

Kids from One Alpha By Selena Lynch Chapter 31

Kids from One Alpha

Chapter 31

Chapter 31: Housemates

Staying with Logan had been interesting from the start. Serena should have suspected that much! The kids had taken it upon themselves to terrorize Holly. Serena couldn't exactly be upset about that, but she scolded them when she found

of.

It wasn't that hard to tell, shrill screams through the old house were always a good indication that Holly was being scared or tricked by the twins. The house was comfortable enough. Serena had her own room down the hall from Logan and Holly. The twins had the bedroom on the far side of the house, next to Flo. She liked having them around, always doting on them and making excuses for them.

Holly was not pleased with the new arrangement, but Serena had trusted Logan when he said that he would handle Holly. She had yet to have any altercations of her own with Holly, other than a few snide remarks about keeping her kids under control. Serena was folding her kids' laundry in their room. She heard them giggling in the closet. They loved finding new hiding spaces to get sneak up on people in. "You two better not be causing trouble in there," she called to them. More giggles came out of the closet. "No trouble, mommy," Olivia said back. Serena wasn't going to believe them. She put the last stack of Oliver's clothes into the dresser and went over to the closet. She pulled the door open only to find a secret tunnel in the walls that the kids had disappeared down. "Great," Serena humphed, putting her hands on her hips. Serena went in search of Floor Logan to see if she could find out where the kids vanished to.

"Logan?" she called through the house. "Flo?" No one answered her. Serena ran down the stairs. If she didn't find out where the kids had gone, they'd get lost somewhere and start screaming for help. Serena ended up in the first floor living room. She pressed her hear to the wall to see if she could hear where the kids went. "What are you doing?" Logan asked from behind her. Serena gasped, turning around quickly. She smiled nervously. "The twins found a secret passage in their closet. I'm not sure where it goes," she told him. Logan smirked. "Ahh, yes. They have found a lot of the good hiding place," he said with a nod. Serena

shook her head. "They've also gotten themselves lost and stuck," she reminded him. "Come with me, I know where that passage goes," Logan said. Serena followed him

back upstairs into the room Serena was staying in. He motioned for her to go in first. Serena watched as Logan entered the room she was staying in. It felt invasive, him being in her personal space. It was his house! Still, she couldn't help feeling like he was

too close. He was still standing across the room from her, though. "Open the closet," he told her. Serena did as she was told, finding the twins playing together on her closet floor. She giggled and shook her head. "You two," she said. "Getting into so much trouble.", "They seem to have adjusted well enough," Logan observed. Serena nodded. "They can make a playground anywhere," she said. She turned back to the twins. "Come downstairs in twenty minutes and I'll make you a snack." They nodded and waved at her. Serena shut the closet door.

Logan went down to the kitchen with her. Serena pretended he wasn't following her while she started fixing a snack for the kids.

"The tree removal has begun on your house," Logan told her. "It is a big tree, so it is a pretty big project. Hands are short, so it is still going to take a while to cut it up and remove all the pieces of the trunk."

"Thank you for the update," she said, spreading peanut butter over slices of bread for peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. "Can you get me the milk out of the fridge?" Since he was going to stand there, she'd rather have him be useful than just watch her. Logan complied, getting plastic cups for the milk. Serena set the plates for the kids sandwiches on the table and Logan put the cups down. A chill ran down her spine when she heard Holly shrieking upstairs. "Oh no!" she cried, running out of the kitchen. Logan ran with her. They raced back up the stairs and found Holly in the hallway, the twins halfway out of her closet. Serena rolled her eyes. "Olivia! Oliver!" she snapped. "Get out here right now and apologize!" "But mommy, she's mean!" Olivia protested. Serena put her hands on her hips. "Do not make me repeat myself!" she snapped, tapping her foot and pointing to the floor in front of her. Holly was hyperventilating, leaning against the wall and clutching her chest. Serena had a feeling she was putting on a bit of a show, but she was more interested in getting her kids to behave. "Holly, are you alright?" Logan asked, standing beside her and touching her shoulder. "Those little monsters need to get the hell out of this house!" Holly snapped, pointing at the kids. Olivia and Oliver had just started to come out of the closet and bedroom, but they shrank away from Holly's sharp voice and accusing fingers. "Holly, you're over reacting," Logan argued. "They are just kids having a bit of fun." "Olivia, Oliver, I want you to come out here and apologize to Holly," Serena said again. Olivia sighed, but she stood up. She grabbed Oliver's hand and they walked out of the

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bedroom together. "We're sorry, Miss Holly," Olivia said, looking down at the floor. Holly glared at them, crossing her arms over her chest. She turned her nose up. Serena shook her head, thinking Holly was acting like a scorned child rather than an adult. "Fine, whatever," she said, walking away from them. "Sorry about that," Logan said,

going after Holly. Serena shook her head. "You two have got to stop scaring her," Serena admonished as she took her kids' hands and led them to the kitchen.

"But mommy, Holly isn't nice to us, or to you," Olivia said.

"Well, we are guests in her home," Serena reminded them. "She has every right to be mad when the two of you sneak up on her and scare her." "But she was mean before that," Oliver said, coming to his sister's defense. Serena put the two of them in their chairs. "Eat," she said. "And stop scaring Holly. You can crawl around in the hiding spaces and have fun, but stop trying to scare her." "Whatever," Olivia said, rolling her eyes. Serena didn't like the language the kids were picking up from Holly. She reminded herself that it was temporary, and once they were back in their own house, she could change their vocabulary when they'd no longer be influenced by someone else. "I know, this is an adjustment for all of us," Serena said. "I'm sorry we had to move so soon after moving into our new house." "We like being here," Olivia told her. "Logan reads to us." "And Flo gives us treats," Oliver said. Serena chuckled. "Well, that's good to know," she said. "But remember, this isn't our home. Not forever. So please, be nice to Holly. She is letting us stay here, and that is a lot." "Why is it a lot?" Olivia asked. Serena thought of how to phrase it so they would understand. "Alright, well, what if one of your friends from daycare came to stay in our house?" she asked. "We don't have friends at daycare," Olivia said smartly. Serena rolled her eyes. "Then pick someone you don't like, and now try to imagine them staying in our house," she said. Olivia made a face and Oliver shook his head. "I wouldn't like that," Oliver admitted. "Exactly." Serena said. "Holly doesn't know you, and if you keep scaring her, she isn't going to have many reasons to be nice to you." Olivia sighed before reaching for her milk.

"I'll be nice" she said. Serena didn't trust her tone.

"Let's just start with you not scaring her anymore, okay?" she asked. Olivia nodded. Oliver mimicked the nod. It was better than nothing. Serena could work on the other complications of cohabitation as they arose.

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Logan came down into the kitchen just as the kids ran off to play again. Serena was washing their dishes. "The kids won't be scaring Holly anymore," she said. Logan sighed. "That's not really my concern," he said. "I'm glad that they are comfortable here."

"You say that like you wish you had kids running around the house all the time," she said, a testing question. Logan shrugged.

"Someday," he said, smirking. Serena smiled and nodded. "Until then, you can help me wrangle my unruly children," she said. Logan laughed. "I hope you don't think I'm a horrible mother."

“Not at all,” Logan assured. The twins were laughing in the living room when suddenly Serena heard the sound of breaking glass. She closed her eyes and sighed heavily.

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Logan and Serena rushed into the living room, finding that Olivia and Oliver had been jumping on the couch. Their activity had knocked a few of the picture frames off a nearby shelf. The frames and glass were broken on the floor. Serena put her hands on her hips again. “Olivia, Oliver, get off the couch!” Serena said firmly. Oliver slid off the couch, cheeks red with embarrassment. Olivia wasn’t jumping anymore, and she dropped down into a seated position on the couch. “Sorry, mommy,” Oliver said, still looking at the floor. He tried to pick up shards of glass.

“No!” Serena said, reaching down and stopping Oliver from touching the glass. “I will pick it up, but the two of you have to apologize to Logan and be more careful.” “Serena, really, it is okay,” Logan said. Serena headed to the kitchen to get a broom and dustpan. It wasn’t the first mess she’d had to clean up of theirs. It was the biggest and the only one that consisted of things that didn’t belong to them.

“I’m sorry, Logan,” Serena said, bringing the broom and dustpan back in. “Did you apologize yet?” she gave Olivia and Oliver a harsh look. “There’s no need;” Logan said, shaking his head. Serena looked at him, raising an eyebrow.

“There is,” she insisted. Logan shook his head and Serena glared at him. She looked back at her kids. “Apologize.” “We’re sorry, Logan” Olivia said. “We didn’t mean to break your things,” Oliver added. “Go to your room,” Serena said. “I want you two to stay up there until you can play around the house without breaking things that don’t belong to you.” “That’s a bit extreme,” Logan said. Serena glared at him again as she swept up bits of the picture frames. “Go!” she said to her kids. Olivia and Oliver bowed their heads. They took hands and headed out of the room slowly. Serena finished cleaning up the glass and frame bits. She picked up the pictures next and carefully set them aside.

