where she chooses to be!" Kyson says. My brows pinch together, and I look at Gannon, who was on the floor.

"Then what is Gannon speaking about?" I ask him.

"It doesn't matter; I will be up soon."

"You're lying,"

"Excuse me?"

"I said you're lying. Now, what is going on with Abbie?"

"Go back to the room, do not make me order you, Ivy,"

"Then answer the fucking question?" I snap. My mind frantically raced as I tried to figure out what was going on because she was fine the other night.

"Abbie is with her mate, you know this. You spoke with her last night" Kyson says, and my eyes dart to Gannon.

"I find out you're lying to me or something is wrong with her?"

"You'll what, Ivy. I would advise you not to finish that sentence, Love," Kyson says, walking around his desk to come to stand in front of me. He folds his arms across his chest. I glare at him despite the tremble in my hands, which didn't go unnoticed by him. But this was Abbie. She wasn't just someone to me; she was everything. More than my life, and that still stood even against my mate.

"Don't forget Kyson, I have other places I can go now," I tell him, and he growls.

Excuse me, Ivy?" Kyson snarls, and his eyes flicker dangerously. His hands clenched into fists.

-

"You dare address the Queen of the Landeena Kingdom so casually, King Kyson," I growled. I know it was petty, but if he wanted to pull rank, so would I, and despite not wanting to be a Queen, I technically am one and have a kingdom with a population of zero, but still, it's mine. My birthright! And for Abbie, I won't back down when it comes to Abbie, even if it gets me killed.

"Is that so, Queen Ivy?" Kyson says through gritted teeth.

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"Queen Azalea," I growled, and he seemed taken aback. If I am going to make claims, I might as well claim it all, including the name. We stood staring at each other, neither of us willing to back down from the other, and I saw the muscle in his jaw clench. Though I was fearful of him using the calling or ordering me since I wasn't even sure how to fight his aura. However, being a Lycan Queen by blood, surely I would have one?

His lost lycan Luna by Jessica Hall Chapter 89

Chapter 89

However, today was different when I saw the car door swing open and a woman got out of the car. She was gorgeous, with curly long blonde hair half pulled up, she had sunglasses on covering her eyes, and she looked, high class. Everything about her screamed money. She walked around to the front of the car, her knee-high black boots crunching on the gravel as she leaned on the hood. She had on a white cami and blue jeans. Her lips stained red from her lipstick.

She sat on the hood, and I waved to her, wondering if she was a pack member and if I should say hello, but Kade told me not to talk to anyone out here, so I remained where I was. She never waved back, only glared at me.

With one last glance over my shoulder, I rushed inside, closed the door and locked it. Not that it would do much, the door's hinges were loose, and the bottom of the door was waterlogged, making it challenging to shut and leaving a gap that the mozzies like to get in from of at night.

I peer out the window at her, staying far enough back, hoping she couldn't see me. She sat t here for a while then eventually left, making me wonder why she stopped here every day. O nce she was gone, I let out a breath of relief. My afternoon was sort of like clockwork.

Inapped before bringing the clothes in, then hung them up along the window curtain on a coat hanger. I made my bed before grabbing the comic book Gannon had brought me. The pictures telling a story about a cat with stripes. If only I could read the images may make more sense to me, but I was thankful nonetheless.

Feeling peckish, I wandered into the kitchen. The sun was down now, and the day turned to night. The nights were longest, so cold and empty that's usually also when the most pain came. That horrible, heartbreaking pain that restrict ed my chest. My anxiety always peaked around this time, waiting for it to arrive. Next time I speak with him, I will ask Kade to take me to the pack doctor. Something had to be wrong, or it wouldn't be so fr equent.

Chapter 89

Trigger warning! Trigger warning!

The next three chapters are brutal, so read at own risk. Violence, cheating, and sexual assault .

Abbie POV

My mind was still reeling with the fact Gannon had driven all the way here. How I had missed him, but I knew it was wrong to have feelings for another when you had a mate, betrayal. The worst sort of betrayal to the moon goddess to refuse the gift she had bestowed on us by giving us our mates.

Honestly, I never thought myself worthy of a mate, someone to love me unconditionally, unt il I met Kade. I missed him, and I wondered if it hurt him just as

much as it did me when we were apart. For some reason though, as I unpacked the groceries Gannon had brought back and dropped on my doorstep.

I couldn't wipe the goofy smile off my face as I chewed on one of the strawberry clouds; he was always giving me candy at the castle. The fact he remembered these were my favorite had me smiling like an idiot before guilt sank in that I shouldn't be thinking of Gannon, so I scolded myself for my reckless thoughts.

It felt strange seeing the cupboards with food in them.

Kade brought a couple of bags every few days but nothing like this. I was always rationing everything, and even then, it still wasn't enough to last before he returned. It had been days since I last saw him, and he never stayed long, only a few minutes before saying he had to get back to work. This place was quiet, sometimes too quiet for my troubled mind, and it made me miss Ivy and Clarice more.

Packing the last of the groceries away, I decided to go bring the washing in; I only had these pants and the shirt, plus the clothes I came here wearing. Which we're currently on the clothesline, having to hand wash them every day in the sink was becoming a real mission.

But I didn't want my clothes dirty if he returned, yet the heat and sun wore me out faster. Being confined out here, I found I spent most of my time sleeping. The hunger always eased when I wasn't awake to endure it, the same with the bond. Its longing and yearning for my mate made the heart hurt less if asleep.

Stepping outside, I shielded my eyes from the sun that was slowly going down behind the trees. I split some sticks to make my pegs. Not even pegs were provided, and only half the clothesline still had wires. I couldn't wait to finally be able to go to the packhouse. Kade had told me all about it and told me how beautiful it was. I just needed to be patient, and soon I would be free to be with my mate and not be at threat of the pack war he was currently stuck in.

Checking the clothes, the hems were still wet, so I flipped them on the clothesline and hung them up the other way. Another half an hour and they would surely be dry, and I could iron them for tomorrow. Walking back inside, I stop when I hear the sound of tires on gravel, and my heart leaps with excitement, hoping it is Kade. When I turned around, it was the mysterious black Mustang parked at the end of the driveway again. I stare at it, wondering why they came here every day but never introduced themselves or got out.

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Chapter 90

Walking into the kitchen, I grab a cup and fill it with milk, deciding to have milk and cookies. I was too tired to cook, not that I had any reason to be, and the stove was temperamental and only worked when it wanted to. Dipping my biscuit in my milk, I bite it, the sugary sweetness making me giddy.

Sugar always had that effect on me. Kade said it was because I wasn't used to having it, and after annoyed him with my constant talking on the way here from the bag of clouds Gannon gave me before I left, he tossed them out the window and snapped at me. I hadn't had anything sweet since besides artificial sugar in my coffee Kade brought last time he came here. He said it was a treat for being good, but it didn't even taste like sugar and had a funny aftertaste.

What if

he came? Maybe I shouldn't have anymore? I thought. I didn't want to annoy my mate and make him leave, placing the half-eaten biscuit back. I would eat the other half tomorrow, just in case he did come to see me. I hoped he would.

I placed the open packet in the fridge and decided to quickly spring clean to burn off some energy. I filled the sink with water and started cleaning the kitchen. Nothing I did improved its state, though. The place was falling apart. Washing my cup, I placed it on the sink upside down when I heard car tires. My eyes widened with excitement, and I couldn't help the stupid smile that spread across my face. Pulling my hands out of the water, I quickly dried them and raced to the front door tossing it open, unable to contain my excitement.

I squealed when I saw Kade's car parked out front, and he hopped out along with two of his warriors who I had met back at the castle. Kade climbed out looking gorgeous in his suit, and I rushed down the steps, almost bouncing with joy. I ran over, about to throw my arms around me. Gosh, I missed him.

Only I was greeted with his fist. My head snapped back, and I clutched my face, blood spurting out of my nose and lip where his fist connected. Blood stained my shirt and my hands as I looked at them. I didn't understand. Lifting my head his hand reached for me before I recognized the cruel sneer on his face. He grabbed my hair, making me cry

out, my neck arched back painfully. Kade said nothing, just ripped me back toward the house; I clutched his hands, my feet slipping on the loose gravel.

"Kade?" I cried as he dragged me across the ground and up the steps by my hair. My hair-tearing painfully from my scalp when he tossed me inside. I screamed in pain when I landed on the hard floor on my hip. My hands jarred as I threw them out, trying to break my fall. Kade kicks the door shut, and my eyes widen when he turns on me again.

"You fucking whore, who were you with?" Kade screamed at me. I scrambled back on my hands and feet when he grabbed my hair again, hauling me to my feet.

"What do you mean?" I shrieked as he hauled me into the kitchen.

"Who's car was here? Do you think I wouldn't notice, wouldn't feel your infidelity." He screamed.

"He brought me food; it was just Gannon," I sobbed, trying to get him to let go. He does, and I stumble back into the sink when he growls, grabbing the back of my neck and plunging my face into the water. I choke and sputter on the dirty water. My hands gripped the sides as I tried to pull my face out, only he shoved my face in harder. My throat burned and ached furiously as I began to drown, inhaling the water making my nose burn, but before I could drown, he ripped my head out, and I sucked in air harsh ragged breaths.

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"Did you fuck him, you whore?" Kade screamed in my face. While I tried to suck in air. My hair and face were drenched, my shirt soaked.

"No, why are," he shoved my face back in the sink, and I clawed and scratched at the bench, trying to get air. Water sloshed onto the floor at my feet as I struggled against him, only for him to rip me out at the last second again.

"He brought me food, that's all" I tell him, wondering what he was talking about. Kade yanks my head back, ripping open the pantry and fridge. He snarls, slamming my head into the bench, pain rattled through my skull, and I saw black as my head pounded to its own beat, and I collapsed on the floor. Blood pooled in my mouth as I tried to look around through my blurry vision.

He starts ripping the canned food off the shelves, tossing them at me, and I shield my head, my body becoming bruised and battered, the bond screaming for him to stop, and my heart twisting painfully in my chest. He snarls, picking up a bag of candy.

"Did you fuck him?" Kade snarls, and I shake my head, sobbing. My hands shook as he reached for me, and I put them up to shield my face. Blood trickled down the side of my head, from my nose and eyebrow. It stained the floor, my hands, and my clothes.

"Please, Please, I didn't do anything wrong," I shrieked when he grabbed my hair again, ripping my head back before stuffing the candy in my mouth. I try to spit it out, choking on it. "Filthy fucking pig, you fucked him, didn't you? Thought you could get away with sneaking around behind my back," he roared in my face, spittle hitting my face with his words.

"You want to act like a whore, I will treat you like one," He growled.

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Kade rips me to my feet by my hair, he shoved me toward the door, and I saw my phone; I tried to snatch it off the counter when he punched me the stomach, knocking the air from my lungs as I doubled over. He smashes it on the floor, my phone breaking into pieces while I try to catch my breath. He kicks me in the stomach, and I retch. The little food I had eaten bubbles up my throat and spills onto the floor along with my blood.

Dots danced before my vision, and flecks of gold as a wave of dizziness washed through me, the room spinning around me violently. My blood dripped from the gash on my head. Kade's feet stopped beside my face when hands grabbed me, and I was tossed over his shoulder. He kicked the door, sending it flying into the front of the yard before stomping down the steps.

"Open the trunk," he snapped at one of his men, who rushed to do his bidding. I thrashed, trying to get him to put

me down, begging and pleading with him though it fell on deaf ears when I was tossed into the trunk, and he slammed the lid shut.

I have no idea how long he drove for, but I was sent hurtling into the rear seat when he jammed on the brakes. My heart beat erratically, filling my ears with the pounding sound of it when I heard the car doors slam, and I suddenly couldn't breathe, panic consuming me, and I tried to suck in a hiccuped breath as the trunk lid opened. One of his warriors reaches in to grab me. I thrashed, slapping his hands away and kicking when he punched me. My head whipped to the side, and I felt my eye swell shut instantly and I groaned, dazed from the blow.

"Hurry up," Kade snarled when I felt a needle jammed in my arm, it was like someone set my veins on fire as the poison raged an inferno through my bloodstream. "Don't worry, Love, it won't kill you, but you won't be able to shift or heal, just a mild sedative," Kade mocked as I peered up at him through my swollen eye that felt like it ballooned out.

The other man grabs me, tossing me over his shoulder, and I groan, feeling sick at the motion of him walking up steps before I was dumped onto a red carpet. I couldn't even sit up, wholly paralyzed yet wide awake. My mind raced as I tried to look around, yet all I could see was a bed with red blankets in the distance. Attached to it were different chains and ropes and the room smelled funny. The pungent aroma of incense burned my nose.

"Sit her up, and make sure she watches," Kade sneered when the man from before gripped my shirt leaning me against the wall. He grabbed my head that lolled forward; I was dribbling blood and drooling down my chin. A woman walks in with barely any clothes on.

She had black lingerie on, her hair was cut short in a pixie cut, and she was wearing stilettos. "Yes, Alpha," she asks, yet I noticed the tremble of her fingers and the shake to her voice.

"This is my mate, Abbie. She is being punished, so we are going to put on a show for, get on the bed, Blaire. The women gasps and spins when he motions toward me with his hand, and she stumbles back, her face paling.

"Your mate?" she gasps and goes to kneel down, her hands outstretched like she wanted to help me when Kade snapped at her. "Don't touch the slut. Now get on the bed," Kade snarls at her.

The woman looks horrified at Kade. "But she is your mate," the woman says, and Kade growls.

"Are you questioning your Alpha? You remember what happened last time you questioned me?" he asks, tilting his head to the side, and she whimpers, offering her neck to him and nods.

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"Get your clothes off, and get on the fucking bed," he snapped at her, she looked over her shoulder at me, and my eyes welled with tears when Kade started removing his clothes.

"If she closes her eyes, hit her," he orders the man holding my head up. Pain ripped through every part of my body, my heart crushed to smithereens. Gannon was right; there was nothing wrong with me. The pain I felt now made worse because I not only endured it for so long, I was now forced to watch it as he fucked the girl right in front of me. Kade climbed off the bed and walked over to me when he was done. Tears trekked down my face when he stopped in front of me.

"Open her mouth," Kade said, and my eyes widened. I tried to move but couldn't; I couldn't even speak. My tongue felt numb; I could only drool on myself. Tears burned my eyes when I felt fingertips on my chin opening my already slack mouth. My eyes went to the woman Blaire on the bed sobbing into her hands when he stuffed his cock in my mouth.

Kade grips my hair and starts thrusting into my mouth. The taste of her coating my tongue repulsed me as he used my mouth before emptying himself in it, making me gag as I choked on it. He then let me go, and I crashed to the ground in a heap, my entire body numb, even my mind as I stared blankly at the dust underneath it.

I stared beneath the bed, no longer listening, going deaf to my surroundings. Closing my eyes, pretended to be back in mine and Ivy's room at the orphanage, remembering the times we would lay on the hard floor gazing out

the window at night making pictures from the stars, dreaming of what it would be like to be free. Never thought I would see the day where I would rather be back there than where I currently was.

Kade left me on the floor and walked out, and it took hours before I could move my hand; I brushed my hair behind my ear. It had been annoying me and obscuring my vision for hours and tickling my nose when I breathed because I couldn't move it; however, I regained some feeling back. My fingertips brush the scar behind my ear, and I suck in a shaky breath. "More than my life, more than my life," I repeatedly whispered to myself as I cried.

"More than my life,"

His lost lycan Luna by Jessica Hall Chapter 92

Chapter 92

Kyson POV

Ivy was furious, and I could feel Damian sneaking closer, worried I would lose control. Honestly, I was on the verge of snapping and dragging her back to the room and her following words nearly made me.

"Don't forget, Kyson, I have other places I can go now," Ivy snarled at me. Her words make me growl; how dare she think she can threaten me, threaten to leave me over something that is out of my control? I can't force Abbie back here.

"Excuse me, Ivy?" I growled, trying to keep my blistering fiery rage under control."

"You dare address the Queen of the Landeena Kingdom so casually, King Kyson," she spat at me. The words rolling off her tongue were pure venom. Her anger was nearly as hot as mine as she glared at me.

"Is that so, Queen Ivy?" I asked her through clenched teeth. My entire body trembled, and I was on serious verge of shifting. She only just learned of her title, and she was already using it against me.

"Queen Azalea," she snapped at me, and I lunged at her, trying to grab her, as Dustin stood horrified behind her when he suddenly ripped her back just as I shifted, losing complete control.

She dares challenge an Alpha King, her King! My hand gripped Dustin's shirt instead of her, and my nostrils flared as I panted, trying to regain some form of control, shocked I had lost it completely. Dustin remained utterly unmoving, and I felt Damian's hand fall on my shoulder when I heard Gannon groan behind me.

