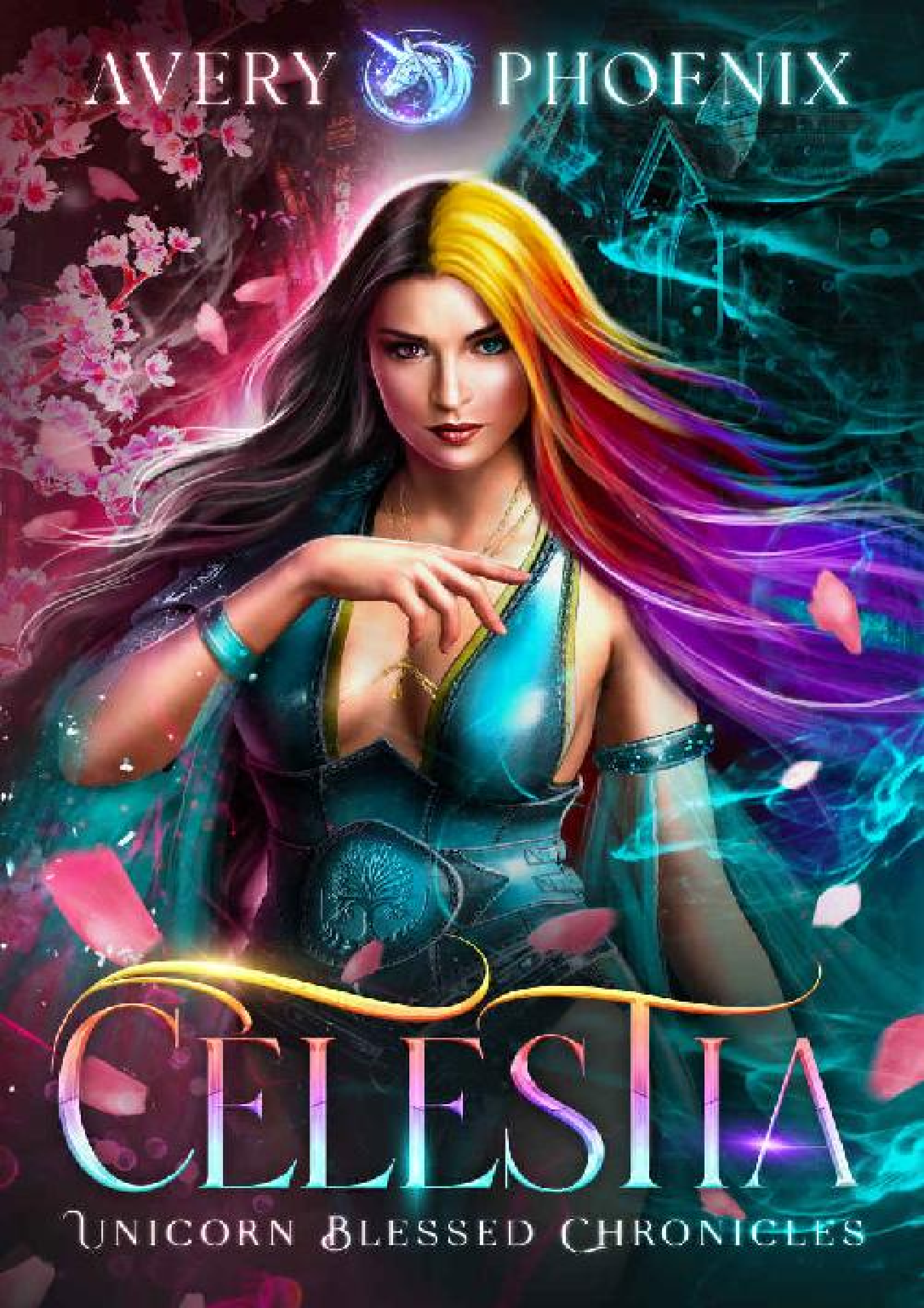


AVERY  PHOENIX



CELESTIA

UNICORN BLESSED CHRONICLES

Celestia

YEAR 3

ASLAN ACADEMY

BOOK THREE

AVERY PHOENIX

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Stay Connected

About the Author: Avery Phoenix

Also by Avery Phoenix

BLURB

A magical discovery leads to a path of hope, but will the Darkness be stronger than Light?

Celestia Rainbow never expected to find out the truth about her birth or the role she now plays in the crisis going on throughout the dimensions.

Forsaken are getting stronger and are attacking hunters and huntresses across the dimensions out of their desire for immense power. Celestia must deal with learning how she can help while also balancing her classes at Aslan Academy and dealing with the tension that's growing within her team.

With Theo returning home, Hunter dealing with his own issues, and Cairus and Caio feeling stuck on deciding whose side they're on, Celestia, Finn, and Orion are having to work overtime to try and bring Team Misfit back together.

Now that they know the identity of the mysterious man from Celestia's dreams, it's time to fight Darkness with Light, with the help of new comrades, familiars, and a little sprinkle of glitter.

Will Aslan's Elite unicorn shifter be able to hold onto her badass name and finally defeat the growing Darkness? Or will she and her lovers finally crumble beneath their own insecurities? Only one way to find out.

Prologue - Adapting To Change



I stood at a mesmerizing lake, its beauty so fluorescent with life.

The water was clear, like looking through a glass, and dozens of flowers in a variety of colors lined the very bottom of the lake. It held the highest level of purity, though I had no idea how I knew about such legends.

Wildlife and nature surrounded the lake. Trees stood tall, and animals big and small roamed the lands with freedom. Mother Nature allowed it so that everything lived in harmony, the earth providing for the living creatures and preserving this very place with all of its might.

I was certain about one thing, feeling confident in my inner thoughts as I continued to soak in the light energy that contributed to my warmth and strength.

This was my Land.

It wasn't relevant how I knew this was where I was destined to belong. What mattered was the sudden chill I felt run along my body, almost like a thin sheet brushing my skin, leaving goosebumps in the wake of its return.

My gaze lowered to the ground and my eyes widened in horror as my beautiful, sacred land began to die. The soil

dried up until not a spec of water remained while the trees that surrounded me shriveled into nothing but black decay, leaving a stench of rotten remains.

The animals, both on the ground and in the sky, dropped to the lifeless ground, their living souls consumed by the dark mist that crept towards me from all directions.

I turned back toward the lake that was my prized possession and ran into it as if it could protect me from my imminent doom. With each step I took into the cool water it slowly shrank in size.

By the time I reached the very middle, the clear, pure water I adored was gone, and the dark mist was ready to face me.

I noticed the rainbow crown perched on a rock before me, the only colorful thing left amongst the growing black that was already consuming the sky above. With haste, I leaned down to grab the crown and clung to it with my life as I searched around me for a way out.

“You cannot run from your destiny, my Queen.” The male voice came from somewhere to the left of me.

I gritted my teeth and turned my head to locate who had spoken. My mismatched eyes narrowed, and my gaze fell on the tall figure that emerged from the Darkness.

The Darkness seemed to create his very essence. I couldn't see much of his face due to the black hood covering his head, but his broad smile and pale skin made me tighten my arms around the crown.

He can't have what isn't his. This does not belong to him.

“I'm NOT your Queen!” I snapped.

He continued his slow approach toward me, and I resumed scanning my pitch-black surroundings for a way out. The Darkness was mere inches from my feet, but there was no use. I couldn't run. I had to face him.

This crown was my right. Just as he had his own right to rule. We could never coexist. One would be sacrificed. I wouldn't let that be me.

"My Queen, don't glare at me with those hateful jewels that will one day look at me with compassion. Your time is approaching. All you need to do is accept the Darkness."

"I'm not accepting anything. I don't belong here! Neither do you. This is MY land and you have overstayed your welcome."

My words did nothing to stop his confident strides, and in seconds, he stood before me. He lifted his hands to lower his hood and faint lavender eyes met mine.

"Our land, my Queen. You just don't understand how precious you are in all of this."

"Wait...you're...no...someone else?" I tried to figure out the familiar person before me. A part of me knew him as someone I loved dearly, yet the other half of me was left in confusion at the spitting image who carried a level of evil, it practically oozed off his aura that upon concentration was a dark grey.

"Yes, my Queen. You know who I am."

"I'm not your Queen!" I countered, my anger only growing at my constant need to defend what wasn't true.

The man gave me a sweet smile and reached out for my crown. I wanted to move, but it was like my body was suddenly

frozen. It was only when he took the crown from my hands that I realized the dark mist was already crawling up my body.

The chilling movement made me shiver, and I struggled to keep calm as I looked back at the man with a panicked expression.

“Do not fear the Darkness, Celestia. It is where you truly belong.” As he spoke, I watched black sludge begin to cloak the crown.

“No! Don’t ruin it. It has to be that way. It represents them! All of them. Don’t destroy them!” I screamed. The Darkness was already level with my chest, and I fought its hold.

*I struggled until tears rolled down my cheeks as my once perfect rainbow crown, the item that was so dear to my heart, turned black. **NO!***

The man grinned, and he lifted the crown to rest on my head before he wiped away the tear that rolled down my cheek.

“I didn’t choose this life, my Queen, but I will enjoy ruling this new world with my beloved by my side,” he whispered. He slowly closed his eyes and lowered his lips toward mine.

The chilled Darkness crawled up my face, blinding my sight as it consumed me whole. My body was cold, so cold my heart ached for warmth. I didn’t want to give up the fight, and I knew with my very being too many lives were at stake.

Yet, I couldn’t win. I wasn’t strong enough to continue trying, even when I wanted so desperately to protect the purity of the land I was destined to rule.

I felt something warm touch where my lips once were, and as much as my mind screamed for me to remain unresponsive,

I just couldn't.

***Out of the entire land that was now covered in pitch
Darkness, those lips were the only warmth left.***

“Celestia!”