“Serena, you didn’t need to be so strict,” Logan said, following her into the kitchen as she disposed of the glass. “I don’t need you interfering with how I raise my kids,” she said. Logan creased his brow.

“I’m sorry, I thought I was helping,” he said. Serena scoffed, sitting down heavily at the kitchen table.

Look, they need structure, they need discipline, otherwise, they will just cause more

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trouble and break more things," she said. "I know what kids are like," Logan said dismissively. "No, you don't!" she said. She was starting to rethink everything she'd thought about Logan and his ability to parent. He was there for the good times, could comfort them and play, and have a good time. The moment he needed to put his foot down, he would dismiss their behavior as being "childish." "Serena, they are just kids. They're playing around. If a few things get broken, that isn't a big deal," Logan argued. "It is a big deal," Serena argued, looking up at Logan with irritated eyes. Logan shrugged, obviously not understanding what the big deal was. "Logan, I need to be the voice of authority in their lives. I'm their mother." Logan sighed, shaking his head. "Maybe you're right," he said. "I know I'm right," Serena said. "I'm their mother. I've been their mother and only parent since the day they were born. I don't need you or anyone else trying to interfere with how I parent." Logan put his hands up, backing away slowly. "I get it," he said.

"Do you?" Serena asked, her voice rising in anger. "Because you don't seem to have a problem making excuses for them and writing off their behavior." "Isn't that what I'm supposed to do, as a family friend?" he asked. Serena shook her head.

"No!" she snapped. "It is a child's natural desire to rebel against their parents. If they think you are their ally, I will never get them to do what I ask ever again." Logan sighed, bowing his head. He sat down at the table across from her. "I'm sorry, Serena, I didn't mean to interfere," he said. "Don't do it again," she said. "I need my kids to trust me, respect me, and recognize my authority. If they think you'll bail them out, they will always go to you." Logan chuckled.

"I'm not there all the time," he pointed out. Serena sighed. He was right. She was putting a lot of anger on him, because she kept thinking of him in terms of being a father to her kids. If that day ever came, she wanted to know that she could trust Logan not to poise the kids against her. Serena shook her head. Maybe she was being a little ridiculous. Logan wasn't their father, at least not officially. He had no obligation to play the role of the parent. Still, she didn't want him to get in the habit of being their friend over an authority figure. "I'm sorry, Logan, I was a little harsh," she said. "I just...it would be better if they saw you as an authority figure than as a friend. You are Alpha, after all." Logan nodded. 2/4

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"I understand your position," he said. "They do make it hard to be mad at them, don't they?" Serena smiled. "You have no idea," she said. "Olivia has mastered the ability to be perfectly cute and charming. Oliver works the 'shy but deep' angle." Logan chuckled. "They will become great assets to the pack as they grow up," he said. "I believe that, completely." Serena agreed. "You know, things have been tense around here. With the

kids, you relocating, Holly causing drama,” he said. “If you ever want to take a break or relax, you can. My mom is almost always free to watch the kids.” “I appreciate that,” she said. As much as she wanted to be mad at him, Logan continued to offer her friendship and support. It drove her a little crazy, because he wasn’t supposed to be like that! He was everything a good mate should be, and he treated her like an important part of the family. Other than the overall strangeness she felt at being wedged between him and Holly, despite not wanting to be, she was grateful that he had been so supportive. She couldn’t help but see him in the light of a personal friend, a potential love interest, and a father figure for her children.

Try as she might to avoid it, the way he continued to support her, she just couldn’t break from that thought! “I’ll probably take you up on that offer,” she admitted. “Why does your mother like my kids so much?” Logan shrugged. “She thinks they remind her of me as a kid. I think she’s a bit nostalgic,” he admitted. “Besides, she is a little antsy to have grandkids of her own.” “I guess you and Holly should get on that,” Serena teased. Logan grimaced. “That won’t be happening any time soon,” he assured. Serena nodded. It bothered her sometimes to hear him say that he was going to wait on having kids. What if he learned that the twins were his, would he want time before becoming their father? “Is that because you aren’t ready, or she isn’t?” Serena asked the fishing question. Logan shrugged. “Maybe a little of both,” he said. “More because she isn’t ready.” Serena nodded. Logan’s phone rang, cutting into their conversation. He answered it, standing up from the table.

“Hello?” he asked. Serena couldn’t hear the conversation. Logan was listening mostly, nodding on the phone. Serena got up and went to the drying rack. She began to put the dishes away. “I’ll be right there,” Logan said. Serena turned as he hung up the phone. “Moonshine got hit hard by the storm. Looks like they are causing trouble to make up for it.” Serena nodded.

“I’ll see you later,” she said. “Later,” Logan agreed before departing. Serena finished putting the dishes away. She headed upstairs to the twins’ room. They were playing on the floor quietly. “How are you two?” she asked. “Good,” Olivia said, looking up from her toys. Serena nodded. “I’m sorry i yelled at you earlier, twice,” she said. Both the twins looked up this time. “It’s okay, mommy,” Olivia said. “We still love you,” Oliver said. Serena chuckled. “I love you too,” she said. “I like how quietly you guys are playing up here.” “We can be quiet,” Olivia said. “Good, that’s what I like. You can run around and be wild outside, but quiet and calm while inside,” she said. They nodded and went back to playing. Serena shut their door almost all the way. They were being so quiet and nice, so she went back to her room, getting a book she hadn’t had the chance to read for a while. She laid down on her bed, comfortably able to relax for the first time in a long time. She kept sharp ears out though, to make sure that the twins weren’t crawling through the hidden passageways again.

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Chapter 33: Aftermath of the Storm

Logan went straight to his office. Carson had called him, letting him know that Moonshine had been hit hard by the storm. He didn't know the details yet, but he was meeting Carson and some of the scouts to find out. "Logan, where were you?" Carson asked, coming out of his office to meet him. "It has been busy at my house," he said with a smirk. Carson shook his head. "If you are jonsing for a chick fight, it seems, you sure know how to put the pieces together," Carson teased. Logan rolled his eyes. "It isn't like that," he said. "Now, tell me about what is actually important." Carson smirked as they headed into the office. Logan took a seat at his desk chair. Carson stood at the edge of the desk, taking his phone out and putting it on the desk. "I've gotten messages from the storm damage," he said. "It looks like they've had damage done to some of their crops and their roads have been washed out." Logan hummed in thought.

"Then we should expect them to be commandeering our roads and infiltrating our fields," he said.

"That is what I expected to, so I sent some extra patrols out to cover those areas," the Beta said. Logan nodded. "Good," he said. "That is all we can do for now. I want to be informed immediately if and when anything happens. We both know how things go when Moonshine feels squeezed and pressured." Carson chuckled, shaking his head. He pocketed his phone. "Yes, we both know how that goes," Carson admitted. "How about our pack, how are we doing with cleanup?" Logan asked. Carson sighed, going over to a small table near the window and picking up files. Each file corresponded to a building that had been damaged in the storm. They were filled with work orders and rebuilding plans. "It is funny." Carson said, bringing the folders to Logan's desk. "That doctor's house was hit the hardest. Almost like some otherworldly force was pushing you two together." Logan rolled his eyes. "Will you stop with that?" Logan asked. "Holly might be a little...high strung... sometimes, but at least I know her past. That is more desirable than a woman with too many secrets and who tries to hide her past." Carson chuckled. "Come on, you know the mystery entices you," the Beta teased. Logan shook his head, opening the top folder to see what the condition of the library was.

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"Maybe, but not in that way," he said. "She has too much unknown baggage." The library hadn't been damaged too much, and it was the first building to be repaired. Logan had always made it a priority. With that building already taken care of, the focus had gone to the residential homes since none of the other pack public buildings had been damaged. "Most of the other houses were only minimally damaged, but a few of the roads were torn up a bit," Carson said. "I have a crew working on the roads first.

Well, after the debris removal is finished. There are some big trees that came down in some back yards.”

“Good,” Logan said. He came to the file on Serena’s house. Looking at the pictures of the damage from multiple angles, it was hard to imagine that he’d been in the house when the tree came down. He’d been in there with Serena and two children! Shaking his head, Logan stacked the pictures together. “It looks worse from the outside,” Carson said. Logan closed the folder. “Those kids are lucky,” he said. “It could have been a lot worse.” “I’m sure you being there helped” Carson said. “And having your home to stay in after has softened the blow for them.”

“I don’t know,” Logan admitted. He pressed his foot into the floor, swiveling his chair back and forth. His eyes drifted to the nearest window, looking out at the bright

sunshine. Just a few days ago, a rabid storm had torn up his territory. Now, it was sunny and warm again. “Logan, is something going on that I should know about?” Carson asked. “It isn’t about the pack” Logan said dismissively. “I meant as your friend” Carson clarified. Logan shrugged. “There is just something about those kids,” he mused, more to himself. “What about them?” Carson asked, pulling a chair up and taking a seat. Carson wasn’t just his Beta, he was one of his closest friends. It was a byproduct of how closely they worked together. They shared similar responsibilities, and had a deeper understanding of each other and what they did than anyone else in the pack. “Carson, I keep getting this feeling around them, like I just want to see them have a great life, to see them succeed and have everything they want,” Logan said, confiding in his friend.