"Let him go, Kyson; you hurt him, and I will walk out those fucking doors and your life faster than I stepped in it," Ivy snapped at me. Her hand gripping my wrist. I could feel the tremble in it, making me look at her. Her eyes were blazing with fury. Looking at her now with her eyes burning with so much anger and fear, she honestly looked like her mother in this instance,

"We will speak in the room. Now go," I tell her.

"No, I want to know about Ab,"

"Room Now!" I commanded, cutting her off, and I instantly felt terrible, and her anger blasted me as it slivered through me so cold and cutting like a knife's edge. Yet she still wasn't able to fight my Alpha aura, not yet, at least as she growled before the command forced her to turn around and storm off back to our room. It wasn't until Dustin sucked in a wheezing breath that I realized I was choking him with his uniform. I let him go and he sucked in a deep breath.

"You know where you should be," I tell him, and he hurries off after Ivy. Turning back to my office, Damian takes a step back just as Gannon groans and gets to his feet. Moving around the desk, grabbed him and shook him.

"Do you have any idea what you have just done?" I snarled.

"She had a right to know." Gannon growled back. "You disobeyed a fucking order; I told you not to get her involved," I snapped at him.

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"And what about Abbie? Ivy may be the only one that can make Abbie see sense. Abbie trusts her," he says.

"That may be so, but now you have just caused me a fucking headache. I didn't want to deal with this right now when she is so goddamn close to going into heat, and the bond has just fucking forged. I had to fucking command her Gannon!"

"You didn't have to do anything, Kyson. You chose to command her because you don't like being challenged, so don't blame that on me." Gannon spat at me.

He stunk heavily of alcohol, and I know he wasn't in the right headspace, but that didn't mean he could get away with disobeying me and causing issues with my mate. I get he wants to vent his anger, but he did it the wrong way. We have laws even I have to abide by, and until Abbie asks to come back, my hands were tied entirely unless I wanted a war with 80 nearby packs, and I already had enough enemies without adding them to that list.

"I know you are mad, but we can't afford this crap right now. You want something to do, go back to Silver Creek," I snap at him. Gannon growls at me and tries to shake me off.

"I already got that bitch. She can't walk, for god's sake. What the fuck else could I possibly do to her?"

"Not Daley, but make sure she is dead before you return home. But I have another job for you while we wait for Abbie to come back."

"No, Kyson, not while he is like this?" Damian said, and I smiled. They both think this is over Mrs. Daley's mistreatment, it is, but they still haven't heard the worst of it yet. Looking back at Gannon.

"You want revenge, then take it out on the butcher. Daley will know his name," I tell him.

"The butcher?" Damian asks, and I nod and look at him over my shoulder.

"Yes, he's Abbie's rapist," I growled before letting Gannon go. This would distract him until I found a way to legally bring Abbie home. Gannon roared, his skin ripping off. He shifted so

quickly as the monster he could become came forward. He stood and snarled, his chest pressed against mine.

"He did what to my Abbie?" Gannon snarled.

"I won't repeat it, it wasn't my place to say, but I was planning to tell you, anyway. Find Daley, and you will know where to find the butcher,"

"I'm not bringing him in," Gannon warned, his eyes flickering and bleeding so hollow I knew the butcher would wish for death long before he would receive it.

"He's all yours," I tell him before turning on my heel and walking out. I was halfway down the corridor when I heard the doors opening.

God have mercy on his soul because Gannon wouldn't show him any; the man was a sadist at heart and was the one I always sent when I needed information. He enjoyed their screams, their pain, and relished in their blood. This man was about to learn who the real butcher was.

Walking back to my quarters, I growled at Dustin, standing guard. The room was silent as I approached, and I should have been warier of that as I entered. Not seeing her until I shut the door, only to turn around and her hand connected with my face. Her claws slashed at me and I clutched my

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face. Her claws tore into my leathery Lycan skin like a hot knife through butter. Blood gushed from my face and sprayed across the door behind me.

"You commanded me!" she snarled at me while I clutched my cheek and eye. My body rippled and my hands clenched. "You bring Abbie back here, Kyson," she growled, and I pulled my hand from my face to look at her. She took a step back at the sight of what she did. My face wasn't healing quickly either. It stung and burned.

Her worry hit me like a tidal wave at what she had done and fear of how I would react. She looked

at her fingertips, her claws still extended, coated with so much of my blood it dripped from her fingertips.

"I didn't mean it, I.." she went to apologize before her anger returned.

"You should have told me about Abbie!" she said as I blinked while trying to clear my vision and keep my cool. Ignoring her ranting, I walked to the bathroom and grabbed a face washer, wetting it and dabbing the gashes that were bleeding everywhere. Forcing myself to shift back, it still didn't heal. Fuck!

Ivy follows me in and gasps at the sight of my face. Her claws were still extended, and I knew she didn't know how to retract them. It's difficult when you're angry and until she calms down, I doubt they will. Her body was foreign to her, and her lack of control over that form seemed as bad as mine.

"Get out!" I tell her, and she goes to say something.

"Azalea, go! Let me calm down. I don't want to hurt you, so please go back to the room," I tell her, gripping the bench.

She growls. But she walks back out and closes the door. I have a funny feeling Abbie was about to cause huge issues between us. But now we both just needed to calm down before one of us did something we couldn't undo and I wasn't about to risk the bond when I only just got it back.

His lost lycan Luna by Jessica Hall Chapter 93

Chapter 93

IVY POV

I left Kyson in the bathroom; I felt terrible for scratching him and hoped it healed quickly. Walking back into the room, I closed the bathroom door behind me. Making my way back to the bed, I snatched the phone from where I left it earlier and tried to call Abbie again, but somet

hing

was wrong with his phone because it wouldn't even ring, just beeped in my ear before hanging up.

My anxiety about not knowing what was going on with her made me itch. A nervous reaction I have always had that drives me insane. Trying again, it was the same thing. My eyes moved to the bathroom, wanting to ask him to fix his phone so, but also not wanting to argue with him again, so instead I walked to the door before growling as I opened it and realized I could walk past the damn threshold. I growled angrily at his command and my inability to fight it. Dustin, noticing me, walked over to me.

"Something is wrong with it. Can you fix it? I want to ring Abbie," I tell him, and he takes the phone from my hand. He fiddles with it and then tries to ring her, but the same thing.

"Her phone is off. It isn't the King's phone, but Abbie's," Dustin says, and my brows furrow worriedly.

"Try her again," I tell him, but it was the same result.

"I'm sorry, my Queen, but her phone is definitely off," Dustin tells me. Why was it off? Nodding, I took the phone from him before closing the door; nausea rolled over me, and I didn't know if I wanted to throw up or throw something. My instincts were all over the place, fear, anger at Kyson, anxiousness, all of it bubbling up and beginning to spill over, and before I even registered what I had done, I through the phone, my hands clenching into fists and fur started growing up my arms. I tried to stop it, tried to regain control. .

Kyson

opened the bathroom door at the same time I tossed the phone at it, his reflexes so much quicker and more controlled than mine, as he snatched it from the air before it smashed into the bathroom door. He looked at the phone, and I noticed his face healed now but surprisingly left faint scarring down his face. Kyson growls before pocketing it while I am trying not to shift.

My wrists and ankles

cracked as the urge became overwhelming, and I had no idea how to stop it. "You need to calm down," Kyson says. That was easy for him to say, another thing entirely to actually do, especially when it came to Abbie. I was out of my mind with worry.

Clutching the dresser, my claws slipped out of my fingertips, scratching into the mahogany-stained wood. "Azalea, do you want help, or are you shifting?" Kyson asks while I try to breathe through my fingers, stretching and growing longer. It was so odd hearing him use another name for me, but I preferred the name. Ivy was weak. I no longer wanted to be Ivy, but I also didn't want to look weak by asking him for help because I really didn't want to shift. It took ages for me to shift back last time.

The heat of his body pressed against my back. My claws sliced through the wood, and I felt my canines elongate painfully. The stretching and moving of bones gressed me out but were nowhere near as painful as my first shift, but still unpleasant.

"Do you want help?" Kyson asks as his hands fall on my hips, and he tugs me flush against him. I

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growl and nod. "Please," I grit out through clenched teeth, knowing I would be stuck in my Lycan form without his help until my body shifted back on its own. So I allow it and melt against him when he purrs, the calling washing over me, making goosebumps rise on my flesh, and everything nerve endings buzzed, wanting to rub myself all over him. The urge to shift left as he held me against him.

"We will get Abbie back. We just have to be patient," Kyson purrs next to my ear.

"You should have told me," I snapped before purring anger and lust mingling and blurring the lines between both emotions, fighting a war within me.

"So you could be like this and worry about something you can't control?" Kyson asks.

"You're the king. You can order him to return her."

"And start a war for the abuse of power. Just because I can, doesn't mean it is allowed. I may be King Azalea, but we live by the law, and the werewolf council members would look for any reason to take down a Lycan Royal. I can't break the laws which I created. She needs to live on her own."

"But is she safe?"

"You spoke with her the other day," Kyson answers with a sigh.

"Then why is Gannon upset?" Kyson growls, his arm tightening around my torso before tugging me toward the bed.

"Alpha Kade has a wife and kids that Abbie doesn't know about, also a few girlfriends on the side," Kyson tells me.

"And you let her go with him!" I snarled, turning in his arm and shoving him off.

"Gannon tried to tell her she wouldn't listen"

"Then you should have told me. I would have convinced her. She would listen to me," I yell at him, my anger spewing over and fur grows over my arms, my neck cracks. Kyson's calling grows stronger, and I close my eyes, trying to catch my breath and calm down.

"You can speak with her on the phone. If she says yes, I will send Gannon to go get her, but until then, love, my hands are tied."

"You're a fucking king. Order the council to be okay with it!"

"I can't do that. I will have every pack breathing down my neck if I do. Just because I am King doesn't mean I can make my own rules as I go Azalea. Do you think I don't want to do that? Gannon is one of my best friends. I don't want to see him hurting just as much as you don't want to see Abbie hurting, but my fucking hands are tied."

"Hurting? What do you mean, Abbie is hurting?" Kyson sighs and pinches the bridge of his nose.

"The chest pain, her pain is caused by his infidelity, not something being wrong with her. The mate bond can feel it. But you two girls were never taught any of this sort of stuff, so she thinks there is something wrong with her, but it's because Kade is screwing other women who aren't his mate," I growl, my anger emblazoned and so hot I wanted to hurt something.

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"Shh, calm down. You can convince her to come home. She only needs to reject him, and it is all over. She can come home then. I promise we will get her back" Kyson says, his hands sliding up my arms and rubbing them as he steps closer.

"Her phone is off" I tell him, and he sighs. I will ring Kade and ask him to get her to ring you, " Kyson says. He steps away, pulling the phone I threw from his pants pocket. I follow him over to the bed as he climbs in it.

Kyson dials his number, and I crawl onto the bed when he pats his chest. With a sigh, I lay down, placing my head on his chest. I listen to the phone ringing, and it doesn't take long before Kade answers it, and Kyson puts it on the loudspeaker, so I can hear better without straining my ears,

"Good afternoon, my King" Kade answers, his voice rather chirpy, and I growled when Kyson's hand clamped over my mouth,

"Kade. Abbie isn't answering her phone" Kyson says.

"Oh, yes, she dropped it in the sink by accident. It got wet; I have ordered a new phone for her" Kade replies,

"Are you with her now?"

"Ah no, I am working, She is at the packhouse with my Cassandra"

"So you told her about Cassandra?" Kyson asks.

"Of course, she was shocked but accepting since we have a kids together, they have been getting on great." My brows furrowed, and the growl that left me was loud and unable to be stifled with just his hand as I reached for the phone, wanting to demand to speak with her. Kyson moves, rolling on top of me and nipping at my neck, the calling seeping into me louder, forcing me to relax beneath him.

"You seem to have your hands full, my King" Kade says with a laugh.

"Hmm, well, I want Abbie to ring this number as soon as possible. I have a mate missing her friend and very concerned after learning you were already married, and with them being so close, I am sure you can imagine how upset Ivy was to learn her friend ran off with a married man."

"Oh, Cassandra was fine with it. They will be like sister wives in no time"

"My mate's concern is for Abbie, not your wife. Have Abbie call us, or I will be coming down with Ivy to see her."

"Oh, no need. Abbie is perfectly fine, I will have her ring you in the morning when I return home."

"Video call, I mouth to Kyson, who presses his lips in a line.

"Get her to video call, or we will come to visit" Kyson tells him.

"Certainly, my King. First thing after the ladies get the kids ready for school, I will ensure she calls," Kade says, and I glare at the phone, wanting to snatch it off him and yell at Kade. I didn't like his tone of voice, something off, or maybe I was just too angry with the man because he tricked Abbie

"Very well, speak soon" Kyson says, hanging up. He leans over and places the phone on the bedside table before looking down at me. I push on his chest, and he exhales, but rolls off me,

*You will speak to her tomorrow, okay? He wouldn't put her on if something was wrong, and she is non aware, he said she was okay with it."

"I know Abbie, and there is no way she would be okay sharing her mate or being lied to."

"Well, we'll see tomorrow, won't we?" Kyson says. I growl, and he rolls on his side, tugging me closer.

His lost lycan Luna by Jessica Hall Chapter

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Chapter 94

"I don't want you checking out my guard, Azalea," Kyson growls.

"I wasn't, but come to think of it, Damian is nice looking too," I tease, seeing him become jealous. I had no interest in any of them. And none were as gorgeous as Kyson.

"Oh, and.." Kyson growls, and I laugh.

"Say one more, and I will put you over my knee," the King growls, yet his words didn't scare me, though they sent a thrill through me, wondering if he actually would.

"Gannon's alright, too. I can see why Abbie likes him," I snickered. He leaped over the table, his growl ripping through the air as he landed on top of me, making me laugh.

"Are you teasing, my Queen, because if you're not, I may have to kill my entire guard to stop your wandering eyes," he says, pinning my hands to the floor while he nips at my lips and rolls his hips against me.

"You can't kill your guard because they don't just belong to you. Besides, Dustin is my guard, not yours, so you can't kill him," I tell him.

"So not only are you claiming your title back, you are now claiming my guard? Anything else, my Queen?" he asks, and I purse my lips.

"Hmm, I am yet to claim my King. I think I will claim him too," I tell him. The King growls, and his lips press against mine hungrily.

His lost lycan luna by Jessica Hall Chapter 95

Chapter 95

My bond flared to life as he pressed his entire body against mine. His tongue dominated mine, tasting every inch of my mouth, his skin against mine made my whole body tingle, his scent invaded my nose, and a purr escaped me as I kissed him back with the same desire. I wanted to mark him, the bond screaming for me to tie him to me. My canines slip out, nicking his lips, and he growls, rolling his hips against me when there is suddenly a knock on the door.

Kyson pulled his lips from mine and growled at the disturbance. I tilted my head to look at the door and sighed as he climbed off me to answer it. He spoke in a hushed voice to someone before shutting the door and walking back over to me.

"What is it?" I asked, seeing the troubled expression on his face.

"Another body turned up?" "A child?" I asked, but he shook his head. "No, a woman's body. I need to go speak with the pack who located the body." "I'll come with you," I tell him, getting to my feet. But he shook his head.

"I won't be gone long an hour tops; I am not going to the scene; I will let Damian handle that," Kyson tells me, and I sighed.

"It isn't something you want to see; I won't be very long. Eat. Hopefully, I will be back before you fall asleep. Dustin is outside the door, so if you need anything, just call out to him," Kyson tells me before bending down and kissing the top of my head. He walks into the walk-in closet and pulls on a black top and denim jacket before leaving.

After he left, I ate my dinner before grabbing the tablet to fiddle with the writing and reading apps. And playing with the text and voice commands. That to call in Dustin twice to fix the tablet when I went into something I couldn't get back out of.

Grabbing my dessert off the tray, I went and sat on the bed, my back aching from being hunched over sitting on the floor in front of the fire. However, once again, I was beginning to feel sick. The bond had me yearning for my mate, and I felt terribly ill. I squirmed, my stomach turning, and I ran for the bathroom.

Sweat glistened on my skin as I broke out in a cold sweat. Rinsing my mouth, I went and lay down and crawled under the blankets. Hours passed, and I couldn't sleep, tossing and turning until I heard the door open, and Kyson quietly entered the room. I had the lights off, hoping sleep would take me, only it never did. Kyson, noticing I am still awake, comes over and presses his hand to my head.

"You feel warm," he murmurs.

"Do you feel hot?" I shook my head; I felt like I was freezing, despite the sweat that drenched me.

"I tried to get back as soon as I could; I thought you were sick; you felt off through the bond. Must be your heat coming on," Kyson says before sniffing the air, and I watch his brows pinched together.