“No...cold...” I mumbled. I desperately tried to pull out from whatever I was experiencing, but it was like the darkness of sleep was doing its best to claw at my conscious and pull me back into the depths of what felt like a nightmare.

Something shook me harder, but again it was no use. I was trying so hard to fight yet I felt like all my efforts were pointless.

“Lightanava.”

A burst of warmth swept through me from my feet all along my body to my head. It was almost like a sheet draped over me, and with it came a soothing heat that vanquished the intense chill I had been tortured with moments ago.

A relieved sigh left my lips as my once tensed body began to loosen. Something wrapped around me, pulling me into a warmer embrace, but it was a comfortable one. The room was quiet, and I was trying to determine whether to open my eyes or go back to sleep, but what kept me from falling back to sleep was the rapid heartbeat sound that left me curious.

I waited for the sound to slow until it was at an even pace before I stirred slightly.

“Celestia?”

Orion's voice sounded groggy, like he was worn out. The weak tone was enough to motivate me to open my eyes and check on my boyfriend. After a few attempts, I finally was able to lift my heavy eyelids, the dimly lit room reminding me of the dream I just had.

I shivered and immediately pulled back to get a better look of the room, trying to determine if this was the land that was supposedly mine.

“Cutie Pie.”

I blinked and peered in Orion's direction, his purple eyes locking onto mine. He looked really exhausted. Dark circles painted the skin below his eyes like he hadn't slept for weeks, and his long silver hair was in a fuzzy mess.

“Orion? You...don't call me Cutie Pie often.” It wasn't really important, but my brain needed a moment to wake up.

“I know. I should though,” he said with a small smile. We stared into each other's eyes for a long moment before I wondered what just happened.

“Orion? Why do you look like you barely slept?” I turned my head to glance at the standing grandfather clock to my left. “It's four in the morning.”

“A certain unicorn shifter kept tossing and turning.” His smile turned sad, and I frowned, understanding I was the cause of his lack of sleep.

“Oh no. Did I have a nightmare again?”

“Nightmares to be exact. I had to use a light spell three times to pull you out of it,” Orion confessed.

My shoulders drooped as I gave him a sympathetic look. “Sorry, Orion...I didn't mean-”

Orion stroked my head with his hand, ignoring my long, purple-pink locks that were in a similar tangled mess. “Don’t apologize for something that’s out of your control. We’re still figuring all of this out. Tomorrow we’ll bring it up with your mother and go from there.”

“But you need sleep too, Orion. You’ll get a pimple.” I shot him an imploring look.

Orion gave me a wide grin as he leaned up to give me a peck on my forehead. “Sometimes sacrifices have to be made.” He winked, and I gave him a wide smile in return.

“I’m really happy you’re here,” I admitted.

With everything that had happened with the exam and discovering my mother was a part of Alpha Pure and had been protecting endangered races, I’d been struggling to grasp everything.

This was our second night here and yesterday was reserved for us to rest after our battle with Orion’s twin brother, Odion. I had many questions about my mom, this entire sanctuary, and Orion’s past. They all seemed important, and I couldn’t decide what to tackle first.

“I’m glad you’re okay.” He ran his hand down the length of my arm and then squeezed my hand gently.

I knew he was worried about what had happened and concerned about the wound on my leg that was still healing. I bet he wanted to give me as much information about his brother as he could, but my mind focused on him getting sleep. *Especially since it was my fault he wasn’t getting much, or really any.*

“That was thanks to your healing,” I pointed out.

“I barely did anything. Your wound is still there.”

“You did do something! Without you and Harrison I would have been dead, or worse.” The worst thing, aside from death, was becoming one with the Darkness and turning into a Forsaken.

With what we’d discovered before I passed out, the dead forest outside of the barrier was tainted entirely by the Darkness. If Harrison didn’t show up and help Orion heal me, I most likely would have turned into a forsaken.

The wound was bandaged up until Mom and Harrison could get a full scan of my body, but that required me to rest. The treatment used a lot of light magic which was obviously a bonus for me, but the extended amount of time encased in some pod overstimulated my magic and made me the opposite of an energizer unicorn.

I moved up to lay on top of Orion, and he relaxed back into the black sheets of our guest room. “I hurt you.”

“You didn’t mean to.”

“I was angry.”

“I know you were, Orion. Are you still upset?”

He was quiet and looked away, which left me a little hurt. I understood why he was so upset, but I didn’t want him thinking that I wanted to kiss Odion.

“A little,” he mumbled before he continued. “I know it’s not your fault, Blessed Love. It just...it hurt? Maybe because it was unexpected and overall...I felt he was going to take you away from me. From us? I don’t know. It’s kind of hard to explain.”

With a sigh, he relaxed his head against the pillow and looked at the ceiling instead of my attentive gaze. I bet he was gathering his thoughts. My sad eyes would make him feel

guilty, which I didn't want him to endure, but I couldn't help my open book expressions.

“Odion...he's a long story that I'd rather not share here. Our past is so complicated and with me still upset with him, it wouldn't help me think clearly of the situation.”

“That's fine. We don't need to talk about it now,” I whispered and maneuvered so my hands were pressed against the sheets and my head hovered over Orion's.

Those gorgeous purple eyes met my mismatched ones, and I gave him a sad smile. “I don't want you feeling guilty about what happened. The Darkness just tainted your vision, that's all. Me getting hurt isn't because you intentionally did it.”

Orion blinked a few times, and I watched him swallow like he had a lump in his throat. “Orion. Why are you beating yourself up?” I questioned, lifting one of my hands to brush his right cheek. I don't think he noticed the single tear as it left his glossy eyes.

“When I got all tainted or controlled and saw you and Odion...” He took a deep breath and continued, looking directly into my eyes.

“For a split second...maybe longer, you two looked good together? Like you belonged at his side and not mine. I was angry because, for once, I was finally happy with how my life was. Even with Aslan being as chaotic as it is, I was content. I knew this school wasn't going to be easy, but with you and the others, it wasn't as bad. Some days were really fun. Yet, in that second when he kissed you, my vision of happiness seemed to shatter. Like a shock to my brain that told me that everything I cherished was going to fade. Kind of like when the rest of my family was killed.”

“Orion.” I leaned down to give him a kiss, hoping the touch of my lips would remind him that I was right here and whatever vision he was seeing in his mind was a lie. “I’m right here, Orion. I’m sorry it upset you, and I wish I could take away the pain it brought you.”

He smiled and nodded before he lifted his arms to wrap around me and pulled me into a hug. “I know, Blessed Love. I’m sorry for being mad and hurting you. I truly didn’t want to. Please forgive me?”

“I forgave you the moment I saw the regret in your eyes, Orion. I knew you didn’t mean to do it and it showed. Please don’t worry about it. I’m fine. You’re fine. Everything is fine. Could be better with the others here, but that will come with time,” I explained.

Even though we both enjoyed having a bit of alone time, neither of us could deny that we missed the others. I guess we got so used to having everyone around and enjoying the lively lifestyle, that being away with just the two of us felt like we were missing something.

We enjoyed the peaceful embrace, and I wondered what would happen tomorrow when we learned everything about Alpha Pure. *What will happen when I confront Mom?*

“Are you worried about tomorrow?” Orion asked quietly.

“I’m a little scared and feel overwhelmed. There’s so much we don’t know, and it seems like there aren’t enough hours in the day for us to catch up and find out what to do. I hate that we’re facing forces we have no information about, and now we get thrown into another set of questions that we most likely won’t find answers to.”

I pulled back from our embrace to peer down at Orion. “I understand. I doubt any of us are prepared for what’s happening, but we’re doing a pretty good job at it,” he suggested.

“We are? Doesn’t feel like it,” I admitted.

“I think we’re doing a good job. Since our first exam together, we were thrown into situations we didn’t expect or scenarios that had never happened to any of the other students before. Maybe it’s just a test of Mother Nature? Who knows. Regardless, as long as we stick together, we’ll be alright. That’s what I think anyway.”

“I wonder if the others are worried.”

“I can’t sense my familiar. We don’t have a strong enough bond yet, I think,” Orion confessed. We’d been given temporary familiars for one of our tests. Gabriel was Orion’s familiar, but I hadn’t gotten the whole explanation of what exactly he was. All I knew was they could stay in their human forms thanks to a device Faelia Blessheart had helped design.

“I can’t feel Arielle either. Maybe this place has a barrier that stops us from sensing them, but they may be able to sense us? I remember Miolana talked about something like that in the familiar class.”

“Maybe. Either way, I’m hoping they know we’re safe and don’t worry. I have a feeling Finn is going to have to hold down the fort.”

“You don’t think they’re going to get along?” I asked.

“Theo’s been a little short tempered lately. Hunter also seems a bit out of it. I’m not worried about the twins. Finn just seems like he has his shit together, even after...well, you know.” Orion grimaced.

I sighed and nodded in understanding. I still remembered when Finn explained to me that Forsaken had killed his family and the dimension had self-destructed in an attempt to save other dimensions from the Darkness.

After what we'd gone through after the fourth Trial, and the agony he must have been going through, I was impressed at the improvement we'd been seeing in him. He was still his fun self, but lately, I'd seen the more mature, serious side of him.

"Hopefully they'll be okay. I'll talk with my mom tomorrow and see if she can contact my dad or something? Well...if they aren't getting a divorce."

"Did your father suggest they were?"

"No. Just the impression I got was they weren't talking. He didn't want to call her when I was struggling after the fourth exam and went for help," I revealed.

"Hmm," Orion replied. "Guess it will be another one of many questions you'll need to find out tomorrow, or at least during our stay here."

"Yes," I said and sighed wearily. "I'm tired of thinking about it."

"Want to go back to sleep?"

"Yes. As long as you sleep too," I mumbled.

He turned us over, causing me to be pinned against the sheets while he hovered over me.

"I'm not tired though," he teased.

I laughed, trying to be quiet, but I struggled as I grinned up at him.