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“They are young members of the pack, isn’t that common for an Alpha?” Carson asked. “Maybe it is.” Logan said, shaking his head. “Look, I don’t know much about Serena, her kids, or your relationship with them.” Carson said. “What I do know is that if you feel a strong connection to them, you should listen to that.”

“Thanks,” Logan said, smirking. “Hang on, I’m getting a call” Carson said. He grabbed his phone and stepped out of the office. Logan checked on the work orders for debris removal. It looked like they hadn’t started on Serena’s house yet. That tree was the biggest one that had fallen too!

Maybe Carson was on to something. So many events had to line up for the tree and the house to get destroyed. It was too much to consider a coincidence. Logan laughed at himself, closing the file. Now he was buying into so ghost story. Shaking his head, he went to a nearby cabinet and pulled out two tumblers. He poured bourbon into each of them, setting one where Carson would sit when he came back in. He sat in his own chair and took a sip of his drink.

Carson came back in, eyeing the bourbon. “What brought this on?” he asked, taking his own glass and sipping the thick liquid. “It’s the good stuff,” Logan warned. Carson

gulped a sip down and nodded. "Seriously," he said, setting the glass down. "Anything important in the call?" Logan asked. Carson shrugged. "Just some reports of Moonshine infiltrations on the roads," he said. "The patrols took care of them.

"Moonshine will retaliate," Logan said, polishing off his own bourbon. He poured another glass. "That's true," Carson said, finishing his drink. He declined a refill, putting his hand over the top of his glass when Logan tried to pour more. "Nothing like a natural disaster to cause the rogues to lash out," he said sarcastically, shaking his head.

"You'd think it would be cause to give it a rest," Carson mumbled. Logan nodded, chuckling.

"Apparently not," Logan said, taking another gulp of bourbon. Not for the first time, he inwardly cursed the fact that his territory shared a border with Moonshine. He sighed, finishing his drink. Moonshine was a growing problem. They were finding any excuse now to cause a mess and cross over pack territory. It wasn't good. A storm shouldn't have been enough to uproot them. It gave Logan the unsettling feeling that the pack was falling apart, that they were unable to support themselves anymore. They weren't just attacking and causing problems to be reckless rogues. They were trying to keep themselves alive! A pack that had fallen into that much decay was a ticking timebomb. Logan shuddered to think what was going to happen if they didn't assert their authority over Moonshine. Logan smiled to himself, thinking of how similar his thoughts were to the arguments

that Serena had made to him about her parenting.

"Logan, I just got a text," Carson said, holding his phone screen up. Logan was pulled from his inner amusement.

"What's happening?" he asked, becoming serious. He hadn't had enough bourbon to lessen his inhibitions. Regardless, he was Alpha, and he would switch into the serious pack defender at the snap of a finger. "Their encroaching on another field. The patrols are requesting backup," Carson reported.

"Let's go," Logan said. He stood up and headed for the door without a backwards glance. He needed to get out there and take down anyone that threatened his pack and his territory!

"Should I call for more backup?" Carson asked. Logan reached into the mental link and requested backup. He didn't want another attack like the one that had almost claimed Carson's life.

"Already done," Logan said. Carson nodded, pocketing his phone. The two males kept pace with each other. Carson told Logan which field was under attack. They didn't need to speak on the way. Logan had to get into the mindset of the Alpha, a warrior that was going to tear down anyone that was a threat!

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Chapter 34: Logan and Carson Band Together

When they came to the field in question, Logan growled under his breath. He started shedding his clothes as he saw Moonshine rogues shifted into their wolf forms, tearing apart the field and attacking a nearby shed. He shifted into his wolf form, Carson dropping to all fours at his side. Snarling, Logan ran at the intruders, slamming full force into one. The wolf whimpered and tumbled to the ground. The rest of the Night Sky warriors had gathered and were shifting into wolves too, attacking in form to drive out the Moonshine rogues.

Logan separated, heading towards the shed where a few of the rogues were ransacking, trying to steal supplies. He ran into the shed, biting the hind leg of the nearest rogue and pulling him right back out of the shed. The wolf whimpered and whined, struggling against Logan's powerful jaws! The Alpha didn't relent, dragging the pawing wolf across the grass before chomping even harder on his hind leg and then tossing him aside. The broken, mangled limb was useless as the wolf tried to escape. Other injured wolves from Moonshine were trying to escape, but Logan wasn't going to let them.

Round up the injured, Logan told his warriors in the mental link. Carson howled, and the others formed a new line, running around in a semi-circle to keep the Moonshine wolves from escaping.

Carson called some others to him, and they pursued the retreating wolves across the territory. Logan returned to his clothes. The fight was quick, and it ended with minor injuries for Night Sky. Moonshine on the other hand, hadn't gotten off so easily. It was just a simple theft, but it could have been a lot worse.

Logan shifted back to human and pulled his clothes on. He got his phone out of his pants, sending a text to the medical staff, calling them out to the field. They needed to be prepared to treat the injured and get all the Night Sky pack members back to the hospital. The Alpha sent out the message globally to all medical staff. He returned to the field in human form. Most of the other wolves had also shifted back to their human forms, carrying their injuries with them. He walked through the fields, cataloging the injured members of Moonshine and Night Sky. There were more injured Moonshine wolves than Night Sky wolves. That was a plus. It was clear that the operation had been disorganized. They were desperate to steal some things, like food and basic supplies. Logan had already figured that Moonshine was desperate. Such a poorly organized

theft attempt confirmed his theories. It only took a few minutes before a few vans and SUVs came driving off-road tearing

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through the field towards the injured wolves. Logan went to greet Adriana. "Prioritize those wolves," Logan said, motioning to the Night Sky members that were injured. "Anyone seriously wounded?" she asked. Logan shook his head. "We'll know more when Carson returns," he said. "He ran down the ones trying to escape. Adriana nodded.

"We'll have to make a few trips," she said. "I can leave some nurses here to tend to the Moonshine wolves until we can transport them."

"Leave them," Logan said. "Take care of our own first. We can get them back to the medical facilities later."

"Very well," Adriana said. She went to work. Logan saw Serena get out of one of the vans, but he didn't approach her or draw her attention. They both had their own jobs to do.

The Alpha joined the ring of pack members that were keeping the injured Moonshine rogues from escaping. A few nurses were running around with pants and t-shirts so that they could all clothe themselves. Water and snacks were also being passed around. Some of the pack members just had a few minor cuts and scrapes. They were given band aids and ointment on the spot, but otherwise left to do their jobs.

Logan continued to make the rounds, ensuring that everyone was doing what they were supposed to. His pack was a complete unit. They all knew what was expected of them, and they didn't need micromanaging or additional direction to do what was needed.

Serena took the first SUV back with a load of passengers. She was so careful and precise in her ministrations; it didn't surprise Logan that she'd want to be there every step of the way with her patients. A howl in the distance brought Logan to face the direction Carson had run off in. He watched as the small band of Night Sky wolves returned. From the looks of it, they hadn't caught up to the rogues that had fled.

Carson and the others were panting. They stopped in front of Logan and began

shifting back. Nurses ran over with clothing and water. Carson put on a pair of pants, seating himself on the ground. He was still breathing heavily, drinking water greedily before speaking. "What happened?" Logan asked, demanding a report. "We chased them back across the territory border," Carson said. "I didn't want to risk going further. "Good call," Logan said. "It was just a simple theft attempt." "Disorganized," Carson agreed, looking at the injured men scattered around. Logan had told Adriana not to tend to any of the Moonshine wolves until they were back at

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the medical facilities. He would deny them medical care all together! They'd been foolish to try and steal from him. They'd put themselves in danger, threatened his pack, his territory, and his resources. No way was Logan going to waste more on them!

"Did you learn anything at the border?" he asked, his calm exterior the exact opposite of the raging anger inside of him. "Nothing," Carson said. "The moment they were across, they scattered." Logan sighed and nodded. It might have been sloppy, but it still didn't give him much to go on. He could interrogate some of the injured Moonshine rogues. What else was the point of keeping injured prisoners? Logan smiled at the thought. A good interrogation could be very useful! "I'm taking the last of the Night Sky wolves back to the hospital," Adriana said, coming to Logan's side. "I'll send the vans back for the rogues." Logan nodded. "Do not give them special treatment. Leave them in the waiting room until I decide what to do with them," Logan ordered. Adriana looked at the injured men on the ground. Logan could tell she didn't like his order. "I think that is unwise, Alpha," she said. "Then don't think about it," he barked. "I will think about it!" Adriana nodded. "Very well" she said. She left Logan and Carson alone together. Logan shook his head. He didn't like taking out his anger on innocent bystanders. The truth was, he had no outlet for his anger! Moonshine was untouchable, as long as he was unwilling to go to war. In a simple theft attempt, he was still left with injured pack members. Maybe not that many, and none that were seriously injured, but that was a best-case scenario in a simple attack. All out war would be far more damaging. He didn't want to put his pack in harm's way. The Federation had been designed to prosper with three interlinked packs. With Moonshine out of the loop, it did lessen the resources and trade opportunities that Night Sky and Starseeker had. They did all right, most of the time, and had established relations within the human world. The system was still mildly dysfunctional with Moonshine running their own show. He had to be careful how whimsical he was with his pack's resources. Some of the things they relied on were harder to come by.