"You don't smell like you're coming into heat, and your scent isn't affecting me, though," he mumbled to himself. I wrinkle my nose as he leans down, pressing his lips to mine, and he chuckles,

"Sorry, the Alpha I met with is a chain smoker," he says with a laugh.

"You smell like an ashtray." I tell him.

"I will go shower, but I think I might call in a doctor to check you over," he says. I shake my head, not wanting to be prodded and poked by any doctors or stuck with needles. Besides, I was sure it had to be the bond.

"No, I think it's the bond; I felt sick not long after you left," I murmured, trying to close my eyes, which felt scratchy, like sandpaper. Kyson growls and doesn't seem to like my answer but nods, anyway.

"I will

be quick," he whispers, and I nod to him, tugging the surrounding blankets higher, trying to warm up. Just as he was about to leave, I called back out, wanting to know about the girl that was found, remembering why he left in the first place.

"The woman?" I ask, and he stops and quickly sits back on the bed.

"A rogue again, however, this one we found ID on, or a form of ID anyway, a library card" Kyson answers.

"Was she a sex slave?"

We aren't sure, but we think so. She had a heap of condoms in her handbag, a few miscellaneous items, no wallet but tucked in the back of her handbag; we found the library card, though it was rather old and in a different state,"

"Next of kin?" I asked. Kyson shakes his head.

"Unsure. Damian was going to see if the library still existed. We only have a name. The card was really old, and we could only make out the first name, Blaire," he tells me, and I nod.

He hops off the bed and makes his way into the bathroom, and the light hurts my eyes, making me squint at the brightness. Yet the motion of him climbing off the bed made me queasy as his weight made it dip and spring back,

I lay there for a few minutes until his scent wafted out the open door with steam. I wiggle to the edge because my instincts want me to go to him, My teeth chattered, and goosebumps spread across my body the moment I pulled the blanket off. My hair was drenched in sweat and sticking to my face.

I climb out of bed and stagger to the bathroom, wanting his scent, knowing it would reduce the churning in my stomach. The bond crying out for him to ease my discomfort. My vision blurred as I made my way into the bathroom and black dots flickered before my eyes. I could hear my own breathing in my head, each breath becoming harder to take as I forced myself to breathe. Stumbling almost blindly with my hands outstretched when hands gripped my arms. Tingles spread up my arms,

"Azalea?" Kyson called, and I clutched my stomach.

"I don't feel good," I told him, my voice barely audible to my own ears, and bile pooled and filled my mouth. The taste was terrible, and I gagged before throwing up everywhere. Kyson jumps, not expecting it before a wave of dizziness washes over me and everything goes black. The King screaming out for Dustin vaguely reached my ears before I no longer felt anything,

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Kyson POV

I paced outside the small infirmary, the doctor having kicked me out because I was becoming aggressive as they poked and prodded her and jabbed her with needles.

Dustin was inside with her because I felt like wringing the doctor's neck every time she would cry out. Especially when he shoved a tube down her throat to pump her stomach, and she woke abruptly. It caused me to shift and grab the man. Seeing the frantic look on her face pushed me over the edge.

kept slipping in and out of consciousness and freaking out each time she came to.

"Any news yet?" Damian asked as I paced out front of the door. I growled and shook my head as he approached, and Damian sighed.

"They locked you out?" I nodded. Too angry to answer when the brown door suddenly opened, and the pack doctor from the small town outside the castle gates walked out. He scrubbed his hand down his face and through his mud-brown hair. The doctor watched me warily, straightening his white coat before he stepped closer to Damian. His eyes glazed over as he mind linked my Beta. Clearly frightened while I was in my Lycan form; however, I was focused and in control. So it irritated me that he addressed him first when she was my mate.

"Are you sure?" Damian asked him.

"Positive, her blood work showed it, and so did her stomach contents," I snarled, making Doctor Rick jump. He hid behind my Beta, his eyes wide with terror.

"What's wrong with her?" I demanded. Dr. Rick hands me her paperwork with shaky hands, and I snatch it, staring at it, but it looks gibberish to me.

"Fucking answer me," I snarled, shaking the papers at him, commanding him.

"She has ingested poison. We found it in her system, my King," he stuttered.

"Poison? Someone poisoned my mate?" I asked, startled. I didn't expect that to be the answer.

"Kyson, calm down and keep your head," Damian snapped at me, and I glared at him. How could he say that when someone tried to poison his Queen?

"What sort of poison?" Damian asks.

"Water hemlock and wolfsbane were in her system. I would check who is working in the kitchens or, more importantly, with the Queen's food. I sent Dustin up earlier to check your food, my King. It was untouched, but the bowl of fruit had traces of both plants in it. Azalea was targeted specifically," Doctor Rick tells me.

"I want all kitchen staff in the kitchen within ten minutes. Send all of my guards to wake them and bring them down; no one is to be unaccounted for," I tell Damian.

"I will send out the alert," Damian says, and I watch his eyes glaze over as he mind links everyone.

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"Is she awake?" I ask, turning my attention to the doctor.

"No, my King. We have given her something to counteract the poison. She should be fine within a couple of hours," the doctor tells me.

"Tell Dustin to remain with her until I return," I tell him, stalking off toward the kitchen where everyone will be meeting." I was furious, and I now had a traitor among my staff, one that had tried to hurt Azalea. Now I had to figure out who was in charge of her food.

Clarice was the first to walk in, rubbing her eyes and dressed in her floral nightgown. Her hair was in rollers; she yawned before flicking the lights on and jumping when she noticed me standing in the kitchen center leaning against one of the steel tables.

My anger refused to let me shift back, and I could see she was startled by my presence but regained her composure quickly. All the guards were warned not to tell the kitchen staff about the meeting. Damian quickly marked her name off as he stepped in with the folder containing a list of the kitchen employees, but Clarice was far from a suspect. I trusted Clarice with my life and Azalea's, but she would be able to tell me who cooked our meals tonight and who was stationed on since she handled the kitchen rosters.

"My King? What is this about?" she asked, looking at me worriedly, trying to fight the yawn I see taking over her. She failed to contain it and covered her mouth, yawning loudly.

Damian waves her forward to speak with her while I watch the 30 kitchen staff members file into the room wearing pajamas, looking confused and dazed at the late-night wake-up call. They all line up the room, filling quickly with the number of people in here.

My personal guard stood by all entrances, blocking the exits. They spoke among themselves in hushed whispers, trying to figure out what was going on.

"Who was in charge of cooking the King and Queen's meals tonight?"

"Me, always me Beta Damian. I don't let anyone else cook for them. Why?" Clarice asked.

"Azalea's food was poisoned, and we don't think it was the first time she was sick also on the night of her shift, they found water hemlock and wolfsbane in her system,"

"Is she alright?" Clarice asked, becoming instantly alert, and her eyes flicked in my direction.

"Yes, but we need to know who was in the kitchen when you were cooking, who had access to her food," Damian explained. She nodded her head.

"Only eight of us," she answered quickly.

"Point them out for me," Damian tells her, and she grabs the staff schedule off the wall, which had everyone's time sheets. She pointed out everyone, and I let Damian interview them while the others stood around nervously before I commanded them one by one to answer. Hoping to weed out any liars, but we found none. Besides Clarice and Azalea's guards, no one went near her food. Turning to Clarice since she was the only one I had not commanded to answer, she sighed.

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"It's okay, my King, I know you have to," she says, focusing on me. I felt terrible. Clarice had been with me since I was a kid, and I knew she never would, but I wasn't going to trust blindly when it came to my mate. My guards were under oath to protect my mate and future Queen and couldn't go against

the promise; there was no way they could even if they wanted to.

"I'm sorry, but I have to be sure?" I tell her, and she nods her head in understanding. Clarice was the oldest of my staff, besides Tanner, the gardener. My command dropped all the kitchen staff in the room to their knees because they could not fight it. A king's command is excruciating when used at full strength.

I swallow and nod to Damian, who grips her arms, so she doesn't hit the ground as the rest did. He looked away, and I knew he felt terrible: he loved Clarice like a mother. I am sure everyone in the castle did since she raised most of us when she was still my nanny when I was a small boy; she had been by my side since I was a toddler. She raised half of those here in this room alongside me, everyone here taking their parents' places within the castle walls when they retired.

"Did you poison my mate?" I asked her, commanding the answer out of her. She shrieked and dropped, but Damian gripped her tighter. Tears sprang in my eyes, and she shook her head, gasping. "No, my King," she rasped out.

"Do you know who did it?" I asked, and she screamed, the sound so agonizing some of the staff broke down, and others covered their ears. I cupped her face in my hands and brushed her tears away with my thumbs.

"No, my King," she answered.

"Do you suspect who might have tried?" I ask her, tears slipping down my cheeks, and she cries out before looking around at her kitchen staff. "No, my King," I sigh, dropping the command. She panted, her face flushed, trying to catch her breath, and Damian rubbed her arms.'

"It's okay, Son. I know you had to," she whispers, clutching my hands in her shaking ones. Her words didn't make me feel any better about using it on her.

"When I find out who did it, I will not just punish them for what they did to Azalea; they will get double for making me hurt the woman who raised me," I assure her. She nods, and Trey rushes over, grabbing her arms, and Damian let her go before getting her a glass of water and helping her hold the cup to her lips so she can drink.

"Help her back to her room," I tell Trey, and he nods his head quickly.

"One minute," I said, stopping him.

"All the food. Where have the orders been going out to?" I ask her.

"The fruit is from here, obviously, the rest ordered in from town and the usual shipments we receive," she answers. She points a shaking finger toward the back wall.

"All order forms are pinned over there, Kyson," she says. A few of the kitchen staff gasped at the casual way she addressed me. Clarice in front of staff always called me by my title except when Azalea was around or my guards. Clarice recognizes what she did and quickly corrects herself, but I shake my head.

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"You know you can call me anything you want, Clarice," I tell her.

"I know," she says, and the kitchen staff looked relieved that she wasn't being punished for it. Not that I ever would punish her for the casual use of my name or anyone for that matter, not that I would tell them that. Everyone slips up from time to time, but considering the woman who used to change my diapers when I was a baby, Clarice had earned her the right to call me whatever she wanted and has never been afraid to scold me either.

Damian fetches the paperwork down and the kitchen inventory lists from the noticeboard at the back of the kitchen where Clarice pointed.

"Everyone is dismissed for now," I tell them, allowing them back to bed. Damian hands the documents to me, and I shake my head. "You handle it; I want to go check my mate," I tell him, and he nods before following me out and back to the infirmary. When I entered, Dustin was sitting beside her in a chair while holding her hand, rubbing circles on its back with his thumb. He quickly stood, but I shook my head. He looked terrible, and I knew guilt was eating at him.

"Has she woken up yet?" I ask him.

"Briefly, she asked for you," he answers, and I nod, brushing her hair from her face.

"Did you find who did it?" he asked, and I shook my head.

"No, but until I do,"

"Until we do, I will be cooking all the King's and Queen's meals," Damian says, cutting me off. I was about to say I would do it.

"I will be. You are to stay with our Queen at all times."

"Fine, you're a better cook than me anyway." I tell him, and he chuckles before sitting at the desk in the corner, going over the paperwork he retrieved from the kitchen. I look down at Azalea, and my body starts relaxing, and I suddenly shift back abruptly. Dustin clears his throat, averting his gaze before standing up.

"I will get you some clothes," he says, exiting quickly. Damian laughed.

"The only time I see that man blush is when one of us stands naked in front of him," Damian says, unfazed by nudity. Not like we hadn't seen each other plenty of times before. I was confident every person within the castle grounds had caught sight of me naked at some point. I take his seat before grabbing her hand and kissing it

His lost lycan luna by Jessica Hall Chapter

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Chapter 98

Gannon POV

Liam came with me. I had to make sure whoever I brought with me had a strong stomach to handle what I had planned for the bastard that touched my Abbie.

Liam was part of the guard, and the man had an iron gut, but half the time, you never realized he was there; the man was silent as the night when he wanted to be. He was also just as fucked up in the head as me, probably why we got along so well. He was also the only person who knew my mate before I came to work as Kyson's personal guard.

I never spoke about my past. It haunted me, but out of everyone, Liam and I had no secrets; he even helped me cover up what I did. Kyson was aware something had happened, yet I don't think he truly knows what or who she was to me.

Kyson, Damian, and Liam were my best friends, but I knew some things Kyson and Damian would look at me poorly for, especially after what I did to her, so I never told them. However, I was pretty sure they suspected something was up because I never showed interest in looking for my mate, and that was because I had already found her.

I met Sia twenty years ago, and she was a normal she-wolf. She rejected me the same day I met her. The only issue was. Lycans can't be rejected. The bond doesn't just go away for us. The bond doesn't end until one is dead.

Even so, it took twenty years after her death for the bond to die out completely, something I never thought would happen. I assumed I was stuck with longing for a bond that didn't want me and was dead and buried for her betrayal. A betrayal I couldn't look past. I held out hope she would come to her senses. That was when I learned werewolves could reject their mates. One difference between our species became so obvious to me the day she did it.

Tronic, she could reject me and feel nothing toward me while I would be left pining for her and feeling her betrayal. After a year of it, I killed her. Liam here helped me de

stroy the evidence. And I knew Kyson and Damian would have forgiven me for it or convinced me to hold off longer, but I didn't want their pity; I didn't want their concern when it wasn't needed; I had it handled.

Or

so I thought. It made me cold and unfeeling, and I detached from everyone. The only time I felt anything was when Kyson would send me to do the jobs nobody wanted, and usually, Liam came with me for those jobs; I relished it, relished their screams, and eventually grew an appetite for it.

Then Abbie came along, but I didn't want her screams; I wanted her. I wanted her love, and I had never wanted another woman since Sia and was content forever to be alone. Yet, she stirred up feelings | thought I was no longer capable of from the moment she came into my quarters by mistake, an obsession which I wasn't sure was healthy but still better than the void I have felt for the last twenty plus years.

"So we are going back for that headmistress?" Liam asked, and I looked over at the man. He had a massive scar down one side of his face that went from his hairline to his chin. Liam was almost blind. in that eye, which is funny considering he was our best gunman.

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Like the rest of us Lycan men, he appeared to be in his mid-thirties, but he was nearly 90 years old young considering how old I was. Not that we had much use for guns, but they made things easier than risking the king when he traveled.

"Her and another," I answered him as he unrolled his knife pouch to make sure he brought them a

"Who else?" he asked as he ran his thumb down the blade and let it slice his thumb as he tested how sharp it was.

"The butcher when we find out who he is,"

"A butcher?" he chuckled. "Well, that is interesting. I wonder how he will feel when he realizes it will be his meat you're cutting into," Liam says, glancing at me and smirking.

"So the Alpha and his mutt son know we are coming?" Liam asks.

"Nope, but I have the paperwork if they kick up a fuss."

"To bring him in?" he asked, and I snorted and smiled.

"Well, I suppose they wouldn't have sent you if it was as simple as taking them in," he says, rolling the pouch back up.

"So what did he do to the King?" Liam asked.

"Not the King, Abbie," I told him, and he exhaled before pushing his fringe from his eyes.

"That's your girl, right? The one you buy that candy for all the time?"

"Yep, when I get her back," I tell him, and I would get her back even if I had to go behind Kyson's back; / wasn't losing her. But for now, I would wait like he asks to see what he comes up with.

I knew he would have to, Ivy, Azalea. I heard the call go out earlier in the night about her title change, yet I was used to calling her Ivy. I nearly choked on my spit that he would allow it, but I think he would allow anything she requested if she batted her eyelashes at him. She would learn he *was* putty in his hands. She just needed to recognize that.

Going at Kyson headstrong wouldn't get her anywhere, but she had other ways to get what she wanted. She just needed to come out of her shell and play on that, which I know Kyson was dreading when she figured that out.

He knows he is screwed when she does, especially with her bloodline. Landeena's were known **to have** certain gifts, so it would be interesting to see if she inherited any of those traits. She had her mother's eyes, so it would be interesting to see if she received her mother's abilities or would she inherit her father's? Time would tell.

"So, what did he do?" Liam asked. I growl at his words and he nods.

"Enough said," he says. We spent the rest of the drive in silence. The long windy roads were boring, and I pulled over and swapped with Liam when

I felt myself nodding off. By the time we arrived, it was the early morning hours, the sun just creeping above the trees of the sleepy town.

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Liam smacked my chest, which is what woke me, and I was instantly alert as I saw the town limits as he drove in.

"Orphanage first," I tell him, and he nods, heading straight for it. I leaned over into the back, tugging my jacket out of the bag. The morning air was a little chilly this morning. We pulled up out of the front of the building.

The place needed to be condemned, though someone had built a ramp for the old bitch to get in now that she would spend the rest of her life in a wheelchair. However, she wouldn't have to worry about the future because hers ends today.