“You look like a zombie, my Blessed Love,” I said sweetly.

His pale cheeks tinted a bright red as he glanced away shyly.

“Can you say that again?” he mumbled.

I smirked, knowing exactly what he wanted me to repeat, but I couldn’t pass up the opportunity to tease him.

“What? That you look like a zombie or the other half?”

He gazed down at me, meeting my softened expression. “The other part.”

“My Blessed Love,” I purred, lifting my arms up to wrap around his neck.

“I like when you say that.”

“Do you now?” I murmured, pulling him down for a slow kiss. “Maybe I should say it more often?”

“You should.”

“Will it please you?”

“Very much.”

“Then I’ll say it more often,” I confirmed.

We stared into each other’s eyes before Orion moved back to sit on his knees. I gave him a confused look, unsure what he was doing until he pulled off his black t-shirt, revealing his lean, muscular chest.

My eyes couldn’t help but take their time admiring his bare chest. My perusal stopped at his lower waist as his hands reached out to unbutton his loose shorts.

“Aren’t you too tired for pleasurable activities?” I asked, but I sat up and pulled my shirt over my head, revealing my perky breasts. His intense gaze upon on my breasts caused my nipples to pebble and my pussy to clench in need.

“I should be asking you the same,” he whispered, that husky voice of his telling me we’d be enjoying each other in moments.

“Won’t someone hear us?”

“No one is in this side of the guest sleeping corridors. I think we’re good.” Orion smirked and lowered his shorts and boxers, revealing his rock hard cock.

“Don’t complain if you get a pimple,” I warned, leaning back to lay down before I lifted my hips to slide my underwear off.

With a toss to my right side, I gave Orion a pleased grin as I enjoyed the naked view. He crawled forward until he was just above me, staring into my eyes before he leaned in to whisper against my lips.

“A pimple is worth hearing my Blessed Love’s moans.” He tugged my bottom lip with his teeth before he released it to kiss me firmly. His hands skimmed down my body and reached my entrance, prompting me to spread my legs for him to do what he pleased. He positioned the tip of his cock at my opening, and my gaze met his purple one that was filled with affection.

“Then let’s not delay, Blessed Love. Maybe we’ll be able to get some uninterrupted shut-eye after.” I hummed.

“I hope so...or we can just pray there’s coffee here and have fun for the remainder of the night.”

“I like this playful side of you.”

“Me too. It’s nice to enjoy what I want, which is you, Celestia-Cutie-Pie-Blessed Love.”

I giggled and unhooked my arms to press my hands on his cheeks. “I love you, Orion. Thank you for loving me.” I pulled his head down toward mine and kissed him tenderly.

“I love you more, Celestia. I don’t know what’s ahead of us, and it may feel like we’re drowning with all the changes that will swarm around us but know I’m here. Just like the others who love you dearly. We’ll get through this, together.”

I nodded before he claimed my lips, and his cock slid into me with ease. At this moment, I wouldn’t focus on what was to come.

I’d enjoy this time with my Blessed Love who’d help me tackle whatever was coming our way.

Alpha Pure Sanctuary



“**B**lessed Love, you don’t need to be so nervous.”

“I’m not nervous,” I replied to Orion. We sat next to each other in the well-decorated white room that was my mother’s private office.

Orion and I ended up sleeping in. If it weren’t for Harrison coming in to wake us up, we would have missed lunch. I didn’t know what would be more embarrassing, Harrison coming in and praising Orion, or my mother coming in and catching me cuddled up naked with Orion.

I had to admit I was happier that Harrison was the one who woke us up. He explained that my mother was planning to check on us, and he decided to go in her stead so that she could focus on lunch preparations.

We’d yet to see the outside of this place, but I knew the area we were staying in was the private sector that only my mother, Harrison, and approved guests and guards were allowed entry. It was well-decorated, the interior of each room painted a different color.

Our meals were usually delivered to our guest room by the maids, but today Mom said it was a rest day, and that was often the one day in the week she liked to cook for herself and the others.

I didn't know who the "others" were, but I assumed it was Harrison and maybe her close guards who seemed to follow her everywhere. It seemed being a Commander required continuous protection, which I hoped I'd learn more about today with our meeting with Mom.

After Orion and I had showered together, taking a little longer than expected, we got to see the large, pink and white kitchen.

Mom looked entirely different in her normal clothing compared to her commander gear. Her attitude alone was completely changed, from the way she greeted us to how she mingled with Orion and me.

She'd worn her long purple and pink hair in loose curls and donned a simple white dress.

A pink and white checkerboard patterned apron was tied behind her, and she'd made us an amazing breakfast of scrambled eggs with bacon, sausage, pancakes with strawberry syrup, and gave us the choice of coffee, tea, or milkshakes!

It was a warming breakfast; one I hadn't experienced since I was little when my mother was still home. My memories were vague, but I remembered how my mom loved baking. The large kitchen was the size of Magnor's living room and kitchen combined.

Later on, Harrison had joined, saying he got a call and couldn't ignore it. I immediately noticed there was something between Mom and Harrison.

The look they gave one another made me suspicious of whether Mom was still in love with Dad or if they were truly planning to get a divorce. *Not to forget Harrison loved calling my mom "Sweetcakes."*

Now that we were full, I asked Mom if we could talk privately, and that was the reason we were here. I was scared to talk to her alone because I didn't know how I was going to react.

I didn't know how I was supposed to feel. Happy? Sad? Angry? My body felt like it was overwhelmed with emotion, but I was also anxious about how this conversation would go.

After what happened with Dad, I didn't know what to expect. *Would she end up dismissing my concerns as Dad had? Would she apologize but continue to put her role first?*

I had many questions and worries, and the mere thought of my mother dismissing my concerns made my heart drop in fear and sadness.

The uncertainty of it all contributed to the nerves I tried to hide from Orion who decided to come with me to the meeting.

He seemed to be cool with Harrison and could have stayed with him while Mom and I had our chat, but his presence was helping me keep calm. *Or trying to be calm.*

Orion lifted my right hand into his and squeezed it gently. I turned to look at him, admiring his relaxed expression as he smiled at me.

"I know you're nervous, but I think it will go well. Either way, I'm right here to support you," he reassured me. I took a deep breath and let it out slowly, meeting his gaze with a small smile.

"What if...she's like Dad? I'm just scared that she'll want to rekindle whatever relationship we had, only to discard it later. I haven't had the time to ponder on what happened with Dad. I don't know if I can handle it with Mom," I admitted.

Orion nodded in understanding. “I get it. It’s tough when you want things to work out with your parents, but it seems like the odds aren’t in your favor. I don’t know about Orlando, but for your mother, I genuinely feel that she’s happy you’re here. I bet she missed you. I can see it when she looks at you.”

“You think so? I didn’t see anything,” I mumbled.

“Your vision is different than mine, Blessed Love. In your vision, you see a beautiful woman who you haven’t seen in years. It’s probably still registering in your mind. For me, I see a beautiful woman who sees herself in her daughter who she hasn’t seen since you were very little. I’ll stay for the more political stuff, but I think you two do need a moment alone to work stuff out on the deeper level.”

“I guess...” I lowered my head.

Orion shifted slightly in the sofa to reach out with his right hand to lift my chin up. His lilac eyes twinkled with admiration as they locked onto mine.

“Trust me, Celestia. It will be worth it,” he whispered, closing the distance between us to give me a reassuring kiss.

I pressed my lips firmly against his, hoping his words were true as I shoved my anxiety and nerves in the back of my mind, hoping they would disappear once I learned more about my mother.

We pulled apart to stare at each other, and the sound of the door opening broke the spell between us. We shifted our gazes to see my mother in a combat outfit, her shoulders draped with her gold cape trimmed in pink and purple.

Her long locks were up in a ponytail, and she wore white knee-high boots that matched her white and gold attire. She

gave us a small smile before she turned around to what looked to be two guards at the doorway.

“I’ll be fine on my own. Feel free to take the rest of the afternoon and evening off. Harrison is in the next room, so you do not need to worry about my safety,” Mom soothed.

“Yes, Commander!” The two guards spoke in unison. She nodded her head, and they bowed before walking away. She closed the door and turned to face us.

“Sorry to make you two wait. I had to deal with some pixie matters.” Mom made her way over to her white marble desk.

“It’s okay,” I replied quietly. Orion squeezed my hand in encouragement before he turned toward my mother. She pulled out her white chair and sat.

“There are pixies here?” Orion asked.

“Yes. Any shifters who are close to extinction find safe haven here. I don’t know if Aslan has gotten the news, but Darkness swallowed another dimension. Majority of the Pixie race was on that dimension when it occurred. The ones who escaped had nowhere to go,” Mom explained.

“Are there any families?!” I asked, anxiously wondering if Finn’s family had escaped in time.

Mom gave me a sad look and sighed. “No honey. They’re still checking, but only a few pixies remained. Did you know someone who was on that dimension before the incident?”

I frowned as I glanced at Orion’s hand that held mine tightly.

Orion answered on my behalf. “Our friend, Finn Charm. His family recently fled to that dimension due to the increased

Forsaken attacks. He found out his family was killed. We just wondered if maybe they were able to escape.”

Mom was quiet for a moment, prompting me to lift my head with a bit of hope, but her sad expression revealed that spark of hope was pointless.

“I can check into it again, but I don’t think your friend Finn’s family survived. It was a tiny reaction window before everything went downhill and ended in the dimension’s demise. I will look into it, or at least assure Finn that their names will be collected and honored on the gravestone being created on their behalf,” Mom explained.

“Thanks, Mom,” I said quietly.

“Thank you...um...Commander?” Orion replied.

“Please, call me Charlotte. I only go by Commander when I’m on duty.” She met my gaze and gave me a sweet smile.

“I’ve missed you, Celestia. I feel we have a lot to talk about, but I think we should focus on your main questions regarding Alpha Pure,” Mom suggested.