Money could always get the job done, but that didn't account for time and availability of said resources. The hole in the federation left by Moonshine was starting to take its toll on the rogue pack too, otherwise they wouldn't have resorted to petty larceny! It was too ridiculous for Logan to wrap his mind around! Somehow, the illegitimate Alpha of Moonshine thought that it was better to engage in crime sprees than just make amends and rejoin the Federation. Not that Logan particularly wanted to deal with that Alpha after what he'd done to Holly's family, or

any of the other refugees, but it would be better than the nonsense of attacking his territory!

Anger bubbled up inside again causing the Alpha to growl. He shook his head. He had to get out of the field before he went to take on Moonshine himself! Every time he looked at the injured wolves, his chest heaved with rage. He needed to be elsewhere to keep his cool.

"I'm going to go to the hospital." Logan said. "I want to make sure Adriana follows my orders."

"She's a doctor," Carson protested. "It isn't in her nature to let anyone in pain suffer."

"Well, this time, she is going to have to," Logan said.

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Chapter 35

Chapter 35: Resources

Logan made it to the hospital just as a van of the Moonshine wolves was showing up. The nurses were running back and forth, helping the injured rogues into the waiting room. They were being seated around the waiting room, but none of the nurses were following up with care. The Alpha went in to speak with the nurse at reception. She was shuffling papers around and looked a little frazzled, trying to keep track of the number of Moonshine wolves that were being accepted into the hospital. Logan didn't care about the numbers or their files or charts. He just wanted them gone as soon as possible.

"Where is Adriana?" Logan asked the nurse at the reception desk. "She's in with the injured Night Sky members," the nurse said. "What's your name?" Logan heard Serena asking behind him. He growled in the back of his throat.

"What are you doing?" he asked, moving to her side, without a backwards glance at the receptionist nurse. "Helping my patients," Serena said. Logan grabbed her arm and pulled her out of the waiting room and down the hall. "Ow!" Serena hissed, pulling away from him. "What is your problem?" "You can't treat them," he told her. "They are prisoners, they stole from us!" Serena rolled her eyes.

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I'm a doctor. I

patients. I took an oath, to do no harm. By not treating those that need it, I am neglecting my oath," she explained. Logan scoffed. "What kind of nonsense is that?" Logan asked. Serena sighed. "Human world nonsense, apparently," she said. Logan snorted a humorless laugh. "Serena, they came into my territory, they attacked my field, raided my shed, tried to steal pack resources, and injured my pack members," he laid out flatly.

"I'm not wasting resources on them in return!" "Logan, that is just petty!" she snapped. Logan raised an eyebrow at her. Was it ironic that she was calling him petty after he'd mentally ranted about petty theft from Moonshine. "Maybe it is," he said, shaking his head. "I don't care. They do not get treatment. None of them are fatally injured, and that means they will all survive. They don't get that pleasure of our hospitality." Serena rolled her eyes. "Logan," he heard his mother say at his side. She was coming from one of the rooms with Adriana.

"What are you doing here, mom?" Logan asked. Flo smiled at him, touching his cheek.

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"I'm still Luna, and I still respond to pack emergencies," she reminded him. "Fortunately, this isn't a very big emergency." "Right," he said with a nod. Serena was still glaring at him. From Adriana's look, it was clear they had heard the fight they were having. "Logan, it isn't the rogues' fault for following their Alpha's orders," Adriana said, "That is the whole point of a chain of command." Logan scoffed, looking away from the three women that were ganging up on him. "Can I please do my work?" Serena asked, motioning out to the waiting room.

"No!" Logan snapped, grabbing her arm when she tried to move again.

"Logan, you're being a little strict," Flo said. Logan growled at his mother.

"There is no reason to waste expensive medical supplies on prisoners who aren't in mortal dangers," he said. "Why is that so hard to comprehend?" Serena rolled her eyes again. "Resources?" she asked. "You don't lack for money, so replacing the medical supplies won't be a problem." Logan gritted his teeth. How could she be so infuriating! Serena stepped away from him. He tried to grab her again, but Flo caught his hand. She pushed him away from Serena.

"Logan, look at me," she demanded. Logan sighed, but he met his mother's eyes. She was using her all important 'mom' voice. "What?" he asked sharply. "Stop redirecting your anger," she told him. "You're mad at Moonshine, not at Serena. You shouldn't take your anger out on her. You also shouldn't prevent her from doing her job."

Logan sighed, pulling his arm from his mom's grasp.

"Fine," he snapped. Flo took a half step back.

"Your temper is going to be your downfall," she told him firmly.

"I've got to get back to work," Adriana said heading back down the hospital hallway to another patient room. "As for me, my dear son, I'm going to go home and check on the twins," she said. "You left them there alone!?" Logan asked, getting fired up again. Flo laughed and shook her head.

“No, no,” she said, shaking her head. “Dana is with them. I should go relieve her.” Logan nodded, sighing with relief. His other fear was that she left them alone with Holly. Not that he thought Holly would hurt them, he just didn’t think she’d be a very attentive or effective sitter. “Good call, go,” he said, nodding for her to leave. Logan tracked down Serena who was cleaning out some leg wounds on the wolf

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Logan had dragged out of the shed, The Moonshine rogues hadn’t been given clothing, at Logan’s request. Instead, they’d been offered blankets so they didn’t have to be entirely exposed, but he hadn’t wanted them to be too comfortable,

“Serena, I’m sorry for snapping at you,” Logan said. She was crouched down on the floor, working on the wound,

“Yes, I’m reeling from that new experience,” Serena said sarcastically without ever looking up. Logan chuckled to himself.

“You’re right, the prisoners do deserve to be treated,” he said, following her to the next one after she bandaged the bite marks on the prisoner’s leg. “Thanks for the confirmation,” she said, the sarcasm still strong in her voice. Logan smirked at her, even though she wasn’t looking at him.

“I guess it is a good thing that I have you and my mother around to talk some sense into me,” he said. Serena finished with her patient and headed to the nurses’ station, She took her gloves off and tossed out the bloodied wipes she’d used to clean wounds.

“No one was seriously injured,” she said. “You were right about that. As a doctor and healer, if you ever order me to ignore someone who needs my help again, I won’t be a part of your pack.”

Logan was taken aback by the harshness in her voice, by the threat that she made. He didn’t doubt what she was saying. When she made the threat, all he could think about was the twins and never seeing them again. It was such a random thought to pop into his head.

Serena was making notes on a chart. Logan reached out and put his hand over hers, forcing her to put her pen down. “Serena, I’m sorry,” he said, getting her to look at him finally. “I lost my temper and took it out on you.” Serena nodded. “Believe me, I understand the desire to protect your pack,” she said. “I understand the importance of preserving resources. But I am never going to ignore anyone that I know I can help.”

“I know,” he said. “You’re a better person than I am, because you can remain calm in a situation like this and do your job.” “You can ease off on the flattery,” she told him, a

ghost of a smile touching her lips. "I am glad that you're here. Glad that you are on my medical staff," he assured her. Serena nodded, pulling her hand from under his. "I've got patients to check on," she told him. "I'll see you at home." Logan nodded as she walked away. He shook his head to himself. The way 'home' sounded on her lips was far too natural.

Logan turned to the waiting room, looking at the prisoners that were now bandaged and being offered water and food. He wasn't particularly happy about it, but he

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shoved those feelings aside. If he was going to beat Moonshine, he had to be better than their ruthless, illegitimate Alpha. He wouldn't be petty and stoop to their level. No, it was his responsibility to set an example and retaliate against Moonshine by being better, by showing his prisoners that Night Sky was the superior pack, the warmer, friendlier, more supportive pack. What a pack should be!

He'd accepted refugees before, and he would again if they truly wanted to leave Moonshine. His territory was fortified. They would be safe there from Moonshine's illegitimate Alpha and the rogues that tried to steal from him. But werewolves were a pack-oriented race. Perhaps Moonshine could be defeated without war. All it would take would be for enough pack members to jump ship.

If the numbers dwindled, there wouldn't be enough of a pack left to protect their territory. It was a somewhat unrealistic notion, but one that Logan wasn't ready to dismiss entirely. With new thoughts and plans formulating in his mind, he headed out of the hospital. Home, the twins and his mother were waiting for him. That was a good way to shed the bad feelings of the attack.