He pulls over to the curb, and I climb out of the car, shutting the door gently. No children were awake; I could tell because no noise came from the place. So I knew that everyone was still tucked into their beds. I step over the small brick fence out the front and hear Liam open the trunk.

"Not needed here; there are children here," I tell him.

"So what are we doing here, then?" he asks.

"Grabbing the old bat, getting a name and leaving," I tell him, and he sighs but shuts the trunk. I continue to the door and knock, waiting to see if anyone answers. No one does, but it was only early, so I wouldn't be surprised if Mrs. Daley was the only adult here. Walking around the back of the building, however. I found the back door unlocked and shook my head. Stepping inside, it was colder inside the orphanage than it was outside.

"Fuck, it's like the arctic in here," Liam snarls.

"I'm assuming she would no longer live upstairs," I tell him, looking at the beaten spiral staircase.

"Not unless the old bat grew wings and can now fly," Liam laughed.

"Oh, she will fly alright," I tell him, walking through the bottom level, looking for where she may have had her room moved to. It was the sounds of banging around that alerted me to which one. It sounded like she fell out of bed, and her annoying screeching voice as she cursed made my upper lip pull back over my teeth as I pushed open the door. The room stunk of piss and shit.

"Fuck me, we haven't even touched her, and she already shit herself," Liam chuckled, and her head snapped up to look at us from where she was trapped beside her bed, her wheelchair overturned. Her eyes go wide, and she cowers away.

"Haven't you done enough?" she said, visibly shaking.

"Nope, but I will make it quick. All I need is a name," I tell her, gripping her shoulders while Liam turns the wheelchair upright. I lift her, dropping her into the seat, and she clutches the armrests.

"How about a nice cup of tea, love? You look rather parched. I make an outstanding brew," Liam says, grabbing the handles and steering her out.

"There are children here," she says, flinching as she passes me when I hold the door open for him to push her out.

"Well, it wouldn't be an orphanage without children?" I told her, following behind as he took her to the kitchen. Liam zips around the kitchen, and I shake my head. He liked the theatrics, and I know he was

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just easing her into her death.

"What have I done this time? What did the king order you to do to me?" she asked, her lips quivering.

Liam chuckles, finding an apron and putting it on before flicking the kettle on. "The children will be up any minute; I have to start making their breakfast soon," she claims. Liam snorts.

"You, you can't even reach the bench. What use would you be in a kitchen?" Liam asks her and her eyes prick with tears.

"Either way, today you will be put out of your misery, so you answer honestly I will make it quick, you don't," Liam turns quickly, plunging a knife into her hand, his other hand clamping over her mouth as her eyes widen and she screams.

"Get the idea?" I ask her, folding my arms over my chest and glaring at her. She wheezed, her withered old face bright red as she stared at her hand, the knife all the way through to the handle and stabbing through the wooden armrest.

"Oh right, forgot," Liam says, ripping it out.

"Ah, none of that, you're a big girl" Liam scolds when her mouth opens to scream, the sound shrill, as it quickly dies out when he waves the knife in front of her face. He then cleans it on the apron around his waist. "Need to get me one of these," he says, admiring the floral apron.

"Do you have one with skulls instead of flowers? I am not complaining, though." Mrs. Daley shakes her head, tears falling down her cheeks and her mouth wide open. She reminds me of one of those clowns at the carnival where you pop the balls into their mouth.

"Never mind, I will just keep this one. Suits me right," Liam taunts, wiggling his jean-clad ass at the withered woman. "Does it make my ass look big?" he asks, and I shake my head, trying not to laugh as he parades around the kitchen. She shook her head.

"Now that was a lie, wasn't it? It's alright. I will let that one slide. One sugar or two?" he asks; she just stared at him wide-eyed.

"You look like two. Let's make it three, though. You seem like a bitter bitch," he says, turning back to make coffee.

Liam hands me mine when he is done making them, and I sip it, watching Mrs. Daley hiss when he forces the cup into her injured hand.

"Bottoms up; it is nice and hot. Don't want it to go cold," he says, sipping his own. "Ah, now that's a nice brand. What is

that?" he asks, looking back at the counter. It was some expensive coffee, from the looks of it.

"Hmm, where did you order this?" He asks.

"Online," she stutters out.

"Good, you can write down the site before I kill you," he says. Mrs. Daley whimpers and points to the fridge where a card was stuck to the board up top. Liam walks over and plucks it off.

"Well, that was easy," he says before pocketing the card with the same name-branded label as the

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coffee jar. Mrs. Daley sipped her coffee like it would delay the inevitable, and we decided to entertain her. Liam kept making small talk with her until I finished mine, and I placed my mug in the sink and washed it before putting it to dry. Turning around, I leaned on the counter and watched the woman shake like a leaf as she watched Liam.

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"So I hear you have a mighty fine butcher in town," Liam asks her, and her hand **freezes as she goes to** tip the cup to her lips; I watch her gulp.

"Now that looks like a guilty face, now doesn't, brother?" Liam says, nudging me.

"Very guilty. Do you have something to confess, love, want to get it off your chest **before you meet** your maker?' Liam taunts.

"What do you mean?" she says, and I click my tongue.

"I was hoping to do this the easy way. I am not here for you, but if you want to be difficult, I need a little practice, anyway, I haven't sliced and diced for a while," I tell her, holding my hand out for Liam's **knives**.

He pulls the rolled-up leather pouch from inside his leather jacket pocket, handing it to me. I roll it out along th

e bench, picking them up and showing her each one, and Mrs. Daley begins to sweat, her eyes flicker between us; Liam smiles sadistically, and I turn to her.

"Which one?" I ask her. She shakes her head, clutching her mug, but Liam **takes it from her.**

"I never.. I had to feed the children. It was only the one time... she probably doesn't even **remember....**" She started stuttering.

"I want a name,' I tell her, picking up the boning knife. I turn it **between my fingers before moving** toward her. Her blood pooled around her feet from her hand. Her lip quivered as I stopped in front of her. I touched the back of the blade to her cheek and slid it down to her chin before tilting her head up to look at me with it.

"Name or the ear goes first, then the toes, then I will de-glove your hand,' I tell her calmly. I had every intention of doing just that if she didn't answer. Her horrified gaze met my cold, gray eyes. She knew wasn't lying.

"Doyle Mathews," she blurted.

"Address?" I ask.

"3 Lincoln Way,

"Wife, children we should know about?" I ask, but she shakes her head.

"Figures a pig like that would have no family," Liam sneers.

"Go check it out and load him up,' I tell Liam, who ducks out quickly. While he was gone, I cleaned up the blood on the floor and wrapped Mrs. Daley's hand in case any of the children woke up.

Liam was gone for about twenty minutes when my phone rang. I pulled it from my pocket just as a little girl came down the steps, rubbing her eyes. Reaching for a tea towel, I covered Mrs. Daley's wrapped hand.

"Yep," I answered the call, watching the child as she walked down the stairs. She looked up, hearing my voice, and I waved to her before kicking the wheelchair. Mrs. Daley smiles fakery and waves to her, earning a strange look from the child who waved briefly as she stepped off the last step.

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"Got him on my way back," Liam informs me.

"The trunk?"

"Nope, he showed me to his store; he is tied to a chair in the cold room," Liam laughed.

"Even better," I tell him, hanging up.

"And what is your name?" I ask the little girl when she remains frozen on the step. I could hear more kids moving around upstairs.

"Kimmy, sir," she says, and I bend down, scooping her up.

"Are you hungry? What do you usually have for breakfast?" I ask her, and her brows furrow, and she yawns again, her tummy rumbling.

"No breakfast since Abbie and Ivy left, Sir. You came with the King?" she whispered into my ear. I nod and look at Mrs. Daley, who drops her head. I growled before turning my attention to the girl; her hair looked like a haystack on her head, some parts matted like it hadn't been brushed for a long time.

"What did they usually make?" I asked her.

"Pancakes, but Mrs. Daley can't get the flour from the basement, and the bag is too heavy,"

"Right, I will get the flour. You go do whatever it is you kids do in the morning,"

"Can we watch cartoons?" she asks before her eyes go to Mrs. Daley, who purses her lips.

"Yep, and make sure you turn the volume all the way up," I tell her, setting her on her feet just as a few more kids start rushing down.

It took minutes before the place was filled with chatter, and I ducked down to the basement and found the flour, No wonder none of them could carry it. I could tell they had tried because flour was poured on the floor like they had been scooping it out of the bag with cups. I shake my head, grab a fresh 20 kg bag, and head up the steps.

Liam walks in just as I drop the bag on the bench. "What's with the flour? You gonna batter the old bag?" Liam laughs.

"Kids are hungry," I tell him, turning my attention to Mrs. Daley.

"When do staff come in?" I ask Mrs. Daley.

"Katrina comes in at lunch," she says.

"Call her in early," I tell her, and Liam hands her his phone. She dials the number and does as she is told while Liam goes out to count heads to know how many pancakes to make.

"Who wants pancakes?" I hear him scream out and all the kids cheer.

"Alright, alright, settle down. Uncle Liam is going to make them, so settle down and watch your dancing puppet show," I hear him say just as a little boy stumbles down the steps with a blanket dragging behind him.

"103, fuck me, that's a lot of pancakes," Liam says, coming back in before his eyes go to the boy. I sniff the air, realizing he is a rogue and Mrs. Daley growls before realizing who is standing next to her, and I glare at her, making her drop her head and flinch away.

The boy cowers and whimpers and runs from her, heading back up the stairs, but I grab the back of his pants, plucking him off the steps. He was only about three years old and wore holey pajama pants and had no shirt; he was covered in goosebumps and holding a filthy blanket.

His Lost Lycan Luna by Jessica Hall

Chapter 101

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His little arm had a bruise, and he cried when I grabbed him like he thought I was about to hurt him. "Shh, shh. What's your name?" I asked him, yet he eyed Mrs. Daley, clearly petrified of the woman. He was all skin and bone, his big brown eyes had no light, his cheeks hollow and his eyes sunken in, his curly black hair sat on his shoulders and was matted and knotted.

"He doesn't talk," little Kimmy says, coming back out in her dirty pajamas. She would be about nine and one of the oldest ones here, which I thought was strange, however seeing a rogue child was more bizarre, and I had a feeling it was just for show in case the King stopped by, but one thing was apparent none of these children were cared for properly, and that really ground my gears.

"Like he can't, or he doesn't know how?" I ask her. She shrugs, and her eyes dart to Mrs. Daley. It was clear she was scared of the woman.

"Mrs. Daley is leaving today, she is retiring. You can speak freely; she won't hurt you," I tell Kimmy. She bites her lip before scratching the back of her matted blonde hair.

"I heard Mrs. Daley fighting with Katrina. Katrina wanted to take him and his brother; Mrs. Daley wouldn't let her."

"He has a brother?"

"Had; we haven't seen him for two days. He bit Mrs. Daley when she smacked Oliver," Kimmy says, pointing to the boy in my arms.

"His name is Oliver?" Kimmy nods.

"The brother's name?"

"Logan, sir," she says, and I nod.

"And what about Katrina? Does she hurt you?" Kimmy shakes her head, and she looks at Mrs. Daley nervously, who stares ahead, looking out the window above the sink vacantly. She knew she had fucked up.

"Mrs. Daley had the butcher hurt Katrina for sticking up for them. He broke her arm, but she is ok now."

"Kimmy, can you find him some clothes and socks for Oliver?" I tell her, and she nods, holding her arms out for him. He goes to her, and she takes him upstairs while I turn Mrs. Daley's wheelchair with my foot.

"Where is his brother?"

"The kid is a menace; he bit me like a savage," she sneered.

"Where is the boy?" I snarl, and Liam glares at her before twisting his knife between his fingers in a warning.

"I would answer him. We don't like child abusers, but you already know that." Liam warns her, and she gulps.

"In the laundry room outside," I growl, storming outside in search of it before finding it behind the shed. I could hear whimpering when I approached the wooden door. Pushing it open, I found the boy

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inside a cage underneath the bench next to the washer. Anger coursed through me as I bent down and snapped the lock. He looked to be about Kimmy's age, though he was freezing cold and bruised and battered.

"Did Mrs. Daley do this to you?" the boy shakes his head, moving to the back of the cage.

"I won't hurt you; I am here to help," I tell him.

"My brother, help my brother," he whimpers, cringing away when I break the front door off. And opened the dog cage.

"Who put you in here, did Katrina? I won't hurt you, and I won't let them hurt you." I tell him while taking my jacket off. I drape it over his skinny frame, and he shakes his head.

"No, she tried to help me."

"Who brought you out here, then? Daley couldn't have. She wouldn't have got down the back steps."

"The Butcher did, Sir," he says as he stares at my outstretched hand.

"Come on, you and your brother are coming home with me; I won't hurt you, but I need you to come inside where it is warm; Liam is inside. You will like Liam; he is making pancakes," I tell him. He hesitates before dropping his hand in mine, and I pull him from the small cage.

"How old are you?"

"Eight, sir," I nod before seeing his bare feet and scooping him up. I carry him inside before stepping into the kitchen.

"Where is Daley?" I ask, noticing her wheelchair gone.

"She went to get more flour," Liam says, winking at me.

I smirk, taking Logan to the living room before wrapping the surrounding blanket from the couch around him. I then went and got firewood and filled all the fireplaces, lighting them.

The smell of pancakes wafted through the place, and Katrina walked in just as I got the living room fireplace going. She was a young woman in her twenties, with brown shoulder-length hair. The kids seemed to like her, jumping around and trying to get her attention. She stopped when I stood up and stared at me.

"Who are you?" she asked, looking at me nervously. She sniffs the air before baring her neck to me.

"Gannon, Liam is out there; I assume you are Katrina?" she nods her head.

"Mrs. Daley?" she asks.

"In the basement," I tell her, and she nods before her brows pinch, and she opens her mouth to say something before spotting Logan by the fire, and her eyes widen. Oliver was sitting on his lap. She rushed over, and I gripped her arm.

"I won't hurt them; I am not Daley," she spat at me, and I let her go.

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"She rushed over and fussed over them. I sighed before walking to the door.

"Help, Liam feed the children; you just got promoted to headmistress," I tell her, and she nods. Walking to the kitchen, I could hear groaning and pained wails coming from the basement.

"Want a hand?" Liam asks, and I look at him covered in flour.

"Nope," I tell him, snatching the knives from the counter and opening the basement door. I hear Liam flick the radio on that sits on the windowsill and blasting the music.

Stomping down the steps. Mrs. Daley tries crawling away where she had been pushed down the stairs, her legs tangled in the wheelchair as she clawed at the ground.

"Change of plans. I wanna hear you scream," I tell her. Reaching down, I grip her hair and yank her head back.

"And you will scream," I snarled.

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Abbie POv

Two days had passed, and Kade had left me to rot in this brothel. He came to torment me every day, so I wasn't surprised to see a woman walk in when the door opened. However, I was surprised to find it was the woman that used to park outside the cabin.

Her heels click on the floorboards. Today she wore a short black dress, and I could see the outline of her thong; it was that tight. I looked away, back at the wall where I sat in the corner. She was here to inject me with more of the shit Kade had been using on me, or so I suspected. I will not cry. She did not deserve my tears. I kind of wished Blaire would come back. I wanted to know she was okay, and I hadn't seen her since the night I was brought here, she tried to help clean me up when he was done with me and he ripped her from the room. I hadn't seen her since.

Chin Nin

The woman crouches next to me

ing me to meet her gaze. She sneers, shoving my face away. "Kade is on his way, and you will be on your best behavior for my husband," she says.

I gulp. Her words stung, but she could have him. I wanted nothing to do with the man, and I felt foolish for not believing Gannon, felt stupid that I actually thought I would have some sort of happiness.

"Seems, your little friend, that bitch Queen of yours has been asking about you, you do anything to jeopardize the life I have with Kade, and he won't be the one you need to fear, I will order every pack warrior to run through you, treat you like the home-wrecking whore you are," she says turning her chin up at me.

I laughed. Of course, that piece of shit's wife was just as depraved as he was.

"Must have really sucked when you learned he had a mate," I tell her, glaring at the woman. She slapped me, her handprint burning into my face, I could even feel her the outlines of each finger etched into my cheek. My face stung yet she smiled, I could see the sadistic gleam in her eye as she grips my hair and yanking my head back, making me grit my teeth.

"Accidents happen, remember that. This is my pack. Kade is my mate; you will learn your place," she says.

"My place isn't here, and you should mind your own. Ivy will come for me," I snarl at her, and she laughs before gripping my throat.

"Why do you think Kade is coming? To see you?" She laughed and clicked her tongue.

"Your friend won't be an issue after today. Kade is only keeping you, so he doesn't become weak. You do well to remember that you are nothing to him, just a warm hole to fuck," she says when the door opens again.