Orion and I exchanged looks before we nodded. “That would be a good start,” I replied.

Mom nodded and relaxed back into the white leather chair. She took a deep breath before a serious expression formed on her flawless face. “Alpha Pure is now the sanctuary for endangered species across the dimensions, but before that, it was nothing but a group of individuals who noticed the decline of shifters and an increase in Forsaken.”

“I and the other individuals involved thought of the idea of a temporary sanctuary when we’d completed our time at Aslan Academy and saved a group of hellhounds. They are one of the rarest types of shifters, and their population is so little, we

were worried the group we found was all that remained of their race. Our little temporary safe haven began to grow as we continued our missions, and I decided that we should create a place where shifters could coexist and be protected from the Forsaken's growth across the realms."

Mom lowered her gaze to look at the both of us. "I never expected it to get this big or for Alpha Pure to become an established safe haven, but during every mission, we discovered injured shifters and many whose homes had been destroyed due to the crossfire. It got to the point that we needed a leader to help maintain an organized, peaceful place, and I was voted into the position by the Council."

"The Council knows about this place?" Orion asked.

"Yes. They are well aware," Charlotte replied.

"Then why does Aslan Academy tell us otherwise? In fact, why do people say you guys kidnap shifters or even ruin your reputation when you're actually spreading goodness and saving rare shifters?" I raised an eyebrow and crossed my arms.

Mom sighed and reached out to pull the hair tie out of her locks, releasing them to fall in a graceful movement.

"It's complicated. Not everyone agrees with our peace movement, while others think that different shifters can't get along. It's been a debate for years, and those who disagree do their utmost to let people think we're bad. Some of those people think if they tell people to stay away from us, those who are endangered will be safe. We don't want people finding out about this place and spreading it around for real hunters or evil individuals to show up and go on a killing spree. Many of the shifters here are still recovering from what they saw and experienced. A few have barely survived being

shifted into a Forsaken, and one trigger could set them off. We do provide therapy to those who still struggle, but we're working on making them strong enough to one day leave this place and go back to their dimensions. Well, that is if they are still standing."

"Then...is Dad one of the people who doesn't approve of this place? I mean...he...well..." I trailed off, unsure what to say about Dad.

"Orlando...he's complicated, Sweetheart. I'll go into detail regarding him later. He somewhat supports Alpha Pure, but many influences don't like how far we've grown. Take the Council, for example."

"Wait. The Council doesn't want you guys anymore?" Orion asked, sounding a little taken aback.

Mom shot us a troubled look as she leaned forward in her chair, rested her elbows on the desk, and dropped her head in her hands.

"The Council is worried we're too powerful. Yes, the majority of the shifters who reside here now are rare breeds, but most of them are extremely powerful. Their numbers may be extremely small compared to other common races like bears or birds, but many of these shifters can destroy an entire race in a few minutes with little exhaustion. They're afraid that we'll be a fighting force and we wouldn't be on their side."

"Why would you guys fight though? Isn't everyone aiming towards destroying the Darkness?" I asked.

"Not everyone wants the Forsaken to leave," Charlotte admitted.

"Huh?" Orion and I said together.

“What do you mean? That makes no sense.” I furrowed my brow in confusion.

“Some people think that in this world, there has to be good and evil. Light cannot be in the world for long without Darkness. Same as there will always be good and bad people. Some of these individuals think some species are overpopulated and think the Forsaken are doing them a favor.”

I felt Orion tense up next to me and I grimaced at the thought. “That’s not right! The Darkness is not just killing shifters. They’re swallowing them and changing them into their own. There’s going to come a time when they launch an attack on all dimensions and try to taint the whole galaxy with Darkness. What do those people have to say about that?!” I argued.

“I think they presume they’ll be able to hide or have their own safe place to go to when they think the Darkness will strike.” Charlotte rubbed her temples and sighed.

“Selfish individuals who will have their own escape plans when the time is right, but don’t care about the rest of the dimensions that will be affected by it. They only said those things because their race isn’t going extinct,” Orion grumbled, sounding extremely pissed.

I placed my other hand on our joined hands to try and soothe him, knowing the pain he felt regarding his family. I also felt for Finn’s family that I’d never got the opportunity to meet. *How was it fair to promote violence and death because you believed it wouldn’t phase you or the ones you loved?*

“I understand your feelings, and I support you. I believe because certain shifter races haven’t been ‘wiped out’ those who oppose our mission think they’re impenetrable. However,

with the way it's going and the increase of Forsaken, I don't know how long we'll have before something big happens and many shifters are hurt by it." Mom pursed her lips.

"So what do you do here then?" Orion asked.

"We nurture shifters who need a temporary place to stay, especially after a Forsaken incident where they are wounded physically or mentally. When they and their family or pack of shifters are ready to leave, we escort them to a safe dimension to start fresh," Charlotte replied.

"Aren't you afraid of them sharing about Alpha Pure?" I asked.

"We make an oath with them that they can't reveal our location. Once they've left this place, they won't be able to return unless they are in dire need once more."

"How does that work?" Orion asked. "Wouldn't they remember how to get back?"

"The spell is initiated on their way out. They vow that unless in dire need of assistance from Alpha Pure, they will not be able to return here. Once it's initiated, they won't be able to find the right location that leads here. It doesn't matter how hard they try. Unless their body is at a high enough stress level that could be measured as a shifter's impending doom, they will not be able to find our location. This is to ensure no one brings evil to this land."

"Intriguing," Orion said.

"Does that mean when we leave, we'll never be able to come back here?" I asked in a hushed tone. *I just got to meet Mom after how many years? Does that mean I'll never be able to come back?*

“Celestia, you and Orion are more than welcome to come back. I know you won’t harm anyone here, and this is your birthplace. You have every right to be here,” Mom whispered.

The knock at the door stopped me from getting the chance to ask more. The white door opened halfway to reveal Harrison with a tray of tea and biscuits. “Decided to bring a snack,” he announced.

Mom smiled broadly at Harrison’s appearance, and he walked over to place the gold tray on the coffee table before us.

“Thank you, Harrison.”

“You’re welcome, Sweetcakes. I’m going to be in the other room if you need anything.” Harrison turned his gaze on us. “You two okay?”

“Yup,” I replied.

Orion smiled. “I’m going to be right back.”

I gave him a pout as I blinked my eyes. The smirk on his lips only widened as he leaned down and gave me a soft kiss. “I won’t be long. Harrison forgot to bring milk.”

Harrison and I both looked down at the tray and realized he did forget to bring the milk. “Huh? I swear I put it there.” Harrison lifted his hand to scratch his head in confusion.

Orion shrugged. “It’s fine. I’ll be back.” He bowed his head to my mother who gave him an appreciative smile. Harrison and Orion made their way out the door, closing it gently behind them.

I guess it’s now or never.

My Miracle and Confession



Mom and I sat in silence, and I stared at the steam drifting up from the tea.

Where do I begin? What do I even say? Hey, Mom. I missed you for many years, and I feel you don't love me because you've been doing this amazing job at saving everything but didn't care to come to visit your daughter? No, that's rude...but that's what I wish I could say, but she'd hate me if I were honest. But the truth will set you free. I don't want it to come back and bite me in the butt. Ugh, why did Orion go? He'd know what to say.

Mom rose from her chair and walked over to sit in Orion's previous spot. She turned her body to face me, and I looked at my lap as my hands began to fidget.

"Celestia. You can tell me how you feel."

"Even if it hurts? What about if it's not nice things?" I raised my gaze to meet hers. She appeared troubled by my words, but she gave me a short nod and sat taller. "Yes. Even if it may hurt my feelings. Whatever you feel like stating, feel free to share it. I know you wouldn't say it unless I deserved it."

"Why did everyone lie to me?" I whispered, lowering my gaze as I tried to compose myself.

“Lie?”

“Mom...do you not know what I went through? Or did you not hear about it from Dad?”

“What happened? To be honest, Orlando and I have been having difficulties contacting each other. I’ve been traveling around to different dimensions doing my best to save other shifters. Whenever I asked Orlando if you were okay, he said you were. He didn’t call you more often? I knew Magnor said he wanted to train you and keep an eye on you after some incident, but he never went into details. I guess because I was in the middle of a dangerous rescue mission, but what did I miss?” Mom asked innocently.

Her mismatched pink and purple eyes told me right away that she was clueless as to how bad my childhood had been.

“Are you and Dad getting a divorce?” I asked bluntly.

“No, not at all, Sweetheart. What makes you think that? That’s the second time you’ve brought it up. What happened when you were younger that I’m not aware of?” Mom stressed.

I frowned, and shrugged my shoulders in disappointment. I didn’t know if I was disappointed in my dad for not telling my mom, or if I was sad that they weren’t getting divorced.

“Why do you love Dad when he doesn’t even care about me?” I mumbled.

“Celestia. Who said he doesn’t care? What did he do?”

“Mom. When I was nine, I tried to kill myself.”

The room was utterly silent, and I didn’t bother to look at her expression before I continued. “Ever since you left and Dad followed soon after, I was bullied. Everyone treated me

poorly, Mom. The people at the marketplace would throw food at me. When I went to school, the kids laughed at me, kicked me, and punched me while the teacher did nothing to stop it. There were days that the person you guys hired to take care of me never showed up. In fact, they stopped showing up eventually, and I was left alone. When I was sick, I was alone. When I was hurt, I had to bandage my own wounds. I was the only unicorn shifter registered, and instead of feeling precious or valued, I felt like a piece of garbage that even animals didn't want."

I lifted my gaze and saw my mom's devastated face staring at me in disbelief. "One night it was raining, and after getting beat up again that week, I had enough. I wanted to die. It was better than having parents who couldn't even check on me or everyone hating me. I was on my way to finish the deed when Magnor found me. He took me in and essentially raised me. Arielle came along not too long after. She is my familiar, and well...here we are. Aside from Dad contacting Magnor to hand over the dual swords he got for me, and getting the beads from you for Sia and me...we barely talked."