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Chapter 36

Chapter 36: Renovation Plans Pt. 1

When Logan went to check on the Moonshine rogues the next morning, he found that Serena had moved them all to private rooms. He'd already told himself he wasn't going to argue with her this time. He was just going to let her do her job as a doctor. "Alpha, you're here early," Adriana said, coming over from the nurse's station. She had her stethoscope around her neck and a clip board in hand. "How are the patients?" he asked, a folder of his own in hand. "Serena is taking good care of them. I hope that

doesn't put you in a temper," she said, jabbing him with a pen. Logan shook his head. "That's not why I'm here," Logan said, holding up the folder he had in his hands. "While it wasn't damaged as badly, the hospital took a hit in the storm. We've been out of date on equipment for a while, so I want to go over renovation and modernizing ideas."

"Great," Adriana said. "I'm busy right now, but when Serena is done with her rounds, she can help." "Serena?" Logan asked, raising an eyebrow. Adriana was making notes on her clipboard "She's been in the human world. She knows about modern medical equipment," she reminded him. Logan nodded. He wasn't keen on confronting her again. She'd been at the hospital all night treating prisoner patients he'd told her not to treat.

Logan took a seat in the waiting room. When Serena was done with her rounds, she'd return to the nurse's station, and he could talk to her then. He did admire her conviction to her work and her forcefulness when he confronted her. She was a rare breed, standing up to him, making threats..

A powerful female was always good to have in the pack, especially one in a position of authority. Logan shook his head to push those thoughts away. His mother was the best Luna for the pack currently. Logan wasn't sure Holly could be a Luna, but she was insistent that they were mates, so he continued with their relationship.

It seemed strange, that an Alpha's mate would be one that didn't have the qualifications to be Luna. Logan tortured himself with a few more round about thoughts until Serena appeared and went to the nurse's station. He strode over to her, standing beside her and leaning against the desk. He set the folder down on top of her charts. "What's this?" Serena asked, tapping the folder with her pen. "Renovation plans," he said. "The hospital was hit by the storm. I want to renovate and modernize."

"That's ambitious," she said. "This isn't a small facility." Logan nodded in agreement. 1/4

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"Money isn't an issue," he assured. "However, I need someone with knowledge of modern medical equipment to give me ideas on what needs to be updated"

"You want me to tell you what equipment needs to be updated in the hospital?" Serena asked Logan smiled and nodded.

"Yes," he said. Serena scoffed.

"Everything," she said. Logan creased his brow

"Everything?" he asked in confirmation. She nodded.

“Look, I don’t know when your last doctor was in medical school out there, but things have definitely changed,” she said, “I can’t give you a whole list of all the machinery and equipment you have and what the modern versions of them are right now.”

“No, I know, you’re busy,” Logan said. Serena pushed his folder off the chart she was making notes on “I am busy,” she said, “Leave the file, and I will make a list for you.”

“Thank you,” Logan said. Serena flashed him a smile and he backed off. He was going to track Adriana down again to see who she had in mind for other renovations.

Logan found Adriana in the doctor’s lounge making herself some coffee.

“Would you like some?” she asked. Logan shook his head and held up his hand.

“No, I’m fine, thank you,” Logan said. “Serena is taking care of the equipment updates, but I need your input on interior renovations.” “Oh, sure,” she said taking a seat on the couch. She nodded to the cushion beside her and Logan sat down. “The ICU rooms and inpatient rooms could use a good update. I mean heating systems, linens, air conditioning, showers and sinks.” Logan grabbed a pen and a nearby pad of paper. He started making notes on what Adriana was telling him.

“Lighting across the entire hospital should be updated,” she went on. “This lounge could use some new furniture, and the personal doctors’ offices are a little dated.”

“Wow, that is a longer list than I anticipated” Logan said, frowning slightly.

“Logan, a natural disaster is a good excuse as any to make changes around here,” Adriana said.

“Thank you, Adriana,” he told her, ripping the page from the notebook and tucking it into his pocket. “If you have any special requests, any specifics on furniture and anything else, just let me know.” “I’ll think some things up,” she assured. “What about paint, new color schemes, something not so bright and plain?” he asked. Adriana chuckled.

“I’m not sure patients would appreciate bright, sunny colors in their rooms,” she said. “False cheer and all.”

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Chapter 36: Renovation Plans Pt. 1

“I understand,” Logan said with a nod. “I can still put a fresh paint of coat around” “Oh, actually, Logan, the windows on the second and third floor need updating,” she said. “They aren’t well insulated, and some of those rooms are where long-term inpatients live. Drafts aren’t good for them in the winter.”

“Yes, good,” he said, grabbing his page again and making more notes. “Those windows too, for whatever reason, are so small and don’t let any natural light into the rooms,” she elaborated. “Rather than sunny colors on the walls, I think real sunlight is the best option for health and wellbeing.”

“You make a good point,” Logan said. “I’ll see what I can do about those things.” “I’ll let you know if I come up with anything else,” she said. Logan nodded, getting up and leaving Adriana to her coffee. Looking back, the couch she was sitting on was shabby, the chairs around the table had torn cushions, and the table itself was sagging and scratched. When he was passing back through the waiting room, Serena caught up to him. “Logan, wait!” she called, her rushed footsteps echoing down the hallway behind him. He turned to her, raising an eyebrow. “Did you come up with something?” he asked. Serena handed him his folder back. “I have a few ideas,” she said. “But this isn’t a good time. We can have a sit down about this later and go over all the details.” “Sure,” Logan said, taking the folder back from her. “I’ll meet up with you later, back at the house?” she asked. Logan smirked at her, but she rolled her eyes. “Sounds good,” Logan said, keeping his voice light. He nodded to her and then let her get back to work. From the outside of the hospital there wasn’t much to see. The damage wasn’t that bad, mostly a few shingles and some siding scraped off by a few branches that had been blown around in the wind. The exterior had been recently renovated, but Logan hadn’t had the time or expertise to renovate the entire interior and update everything. Now he had two experts that could give him the feedback he needed to make sure the facilities were up to date. As much as he wanted to avoid a war with Moonshine, there was still the possibility of it in the future. Not to mention the raids and attacks always brought back wounded pack members. Carson had been severely injured, and he wasn’t the first one! Logan wanted the best, most current equipment to ensure that his pack members were well looked after and had what they needed to recover from injuries and attacks. Logan pulled his notes from Adriana out of his pocket. He smoothed the wrinkles out and tucked it into the folder he had on renovation plans and work orders for the hospital. The exterior had already been repaired and was getting a fresh coat of paint.

was time to turn his attention to the interior.

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His hospital was large enough that he could accommodate spillover from Starseeker pack too, if their facilities couldn’t handle an influx of wounded pack members. If he was going to be partially responsible for the recovery of members for another pack, even if they were currently prisoners, they still needed the best care. He had the best doctors, now he needed to give them the equipment to allow them to do their jobs.

Although he didn’t want to feel excited about a one-on-one with Serena, he couldn’t help the feeling welling in his chest. He inwardly hoped that Holly wouldn’t be around that afternoon. He so rarely got to speak with Serena when she wasn’t working or when Holly wasn’t watching their every move.

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Chapter 37

Chapter 37: Renovation Plans Pt. 2

After a long day of running around and checking on patients, Serena headed home for a late lunch break. She knew the kids were at daycare, Flo had offered to pick them up later. There was a part of her that hoped Holly wouldn't be around when she and Logan had their sit down. It was all business, but she still wanted to be around him without feeling like she had to look over her shoulder or being constantly distracted by the twins. She needed to create a good working relationship with the Alpha As a doctor, she would be working closely with him, as was the case the night before at the hospital. Fortunately, as a doctor, she did have some authority over him since her work was about life and death. On some level, he did have to defer to her expertise and her knowledge, because she was the voice that had control over medical decisions. It got complicated sometimes with an Alpha, but as she had proved the night before, he would listen to reason. Logan's house was quiet when Serena got there. No matter how long she stayed there, she was never going to be able to refer to it as her house." She found Logan in the kitchen with lunch prepared. Serena crossed her arms and raised an eyebrow at him. "It is a business lunch," he said. "I figured since I was forcing you to spend time with me, I'd spring for lunch." Serena chuckled, shaking her head.

"You don't have to force me to spend time with you," she said, sitting down at the table. Logan smirked, taking a seat across from her. "Noted!" he said, sliding a drink across the table to her. Serena sipped the tea and nodded in thanks. "So, we're here to talk about the hospital, right?" she asked. Logan swallowed the bite of his sandwich he just took and nodded. "Yes, let's talk about the hospital," he said. "I don't want you to worry about expenses at all. The pack funds can afford whatever you decide is necessary. Serena shook her head. "I'm not entirely comfortable with being in control of this operation," she admitted, setting her sandwich down. "There have to be more authoritative pack members that would do a better job." "I'm sure there are," he said. "But none of them have the outside human world experience that you do. Even Adriana isn't familiar with modern medical technology." "Alright, alright, I get it," she said. "Is this why you agreed to bring me on as a doctor?" Logan grinned playfully. "As intriguing as your human world experience is, that is not the reason I gave Adriana permission to hire you," he assured her. "Your skills as a doctor are what got you the job."