His scent wafted to me before I saw him, the bond recognizing him instantly, and I now despised the reaction he stirred. I wanted his blood, and I hated that he could easily influence me the way it does.

"Ah, there are my girls, having a chat, I see," Kade says, walking in wearing a tailored suit, and the woman lets me go and rises to her feet.

"Abbie dear, I see you have met my wife Cassandra, pretty isn't she?" he says, sweeping her hair off her shoulder before cupping her neck and jamming his filthy tongue down her throat. I averted my gaze, relishing the pain that serrated through my chest. When he had finished his disgusting display of

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affection, he spoke.

"Now, the Queen has decided she wants to video chat with you today. She found out about Cassandra, and you love, will convince her everything is peachy and that you are happy here," Kade says, walking over to me and gripping my arm. He yanks me to my feet. Yet excitement bubbles within me. Nobody knew me better than Ivy; she knew my darkest secrets, my biggest shames. She would

see through any facade Kade tried to put up.

Kade pushes me on the bed and grips my face; I try to pull away from his grip. When he kissed me, was near tempted to bite his filthy tongue but learned last night not to do that after he knocked me out cold. My jaw still throbbed even this morning.

"It won't work. Ivy will know something is wrong," I spit at him when he stops.

"Now I had a funny feeling that you would say that, so I have a motivator for you," He whistles, and I hear a struggle outside and a woman's shrill cries and that of a baby. My heart leaps in my chest, and I get to my feet as a woman in lingerie is tossed on the floor on her knees, a baby clutched in her arms that was barely a few months old. I glare at the man who shoved her before turning my attention to Kade.

"Now you will put on your best performance; Abbie, meet Stacey, Stacey, this Abbie," he says, and I swallow as he grips her hair, ripping her head back.

"Now, Stacey, Abbie over here is the one who decides if little Jacob here is going to get to live another," he says. Tears streaked down her face. The baby was bundled up, clutched in her arm, and tucked to her chest. Her mascara ran down her cheeks as she looked at me pleadingly. Her bright red hair stuck to her face as tears smudged her makeup and lines trekked into her foundation.

Kade reaches for the boy in her arms, but I speak before he grabs him as she tries to fight him off. "I'll do it. You touch one hair on that baby or her head. I will refuse to do anything you ask, leave her," I snap at him, and he pauses his outstretched hand; he stands and clicks his tongue, letting her hair go, and she crawled quickly over to me, holding the baby with one hand stopping by my feet. Kade snarls at her and goes to grab her, but I step over her, putting myself between them.

"Seems you do have a backbone after all" Kade says.

"It will do you no good here, you fuck this up, you watch them die," he adds.

"You touch them, and you do," I tell him. I was the only thing standing in the way of having Ivy get the King here, and I knew she would cause hell in the castle for me because if our roles were reversed, I would do the same.

Kade nods and looks at Cassandra, who smiles sweetly before tugging her handbag off her shoulder. She pulled a smaller bag out that was clear and contained makeup. I sat on the edge of the bed, knowing exactly what would happen next. Mrs. Daley was good at this facade, too, when she wanted sponsors and had covered our scars plenty of times. If I can survive that bitch, I could survive anything.

Stacey cringes away from her, and Cassandra raises her hand to hit her when Stacey accidentally bumps into her. Rage courses through me, and I grip her wrist. We stand-off for

a few seconds. Cassandra was clearly shocked I would grab her, especially in front of Kade, who she was expecting to jump to her rescue, but he only chuckled.

"Now, now, ladies, no fighting," he says, sitting in the chair in the corner beside the bed.

"You don't want to jeopardize that future you want so badly, do you?" I ask her, and she glares at me.

"You are asking for death, girlie," she spits, yanking her arm away.

"Good thing I don't fear it, but I bet you do," I tell her, and she glares at me. I sit on the bed, and Kade clicks his fingers impatiently at her.

I shut down, letting her play dress-up, solely focused on keeping the woman at my feet and her baby safe from these monsters.

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Azalea POV

The jostling sensation of movement woke me from my slumber. I had no idea how long I had been out, but the woozy feeling abated. The previous night's memories slowly returned to me as I opened my eyes to find Kyson carrying me.

I let out a shaky breath, and he looked down at me in his arms. He pulls me higher, burying his face in my neck and inhaling deeply. Placing my hand on the side of his neck, he moves me, allowing me to wrap my legs around his waist and I lazed against him. His scent soothed my agitated nerves. I felt wired and jittery.

"Thank God," Kyson breathes.

"I feel better," I tell him, yawning. Yet anger coursed through the bond, and I pulled my face from his neck to look at him, feeling his aura angry like a storm.

"What's wrong?" I asked him.

"Someone tried to poison you; I promise I will figure out who soon. Until then you are to remain with Dustin or me," he says, and my brows furrow. *Why would someone try to poison me? I had done nothing to anyone here. Although, I knew that should worry and scare me, I couldn't seem to focus on that. My instincts were going berserk. No matter how much I tried to focus on what he was telling me, all I wanted to do was lick him.*

Kyson carried me to our bedroom, and I was perfectly capable of walking but didn't want him to let go, enjoying his warmth and scent. I rub the center of his chest with my hand, and Kyson chuckles.

"Something you want?" he asks, amused.

"You," I tell him. My instincts were all over the place. I wanted my mate, and before I could stop myself, my teeth sank into his chest through his shirt, my claws slipping into his shoulder while the others

clawed his pec through his.

Kyson grunts, hoisting me higher while I want to climb into his shirt.

"Your scent is changing," he purrs, nipping my mark while I am too fascinated by the taste of his skin, as I licked his neck. Kyson shudders, clutching me tighter.

When he steps into our room, he kicks the door shut with his foot. "You should rest; you had an eventful night, and Abbie will be ringing this morning," he says, moving toward the bed, and I feel the softness of the duvet against my back as he places me on it.

He tries to stand up, but I wrap my legs around his waist, tugging him closer, my teeth sinking into his collarbone. He growls as my teeth break his skin and he starts to purr, the calling wrapping around me, and my claws slip out, shredding his shirt even more. He

Kyson presses his weight down on me, the calling making his chest vibrate against mine before rolling onto his back, pulling me on top of him. My lips go to his chest while hands move up and down my arms and sides while I mauled him. My teeth sank into him wherever I could get him. He drops his chin when I attack his neck, his stubble brushing my cheek, and I growl when he doesn't let me mark him.

"I thought you wanted to speak to Abbie?" he murmured, kissing the side of my mouth. Abbie, it had something to do with Abbie that was important; I just couldn't remember why. My tongue rolls over his chest, my hands clawing at his flesh.

"She should be calling soon, Azalea." he tries to remind me before he groans when my teeth nick his neck. Yet my sole focus was on my need to mark him. I couldn't think of anything but wanting to crawl inside the man. Desire coursed through me so strongly I couldn't think of anything else.

"Love, Abbie. She is ringing soon," Kyson growls, nipping at my shoulder. I try to shake the fog, consuming me and muddling my thoughts. Kyson smashes me with the calling, and I melt against him, pressing my ear to his chest and listening to the sound emanating from him.

"Shh, Abbie is calling soon. You want to speak to her, remember?" Kyson said softly, the calling growing stronger and making my eyelids heavy. I yawn, pressing my face into his chest.

"Abbie! Think of Abbie, Azalea. If you don't answer her call, I don't want you to hate me for missing it, so you need to focus. You can mark me afterward," he purrs, kissing the top of

my head. His finger stroked my hair. My claws were slipping out of his chest as his calling turned to sedative.

"That's it, plenty of time for that later, but calm," he purrs, his fingers moving from my hair and trailing up and down my spine. I blink, fighting the urge to sleep, trying to fight the calling, and my breathing becomes harsher.

"That's it, Love. Fight it. You can fight your urges; just focus on a different emotion or think of Abbie," Kyson says. Yet my brain was mush. Yet I knew something was going on with Abbie; I just needed to remember

"Abbie is with Kade," the moment his name slipped from between his lips, a furious growl tore out of me, and I sat up, blinking, my claws sinking into his chest, and he hisses, and I look down at my hands, and Kyson pulls my claws out, and his blood oozes down his side. I move to lick his wounds, wanting to heal them.

"It's fine," I cut his words off, running my tongue over the puncture marks. They healed instantly, and I had no idea how I did it, but I could tell my saliva had changed. It tasted different on my tongue, Kyson looks at his chest. The scars remained, which I thought odd. They were fresh wounds and should have healed completely. I glanced at his face to see the faint scars from the other night.

"You're not healing, it scarred you?" I murmured.

"Worry about that later. It is because you were angry. See, these healed just fine," he says, pointing to the love bites I gave him. It made no sense why some would heal and others scarred him. They all should have healed. My brow pinched when his calling slipped out.

"That's it. Just focus on something else." I blinked. Clarity was washing through me like a tidal wave as I remembered I was waiting for Abbie's call, Kade slipping into my thoughts. I despised the man hadn't even met him.

"What time is it?"

"Just after 10 am, so she should be calling any minute," Kyson says, lifting his hips and pulling his phone from his back pocket. He hands it to *me*.

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"Do you remember how to answer it?" I nod, unlocking the phone and climbing off him. The moment did, it was like I was being pulled back to him, and I looked at the phone in my hand and at Kyson on the bed. It was like a war in my head between what the bond wanted and what I knew I needed, and that was to ensure Abbie was okay.

"Focus, think of Abbie." I nodded. It was difficult to keep a coherent thought. However, I was glad Kyson ignored his instincts to let me mark him, knowing I would regret it if I missed Abbie's call. The phone started ringing in my hand, and Kyson, seeing me struggle, moved quickly, answering it, and her face popped up on the screen, snapping me out of my inner battle.

"Abbie!"

"Hey, Kade said you wanted me to call; I dropped my phone in the sink. You know I am clumsy," she chuckles.

My brows furrow Abbie wasn't clumsy? "Have you got makeup on?" I ask her, staring at her face that looked different. The urges coursing through me instantly stifled as I looked at her and took in her appearance. Abbie was far from girly, so I thought the makeup was strange.

"Yep, do you like it? Cassandra helped me," she says, turning the phone, and I see a woman that looked like she just stepped out of some magazine. Her face was made up so perfectly. The woman smiled and waved enthusiastically before Abbie turned the phone back to herself.

"How have you been?" she asks, and I don't miss how her eyes moved to someone past the phone. Kyson walked into the bathroom, and I moved to the couch.

"Cassandra, that is-" I ask.

"Kade's wife, they have three kids," Abbie says, cutting me off and smiling, yet something didn't feel right; her eyes didn't light up the way they usually did.

"And you're okay with that?" I asked her.

"Well, I can't punish him for *marrying* before he *found* me," she said. My brows furrowed, and Abbie then changed the topic of conversation and turned the attention away *from* her, and asked me questions. I asked about the packhouse, and she gave me vague answers. Kyson comes up behind me and into the camera's view.

"Hi Abbie, you look nice," Kyson says, sending her a wave. She smiled and waved, saying hello. Yet something felt off with her, she was bubbly like normal, nothing that would suspect anything was wrong, and Kade said a quick hello, talking to kyson over her shoulder.

"Well, my King and Queen Abbie and Cassandra are about to go shopping," I nod, and he moves away from the camera's view, and I could hear him talking to someone but not quite make out what he was saying. Kyson had turned his attention to the tablet I was using last night, checking my writing.

"Well, I will try to ring you again soon," Abbie says.

"I was going to ask if you wanted to come up on the weekend?" I ask her, and I see Kyson look at me out of the corner of my eye.

"That would be awesome; I have missed you." Abbie says her eyes lighting up.

"Not this weekend, Abbie. A driver won't be available." I hear Kade say somewhere off the side.

"It's fine. I will send Dustin to come to get her and your wife, be a girl's weekend," I tell him. Not that I wanted to see his wife, but I knew it would look sus if I didn't invite her to.

"Kids have a soccer match, Abbie's first one. She doesn't want to miss it," kade said, and Abbie nodded before rubbing behind her ear.

"Yes, I promised the kids I would go; I forgot maybe the one after," she smiles, yet my focus was on her hand rubbing behind her left ear. My neck itches, and I instinctively rub the scar on the back of my neck where my hairline is as I nod. Something in the pit of my stomach told me something was amiss.

"Sounds great," I tell them, plastering a fake smile on my face. Abbie's smile waivers slightly.

"Well, I will let you go. Ring me tomorrow night," I tell her, and Kade pops back into view.

"I will make sure she does," he says, kissing her cheek in a show of affection. Abbie blows me some kisses.

"I love you," she says.

"More than my life," I reply.

"Yep, you know that," she says, smiling, and my heart hammers in my chest. I pressed my lips in a line as she rubbed the spot behind her ear. She didn't say it back. She always says it back!

"I love you; I will speak with you tomorrow," I tell her. She nods, and we both hang up.

"She seems good. Hopefully, Gannon will get off my back now," Kyson says.

"She didn't say it back," I tell him, looking at the blacked-out screen.

"Pardon?" Kyson asked.

"She always says it back!" I tell him. Kyson's brows furrow.

"She looked fine, she said so herself,"

"They are making her say that, Kyson. She didn't say it back!" I tell him, becoming angry.

"I know you miss her, but," "She didn't say it back. She always says it back. We are leaving now; we are bringing her home." I tell

him.

Kyson growls and shakes his head. "Kade will bring her up the following weekend. She seemed fine, looked great, and seemed to get along with Cassandra," Kyson said.

Was he thick? Did he not hear what I said? Anger coursed through me, the raging lust burning out. I knew Abbie. I explained about her touching the scar behind her ear, and Kyson looked at me like he thought I was insane, but I know Abbie. She is my best friend.

Kyson reaches out for me, but I pull away. "We need to go get Abbie, now!" "I can't do that, Azalea. She wanted to stay, she told me herself when I asked"

"I don't care what she told you. I am telling you, it was an act that was not Abbie, not my Abbie!" I yell at him.

Kyson reaches for my hand and I jerk it away from him. "Don't fucking touch me. We need to get Abbie," I snapped, and he growls at me.

"You are being ridiculous. She is fine," he retorts, stepping closer, but I take a step back.

"Azalea!"

"We need to go get Abbie!" I snarled.

Gannon POV

Liam had to keep turning the music up. Mrs. Daley's screams echoed around the basement. Eventually, her screams cut out completely, her body bloody and lifeless, having skinned the bitch alive. Oh, how I loved hearing them scream. Although I could have gone without the erection, it gave me. Blood coated the stone floor red, the smell was pungent, and the place reeked of raw meat.

Washing my hands in the filthy sink, I dry them on a hessian bag I found sitting beside it before looking at the old hag's pelt hanging up on a hook from the ceiling, admiring my handiwork. I headed for the stairs with a shrug. The rickety old steps creaked under my weight as I climbed them. Opening the door, I shake my head when I see Liam shaking his ass and dancing to the music he had blaring loudly. Liam was still wearing his floral apron while doing the dishes.

Katrina comes into the kitchen with another pile of plates clutched in her hands, a tea towel draped over her shoulder. She gives me a wary look. She hesitates for a second, then hurries past me toward the small kitchen. I watch as she sets the plates on the bench beside Liam. He grabs her hand and twirls her around before pulling her to dance with him, tugging her body flush against his.

Only then does he spot me standing by the basement door. He smirks, letting her go before letting her go and drying his hands on the apron.

"About time; I thought you were trying on Mrs. Daley and wearing her skin as a suit with how long you were taking," Liam laughs. Katrina stares wide-eyed at me, turning my head to look at her, and she hastily looks away.

Liam undoes his apron and sets it on the counter before pecking Katrina on the cheek. "Be seeing you later, Dollface," he says, sending her a wink. I shake my head as he walks towards me when he stops at the door leading out to the hall. "On second thought." He turns back and snatches the apron off the counter.

"You don't want this, do you?" Katrina shakes her head. I was pretty sure she would give him her kidney if it meant he would get away from her. Probably even cut it out herself.

"Good, good, it looks better on me anyway," he says, chucking it over his shoulder and sauntering out.

"Ah, Mrs. Daley?" Katrina asks me when I turn to follow him.

"No need to worry, I already hung her up to dry, just let her air out for a bit," I tell her, following Liam back through the place. I stop when I pass Oliver and Logan, who are both still sitting in the same spot, huddled underneath a blanket, watching the other children playing with some puzzles.

"I will be back in a few hours to pick you up; I have someone I want you both to meet," I tell them. Oliver rests his head on Logan's shoulder, sucking his thumb.

"Who?" Logan asks me, hugging his brother closer.

"A woman named Clarice. You will like her, and she will love both of you. She will take good care of you." I told him and he chewed his lip while looking at his little brother. He nods, so I turn on my heel before walking outside. When I do, I am confronted with Alpha Dean and Alpha Brock, who were having a heated argument with Liam.