Mom was speechless, but I kept going, determined to reveal everything.

"Dad apologized when I made it to new Aslan, and he said he would try to make things right. He assured me he wanted to be a better father, but when I needed him the most, he wasn't there, Mom. I got tainted during the exam at school when there was a mishap, and I felt really bad. I knew in my soul there was something wrong with me, and I went to see Dad repeatedly. Each time the secretary told me he was busy or that he was in a meeting. That day right before the storm, and I used my magic to knock her out so that I could see Dad. That's

how desperate I was, Mom. I needed help because I was frightened I'd become a Forsaken."

A tear rolled down my cheek, but I brushed it away with my hand. "I told him that there was something wrong with me. I begged him to help me or even to call you to help me. That's when he said you two weren't really talking, and he said he wouldn't call you. I just...I felt discarded. Just like I had when I was small. It made me wonder if the kids on the playground were right. Maybe I shouldn't have existed, because now that I needed help, my own dad didn't care. I walked out of the office feeling defeated, and well...if it wasn't for Finn and Magnor...I...don't think I'd be here," I confessed with my head low.

"Celestia...I...didn't know," Mom whispered.

"Well...surprise? I was so scared to see you because I thought...I thought you'd reject me too. If it weren't for Magnor, Arielle, and the guys, I don't know where I'd be, Mom. I've faced Forsaken on multiple occasions now, and even though I try to be strong, it's so fucking scary. I want to be strong, but I continue to have these nightmares about Darkness and me being a Queen. I don't know how long I can fight it anymore. I asked Dad if I'm tainted, but he wouldn't even lift his eyes from his work to look at me. I could have died, and he wouldn't have cared. I just thought maybe if Dad could reject me so easily, maybe you didn't want me either? Was I a mistake, Mom?"

She gawked at me, and I let my tears fall as I stared desperately into her eyes. "If I was a mistake, it's okay to say so. At least it would make sense why my parents don't care about me. Like...Magnor's not even my dad, but he loved me better. If you could have just told me you were busy saving

people, I would have understood. I wouldn't have begged you to come back. At least I would have known you were truly busy. Instead, all I knew was my mom was in some dimension it was hard to communicate with while Dad was, apparently, a gatekeeper. Now I find out years later they were all lies. So if this was because you never wanted me, I'll accep-

"Celestia," Mom whispered, and I watched tears roll down her cheeks as I trembled.

"If...If you didn't want me, you could just say so, Mom. I won't be mad...I won't...I won't be upset. I'll accept it and never get in your way again." I meant every word. Quietly, I began to whimper.

Mom reached out and pulled me into her arms, and I couldn't fight back anymore. I wept like a baby. How I missed my mom's hugs and comforting presence in my life, but if she regretted having me, I'd understand and leave her life for good. I'd made the decision in my mind last night before bed, hoping it would lower the agonizing pain that would come with knowing my parents never wanted me, but it still hurt like an open wound, and I didn't know what to do to stop it.

My tears would only bring my mother guilt, and I didn't want that for her. Anything could have happened to cause her not to want me.

Maybe I came by accident, and they weren't ready to have a unicorn shifter who was a part of an almost extinct race. Whatever the reason, I was willing to accept it and leave the picture for good.

Why stay in someone's life when all you reminded them of was what they could have done without your entry into the world?

“Celestia, you are NOT a mistake. You have no idea what a blessing you are in my life. I didn’t know. I swear I had no clue it was that bad. Orlando and I were having issues communicating, and I guess we had our own share of arguments and disagreements. I never expected it to impact you in such a negative way,” Mom confessed and pulled back to stare directly into my eyes.

“I asked Magnor to check on you because I hadn’t heard from Orlando for a while. I knew he was having difficulties with the Council, and they were monitoring his phone calls and who he was associating with, so Orlando had to lay low for a few months before he secured his position at Aslan. Magnor did tell me he found you hurt and took you in, but the reception had been so bad, the line had cut off. I couldn’t get a hold of him until a few days later, and I couldn’t leave the mission we were conducting because I was the commander. I kept trying to call. I called until I finally got service, but Magnor said you were better, but resting. All I could hear was your soft inhales and exhales, and Magnor did his best to keep me posted that you were safe. I never thought you were bullied.”

“Magnor knew,” I whispered.

Mom sighed. “Magnor doesn’t like telling me stuff because he knows I’d stop everything and come home. During that time, it was when we began our mission to save as many unicorns as we could because they were being hunted and slain in broad daylight. However, that’s no excuse to ignore you.” She hugged me again and held me for a long time as I cried. I knew she was doing everything not to break down, quietly shedding her tears for the sake of comforting me.

“So I’m not a mistake? You don’t hate me? I can come back if I miss you? Mommy, I really missed you.” I sobbed uncontrollably.

“Oh, Sweetheart. I missed you every single day. Every chance I got I looked at your photo. I wished so hard that I could be there for you instead of doing my duty as a Commander. I know all I’ve said sounds like excuses, and that’s what they are, but if I truly knew how bad the situation had been, I would have come home in a heartbeat. You are my life, Celestia. You are my little me, and I never expected that my lack of being physically there for you would have caused you so much turmoil. Baby, please forgive your mother. If I could go back and change everything, I would.” She held me as tightly as she could as she cried.

“What if you go back on your word? Dad did...” I whispered.

“Orlando...ugh. I won’t defend your father until I know exactly why he dismissed you like that, but I will not go back on my word, Celestia. A mother has a special bond with her child, and I struggled so hard to have you. You were the miracle baby I begged for. I never dreamed for you to experience what you did. I’m so sorry,” she whispered.

I continued to sob until no more tears came out. Mom rubbed my back and allowed me to calm down before she pulled back to look in my sad eyes.

“Can I make a phone call real quick?” she asked.

I nodded and watched her get up and walk to her desk. She pulled out a phone and tried a few times to dial a number, but from the sound of the ongoing ringtone, the person wasn’t picking up. She sighed, and her eyes began to glow before she dialed the phone again.

It only took three rings before someone picked up the line. There was a response on the other end before my mother spoke. "I don't care how busy your schedule is. Come. Here. Now. Or I'll definitely divorce you no matter what the others say." She hung up the phone before the person could respond.

I blinked at her in confusion, and she gave me a small smile. "Orlando will be here in three days or less. I'll give him a good lecture, and I'll figure out what happened." Mom placed her phone on her desk, walked back over, and sat next to me.

"Mom...but Dad won't come. And what did you mean by the 'no matter what the others say' part?" I asked.

Mom blushed and glanced away as she looked deep in thought for a moment.

"Orlando will come. I may be nice, but I won't play with this issue, and he knows it. As for the others...um. How am I going to explain this?"

I gave her a blank expression as I waited for her to figure things out. She sighed, looking like she'd given up trying to figure whatever out and she stared directly into my eyes.

"Celestia. Orlando isn't just your dad."

"Huh? Dad isn't my dad?!" I asked.

Mom lifted her hand up to move them side to side dismissively. "No, no. He is. I...this would be easier if Harrison or Hellsin were around," she whined.

"You know Hellsin?" I asked. She gave me a small smile, and her shoulders drooped in defeat.

"Celestia. Orlando is one of your dads."

"Da- Dads?" I stuttered.

“Orlando, Harrison, Hellsin, and finally Magnor. The four of them are married to me, and you are our Blessed Child.”

Who I Really Am



I stared at Mom as if she'd lost it. "Wh- What?!"

There was a knock on the door, and we turned to see Orion and Harrison return with another tray of tea. This time it included the milk.

Orion met my shocked expression and frowned, walking over to me without a hint of hesitation. "Celestia? You're extremely pale."

"I'm going to assume you just dropped the truth bomb." Harrison spoke as he made his way to the desk to put the new tray of tea down. He walked over to stand in front of Mom and me. He knelt on the floor and reached out to stroke my head soothingly. "Celestia, honey. Breathe. You'll pass out at this point if you don't relax."

I took a few deep breaths. Orion sat next to me and pulled me into his arms, comforting me as I came to terms with what I'd just heard.

"Why is she in shock?" Orion asked.

"I guess it's a normal reaction. Did you tell her, Charlotte?" Harrison looked up at Mom as he asked, his tone serious. I heard her sigh, and I could imagine her nodding in agreement.

“Yes. She knows. We need to talk after. You and me,” Charlotte suggested.

“Knows what?” The curiosity lingered in Orion’s gentle voice as he continued to hold me.

Harrison sighed heavily. “It’s a long story, but Orlando isn’t Celestia’s only father.”

“...Meaning?” Orion pressed, but I knew from the tone of his voice that he’d figured it out but wanted to hear it with his own ears.

“Hellsin, Magnor, and I are also Celestia’s parents. Or I guess dads. Celestia’s genetic makeup is with all five of us. She’s our child,” Harrison confessed.

“Isn’t that impossible?” Orion inhaled sharply. “Wait...that means Celestia’s a Blessed Child?”

I pulled back to look at Orion, and he turned his gaze on me.

“Blessed Child?” I quietly asked.

Orion slowly nodded. “A child born through love and magic. I don’t know the details about it, but my parents once talked about it. Think of it like having one mother, but to create a Blessed Child, you need two to four men involved. It’s a term given to shifters who mate with more than one individual. Not all children are necessarily blessed because they can find out later after the birth of the child that they only carry one father’s genetic code. However, there is a one percent chance that the child will carry traits from all the men involved, meaning the men are all the father of the child. My father said there hadn’t been a Blessed Child in centuries. It’s almost impossible to accomplish.”

We turned our attention to Mom and Harrison, and they nodded in agreement.