“Good to know.” Serena said with a smile. She couldn’t shake the insecurities she felt. Being someone who had spent so much time in the human world, it always made her suspicious when people took an interest in her.

“You can get what you need in regards to updated medical equipment. I’ll leave it in your hands to broker the deals with the equipment companies,” he said. Serena grimaced.

“I’m not great with bargaining,” she admitted. Logan chuckled. “After your showdown with me last night, I am confident you can get what you need and want when we want it,” he assured, winking at her from across the table. Serena smiled, despite herself. “That was out of necessity,” she argued. “You were getting in my way as a doctor.” “Well, use that same fire when you are updating medical equipment,” he offered. Serena shook her head. “There is just one problem,” she said. “I don’t remember the exact names and equipment brands.” “What do you need to get it?” Logan asked, raising an eyebrow at her. Serena sipped her iced tea, thinking but trying to make it look like she wasn’t avoiding the question. “I’m not sure yet,” she said. “I can do some online searching, but I’m not sure how many web pages are constructed in the most current models of medical equipment.”

“So, go right to the source,” Logan suggested. Serena gave it some thought. If she went reached out to the human world, she could contact her professors and the medical school she studied at. It hadn’t been too long; they should still remember her.

They’d get her in touch with the companies that could supply her.

“That would mean contacting my professors in the human world,” she mused.

“Really?” Logan asked, his interested peaked. He sat up straight. “I still have connections. I can make a few calls after lunch,” she offered. Logan nodded. “Please do,” Logan said. Serena finished her sandwich and then headed out on the deck off the kitchen. She pulled her phone out and called the number of the professor who had been most fond of her work. “Dr. Lynn,” she said. “Oh, is this Serena?” she asked, her voice growing in excitement on the other line. “Yes, it is,” she said. “I told you I would call when things got settled.” “I’m glad to hear that you’ve found work and are settling in,” she said. Serena chuckled on the line. She hadn’t told many people in the human world about the twins, and when she had, it was only out of necessity. “Well, the hospital I am working at is a little outdated on its medical equipment” Serena explained. “I’m not the head doctor at all or anything, but they did put me in

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charge of updating the medical equipment.” “That is a big responsibility,” Dr. Lynn said. “I know, it is, and it wasn’t one that I was really expecting so early. I’m a little lost on what I am supposed to be looking for and what I am supposed to be doing,” she explained. Dr. Lynn chuckled on the other line. “Yes, yes, I imagine it is a little overwhelming,” she said. “I have some resources for you.”

“Great” Serena said.

“My afternoon is a little booked, but if you could stop by my office in the next day or so, in the afternoon, I can have everything you need ready to go,” she offered. Serena tapped her fingernails on the deck rail. She hadn’t exactly planned to go back into the human world, but that seemed unavoidable in the current state of things. “Umm...I will...let me check my schedule,” she said. She muted the phone and went back into the kitchen. “What’s the news?” Logan asked. Serena held up her phone. “I have an old professor who is willing to help,” she said. “She wants me to come into her office, though.” “Back in the human world?” Logan asked. “Next day or so?” she asked. Logan nodded, giving her the go ahead. Serena mouthed a “thank you” and ducked back outside, unmuting her phone. “It looks like I can get in there the day after tomorrow,” she said. “Great, Serena, I will see you then,” Dr. Lynn said. “I’ve got to go!” she hastily hung up. Serena sighed, pocketing her phone again. She went back inside to fill Logan in on her conversation. “Looks like I’m good to go the day after tomorrow,” she said. “I knew you could make it work,” he said with confidence. “Mommy, you’re home!” Olivia’s voice shouted down the hall. Her feet, and Oliver’s close behind, running down the hall. “We’re back,” Flo called through the house. Serena smiled and went to her kids. She hugged them both tightly. “How was daycare?” she asked. “Good, I jumped rope longer than everyone else,” Olivia said. “Wow, Olivia, you’re getting so strong,” Serena said. “I know!” she said excitedly, jumping up and down. Flo and Serena both chuckled at her daughter’s antics. It struck Serena that Flo was her kids’ grandmother. She shook her head quickly and turned to her son. Chapter 37: Renovation Plans Pt. 2

“What did you do, Oliver?” Serena asked. “I painted a picture,” he said. “It was still wet, though, so I’ll bring it home tomorrow.” “I can’t wait to see it,” Serena said. She kissed Oliver’s head. “Thank you, Flo, for bringing them back.”

“Any time,” Flo said, running her fingers through Olivia’s hair. Serena sent the kids up to their temporary room to change out of their day clothes.

“Serena, do you want to leave the kids here when you go to the human world?” Logan asked, coming into the hallway. Serena sighed. She hadn’t thought about that yet. “You’re going to the human world?” Flo asked. “Just for a visit with an old doctor friend,” she said. Flo nodded. She looked back at Logan. “Let me think about it.” He nodded. “They are welcome to stay here with us,” Flo offered. Serena looked between Logan and his mother. The Alpha didn’t seem to be against the idea. Serena shrugged. “I’ll think it over,” she said. “I need to get back to the hospital and finish my shift. Thank you for lunch.” She waved goodbye and got her work things together again.

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Chapter 38

Chapter 38: Return to the Human World

When Serena finished her shift and got home from the hospital Flo still had the kids up. It wasn't too late, and they were already in their pajamas. She was sitting in the living room with them, Oliver was drawing and Olivia was playing with some carved wooden wolves that Serena had never seen before.

They were being quiet and on their best behavior. Serena was impressed. Flo wasn't even keeping a sharp eye on them. She was sitting on the couch and reading a book. Olivia and Oliver were masters at sneaking away and causing trouble when they thought no one was watching. "Are those new toys?" she asked, kneeling down by Olivia. "Flo gave them to me," Olivia said, smiling at the Luna. "Leant them to you," Flo corrected, leaning forward on the couch. Olivia nodded and went back to her game. "They are beautiful." Serena said, looking at Flo. "Carved by my father and given to me to play with when I was their age," Flo explained. "The detail is amazing," Serena said, picking up one of the wooden carvings. The wolves had lines for fur, and each one had unique facial features. "My father was good with his hands," Flo said.

"Did you two have fun with Flo this afternoon?" she asked. The twins nodded, but Oliver was focused on his painting and Olivia was too immersed in her game.

"We all got along just fine," Flo assured. Serena stood up and took a seat on the couch beside Flo.

"I was thinking about having my kids stay with their grandparents in Star Seeker while I am back in the human world," she said. "Charlotte and Thomas will look after them. "Are you sure?" Flo asked. "It would be my pleasure to watch them." "I know it would," Serena said. "You are so great with them, and I appreciate all your help."

"I loved being a mother," Flo said. "It was always my greatest regret that I never had more children." Serena chuckled and looked at her own kids. "Perhaps your sentiment would be different if you'd had twins," she said. Flo laughed and shook her head.

"You do amazing with them, especially without a mate," Flo said. Serena nodded, appreciating the praise.

"My parents would love to have some quality time with the kids." Serena said. "Charlotte dotes on them, and they will probably come back with more clothes than

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Chapter 38. Return to the Human World they can wear before they outgrow them.” She laughed. Flo laughed too. “A grandmother’s duty,” she said. “Mommy, why do we have to go stay with grandma and grandpa?” Olivia asked, looking up from her game. It got Oliver’s attention too. “We like it here,” Oliver said.

“I have to go on a little trip, back to the human world,” Serena told them. “Your grandparents would love to watch you while I’m gone for a few days.” “Back to our old home?” Olivia asked, jumping up. She ran to her mother’s legs, and threw herself across her lap. “I want to go back!” Oliver looked up from his drawing

too.

“Me too!” he insisted. “I’ve been thinking about it, Serena,” Logan said, coming into the living room. “Perhaps I should tag along on this venture to the human world.” Serena raised an eyebrow at him. “That could be a good idea,” Flo said, looking between Logan and Serena. “Do you even know how to pass as human in the human world?” Serena challenged. Logan shrugged.

“You can teach me,” he said.

“If Logan goes, I want to go too,” Olivia insisted. Serena raised a questioning eyebrow at Logan. “It isn’t up to me,” he said, drawing from their conversation about parental authority previously. “Though, I wouldn’t mind the added company.”

“Yes!” Olivia said, jumping up and running around the living room. “Can we see our old house?” Oliver asked, rolling his picture up and carefully putting his pencils back in the pencil box. “I’m not sure,” Serena said. “It depends on what we have time for. I’m meeting a friend, and that could take up a lot of our time.” “We’ll see what we can get into with the time we have,” Logan said. “I guess we should start packing,” Serena said. She got up from the house and headed upstairs. Olivia and Oliver followed her, rushing to their room to start packing. She knew their backs would end up stuffed with toys instead of clothes. Serena knew she’d have to go and repack their bags. While she was working through her own clothing and travel necessities, Logan appeared in her doorway. “Do I need to buy new clothes for this adventure?” he asked coyly. Serena looked over her shoulder, tossing a few shirts into her open suitcase on her bed. “Your clothes are fine,” she said laughing. “The human world isn’t that different.” “No?” he asked. “You were so concerned that I wouldn’t blend in.”