"Can I help you?" I ask them, coming behind Liam and stepping over the small brick fence that ran along the footpath.

"Don't you mean can I help you? This isn't your pack, and we were called here about a disturbance," Alpha Dean states.

"Is that right? Well, last I checked, werewolves were lower on the food chain. So I suggest you move along before you meet the real big bad wolf," I snarl. Alpha Dean looks at Liam and me before focusing back on me and looking me up and down.

"Well, the King never informed either of us that you would be showing up; if we had known, we would have prepared for your arrival," Alpha Dean adds, glancing around nervously.

"No preparations needed. If you will excuse me, I have a butcher who needs butchering," I tell them before smiling and shoving past them both. I open the driver's door, and Liam tosses me the keys, and I snatch them out of the air, about to climb in the car.

"Exactly why are you here?" Alpha Brock asks,

"Little slow, this Alpha is. No wonder the pack is going broke. Not one brain cell between the two of them," Liam says, and I smirk at his words.

"The two rogue boys inside will be leaving with me when I return; touch them, you will be hanging alongside Mrs. Daley in the basement," I tell them before climbing into the car.

They glanced at the orphanage behind them, and we drove off. Liam gave me directions to the butcher's shop in town. It just so happened to be in the small town square, and we received a few nervous glances as we climbed out and headed inside the small place.

A huge glass display fridge was out the front taking up half the store, but I could see a room out the back behind the til. Pushing through the hinged door beside the fridge display, I went out the back of the small store to the freezer room. I could hear muffled yelling as I approached the enormous steel door. Twisting the handle, I yanked it open and stepped inside. The room was freezing, and I shivered instantly.

"Oh, a little frosty in here," Liam chuckles. However, my attention was solely on the butcher, who stared with big brown eyes. He was in his mid-forties, still dressed in plaid pajama pants, his hair a mess and sticking up at odd angles. His teeth chattered, and his lips were blue. His chest was bare, and his nipples were hard. Goosebumps covered every inch of him.

Liam had skillfully tied him. There was no way he would have been able to shift to get out of his restraints.

He glanced between us both, and Liam pulled on his lovely floral apron while I grabbed one of the rubber ones hanging up outside the freezer room door.

"Bring him out," I called to Liam, who obeyed, rubbing his hands together excitedly.

Liam unties him, and the moment he does, he runs, bolting out the door, but nothing a punch to the windpipe couldn't fix. My fist connected with his Adams apple. He gasped, clutching his throat; I gripped his hair and slammed his head into the steel table. He drops to my feet, and Liam comes out shaking his head, clicking his tongue before kicking him in the ribs, making him grunt.

"Now listen here, pork chop; I am old and tired and just made over 100 pancakes, so do me a favor and climb up on the steel bench. My back is aching," Liam tells him while tying the back of his apron.

"There must be some mistake; I don't even know what I did. You have the wrong guy!"

"Is your name Doyle?" I ask, and he nods.

"Do you know a girl named Abbie?" I ask him, and his eyes widen.

"So you do know Abbie?" I ask, and he looks between us but shakes his head.

"Well, now that's a lie, isn't it? Because Mrs. Daley told us about you, and how you paid her to rape the girl, stole her innocence and all that." Liam says, tilting his head to the side observing the man.

"No, I never took that, I swear. Mrs. Daley lied. I never took the girl's virginity; she is still pure, I swear. If Abbie said I did, she is a liar. I know better than to take her virginity. She isn't as worth much if she is sold off," he blurts out, and I look at Liam.

"What do you mean?" Liam asked, as confused as me. The King would not lie or send me on a wild goose chase.

"I am saying you didn't buy ruined goods. I heard how the Lycan King took her in; she is still pure, I swear. If she is saying she isn't, she is a liar. Tell the King she is still pure; I know better!" My eyebrows raise. He thought the King would buy a sex slave? Does he not know the King could have any woman he wanted? Not that he wanted any other than Azalea.

"You know better?" I ask, and he nods, looking at me pleadingly. What the fuck is wrong with this man? I thought I was fucked in the head, but he just took it to another level.

"I am a little confused. Are you Gannon? He is claiming to know better, but rape is apparently still acceptable?" Liam asks me.

"What? No, I paid for her. She is just some whore," he says, and my blood boils at his words. My claws slashed down his face, slicing through to the bone before I grabbed his throat, picking him up; I slammed him on the table.

"Please, please, she's still pure. I only fucked her up. I left her virginity. Buyers value that," the man begged. Liam's claws sink into his thigh at his words.

"You seem to be very confused. We don't care about her virginity status; we care if you hurt her. But keep talking; you are making your death more painful. Two things we hate, rapists and anyone that

hurts children, and you did both those things. Now you will pay for your crimes in blood," Liam growls before dragging his claws out of his leg. His screams echoed around us, shrill and loud as Liam pulled them out slowly, twisting his fingers as he did. His hands clutched my hand around his throat.

"Help me move him, flip him on his stomach," I tell Liam, who walks off into the freezer. He returns, bringing back the ropes he had tied this scumbag with. We flip onto his stomach before binding his hands and feet to the legs of the table. He thrashed and screamed.

Liam starts whistling as he cuts the vile man's pants off while he cries and begs. Walking into the freezer, I look for a broom, finding one in the back corner by the grate and drain in the floor. Grabbing it, I walked back out, and Doyle was crying hysterically and begging Liam to free him.

His words cut off, and his head lifted, his mouth wide open on a silent scream as he gasped when I shoved the broom handle up his ass. His entire body shook, his legs shaking. Blood trailed over the steel table.

"I swear you're still pure. Anal doesn't count, right?" I ask him while I walk around the table. I grip his hair, yanking his head back. He panted, eyes wide, and I smiled when Liam gave the broom a jiggle, and he made a pained groan. I drop his head, and Liam walks over to the wall and pulls down a bone saw, chucking it to me. He then unrolls his pouch of knives, selecting one.

"So slice and dice, or will we be more creative today?" Liam asks.

"Please, please, just let me go," the man begs.

"Don't cry, beefcakes. Gannon here will make sure we tenderize your rump before we make you eat it. We can stuff it some more," Liam tells him, slapping his ass. "If you want. I reckon you could take another, pretty loose back there," Liam adds. The man whimpers and sobs before pissing himself, urine cascading down the sides of the table along with his blood.

"What's that?" Liam asks when Doyle mumbles something incoherently.

"Think he said he wanted the other broom," I tell Liam, who smiles sadistically while the man screams and thrashes as much as possible.

Liam comes out with a mop, and I shrug.

"It's alright, I will spit on it first," Liam tells him before shoving it up alongside the other one. His screams were music to my ears and rang out loudly, making me shiver.

"Now, do you like your meat medium, raw, cooked all the way through? How should we serve it to you?" Liam says, cutting a chunk of his ass cheek off with his knife. He screams, and I grab my saw before using a rag as a tourniquet. I know he will heal quickly, but the tourniquet will ensure he does before bleeding out. Wrapping it just above the knee, I pull it tight before grabbing my saw, and I start cutting into the back of his knee.

Azalea POV

Kyson refused to listen and said I was being unreasonable and that she probably forgot to say it back. However, I knew she said it to alert me something was wrong. I know Abbie, and she always says it back. Kyson said he would take me to see her on the weekend. That was not good enough for me; today was Monday, and I was unwilling to wait that long.

Although I had no choice with the heat ravaging me painfully, and I could not even move, it swept over me like a tidal wave, crippling pain the longer I denied it and showed no signs of easing.

"This is ridiculous, Azalea. You are in pain. Let me ease it," Kyson snapped at me as he reached over and gripped my shoulder, trying to roll me onto my back.

His touch burned, lust trying to consume me, and all I wanted to do was bathe in his scent, craving his touch and him like he was an antidote to crippling agony rushing through my nerve endings and making my entire body burn and ache for him. Sweat glistened on my skin and drenched my hair. My pillow is soaked as I squirm in pain. No matter how I lay, I could not get comfortable.

"Bring Abbie home," I snarl while curling up in a ball on my side and facing away from him. I bring my knees to my chest, trying to ease some of the pain, though nothing works. Kyson growls. Yet I ignore him. My stomach was cramping, and his scent was driving me insane. My burning anger was enough to keep me sane and determined not to give in to instinct until he either sent someone to get her or took me there himself. I refused to give in.

I wanted to claw at my chest, the bond refusing to settle, wanting me to go to my mate, urging me to mate and mark him, promising to ease my discomfort if I just gave in. Kyson growls, grabbing my shoulder and forcing me onto my back.

I thrash as he pins me, moves on top of me, and pushes his body between my legs, bearing his weight down, effectively trapping me beneath him. My skin tingles where his hands gripped my wrists. The calling rushes out of him as he tries to get me to submit to him.

A moan escapes me, followed by a growl when recognition slaps me in the face. He claws my clothes away, ripping them to shreds, and I sink my teeth into his chest. I bite him as hard as possible. Kyson growls ferociously as he slams me down on the bed, my teeth tearing from his skin. His canines press against my throat as a warning, and I freeze, breathing harshly as anger twisted inside me that he would try to force me.

"Stop this, you need to mate!" he snarls, his teeth grazing my skin, and I fight the urge to shiver and fail miserably. His breath was on my neck as he panted in anger, his grip on my wrist tight as a vise as he pushed them into the mattress.

"It's still rape even if you are my mate; you do, and I will never forgive you," I spit at him. A whine leaves his lips, a noise I had never heard from him before. His tongue laves at my neck, and he breathes heavily before he presses his face into my neck, rubbing his face on me.

"I would never," he growls, and I turn my head to look at him. Kyson genuinely looked upset over my accusation. "Then get off me," I retorted, and his eyes flickered, his body rippling as he fought the urge

to shift. Jet black fur grew along his arms, and his skin rippled. His cock was hard as it pressed between my legs. My entire body tingled as his skin pressed against me.

"Get off me, Kyson!" I snap when he doesn't move. His claws slipped into the bed where he gripped my wrists, but he reluctantly rolled off me, only to yank me on top of him, and I pushed off his chest.

"Stop! If you won't, mate. At least try to lessen your discomfort. Your heat affects me to Azalea," he snarled, holding me against him, and I tried to wiggle out of his grip, but he was a lot stronger than me, his arms becoming restraints, and after struggling for a few seconds. I relaxed, melting against his skin, letting it ease the agony rolling through me.

The heat getting some relief, my skin glistening in a sheen of sweat induced by the heat. It was like having the worst fever. My skin was blistering hot, and my insides felt like I was boiling from the inside out. A sigh escapes me, and Kyson's hand travels up and down my spine, my temperature dropping slightly just from his skin against mine.

"We will see Abbie on the weekend; I promise I will take you to her, Azalea. Please," Kyson pleads.

"Not until she is here. Go get Abbie," I murmur, licking his skin before realizing what I was doing and clenching my jaw.

"I am busy. The weekend isn't that far away," Kyson purrs before burying his nose in my hair as he inhaled my scent.

"Then send Gannon!" I tell him, knowing Gannon would drop anything to get to her.

"Gannon is busy taking care of something and will be gone for God knows how long taking care of it; I will when he returns." Kyson states.

"What about Damian?" I asked.

"I need him here with me," Kyson says simply, and I curse under my breath.

"You won't be able to fight the heat for long, Azalea. Just give in. It is pointless you will mate me, so give in! It doesn't just make you uncomfortable!" he growls, gripping my hips and rubbing my pussy along his raging hard-on. I moan at the feel of his cock gliding through my wet folds. But still, I refuse, shaking my head and earning a growl from him.

Kyson POV

Azalea could be damn stubborn. I could feel her agony; the rippling pain rushes through the bond, making mine ten times worse. My skin against hers eased it a little but not much, and the longer she denied us both, the crankier I was becoming.

Each wave of her heat made my muscles tense, and I had to grit my teeth to stop sinking my canines into her and forcing her to submit. She wanted Abbie returned here. However, Abbie looked fine, excitable, and her usual self.

Being King, if I broke the rules, the consequences were far worse for me. There were things Azalea didn't understand, like the pact I was under as ruling King. She thinks it is as simple as commanding them. It isn't when I am obligated to give the five founding council members my blood every year, making them immune to my commands.

Lycan blood was one thing, but a King's blood. I couldn't command them if I wanted to. Azalea has had dribs and drabs of my blood when biting me, and those times if she had noticed I was struggling to hold rein over her, each time she grew stronger when she bit me, but the Council, they have been drinking my blood for years making them un-commanding. I hated it, but it was necessary. What was law if the one creating them didn't uphold those very laws? It is what made me a fair King.

Meaning everything had to be agreed upon somewhat. Sure, I could probably command them if they had only a few drops, but the council members were immortal. They had been advising alongside me for centuries because they had been drinking immortal blood for centuries.

Lycan blood was potent, prolonging a life span long after it should have ended. It was the only trait it gave them besides making them resistant to my commands. I couldn't persuade the council members. Everything had to be discussed and set out. It was a safety measure put in place for the packs. That the five elected council members would have a say, and nobody had any say against me any other way.

It was why packs were helping the hunters in the first place. They thought it unfair that someone should have so much rein over all packs. I could be a mad King. Order them to kill themselves, and the packs would.

This way, there was someone to serve judgment on me for any wrongdoings, and it is also why very few have helped the hunters to eradicate Lycans now. Not long after my sister was killed, it was put in place to calm the packs.

Suddenly, I regretted that pact because my mate thought I was being a jerk by denying her. Still, the consequences for someone of my status against the werewolf communities were far greater than that of an ordinary wolf. They would come for me, so until Abbie said to come to get her, I had my hands tied, and unfortunately, I couldn't just take Azalea's word for a gut feeling.

She would come to understand when she meets the Council. Until then, I would just have to put up with her tantrums.

Another wave rushes over her, her body tensed, and sweat beads on my skin where she lay on top of

me, the heat emanating from her growing hotter with each wave. She was boiling herself from the inside out. Her teeth sank into my chest, her claws raking down my sides as she squirmed, her bare pussy rubbing along my throbbing length made me groan. My blood boils hotter, and I grip her hips, rubbing her against me. Azalea moans before her claws sink into my chest. "No!" she growls.

"Azalea, your temperature is too hot. You're in fucking heat; heat can kill Lycan women if they don't mate!" I snarl.

"Then bring Abbie home!" she snarled, trying to roll off me. The scream that left her when her skin left mine made my blood run cold. Dustin's voice was instantly in my head at the soul-shattering sound.

"My King?"

"Get the Pack Doctor," I snap at him. I risk her life if I let her go on like this much longer. How she could resist mating in this state was beyond me. I had never heard of a Lycan female lasting this long without giving in. Her stubbornness would kill her. "Yes, My King," Dustin replies as I grip her arm, ripping her back on top of me, her temperature dropping slightly but barely.

She left me no choice but to stop her heat. Either she gave in to save her life, or I stopped it and risked mine. Without a doubt, she would choose Abbie over me; I knew that. I should have known she and Abbie the day I found them were a package deal. Both were willing to die for the other, both would rather be dead without the other. A friendship no one could get between.

Azalea tries to climb off me, but I snarl and bite her shoulder, making her moan and shiver, pressing the points of my teeth near her mark. Her breathing becomes labored and loud to my sensitive ears, made even more acute because of this heat.

"Move, and I will make you submit. I have the Doctor coming, so stay," I growl, letting my teeth retract. She nods against my chest, and I glare at the ceiling, cursing that she was so strong-headed. It would be worse when she realized she could go against my commands when she found her Alpha voice.

"Azalea, I am not above begging," I tell her when she keeps squirming, her arousal and heat coating my cock as she squirms, burying her face in my chest.

"Not until I have Abbie back," she snapped, biting my arm.

As sparks rush up my arm, I hiss as my cock twitched against her. She growls at the feeling like she thought I would pin her down and force her, not understanding for Lycan men. It is involuntary. Our urge to mate is just as painful as her heat.

"Stay still then," I tell her, gripping her hips and holding them in place. My control slowly waned, and I hoped this fucking Doctor got here soon. She was turning savage as she kept attacking and biting me, yet she remained where she was and could not fight my command, her heat driving her insane as she resisted it. God help me when she learned to defy my orders, too.

She could resist my commands. She may not be able to resist my calling, but my orders she could and until she trusted me. I couldn't risk using the call to make her submit. She needed to understand I would only use it to calm her or for her safety. Unfortunately, I ruined her trust and now was stuck earning it back. My father used it on my mother constantly for the same reasons, but it just became easier to get his way and a breach of trust after a while, not that mum noticed or he did anything wrong to her. Still, it wasn't always necessary, and I didn't want that with Azalea. I would rather she sought out my calling than me use it against her.