“Harrison, Hellsin, Orlando, Magnor, and I were a team at Aslan Academy. We graduated together and remained as a team as we began to fight and vanquish Forsaken. We were known as Alpha Pure, which is how this sanctuary obtained its name. During one of our missions...well...” Charlotte trailed off and looked away, and I could see the pain in her expression as she bit her lip.

A grief-filled expression formed on the lines of Harrison’s face, and he stood up and placed his hand on my mother’s shoulder and continued.

“We had a mission where the Forsaken had taken over most of the dimension. It was an intense battle with many teams trying to hold off the Forsaken long enough to transfer the remaining shifters and humans on the dimension through a portal. During that event, your mother pushed herself to her limit and was struck by a Forsaken. It was pretty bad, and we barely escaped. Your mother was in a coma for a few weeks. She eventually recovered, but it was revealed that the attack had damaged certain parts of her body, the main area being her womb.”

Orion and I stared blankly at them, our mouths wide in shock.

“Meaning...” I trailed off.

“She couldn’t have children,” Orion finished with a whisper.

Harrison bit the side of his lip and nodded while Mom lowered her head, looking depressed just from those words.

“We tried everything, went to every possible healer. No one could solve the problem. Only one man suggested that we try the birth method of creating a Blessed Child. Yes, the percentage was one percent, but we had nothing else to lose. The chance of having a child was better than no chance. All of us had enough magic for it, so it was really trial and error,” Harrison disclosed.

“Does that mean you guys were all together? I mean like, um you know,” I suggested.

“Yes, Celestia honey. We’ve been together with your mom for many years and married her before we decided to try and have you.” Harrison had a sweet smile on his face as he stared at me with pride. Mom lifted her head to look at me with tear-filled eyes.

“I wanted so desperately to have a child. I never thought about it when we’d been working on our careers as Hunters and Huntresses, but when I found out that I could never have children, it dawned on me how badly I wanted at least one child. One would have been enough, but that right was completely taken from me. It was a difficult time, and everyone was affected by it. Especially Orlando,” Mom admitted.

“Why Orlando?” Orion asked. His voice didn’t hold any emotion which made me wonder if he was upset.

Harrison spoke up. “Orlando was in charge of the mission and blames himself for Charlotte’s injury. She was originally supposed to work behind the scenes, but things got hectic, and because Charlotte is one of the strongest mages, it made sense to have her assistance. However, Orlando underestimated how strong our opponent was. It wasn’t just a few Forsaken. We’re talking about an entire dimension full of them that had

overtaken 99% of the land. It's what some people would have termed as a suicide mission. We should have abandoned the remaining shifters, but many of them were Centaurs like Orlando, and their race is just as rare as unicorns. Hence the reason he faults himself for Charlotte's struggle."

"So why did he treat Celestia so poorly?" Orion argued. Harrison raised an eyebrow at us, and Mom gave us a sympathetic look.

Orion decided to continue before either of them could respond. "Celestia grew up being bullied by everyone in Versa. She had to live a life of torment and isolation until Magnor came by. Sure, Magnor did his share as a good father and still owns up to it in his own way, but if you're telling me Celestia had four fathers, where were all of you? Why did you guys keep it a secret for so long and let Celestia go through that pain? And Orlando especially. Celestia told him all about the bullying, her past, the struggle she experienced. Heck, Celestia stated how she missed her mom and just wanted one phone call to talk!"

I squeezed Orion's hand, knowing he was upset about all of this. I guess it made sense to be mad, but now that I'd told Mom everything and got her side of things, my anger seemed to have dissipated. Regardless, the whole situation was hard to forgive and forget, especially with the way Orion was putting it.

"He asked Celestia for forgiveness and instead, he shoved her away when she needed him the most. Celestia had been swallowed by a Forsaken before we got to new Aslan, and she was seconds away from being retaken by the Darkness over some prophecy. All because he dismissed her when she truly needed salvation. If it weren't for Finn Charm, Celestia would

be dead. What would Orlando have to say then? Oops? Sorry? I'm not going to sit here and give him a free pass when he deliberately ignored Celestia, the woman I love dearly, because he has his own reasons that are in the past. We're in the present. Mistakes can always be made, but you won't grow from them if you don't stop and realize what is contributing to those mistakes and work on fixing them."

We were all silent as Orion's words lingered, all of us absorbing the words of wisdom. Harrison looked conflicted for a moment before he took a deep breath.

"I agree with what you have to say. Orlando...had a really troubled past, and though he was pleased with the idea of helping Charlotte because he loved her, I don't think he expected it to work. None of us did, actually. We'd tried and tried and weren't successful. We gave it one more shot for the hell of it, and that was when Charlotte became pregnant. Orlando had been the main contributor while Hellsin, Magnor, and myself hosted the magic that would initiate the process. That is why Celestia has more similar characteristics to Orlando and Charlotte compared to the rest of us."

"So...he didn't want me?" I asked.

"Sweetheart, it's not like he didn't want you," Charlotte whispered.

"Again, Orlando's past was...well it was fucked, and he didn't think of himself as a father figure. When he found out he was going to be a father, he was thrilled. He was beyond happy, same as the rest of us, but then the Council got involved and well...Orlando knew early on after you were born that he'd eventually have to do what the Council wanted, regardless if he had a kid or not."

"Duty comes first before raising a child?" Orion asked.

“In this case, yes. You see, back then it wasn’t like it is now where so many students apply to Aslan. It was the opposite, and the shortage of our team alone had made a large impact. We all raised Celestia until she was about three before Hellsin and I had to help out with Alpha Pure to keep it safe and organized. Soon, Magnor was summoned for multiple missions and requested by many Hunters and Huntresses to assist in training them, and he became overwhelmed with work. That led to just Charlotte and Orlando, and eventually Alpha Pure needed Charlotte because she’s the only one who could soothe many of the shifters here.”

“Why couldn’t you just bring Celestia with you back here?” Orion’s voice was laced with confusion.

“Too risky.” Charlotte shook her head. “They were already suspicious on how I’d given birth. Miolana had to get involved, and with the help of Othello, they forged the reports that I’d been healed and was given a small window to give birth. That was why I’d disappeared to do my own thing. I didn’t want to risk bringing Celestia back. Especially with the chance of Forsaken attacking Alpha Pure. This area is only guarded against a certain point. If Celestia had accidentally ventured outside because of her adventurous spirit...the risk was too great. Also, being a Blessed Child makes her a rarity all on her own, even more so than her being a unicorn shifter with the magic level she was born with.”

“She took the adventurous side from Hellsin,” Harrison pointed out with a smirk.

Charlotte gave him a look. “She took my mischievous side. Not the adventurous side.”

He shrugged.

“We’ve proven this.”

Harrison walked back to me and knelt on his knee, placing his hand on mine that was still in Orion's.

"You have every right to be upset, Celestia. I don't know the facts, but from what I gathered from Orion's speech, you were neglected. We didn't do our duties as parents, and excuses aren't going to solve the problem. An apology can start the process, at least. On behalf of your dads and Charlotte, I'm terribly sorry for everything you have been through. I never wished for our child to struggle, yet here we are, trying to heal old wounds. I don't know what we can do to officially heal them, but I will do what I can to be a decent parent from now on. So please...give us a chance to redeem ourselves? Even asshole Orlando? Your unicorn father would be extremely happy," he whispered.

"You ARE a unicorn shifter!" I gasped.

Orion shook his head.

"Blessed Love, I think you should answer his plea first."

"Oh, right." My cheeks heated with embarrassment.

I glanced between Mom and Harrison and took a deep breath.

"I forgive you. It may take a while for Orlando, but I'm willing to hear his side of the story when that time comes. Um...I guess I can say I'm home?" I whispered with a shy smile.

Harrison had a broad grin on his face, and Mom was crying again, tears streaming down her cheeks.

Harrison looked at Orion with a prideful expression.

"We may have only known each other for two and a half days, but I'd like you to know that I have a lot of respect and

pride in you. From the moment we met, I saw how protective you were with Celestia. Even when the situation you two were in caused you to hurt her, you owned up to your mistake and risked your life to ensure she survived the journey here. Again, I understand your anger, and you have every right to be as upset as Celestia. I apologize to you for our flaws as parents, and it's thanks to your assistance that we're able to see our mistakes and work on them. If you could give us a chance to try again, we'd be greatly appreciative. I also thank you for being there for Celestia and loving her. It's reassuring to know she has someone who loves her to such an extent at an early age."

Orion shyly glanced away as his cheeks tinted red.

"Thanks...and I guess I can give you guys a second shot."

I smiled and looked at Mom who also had a soft smile on her face.

"I'm happy my sweet daughter has found someone she loves," Mom praised.

I blushed, realizing I hadn't gone into details about my "relationships."

"Uh...about that," I said hesitantly, looking at Orion who met my gaze.

His lilac eyes displayed his confusion before my comment clicked and he blushed harder.

"Uh..." Orion trailed off, and we were both silent.

Mom and Harrison studied us with intrigued expressions.

"I feel like we're missing something," Charlotte whispered to Harrison who nodded.

“Totally feel something. What’s our Sweetheart hiding?”

I glanced away as I wondered how to word this.

Time for the awkward train.

“Um. So...uh...how do I put this? Orion is my boyfriend, yes. But...he’s one of my boyfriends?” I said in more of a question than a statement.

Harrison and Mom both stared at me with blank expressions like they didn’t understand what I’d just said. Orion chuckled.

“I’m not Celestia’s only boyfriend,” Orion revealed.

“How many?” Harrison asked.

“Uh...if you include Orion...six.” I gave them a shy smile. Mom gawked at us, and Harrison grinned before he looked at Charlotte.

“So, remember back when we were dating, and we made that bet? I think that confirms I wo-OW! Sweetcakes?! I thought we agreed that you wouldn’t punch me. I didn’t even say anything annoying,” Harrison whined as he rubbed his now red arm that Mom had punched. I knew it was more playful, but I think she’d forgotten her own strength.