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Chapter 38: Return to the Human World

“I’m still concerned about that,” she admitted. “It is more about your behavior than your appearance. Although, you can’t run around as a wolf, at all.”

“At all?” he asked. Serena shook her head.

“If you do, you might end up getting shot,” she admitted. Logan let out a long breath, shaking his head. “I wasn’t prepared for that bit of news,” he confessed. “They don’t have wolves out in the human world?”

“Oh, they have wolves, but they don’t really live in cities or around people. They can’t turn into people, and when they get too close to people, the humans get nervous and kill them before they can attack anyone,” she explained. Logan shook his head. “Wolves attacking people,” he said. “Wild animals,” she corrected. “Not all humans accept that animals can be...self-aware, and in the wild, there aren’t a lot of animals that can differentiate between a human and a meal.” “That’s unfortunate,” Logan said. “But you’re sure we’ll be safe?” “As long as you don’t sniff people out, don’t transform into a wolf, don’t take your clothes off randomly, or do anything else wolfish, we will be fine,” she assured. “Besides, there are some very strange humans in the human world.”

“Strange humans?” Logan asked. Serena nodded, walking to her dresser and pulling out a few pairs of pants. “I can’t explain it all in detail,” she said. “Don’t worry, you’ll get a full experience where we are going. Big cities are rife with strange humans.” “Good,” Logan said. “I’ll go pack. We can head out early tomorrow.” “Great,” Serena said. Logan headed off down the hall. Serena finished packing her own bags and she went to the twins’ room. They had a suitcase open, toys tossed in and a few pieces of clothing. Serena chuckled, going to their suitcase and sorting through the mess that they had piled onto it.

“I can’t wait to see the old house,” Oliver said. Serena shook her head. They hadn’t lived in a house, they’d lived in a tiny apartment three floors up. It wasn’t far from the medical school, so Serena knew they could swing around and see it. She didn’t know if anyone was living there anymore though. “While I’m with my doctor friend, will the two of you be able to show Logan around?” she asked.

“Yea, that sounds like fun!” Olivia said. “We can take him to the park,” Oliver said, referencing the park with the playground that was less than a block away from where they’d lived. Serena had taken them there every day it was nice when she had a break from work and classes.

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Chapter 38 Return to the Human World

“That sounds like a good idea,” Serena said. “I bet he’d like to see the park.” She put her suitcase and the kids’ suitcase by the front door when things were all packed. It was getting late, so she put the twins to bed. They were excited, but exhausted enough to go to sleep quickly. On her way to her own room, Serena ran into Logan again. “Quick

question,” Serena said. “How does Holly feel about this impromptu trip with me and my kids?” “I didn’t know you cared about that?” he said. Serena shrugged. “I don’t want any delays,” she admitted. “I also don’t want to be accosted upon our return.” Logan chuckled. “I’ll handle Holly” he assured. “See you in the morning.” She nodded. He gave her a soft smile, and Serena felt her stomach drop. She was getting in too deep! It wasn’t good. Going away for a few days with Logan and her kids might be too much. She’d have to make sure she didn’t let anything go too far. “Good night,” she said, waving at Logan as he disappeared into his room. She sighed heavily and went to her own bed. They were going to have a long drive ahead of them tomorrow. Serena wanted to be well rested. Her kids could be a pain in the car, and she didn’t want that to lead to any squabbles or discomfort. Returning to the human world came with enough uncertainty!

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Mercifully, Olivia and Oliver mostly slept in the car. When Oliver was awake, he was draw quietly. When Olivia was awake, she would hum to herself and kick her legs back and forth. Logan was quiet too, letting Serena sit alone with her thoughts. At the beginning of the ride, he had asked several questions about the human world, but eventually, even he had run out of questions to ask. She hadn’t minded answering. Not that she was an expert in the human world by any means. She’d spent some time among them, but she hadn’t fully integrated herself into the human culture or society.

She answered what questions she could, but the truth was, she only knew how to pass as human. She didn’t know all about humans and their world.

“We’re almost there,” Logan said, pulling her from her thoughts. “Thanks,” Serena said, smiling at him. He nodded. She looked in the back seat, seeing both the twins completely passed out. Serena, dipping into her knowledge banks, had gotten them a two-bedroom suite at a hotel where they could sleep. They were getting into the city pretty late, and Serena wasn’t going to be seeing her professor until the next day. When they got to the hotel, she carried Olivia and Logan got Oliver. The day of driving had been long, and neither of them had much to say anymore. They got the kids tucked into the bed they’d be sharing with Serena, and then Logan went back down to get the car to get their bags. “Are you hungry?” Logan asked when he returned. “I can whip something up in the kitchenette.”

“Oh no,” Serena said, wagging her finger back and forth. “I’m going to show you a great perk of the human world.” Logan smirked. “Alright, that sounds interesting,” he said. Serena pulled her phone out and dialed a number to takeout restaurant she was familiar with. She placed a quick order for dinner, including something for the kids if they woke up. “Now, we just wait for the next twenty minutes, and then food will show up at the door,” she said. Logan smirked. “That sounds...incredibly convenient,” he said. She nodded.

“Convenience is a major staple in the human world,” she said, taking a seat on the couch. Logan put his travel bag in the room he’d be staying in, and joined Serena in the suite living room. “Is it strange, being back?” he asked. “It was strange coming back to pack life,” she told him. “This...this is still more familiar.”

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Chapter 39 Big City Adventures

“Transitioning back has been that complicated?” Logan asked, leaning back in his chair and crossing his legs. Serena didn’t want to talk about herself anymore. “I’m surprised you don’t have as much experience with the human world,” she admitted. “Being Alpha, don’t you trade with them?” “Yes,” Logan said with a nod. “Trading isn’t the same as being among them or passing as them. You don’t have to convince your trading partners that you’re human. As long as they get their goods, they don’t care.” Serena giggled, tucking her legs up on the couch and hugging her knees to her chest. There was a knock on their hotel room door, and Logan answered it, getting the food and paying the delivery person. He was good at the money, but he didn’t exchange any pleasantries with delivery boy. When he closed the door again, Serena laughed. “You could have been nice to him,” she said. Logan cocked his head to the side. “It is common in human culture to be nice and exchange small talk with the people who bring you your food.” Logan shrugged, handing Serena her takeout bag before digging into his own.

Serena was scheduled to meet with her professor in the afternoon. She spent the morning dressing like a respectable doctor, doing her hair and makeup so that she could feel good about seeing her old professor. She made up a hospital name for when her professor asked where she was working, and got her binder with notebooks and pens. “How do I look?” she asked, turning to her daughter. “So pretty!” Olivia said. Oliver smiled. “Very pretty, mommy,” he said. Serena smiled, pulling her hair up in a ponytail. “Good,” she said. “You’re taking Logan to the park today, right?” “Yes,” Olivia and Oliver agreed. She grabbed her twins’ hands and brought them out to where Logan was waiting for them. He was well dressed, probably a little more so than how he should have been to take two kids to the park, but Serena didn’t say anything. “The kids have a park they want to show you while I’m with my professor,” she said. “That sounds like fun,” Logan said. “Okay, ground rules about the human world,” Serena said. “Don’t refer

to yourself as an Alpha, don't growl around other humans, and don't challenge anyone, even if you think they are challenging you." "That's a lot to ask," Logan said. Serena raised an eyebrow. "Alright, I'll behave." "Good," she said. "Oh, and if anyone asks, you are the twins' uncle." "Why uncle?" Logan asked. Serena sighed. "Kids in the human world sometimes get taken by strangers," she said. "They are

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considered perverts and freaks, and are usually arrested." "I don't understand," Logan said, creasing his brow. Serena sighed again. "Just because everyone around here lives near each other doesn't mean they are part of the same supportive community," she explained. "Some of them do bad things to each other and hurt each other, even to kids." Logan sighed. "That's horrible," he said. Serena nodded. "So, if anyone asks, you're their uncle," she said. Logan nodded. "Good call," he said. "Now, I've got to go," she said. "Olivia, Oliver, be good for Logan." "We will," they both said dismissively. Serena collected her binder and headed out of the suite. She remembered where to walk in order to get to the medical school campus. It had been a long time since she'd set foot there, and she was feeling nostalgic. Not much had changed since she left, and she knew exactly where Dr. Lynn's office was. Walking through the academic corridors, she felt cozy, like she was at home. She knocked on the door and Dr. Lynn invited her in. "Serena," she said, motioning for her to come inside. Serena entered the familiar office, sitting down in the chair she had occupied several times when they were working together.

"It is good to see you, Dr. Lynn," she said.

"Good to see you too," she said. She pulled out a folder and handed it over to Serena.

"This has all the information you'll need to update the hospital you are working at."