It was foolish of me to underestimate her relationship with Abbie. I should have recognized how close they were from that very day. I did in a sense, but after what Azalea had told me, it now made more sense. Both witnessing the same horrors, both urging the other to keep going. Both living for one another.

I should have noticed from the moment she threw herself at my feet and begged for Abbie's life, begged to let her die alongside her if I didn't spare her. She reacted not out of fear for Abbie. Sure, that was there too, but no, she responded out of love and dependency. They were each other's lifeline, knowing I could have ended hers for merely speaking out of turn.

Now, that was a different sort of bond I hadn't realized belonged outside of a pact bond or brothers bond forged over centuries like Damian and I shared. Brothers united not by blood but by respect and fighting beside each other for a long time. Azalea and Abbie shared the same thing, only it was based on survival and a strange dependency on each other. And for now, I knew I would never win if I made her choose between us.

Hearing a knock, I sat up, and Azalea groaned as she slid lower on my lap. I rip the blanket over her naked body to cover her.

"You can enter," I call to him. The moment his scent wafted to me, Azalea growled at the intruder in her nest, which was currently me, as she burrowed under the blanket, her claws scratching my sides.

Doc approached cautiously. She was dangerous in this state. You never intrude willingly on a nested she-wolf, let alone a Lycan. I grab her arms, wrapping them around my waist before laying back down, trapping her arms underneath me, and wrapping my arms around her shoulders, pinning her as she went to attack him.

"Be quick," I tell him, feeling the mattress shred beneath my back. The growl that leaves her is more predator than prey. I smash her with the calling when I feel her start to shift, and she melts against me. Doc's eyes are wide as he stares at her and watches me. He was not just intruding on her nest, but looking at my heated mate. Not a scenario anyone wants to be in.

"My King, what you're asking-" Doc tried to say.

"Will stop her heat, now do it!" I tell him.

"Yes, but my King, it isn't,"

"I said do it, stop her heat. I will not force her," I snarl at him, and he seems perplexed.

"She is resisting?" he asks, and I growl. He shook himself, startled by that information just as much as I was that she could resist it.

"You want to argue with me, do it through the mind link. I know what's at risk, do not make me order you, Doc," I warn him, and he sighs, looking at her as she purred, licking my chest, having forgotten we had people in our presence, unable to fight my calling as it lulled her to a sedated state. Doc pulls herbs and vials out before making the concoction up in a bowl and extracting it with a syringe.

"My King?" Dustin asks through the mind link, and my eyes move to him over Doc's shoulder.

"I know, but I won't force her," I reply through the link. Dustin nods once, but looks away. We all knew what I was risking, and I wasn't willing to guilt-trip her into giving in because I knew she would, but then she would resent me afterward or may accuse me of lying.

Doc clears his throat awkwardly, and Dustin averts his eyes while mine go to Doc's. "My King, I have to... the injection site, I have to.." He stutters, and I growl, knowing he had to inject it into her ovaries. I had seen it happen to a Lycan woman who was in heat just as her pack was attacked. It stopped her heat and saved her until the bond was severed when her mate was killed. She ended up killing herself not long after her mate died, anyway. She went insane after about a month.

"Which one?" I ask him.

"Either," he states, averting his gaze while I rearranged her by pressing my leg between hers to cover her. My hands and the blanket tangled around her to cover her nakedness. Yet the moment he turned, the savage growl he received from me had him jump back. I couldn't help it, covet and protect, my instincts went haywire. Knowing he could see what was mine and was about to touch her while she was in this state sent me insane.

Doc shook, and before I could stop myself, I shifted. Dustin only just ripped him back in time before I slashed his eyes from his head, the needle dropping from his hand. I tuck her under me. Azalea's eyes roll in her head, the calling wearing off, and I only just managed to flood her with it as she came to. No doubt she would lash out at someone so near her nest.

"My King?" Doc stutters. Yet I had never struggled with control like this. Most of my guards had caught her in some state of undress before, but never while she was in heat. My instincts told me he was trying to take her, even though I consciously knew I asked him here. Reason tried to calm me, but it wouldn't abate my urges.

Dustin bends down, scooping the needle off the ground. My eyes tracked his every movement as he approached the bed. Though his scent near her didn't seem to faze me, probably because she reeked of him constantly or maybe because I knew he was no threat, his scent a clear indicator that she was not his type, his scent not wavering near her at all. No reaction, whereas I could sense Doc's testosterone levels rise around Azalea because she was in heat.

"Ovaries, right, Doc? I'm not good with female anatomy," Dustin admits, and Doc moves toward the end of the bed, watching from afar, careful not to come too close. His nostrils flare, earning him a growl. Dustin's hand shook as he stopped beside me at the edge of the bed. He bares his neck to me, and my eyes flicker as he offers his neck to me.

"No threat, Alpha King," Dustin said steadily as I sniffed his neck, turning my nose away from him to sniff my mate. Dustin reaches over, tugging the surrounding sheet over her legs and mine covering her.

"He needs to move his leg," Doc says, glancing away when my eyes snap to him. Dustin's hand taps my leg. The man needs a bravery award coming near me like this. I don't think Damian would be game enough to try while she was in heat. I move my leg, and Dustin quickly tucks the blanket between her legs, careful not to touch between her legs. Azalea's eyes flutter, and I bury my nose in her neck and lick the hollow of her throat.

"Focus on your mate, my King. I am no threat," Dustin says as I feel him moving her slightly, and I keep my face in her neck; she shivers, my whiskers tickling her neck.

"If you push hard enough, you will be able to feel it. The Queen is in heat. Her ovaries will be swollen. You won't miss it once you feel it," Doc murmurs.

"Feel what? I don't even know what I am feeling for," Dustin whispers.

"Hand on the back of her hip. Use your other to push down, no lower but above the pubic bone," Doc says, and I growl.

Dustin fiddles around then jumps. "Ah, that's wrong, so wrong, shit, sorry, my King," he says when my head snaps to look at his hands on my mate.

"Not gross, just didn't think ovaries could expand like that," he rambles, remaining still while my eyes remained on his hand touching her.

"She isn't human. Lycan anatomy is far different from human anatomy," Doc explains, my eyes going to the man who averts his once again under my glare.

"Fascinating truly is, a human woman. You could only feel the ovaries internally by lifting the ovary,

and with a hand on the stomach. Still not 100% accurate on humans, Lycans are a little different," He says, turning his head. Dustin moves too quickly to pluck the needle from between his teeth. He freezes when I growl, offering his neck to me to sniff. I turn my attention back to Azalea and hear him breathe.

"Now I inject it into the ovary?" Dustin whispers. Glad he was doing it, I don't think I could.

"Yes, but move quickly. The King will feel it. I have heard it isn't a pleasant feeling. He may lash out,"

"Wait, will I hurt her?" Dustin asks.

"Not if the King keeps her sedated, no, but he will feel it," Doc says, my ear pricking on top of my head at his words.

I felt it alright and clenched the sheets. Dustin moved quickly, but I was more focused on Azalea, watching her. I heard the door click as they rushed out and would have to remember to thank Dustin later.

It took around 30 minutes until the side effects died down in her. Her breathing evened out, her cheeks were no longer a rosy red, and her skin was no longer blistering hot. However, it had no such effect on me. Her scent near driving me insane. The pain was pure torture for me, and now she lay asleep as exhaustion took her after hours of heat. She was now vulnerable to me, and I knew I had to get out of the room before I mated her.

Another hour passed as I paced and drank an entire bottle of whiskey, trying to force myself out of the room. Topsy, I snatched another bottle off the bar and staggered out of the room. Dustin gripped my arm as I stumbled toward the steps.

"Stay guard," I tell him.

"My King," Dustin murmurs.

"Don't, I know what I am risking? I am fine," I tell him.

"Do you?" I growl at his question.

"Yes, my life and I will be fine. I won't force her, and none of you are to tell her. She will come around." I stopped, losing my train of thought.

"You have three days, My King," Dustin argued.

"I need to go," I tell him.

"Not a word," I tell him, clutching the handrail as I headed for my office.

Azalea POV

My body ached as I rolled onto my back. My memory was grainy, so I was a little confused because I thought I was in heat? Although I felt perfectly fine now and well-rested, there were no signs of a temperature. However, rolling over, I find the bed empty, making me get up.

Glancing around the room, I couldn't see Kyson anywhere. Walking to the closet, I retrieved some clothes, a pair of jeans, and a blue shirt. The options are limited, from me shredding clothes all the time. Mostly Kyson's, but I know he kept clothes in his office. The thought makes me chuckle, knowing he was keeping clothes there for safekeeping and away from my claws. His clothes weren't safe here, especially with me nesting on and off. Such a bizarre thing to do.

I meander around the room, trying to wake up before hunting down Kyson when I notice my tablet. Picking it up, I glance at the time before seeing Kyson's phone on the bedside table. My brows pinch. Wasn't Abbie supposed to call back last night, or was it still the same day? My sense of time had been blurring. My days and nights formed into one never-ending one and losing track of time was becoming a regular occurrence.

Picking up his phone, I unlocked it, but he had no notifications on it or messages, not that I could read those anyway without typing them into my tablet. I toss the phone on the bed and head for the bathroom with a shake of my head. I shower quickly, eager to see Kyson so I can try to convince him to take me to visit Abbie.

When I got out of the shower, I towel dried my hair, not wanting to use the hairdryer because my hearing was super sensitive right now; I could even hear the lights' flickering buzz and the ruffle of the curtains as the breeze moved through them. Everything was extremely heightened, more so than usual.

Slipping on some flats, I open the door and step into the corridor to see Dustin yawning and leaning against the wall.

"You look tired," I chuckle, and his eyes fly open, and he straightens up. "Morning, my Que-," I raise an eyebrow at him.

"Azalea," he corrects himself. It was stupid. He tried to be so formal when he literally followed me around like a shadow, so him calling me that irked me. So, I liked to think he was a friend, not just here out of duty.

"Do you know where the King is?" I ask him, and he yawns again.

"I will take her," Trey says, and Dustin looks at him. I hadn't even noticed him standing there.

"Why are you up here?" Dustin questions. "You're not on guard today," Dustin says.

"Damian said to relieve you, I am fine working. You have covered my shift three times now?" Trey says with a shrug, and I look at Dustin. Has Dustin worked three shifts straight? That is like thirty-six hours.

Dustin shakes his head and waves him off. "I am fine. You can go." Dustin tells him, waving him off.

"No, you should sleep," I tell Dustin, feeling bad, taking in his appearance; he indeed looked exhausted.

"I am fine, Azalea. The King is in his office. However, I wouldn't advise going down there; he is in a mood," Dustin says. Since when isn't he in a mood? I don't think it is a mood but his damn personality.

"You said Damian is back?" I ask Trey, and he nods.

"Go rest. Trey will take me to see the King," I tell Dustin, squeezing his arm as I pass him. Dustin grips my arm when I move toward Trey, and I give him a strange look, but he sighs.

"It's fine; I will take you. You're dismissed, Trey. You're not needed here," Dustin tells him.

"But-"

"I am her personal guard, and I dismissed you. Now go!" Dustin snaps at him. Trey growls and shakes his head. "Trying to help, geez," he snarls, stomping off.

Turning my attention to Dustin, he glared after Trey. "Hey, what's got into you?" Dustin shakes his head and drapes his arm over my shoulders, tugging me closer.

"Something off about him. I haven't liked him since he came here ten years ago; I am not sure why, but he rubs me wrong. However, he took a bullet for the King about 8 years back, earning a spot on the royal guard, and then Damian put him on personal guard duties alongside me; he is trusted. But I don't trust him; a few things don't add up for me," Dustin says, and my brows pinch.

Trey seemed harmless, although he had been rude to me when the King cast me away. That was him reacting to orders, and other than that, he hadn't given me any reason to worry. However, I trusted Dustin, so it made my spine tingle when he said he didn't trust Trey.

"What do you mean?" I ask him.

"Just, I don't know. How he came to be here doesn't seem right to me,"

"So, where was he before?"

"The Landeena Kingdom, about 20% of the pack here were originally your family guard or those from your Kingdom, survivors of the massacre. After your parents were killed. King Kyson's pack was the only remaining Lycan pack. For safety, Lycans stick together. We are a dying species, so the King took them in. My Queen, those people are your people," Dustin says, nudging me with his elbow before yawning again.

Did people survive? I assumed that with how much of a ghost town, everyone was killed, but it made sense that there would be survivors.

"How about we stay in the room for a bit? You can sleep. Since you don't want anyone else as my guard," I tell him.

"I am fine; I can take you," Dustin assures me, but I grip his arm and pull him back toward the room.

"Sleep on the bed if you want. I promise I will remain here," I tell him. Dustin shakes his head. Instead, follows me toward the couch. I retrieve my tablet and open it up and book before deciding to do something educational. Dustin stood there watching me, and I raised an eyebrow at him.

"You are supposed to be sleeping," I tell him, patting the couch. He purses his lips.

"Don't make me try to order you. It will probably just embarrass me when I can't," I chuckle, and his lips tug in the corners, but he reluctantly sits, and I chuck the throw blanket over him.

"Now, sleep," I tell him.

"Yes, boss," he laughed, closing his eyes. It didn't take him long before he fell asleep, and after an hour, he fell sideways into me, his head resting in my lap while I was trying to work out how to do the strange letter in the book. It had a dash above it, but I couldn't figure it out on the tablet. Giving up, I move to the following sentence when Damian comes in, and I hold a finger to my lips, pointing to Dustin asleep.

"He should be on guard," Damian growls, and I growl back at him.

"Thirty-six hours he has been rostered on for," I snap at him, and he seems taken aback.

"No, Trey is his relief," Damian says, looking at Dustin.

"Trey was here earlier. Dustin didn't trust him and sent him off." Damian seemed confused but sighed.

"Fine, I will speak with Dustin when he wakes; I brought your lunch up," Damian says, passing me a plate. I sit my plate on the arm of the armchair.

"The King?"

"In a foul mood," Damian says. He straightened his black shirt, which had bread crumbs on it from the sandwich he had made me.

"Can you take me to see-" Damian holds up a hand, cutting me off?

"I know what you are going to ask. The answer is no, I have to go with the King to check out something. We will be gone for a few hours."

I huff, annoyed. "The King said he would take you on the weekend. He will, Azalea, just be patient,"

"I can't be patient when I know she is in trouble,"

"The King said she was fine,"

"It was an act!" I growl, becoming angry. Why won't they believe me?

"My Queen, I don't know what else to say, The King-"

"Yeah, the King said," I growl, glaring at the plate.

"He has his reasons," Damian defends him and growls. If he has reasons, why not tell me those damn reasons? I just want to see her, that's it. If she is fine, I will apologize for wasting his time, but until I do, I will keep pestering him because I know I am right!

Chapter 112
I place my plate on the coffee table before carefully slipping out from under Dustin's head.

"Azalea?"

"No, he won't take me, fine! But there are plenty of others here who can," I tell him before stomping off out of the room. Excuses always an excuse.

Damian chases after me as I stalk down to the office, telling me I should leave him be. That he was in a mood! I roll my eyes and pull my arm from his grip when he tries to stop me from going into the office.

Pushing the door open, I stepped inside to find Kyson by the window. Whiskey in his hand. He looks at me and smiles, his eyes going over my shoulder as Damian steps in behind me, looking somewhat flustered.

"Everything okay?" Kyson asks.

"Yes, I was trying to take Azalea back to her room," Damian says, grabbing my arm, and Kyson snarls ferociously, making him let go. He shakes his head, and his eyes flicker. Damian backs away from me with his hands up. What is wrong with him?

"Can I speak to you, please?" I ask Kyson, who was glaring at Damian. Kyson turns his attention to me before waving me over and dismissing Damian. He glared at the door as it closed, and I approached him.

Kyson sits in the armchair, flopping heavily into it, his whiskey sloshing over the sides of his glass. I take it from him, placing it on the lamp table beside him just as Kyson grabbed me, hauling me onto his lap. He buries his face in my neck and starts purring, tugging my shirt up.

"Stop. I need to talk to you," I tell him while pushing off his chest. He growls, ignoring me, fondling my breast and nipping my shoulder through my shirt. His skin was scorching.

"Are you alright?" I ask him, but he growls again, tugging at my clothes, trying to undress me. With a sigh and I speak, anyway.

"Damian said you were leaving for a few hours, so can you get one of your other guards to take me to see Abbie, or even Dustin could take me?" I ask him, pushing his face away that was currently buried in my neck.

"I will take you on the weekend," he mumbles, licking my neck, his hands pawing at me. His grip was rough as he tugged and pulled me around.

"Kyson, stop. We will be quick straight there and back."

"No, it is too far to go on your own on the weekend. End of discussion." he snaps at me. I growl at him before shoving off him and standing up.

"Then Trey can come too?" I tell him.