She snapped out of her daze. “I didn’t mean it to hurt! And NO, you don’t win the bet. I don’t remember it.”

“You say that, but I can guarantee you do. I’m calling Hellsin! He remembers everything!” Harrison argued.

“Oh no, you won’t!” Charlotte argued.

We watched the two of them continue to bicker, and I looked at Orion who had a small smile on his peaceful face.

“Guess that went a little better than expected,” Orion whispered as he squeezed my hand. I grinned and squeezed back as a wave of relief went through me.

“I think so too, but the tea is cold,” I pointed out.

Orion chuckled. “We can always make more tea,” he suggested.

“Yes.” I giggled happily, feeling the weight lifted off my shoulders regarding all the pent-up stress I’d been piling internally. I didn’t know if I was too forgiving, but everyone made mistakes and deserved to try again.

All I had to hope for was I could eventually forgive Orlando. I didn’t know if I could, but maybe...just maybe I could try again? At least now, I could finally learn who I really am.

Troubled Anxiety and Blessed Love
Always



I leaned on the rail of the balcony, my eyes lingering on the beautiful night sky and the wondrous land below. I couldn't help but smile at the immense beauty before me, especially with the gentle moonlight and the cool calming breeze teasing my flesh.

After our talk, we had ended up making dinner together. Orion and Harrison ended up throwing flour at each other when we attempted to make a cake for dessert. Even though Orion was usually quiet and didn't trust people easily, it seemed like he and Harrison connected right away, and he opened up with ease.

It was wonderful to watch him laugh and be able to loosen up a little, especially in front of Harrison, who was one of my dads. Mom said she'd go into detail about it when she showed us around the sanctuary tomorrow, but I was still adjusting to the thought of having four dads.

I wouldn't deny that I was happy one of my dads was Magnor, someone I always felt was a father figure to me in childhood and who still did his portion of being a parent in his own way.

After Mom gave the details about what was going on, I figured it made sense why Magnor had been traveling back

and forth. At least he'd done his best to balance the amount of work the Council wanted him to accomplish with taking care of me.

Everything I had heard about the Council was negative and caused me to wonder why we couldn't have a new Council instead of a group of old shifters who cared more about keeping traditional standards and using their power to keep their solid ways in place.

If what everything Mom and the others were saying was true, then they would only contribute to the growth of Forsaken due to their shortsightedness.

They seemed to be more focused on gaining power through the form of Hunters and Huntresses instead of caring about the problem at hand or about the rescuing of shifters who were rapidly becoming extinct.

For now, there wasn't much we could do until I figured out where we stood in this Forsaken outbreak, but I felt like I could help in some way. Seeing the sadness and depression Finn had gone through, and how Orion's family's murder still affected him, broke my heart. I couldn't imagine other shifters experiencing the same helpless fates.

We could do better, but how? What can I possibly do to fix anything before it comes a time that we have to fight Forsaken from overtaking our dimension or our home dimensions?

“Blessed Love?”

I slowly turned to glance over my shoulder to see Orion, who was leaning against the door frame of the balcony entrance. He was in nothing but white boxers, and his long silver-white hair was left loose and in its perfected beauty.

His purple eyes took a moment to appreciate my curves in my white silk nightgown Mom had ordered for me with a bunch of other clothes. They were surprisingly comfortable and fit my curves nicely. *Guess it was motherly instinct.*

My long purple-pink locks were left down in a loose wavy flow, and the gold strands seemed to have doubled since the last time I checked, making my hair practically glisten in the sun and moonlight.

“Hey. Where did you go after I showered?” I asked.

Orion smirked as he made his way over to where I stood. I turned around to face him, placing my arms to rest on the rails behind me.

He didn’t hesitate to slide his arms around my waist and pull me into a deep kiss that made me groan in satisfaction. Since we’d arrived here, I’d noticed how confident Orion had been with our relationship.

I didn’t know what had changed, but I was enjoying it and loved seeing his progress. It was like he was finally finding himself and who he wanted to be. Maybe his brother had a part in the gradual switch, but so far it had been all positive.

He released my lips and began to move down my neck, making my toes curl and a soft moan escape my lips. “Harrison was annoying me.”

“Was he...hmmm?” I closed my eyes, enjoying the way Orion’s lips sucked at my skin before his teeth gently bit and nibbled on my burning flesh.

“Ya...I had to shoo him away so I could get alone time with you.” Orion pulled back to meet my curious gaze.

“You’ve been really confident lately.” I moved my arms from the rail and wrapped them around his neck. “What’s

going on?”

“Hmm.” Orion pressed his forehead against mine before leaning in and locking lips with me again. We kissed a few times, enjoying the way our lips pressed against each other, and the affection I could feel with his kisses made my heart inflate with joy.

“Orion,” I whispered, giving him a look that told him he couldn’t keep avoiding the conversation.

It was hard to ignore his passionate moves, but I knew something was still bothering him, even after our talk yesterday.

He was still silent, but he tightened his hold around me and pulled me forward to press my body against his. “I’m...a bit scared.”

His admission was barely a whisper as he rested his chin on my left shoulder. I could hear how fast his heart was beating against his chest, reminding me of our last conversation and how quick his heart was back then.

“Orion? Why are you scared?”

“It’s stupid.”

“It’s not stupid if it worries you.” I knew Orion well enough to know he wasn’t the type to be scared easily.

“I’m scared I won’t be able to protect you from my brother. I’m afraid I’ll lose you somehow. I...just don’t want to be away from you, Celestia.” He leaned back to look at me with sad eyes.

“With you being a Blessed Child, and with everything going on with the Forsaken, I feel like we’re about to deal with something bigger than us. The guys...me...I don’t think we’re

ready to face it. You've always been there to strengthen us, to make up for our flaws and lack of magic so that we can defeat the enemy together. I'm scared because what if you're not there to give us that extra push to victory? How are we going to be strong enough to defend you when you need it?"

"Orion. What makes you think we'd get all involved with everything that is happening?"

"I can feel it, Celestia. Now that my brother knows you're connected to me, he'll be even more driven to bring you to the dark side," he admitted.

"Do you think your brother is evil?" I asked.

Orion was quiet for a long moment, looking deep in thought as he avoided my gaze. When he found an answer, he lifted his head to look into my eyes.

"No."

"Why?"

"I...I feel maybe...just maybe, something is controlling him? Or he has some motive that is being implemented because of false claims? I honestly don't know, Blessed Love. I've thought about it repeatedly for years, and I still can't conclude that he's an evil person. Yes, he's a Dark Rider, and they are essentially creatures of Darkness. But I feel I'm missing a puzzle piece, and I don't know where to look to find it."

"You think his obsession is due to the legend?" I asked.

"Yes and no. Yes because we all fit into the legend requirements, but I still feel in my gut that there's more. Before...coming to Aslan, my brother met me. I don't know how he knew where I was, but it was kind of like he'd always known where I'd been. Probably a twin thing, but during the

years he was training, and I was with my family, I couldn't sense him. It was a bit of a shock to see him after all those years, but all he said was that whatever happened, I shouldn't hate him."

"He said that?" I asked, a little taken back.

"Yup. It was as if he'd known that day would come. It's hard to admit it too, but he wasn't using his full strength when we were facing him. I was an idiot and let the Darkness overtake me because I was afraid."

He sighed and put his forehead against my left shoulder. "I was scared that he'd take you and I'd never see you again. I would fail at protecting you, and the mere thought of having to tell the others that I failed made me so anxious. I didn't want you to get hurt, and just seeing you unconscious after the Rhinroy sent you flying, I was left in a ball of panic and fear."

"Blessed Love," I whispered, hating how full of agony his voice sounded as he explained everything. I could feel his pain, fear, and the burden he carried. He thought of himself as a leader for the others, and the thought of bearing that responsibility and losing me must have been driving him to the wall.

"I...want to find out if my brother is doing this with his own will, because of...well...I don't know if I have the courage to kill him," Orion mumbled.

I lifted my arms to hug him, placing a soft kiss on his shoulder as we remained silent. "Do we have to kill him?" I asked eventually.

"I guess? The Council...they're not going to let someone who's been one with the Forsaken free."

“What if he’s not bad? Maybe he’s being controlled, or a different culprit is pulling the strings? What happened to innocent until proven guilty?” I contemplated.

We pulled apart, and Orion gave me a sad smile. “The traditional rules haven’t changed. I don’t think so anyway. They’re all about crucifying the target before they’re deemed innocent for the sake of getting rid of the person causing problems. Even if they are wrong, the members of the Council have never admitted it.”

“Isn’t Othello a part of the High Council? He’s the Head Leader,” I pointed out.

“He was until recently,” Orion revealed.

“Huh? What happened that made them take him off?” I asked in confusion.

“He helped us. I didn’t hear everything, but after the Fourth Trial, I overheard him, Magnor, and Miolana talking. They said the High Council voted him off because he was becoming too involved with the students and making unnecessary attachments.”

“That’s prejudice,” I countered.

Orion grinned at my pouted expression and slid his hand in mine as he led us back into our room to sit on the bed.

“I agree, which makes me wonder what we can do to overthrow them.”

“Overthrow the council? And who’s going to take their place?” I asked.

“I don’t know. Othello? Someone else who acknowledges that the old ways are wrong and outdated and that we need to change our overall system. Even if the Forsaken threat is

eliminated, there are many other problems with the dimensions. There's too much segregation of species, even after all this time. Adults and children bully those shifters who are almost extinct because they're so rare, which makes no fucking sense." Orion huffed the last part as he tightened his hold in my hand.

"The bullying, the neglect in helping one another. Everyone seems to be on their own mission to become powerful, and rich individuals run away when they have the power to help people other than themselves. There's essentially no unity when there should be. The Forsaken can spread and conquer dimensions easily because everyone focuses on themselves rather than helping each other to become stronger, better, and more positive. We can do so much more, yet we're under a Council that thinks everything is fine, and they have their "power" in Hunters and Huntresses."