"Thank you," Serena said, tucking the folder into her binder. "I'm surprised that they asked you to handle such a large job," Dr. Lynn said. Serena shrugged. "I'm a new set of eyes, fresh out of school," she said. "They assumed I had knowledge of the newest equipment on the market." Dr. Lynn chuckled. "Well, then perhaps they do know what they are doing," she said. "I hope their budget is large, because this stuff does not come cheap," Dr. Lynn said. She was typing at her computer while also talking to Serena. A professor and a doctor, her life was always busy. "That shouldn't be a problem" she said. "Thank you, Dr. Lynn. I appreciate all your help."

"Please, I love hearing from my old students," she said. "Please, keep in touch. If you have any other questions, let me know." Serena nodded and let herself out. Rather than heading back to the hotel; she went to the park, hoping to catch up with

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her kids and with Logan. Olivia was hanging from the monkey bars and Oliver was 'whooshing' down a slide. Logan was at the bottom of the slide, catching Oliver. She smiled to herself, entering the park and setting her binder and folders down on the nearest bench. "I see the park is still fun," she said, getting their attention. "Did you get what you needed already?" Logan asked. Serena nodded. "Absolutely," she said. "So, what are we going to do with the rest of our afternoon in the big city?" "I want to go see the fish," Oliver said, referring to an aquarium. "Yea, and the tigers," Olivia said. "We could go to the zoo," Serena said. "Animals in captivity?" Logan asked. "Yea," Serena said. "Think you can hold it together?" He scoffed and nodded. "I'll keep myself under control" he said. "Good, because there are some disgusting fried foods that I think you'll enjoy at the 200," she teased. Logan shrugged. "Sounds good," he said. Being back in the city, Serena felt a flood of new energy. She hadn't felt so invigorated since leaving the human world. It was surprising to her, to feel so happy and excited. Olivia and Oliver chattered all the way to the zoo, and Logan paid all his attention to them. She didn't want to keep looking at them like a family, but it was the first time she'd been able to share her experience in the human world with someone from her pack. The fact that it was Logan didn't take away from the swell of joy inside her. He wouldn't understand it all from just a few days, but he'd see what she saw. That was something she'd lacked in the pack. Now, she wouldn't.

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Chapter 40: Renovations in Action

Back in pack territory, Serena went back to her life and her routine. The kids continued to talk about their journey for days, always bringing up the park and their trip to the zoo with Logan. The Alpha had been a little concerned about all the animals in captivity, but he hadn't made a scene or done anything that was too suspicious.

With her newly acquired resources, Serena busied herself with making deals and getting the equipment ready to update the hospital. Adriana was busy with handling the renovations of the rooms and offices, all the interior work. The exterior had been repaired, the interior had been painted, and Adriana had gotten the furniture and appliances in the lounges and offices updated. She was still trying to plan when the lighting systems could be updated, which was harder to orchestrate. "These renovations are interfering with every day patient care," Adriana whined, coming up to the nurse's station. Serena was checking the boxes on yet another order form for updated monitors and lead lines. "It is more work," Serena admitted. "But the two of us can work it out."

"You have practice, being a single mom and a med student and everything," Adriana pointed out. Serena chuckled. "Maybe, but you're a doctor, used to the stress of emergencies," she said. "You can get it done."

"You're right, you're right," Adriana said. "Speaking of the renovations, how was your trip to the human world, with the Alpha?" Serena rolled her eyes, dropping the order form in the delivery box. "It was fine," Serena said. Adriana gave Serena a sharp look. "Uh-huh," she said teasingly. Serena rolled her eyes. "What is that supposed to mean?" she asked. Adriana shrugged. "You don't do a weekend away with the Alpha and your kids without something happening," Adriana pried. Serena gave a humorless laugh. She was being honest when she said nothing happened. She couldn't tell Adriana that the weekend had felt like a family vacation. "Look, the kids love Logan," she said. "They call him their 'uncle' sometimes. He loves them too, and his mother has been so great at helping out while we've been waiting for my house to get fixed." "I think there is more to it than that," Adriana said. Serena shook her head. "You're seeing things that aren't there," she said, grabbing her clip board and heading down the hall to a patient she needed to check on. Adriana followed her. "Come on," she said. "Please give me the details on what happened while you were in

a hotel with him." Serena rolled her eyes again, stopping with her hand on the doorknob to a patient room. She turned around to smile at her friend. "Adriana, nothing happened," she said. "We went to a zoo to look at captive animals, which Logan didn't understand as a human past time, and the kids had fun. I showed him about delivery food and fed him fried dough. He was very confused when we got back."

Adriana laughed, shaking her head.

"You're talking about him like he is another one of your children," she said. "I know Logan has gone out of his way to be nice to you, but you've been so resistant." "What are you trying to say?" Serena asked, raising an eyebrow. "Do you have some kind of history with the Alpha?" she asked straightforward. Serena sighed heavily, looking at her patient's room door again. "We crossed paths a few times at pack parties when we were younger," she said. "Nothing worth bringing up." She hated lying to Adriana, but her friend was already asking prying questions. She didn't want to let it get too far.

"Well, I can't deny that you and the Alpha have some kind of chemistry," Adriana said. "We work together," she said. "So, can I do my job?" Adriana laughed and nodded. Serena went into the room to look at her patient. She checked the patient's vitals and bandages. Nothing needed to be changed or altered, so she made notes in the chart and moved on.

Back at the nurse's station, Serena sat at a computer and pulled up an order form for new computers with updated operating systems and new medical programs. She was also ordering scanners and copiers to help digitize everything. Serena spent her days checking on patients and doing routine exams, and then quickly filling out order forms and followed up on deliveries. A couple delivery men came in and headed to the

reception desk. "We have a delivery," they said, handing the nurse at reception a delivery form. Serena jumped up and went to intervene. "How big of a delivery is it?" she asked, taking the order form and scanning what equipment was coming in. It was a shipment of new hospital beds and mattresses, the kind of beds that were adjustable with a remote control. "Pretty big," one of the delivery men said. "We can get it all in, but it will take a few trips." "Can you bring it in around back?" Serena asked, signing the delivery form. "There is a service entrance back there." "Yea, we'll bring the truck around," the delivery man said.

"Great, thank you," Serena said with a nod. "I'll meet you back there." Serena grabbed her own folder of renovation plans, which was so thick she'd need to transfer it to a binder soon, and took off to meet the drivers around back. They were already unloading the beds through the service entrance. "Please, just push them up against the walls, here," Serena said, directing them to put the boxes to one side of the hallway. Adriana joined her, checking the box stickers to make sure they were the right products. "This is really great," she said. "It is going to be fun scheduling a shift in all the beds and patients to get these things unpackaged and situated in every room." "This isn't the first big overhaul we've done," Serena pointed out. "Remember when the painters were here?" Adriana laughed, shaking her head. "Oh, yea," she said.

Getting the bed delivery squared away was just another step to getting the hospital renovated. As much as Serena liked seeing her facilities get updated, she was working long hours and she was completely ragged by the time she got home. Olivia and Oliver were happy at daycare and happy with Flo and Logan, but Serena felt like she was missing time with them. She was looking forward to when the renovations would be done and she could relax a little bit! "Come on, let's grab some lunch before we have to get back to work," Adriana said, taking Serena's hand and leading her in the direction of the cafeteria. It wasn't the best food, but at least it was quick. "Fortunately, that is the biggest delivery this week," Serena said, grabbing a salad and some soup for herself while Adriana got a large sandwich and a cookie. Serena, having second thoughts, grabbed herself a slice of pie too. "Yes, I feel the pie," Adriana said, trading her cookie in for pie. Serena chuckled. "At least, once it is done, this hospital will be completely sate of the art," she said. Adriana nodded. They got themselves seats in the cafeteria; Serena set her phone on the table so she could see if any urgent texts came in. "Enjoy this moment with me," Adriana said. "At least, when I get home, I get to rest." Serena chuckled.

"My kids have so much fun without me around," she said, shaking her head. "They are kept busy. I miss having time with them though." "Well, I know you are already putting so much time into this project, but we've hit another snag," Adriana said. Serena paused in chewing her salad. "What now?" she asked. She'd been meticulous with her ordering and monitoring the deliveries. If something had hit a bump, she hoped it was something that was easily

fixable.

“So, some of the nurses and other medical staff aren’t very versed with using the new equipment,” Adriana said. “Do you think you could...help teach them how to use the new stuff?” Adriana batted her eyelashes hopefully. Serena laughed and shook her head.

“Yes, I can put in some extra time and teach them how to use the new stuff,” she said. “Though, the new computers, I’ll have to brush up on my skills with those too. The software has been updated since I left school.”

“Oh, this will be fun,” Adriana said slightly sarcastically. Serena rolled her eyes. Her phone began to vibrate as she was polishing off her salad.

“Oh, I’ve got to run,” she said. “I have a patient who needs an abscess drained.” Adriana cringed, but nodded. Serena grabbed her phone and her files and took off to get back to work. With a deep breath, she composed herself. Teaching nurses and medical staff was a new experience, but she would do it if it meant the hospital would get back to full operation sooner.

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