"I said no!" he said snarled, his eyes flickering dangerously.

"Abbie never rang last night," I tell him.

"She was probably busy," and I roll my eyes. I storm off toward the door. Fine, I would go myself.

"Azalea?"

"If you don't take me, I will go myself," I tell him while walking toward the door. Had barely gripped the door handle when the sound of snapping bones reached my ears, and his hand fell on the door beside my head. The growl that ripped out of him made me spin around to face him.

The sound was so deep and menacing it raised goosebumps all over my body. The hair on my head stood and an icy shiver slivered up my spine, making my stomach drop. The feeling rushed over me so quickly it was like I had jumped off a tall building. The plummet of my stomach as I came face to face with him in his Lycan form terrified me.

Kyson had gone, and a savage was in his place, his voice also a harsh growl as I stepped back and hit the door. His entire body shook with his anger. I suddenly understood why everyone feared the man; even when he tossed me aside, he wasn't this rage-filled. This was something else, entirely, as no part of him was human, a monster, primal and animalistic on a scale I had never seen before.

"Mine! You will submit-" His words cut off, and he blinks, shaking his head. His claws raking down the door behind me sounded like nails on a chalkboard. I grit my teeth, and he stumbles backward, looking shaken, like he had no control.

"Where is your guard?" he says, turning away from me and putting some distance between us.

"Outside," I lied, not wanting to get anyone in trouble, especially Dustin. Damian was angry enough at him earlier.

"You should go back to the room, Azalea,"

"But Abbie-"

"I said room, now go. I have to leave anyway,"

"Dustin and Trey,"

"I said no! Now get out!" he screamed at me, and I shook my head before turning on my heel and rushing out. Damian stood by the door and jumped when I came out before he sighed.

"I told you he was in a bad mood," Damian said, and I growled at him before stalking off down the corridor toward my room. Just as I reached the doors leading toward the stairs, they burst open, and Dustin crashed through them, looking frantic. The look of relief on his face when he spots me was evident as he clutched his knees, trying to catch his breath.

"You said you wouldn't leave!" he said, coming over to me.

"Sorry, I had Damian with me. I didn't want to wake you," I tell him, taking the arm that he offered me when Damian called after him.

"Dustin, a word," I chew my lip, hoping I didn't get him into trouble. Dustin sighs loudly but stops before walking back down the hall when Clarice comes up with the King's lunch. She stops looking at Damian and Dustin, who are talking.

"Azalea, how are you feeling?" she asks, cupping my face with her hand. Before I could answer, I heard Dustin growl before yelling at Damian.

"Fucking bullshit!"

"It's an order. You need sleep," Damian snaps back at him.

"I will lock the door and sleep on the couch,"

"Trey is her other assigned guard. The King trusts him, and so do I," Damian says.

"Get anyone else; I am telling you something is off with him,"

"Oh, for fuck's sake, if this is over the assignment last year, are you still pissed about that? He proved he had nothing to do with sabotaging you,"

"No, it's about her safety. I couldn't give fuck about that. But-" Dustin argued back.

"What happened?" Clarice whispers to me, and I turn my attention back to her. "I'm not sure. Dustin keeps taking Trey's shifts, said he doesn't trust him," I tell her when I hear a growl.

"Dustin cursed under his breath before stomping back over to me. "Come on," he says, looking furious, and my brows pinch as he grips my elbow, leading me away from Clarice, who glanced at us confused.

"Are you alright?"

"Damian pulled me from shift for next 8 hours,"

"It's fine. You need sleep," I tell him as he pulls me up the stairs.

We made it back to the room in record time, with his long strides as he tugged me after him. "Slow down!" I tell him, stumbling on the top step. His hand gripping my arm was the only thing stopping me from falling.

"Sorry," he says, leading me to the room. He pushed the door open.

"Just sleep; I will be fine,"

"Damian ordered me back to my room to ensure I sleep. Just be careful around him. I am setting the alarm and will speak to some other guards to keep an extra up here," Dustin almost looked frantic.

"Don't trust him, Azalea. Just stay in your room the moment I can come back; I will be here, just-" He curses, shaking his head.

"Make sure you keep the door locked. Promise me you won't let him in here!" Dustin says, gripping my arms.

"Okay, I promise, I won't let him in the room with me," Not that I would; I barely knew Trey. So I doubted he would try to come in here, anyway.

"It's fine. I will see if Clarice will stay with you while the King is gone; Gannon can't be too much longer, surely," Dustin mutters, rubbing his chin.

"I'll be fine," I tell him.

"You know where my room is, right? Wake me if you need me. You also have my number on the phone; just press number three, speed dials straight to my phone," I nod, wondering if the lack of sleep was making him paranoid. He sighs before kissing my forehead and hugging me, something he had never done. "Don't let yourself be alone with him," he whispers before walking out when I nod. I watch him leave, wondering why he felt so strongly about Trey.

Kyson POV

I had n idea what came over me; I almost attacked her. Her heat is still intense despite her no longer suffering its effects. I didn't mean to snap at her, but I would have bent her over my desk if she didn't leave. It took twenty minutes before I calmed enough to shift back. I snatch the bottle of whiskey off the lamp table and swig from it.

"You bloody idiot, are you trying to get yourself killed!" I snap at him.

"I'm sorry, I thought you had control, or I wouldn't have grabbed her," I click my tongue and curse, shaking my head before tipping the bottle to my lips.

"Just let me explain to her," Damian says and I shake my head. "No, I want her to give herself to me when she wants to, not because she feels forced because my life is at risk," I tell him.

"Kyson?"

"The injection only lasts two days. We have some leeway. Azalea will change her mind," I tell him, not so sure she would.

"And if she doesn't?" I bite the inside of my lip.

"She will,"

"If she doesn't, I tell her," he snarls, and I growl at him.

"You die, then what? You let her live with that guilt. No one can protect her the way you do, Kyson. Think it through."

"I don't want her to feel obligated," I tell him.

"I won't let you die, and neither will she!" he snaps. Damian tosses me some pants and a shirt, realizing I was still naked. I take them, slipping them on and doing up the buttons. "We should leave. I want to get back before tomorrow,"

"We shouldn't go, not while you're like this,"

"Exactly why we are going. I am struggling to hold myself back. Now grab the keys. We are leaving," I tell him, grabbing my wallet off the desk and stuffing it into my pocket. I push the doors open and walk out toward the front of the castle. I needed to be away from her for a little while, just until I got these urges under control.

However, when I reach the door, I stumble, vertigo washing over me, and the room tilted and slanted, making me stumble. My hand goes out, catching myself on the wall before I pass out. A cold sweat causes sweat to bead on the back of my neck. Everything telling me to hurt my mate. When Damian grips my upper arm, I blink, trying to force the effects away.

"We should stay," he murmurs, but I shake his hand off. "I'm fine, we will be gone only 12 hours max, plenty of time, and by the time we get back, the medication should be nearly worn off," I tell him.

Damian growls disapprovingly but says nothing as I start walking out.

"Gannon is on his way back. He should be here before we get back." Damian assures me.

Azalea POV

An hour passed when I heard a knock on the door. I looked toward it before hearing the handle twist, but not open.

"My Queen?" Trey called out from the other side of the door. I worried my lip between my teeth as I got to my feet and walked over to the door. I twisted the lock and cracked it open to peer out the door.

"Clarice said to come down to have afternoon tea. The King doesn't trust anyone to bring your food to you, so you will sit with Clarice," Trey tells me, and I nod, slipping out the door. I followed behind him as he led me toward the kitchens. Once I stepped in, Clarice made some sandwiches and smiled warmly at me before wiping her hands on her blue apron.

"I have got everything out. You can see it all sealed," she says, pointing to the jams and spreads, and I nod before grabbing a butter knife. Clarice hands Trey a salad sandwich while I make myself a jam one.

"I know the jam is probably not what you had in mind, but Kyson doesn't want you eating anything unless he or Damian prepared it," Clarice tells me, and I nod before taking a bite of my sandwich. I started packing the spread and bread away while Clarice fussed I shouldn't be cleaning. Ignore her before we all stand in awkward silence. Clarice kept glancing at Trey, and so did I after what Dustin told me. He must have noticed the tension because he swallowed down a bite of the sandwich Clarice made.

"What? Do I have food on my face?" Shaking my head, I turn my attention to Clarice, who also seemed a little stiff.

"Want to help me outside?" Clarice asked. Smiling, I nodded. Anything was better than wasting away in the room.

"The King wants her to remain in her room," Trey says with a shrug.

"I will deal with the King. He has no reason to worry," Clarice chimes in before I say anything.

"Yeah, I told Damian that when I took over from Dustin. Not like she can drive on out here to go after her friend." Trey chuckles. Clarice's eyebrows furrow at his words, and so do mine.

"I can't drive," I tell him.

"Exactly, and only one way out is to drive out the front gates. Unless you used the back exit, but no one goes down there, the road is too rough," he laughed.

Clarice sets her sandwich down on her plate and places a hand on her hip. "What?"

'Are you trying to give her ideas?' Clarice asked, raising an eyebrow at him.

"What? No, of course not. And she said it herself she couldn't drive. Besides, there are guards at the front gate. She would never get past them. I was just saying he was worrying for no reason!" Trey says, sighing heavily.

The tension in the room becomes thick between them as they stare at each other. "Is everything okay?" Trey asked, glancing at us before he sighed.

"Is this about me taking over from Dustin? I swear I had nothing to do with that. I get you don't like me, but I would never place you in harm's way, my Queen. Dustin and I just have history," Trey says. And my brows pinch.

"Pardon?" I ask.

"Ah, I probably shouldn't say,"

"Well, you can't say that and not say it now, can you?" Clarice says.

Trey glances between us both and rolls his eyes.

"Dustin used to have a thing for me. I knocked him back. Straight," He points to himself.

"Anyway, we had the competitor trials last spring for the guard position. Dustin blamed me for sabotaging him by setting the clock back, so he missed the trials and didn't make the cut," Trey says.

"Ah, yes, I remember that caused quite a stir."

"Well, did you?" I ask him.

"What? No, of course not. He forgot to put his phone on daylight savings time. He slept through the trial."

"What are the trials for?" I ask Clarice.

"Just a competitor thing between the guards, makes them compete each year for ranking within the royal guard," Clarice clarifies.

"Yeah, I don't understand why he blamed me. Nobody could beat his track time anyway from the year before or any of his scores, so his job was never in jeopardy," Trey shrugs.

"He holds the record?" I asked.

"Yeah, there is a reason he is your personal guard? He even beat Damian's record one year. Damian got it back, obviously. But it still shocked everyone. Especially with Damian's Beta genes." Trey states. I chuckle, happy for Dustin. Although I never pictured Dustin to be so competitive, then again, he looked like he lived in a gym and was the most observant out of all the guards I had. Also, the most protective. Interesting.

"Want to help me garden?" Clarice asks. Grabbing my plate, I place it in the sink.

"She right with you for a few minutes. I want to go use the bathroom," Trey asks Clarice.

"Of course," Clarice says. She leads me outside. We spent the afternoon gardening, all while my thoughts remained troubled as I worried about Abbie. When the sky started to change color to orange and soft pinks, Trey led me back to my room. Once again, Abbie never rang. Yet all I kept thinking about was that back exit he spoke about. Rummaging around the room, I find some maps and try to read them, chewing my lip. I glance at the door, wondering if I could trick Trey into showing me on the map.

Pushing the door open, I pop my head out before wandering over to him. He instantly straightens. "Everything okay, my Queen," he asks.

"Do you know where Alpha Kade's pack is?" I want to post a parcel to Abbie." I tell him.

"You want to post a parcel?" he asks. I nod, biting my lip. He takes the map from me.

"Ah yeah, here, but you need her address, not just the suburb. Do you know the address?" he asks me. I shake my head.

"You can use street view; I can show you if you want."

"Street view?" I ask, having never heard of it before.

"On Google, you type an address on the maps on the phone. You can pull up a street view of it. You would be able to see the Pack house,"

"The Phone has maps?" I ask him. He nods, holding his hand out for the phone.

"Yep, like a Navman, will even tell you how to get there, may I? I will show you," He says. I glance at the phone in my hand before passing it to him. Trey fiddles with it before pulling up some apps, and maps pop up. He then types in the address and goes to some link, and I see a picture of the Pack house, which was a huge white mansion with fountains out the front.

"That's where Abbie is?" I ask him.

"Technology is pretty cool, huh," he laughs. I nod.

"Oh, Dustin told me he will be up soon. He got permission from Damian to return to his post." Trey tells me. "I hope he slept." I murmured to myself.

"Yes, hopefully, he will be in a better mood," Trey laughs. And I nod before wandering back into the room. I lock the door before racing around. I grab a jacket before glancing at the door, being careful not to bump the phone and get out of the address. Stopping next to the door, I listen for any movement before going to the window. I push the window up and peer out into the setting sun. Looking at the side of the window, I tug on the vines to see if they would hold me before wondering what my chances of not breaking something were when I notice a drain pipe at the next window over. Closing this one, I move to the next. I chuck the phone in my pocket before throwing a leg out the window.

My heart pumped frantically as I pulled myself to sit on the edge of the windowsill. I gulp, looking at the drop. My hands shook as I gripped the copper pipe. Minutes pass before I finally build the courage to let the pipe take my weight. When the pipe doesn't pull away, I sigh before slowly descending it until I get a safe enough distance from the ground to jump. I do. Once down on the ground safely, I did a happy dance looking at the window I escaped from, which was cut short when I heard a guard's voice and raced around the corner and hid.

I knew the road Trey mentioned, but I thought it was a dead end. Making my way to the garage behind the stables. I peer in the glass window on the side door to see if anyone is in there. Finding no one, I twist the handle and rush to a sleek-looking black car. Tugging the handle, I am relieved to find it unlocked and quickly climb in before looking for the keys which were tucked under the visor. They fell on my lap, and I look at the steering wheel.

"I could do this, I can do this!" I whisper, trying to figure out where the key went. Finding the ignition, I jam the key in and twist. The sound makes me jump when it makes a weird noise from holding the key on for too long. I duck behind the steering wheel, worried someone might hear. I sit up, putting my seatbelt on when no one comes. The car goes nowhere when I put my foot on the pedal. I push on it harder, still nothing, before I glance down to see what I was doing wrong and find something strange between the seats.

I briefly remember seeing the driver once fiddling with it. I squeezed the button and moved it, forgetting my foot was on the pedal, and the car flew backward and hit another vehicle behind me when I jammed my foot on the other pedal. "Whoops," the alarm blares, and I panic, moving the stick thing again only for the car to jerk forward. How do people do this? I growl, pulling it back again, only to hit the car again. On the plus side, the alarm turned off.

Moving it again, I take my foot off the accelerator and slowly press it, and the car moves forward toward the open roller door. As I put my foot down, my heart lurched into my throat, and the car lurched forward. I take it off, easing it on and scraping the brick wall as I leave the garage. I clench my teeth at the noise. The phone person tells me I am off route and to move back to a road as I follow the dirt track at the back.

My hands shook as I moved out into the open to see guards running in my direction, and I floor it only to jam on the brake, trying to navigate the dirt path. Hearing a tap on the window, I jump and see Dustin walking beside the car. He points to the buttons on the door handle. I press them. The roof opens up, and the window rolls down as I frantically jabbed buttons.

"This would have to be the worst getaway I have witnessed, also the slowest; I can walk faster," He laughs, and I growl, ignoring him, the car moving at a snail's pace.

"Azalea?"

"I am going to get Abbie!" I tell him. Dustin looks toward the guards. He waves them off. He clicks his tongue, walking beside the slow-moving car.

"He is going to kill me, anyway. Stop and move over. He would be home long before leaving the driveway at this speed," He says, and I look at him.

"Hurry before I change my mind," he says, and I jam on the brakes.

He reaches into the window, moving the thing in the middle, putting it on the P.

"Move, go on climb over," he says pointing to the passenger seat.

"Really?" I ask him.

"Well, you will keep trying to leave, and if you are going to, I would rather be with you," he says, opening the door.

"The guards?"

"I will tell them I am teaching you to drive. Clearly, you need teaching. Kyson will murder you. This is his favorite car. It never leaves the garage, although I am glad you didn't pick the one next to it because that one is mine," he laughs, and my face falls as he peers up the side of the car.

"If he is going to kill us, might as well before something worth dying for, right?" He asks. I nod, and I climb into the passenger seat. He gets in and glances at me.

"Put your seatbelt on," He says, and I do. He shakes his head before continuing along the path but at a quicker speed.

"We have an hour before one of them mind links to find out I am full of shit, and not teaching you to drive," Dustin says as we reach the road far from the castle view. He floors it, shoving me back in my seat, and whistles as the engine screams as he tore onto the street.

"Now, let's find Abbie," Dustin says.