"It's only a matter of time before we're outnumbered, and there won't be enough Hunters and Huntresses to be able to defeat the Forsaken's growth," I added.

Orion nodded, and he leaned back to rest on our bed. I did the same, our joined hands still interlocked as we stared at the ceiling.

"What I'm scared of the most is the Forsaken finding someone strong enough to host it," Orion whispered.

"Host it? You mean like what's going on with Odion?" I asked.

"Yes. Odion is already strong as is, but if the Darkness could get in contact with someone like one of the High Council members, we'd be screwed."

“You think that’s what the Darkness is after?”

“What do you mean?” Orion asked.

“What if its purpose is acknowledgment? I mean...I don’t know. Darkness is, of course, evil to many, but if it’s growing at such a fast pace now, shouldn’t we determine why? It’s kind of like how our decisions affect the earth and Mother Nature’s response to our actions. If they’re negative, natural catastrophes occur because of it. Maybe the Darkness is the same?” I suggested.

“That isn’t a bad thought,” Orion admitted.

“Orion.”

He turned his head to look at me, and I adjusted to rest on my left side to stare directly at him. “Don’t be afraid. I get why you’re scared, but we can do amazing things together. I won’t deny that there could be a situation where I may not be able to contribute, but even with the lack of time we may have with everything going on, we can work on it. There’s room for improvement and growth. We just have to continue our positive outlook. Once we get back to Aslan and tell the others everything that happened, we can find a solution to all of this. Maybe we will be able to look into your brother and his situation as well,” I explained.

I knew Orion was scared because he loved me dearly and couldn’t lose me like he had his family. Being a Blessed Child seemed like a high status that I’d yet to fully grasp or understand its amazing significance, but Orion appeared to know more than he wanted to share about that topic, and that was another plate of anxiety he was carrying.

“I know once we have Finn and the others, we’ll think of something. We always do.”

Orion flipped and stretched out on his right side facing me. “Okay. I’ll try not to worry...but I still won’t stop my advances on you.” The last part he mumbled and blushed.

I giggled, moving over so that I was pressed flush against him. “I like it.”

“Do you?”

“Very much,” I purred, leaning slightly forward to kiss him. His hand rested on my hip and began to glide lower to my upper thigh where the lace of my dress was. “Aren’t you worried I’m going to get pregnant with all the sex we’ve been having?” I questioned.

“No.”

“Why?”

“Well...the chance is pretty low, and if you did, I’d be fine with having a child with you,” he confessed. “We’re technically married.”

I blushed at his reminder, and I lifted my right hand to look at the blessed mark on my wrist that represented my official bond with Orion. I already had one from Finn on my chest that had been done on purpose, and another from Theo that was technically an accident.

“You...want kids?” I asked hesitantly.

“You don’t?” he countered. I was quiet for a few seconds, trying to think.

I was a little overwhelmed with everything that I’d been through up to this point. I had thought I was born in Versa, and I had no memories of this place. On top of that, I was still coming to terms with the fact that Magnor, Hellsin, and Harrison were my dads too.

How did I go from this sanctuary to Versa and not remember a single thing? Would I want to have kids? Do I want to bring a child into this world and let them experience what I did? What if I end up doing exactly what Mom did? It's not like she didn't want me, but what if my job ends up coming first, and I end up putting my kid in the same position as Mom and my dads did with me? I wouldn't be able to do that to my kid. There's no way I'd allow it...but what if there was no choice? With the way our lives are at this very moment, could I even afford to get pregnant?

“Blessed Love.”

I had to blink out of my daze as I realized a few seconds must have changed to minutes because Orion had a worried look on his face.

He stroked my cheek and then ran his hands through my hair. “What are you thinking?”

“I'm not ready...” I confessed, feeling ashamed. “I...I'm worried...or maybe frightened I'm going to be a horrible mother and end up abandoning our child due to our duties. I mean, I don't know what our duties will be when we graduate Aslan and become Hunters and Huntresses. In fact, I don't know if we'll be allowed to remain as Team Misfit when we graduate, like how my mother was able to remain as Alpha Pure. There are many factors against us, and I honestly don't know if I want kids. Maybe? I just...I want them to be loved and live the best life they can. Not in this world with Forsaken and fighting. Not with the disagreements, seclusion, and the chance of being bullied or hunted for who we are.”

I sighed and reached out to press my hand on Orion's chest, trailing it down those chiseled abs as I continued.

“Also, the others. I don’t know how everything is going to work with all of us dating. Would we aim to do what Mom did to me? Will...will we all be together in a year...or two years from now? I know I’ve been vocal about lacking in balancing everyone, but it’s tough. I feel more connected to you and Finn, maybe because of our races. Finn isn’t a unicorn, but pixies are just as magical and use similar elements. Not to say I’m not into the others. I’m getting closer to Hunter, especially with him watching over Arielle when I’m not around, and I still feel really connected to Cairus and Caio. Theo...I’m feeling distant lately? I don’t know why I suddenly feel like that, but whenever I think of him, I worry. I fear he’s just going to kind of disappear if I don’t get my shit together, but I’m struggling, Orion.”

I lifted my gaze to meet his purple one, and he reached out to rub a tear from my cheek that I hadn’t even realized had fallen from my watery eyes.

“You’re scared you can’t handle all of us?”

“I’m afraid I will suck as a girlfriend. You’ve all been really understanding, especially you and Finn. But the others, I don’t think I’ve given them enough of me for them to realize I’m not going anywhere. I’m just frightened that things are going to come up, one after another, and there will be that debate of who’s my favorite. I love all of you. I really do care for each of you with every piece of my heart. With all this constant change and finding out new information left and right in a span of days, I just feel overwhelmed. I want to be strong too, but how can I do that if we’re not all on the same page?”

“I think you’re doing a good job with everything that has happened. From day one with Old Aslan to New Aslan and all

the Trials. I do see why the others might be upset, but I think that anger would be targeted at me more than you.”

“Why? You didn’t do anything,” I pointed out.

“You’re more comfortable with Finn and me subconsciously. It’s like your shifter body senses the similarities in magic and yearns for it. Especially when you’re scared or unaware of what’s going on. I believe the others understand that, but it’s a mind game when we’re looking at the time spent with each guy,” Orion explained.

He leaned in to give me a firm kiss on the forehead. “I’ve been more intimate and have been wanting to show more compassion and love because I know that once we go back, you’ll have to spend time with the others, and well...I’ll be lonely. It’s selfish I know, and Finn kind of understands me, but the others don’t know my past to such an extent like you and Finn.”

“That’s what I want to prevent. You feeling lonely. Everyone feeling left out. I just...don’t know how. I can’t split myself into two or six,” I said with a hint of frustration.

Orion nodded and pulled me into his arms, his hands lowering to my waist as he held me.

“I know, Celestia, and we wouldn’t want to push you to your limits. We get it, but I feel this is going to be a process and learning experience. Maybe your mom will have advice because she’s married to Magnor, Hellsin, Harrison, and the Asshole.”

I had to take a second to try and figure out who the Asshole was. “I have a hunch Asshole is referring to Orlando?”

“Yes.”

“You realize you hold grudges?”

“Also yes.”

“At least you’re aware of it.” I sighed with a smile and pressed my forehead to his chest. “I’ll ask her, and maybe when we get back, we can talk with the others. I want this to work out, Orion. I want the others and maybe...eventually be bonded to Hunter, Caio, Cairus, and Theo. I don’t want to lose anyone, but I can’t juggle everything flawlessly right now. Not with all this change. I physically, emotionally, and mentally can’t do it.”

“I understand, Blessed Love, and we will work on it. I don’t want you stressing over it. We’re adults. We’ll find a way for this to work, even if I have to punch some common sense into the others.”

I grinned against his chest and pulled back. He leaned closer to gaze at me with a soft smile. “Violence is a bad tactic for creating harmony amongst friends,” I scolded jokingly.

“Not in this case. Finn can handle them, but if not, I’ll work my alicorn stubborn magic. They’ll cooperate.” He grinned.

I sighed in exasperation. “Again, I feel you have an evil side to you. Aside from your grudge holding and burst of rage when someone upsets you.”

“The quiet ones are the deadliest.”

“I can’t believe you’re proud of that.” I shook my head and giggled. Orion chuckled, and we ended up laughing together quietly before we kissed again at a slower pace.

I hugged him tightly and closed my eyes.

“Eventually, Orion.”

“Hmm?”

“I want kids one day. Just not now. I think it would be a wonderful experience to have a bonus with having six helping hands, but I wish for our dimension or the vast dimensions to change for the better. I want our children to be able to express themselves freely and not be punished or laughed at. For them to live in harmony with different shifters and watch them grow together without fear that they’ll be enemies one day. I want our children to experience a future that we create. One that’s better.”

“That sounds achievable,” Orion whispered. We shared a look, and I nodded.

“A world I hope all of us aim to achieve one day,” I said softly.

“Boy or girl?”

I grinned at the twinkle in his lilac eyes when he asked the question.

“Girl.”

“Why?”

“I don’t know. Do you want a boy?”

“Uh...” He trailed off as his cheeks tinted red. “I want a girl.”

“Huh? Why?”

“She’ll be pretty like you...” he admitted. “That’s my only reason for now.”

I beamed and wrapped my arms around his neck again before giving him a firm kiss. “You know you’re adorable, right?”

“Am I? I thought I was secretly evil.” He winked playfully before he rolled us over and pinned me into the sheets.

“You are, but you are adorably evil.” I laughed.

“Hmm. I can accept that.” He chuckled and pressed his forehead against mine as our noses touched.

“How about if I put a protective spell on you so that you can’t get pregnant until you’re ready?”

“There’s a spell for that?”

“Yes...uh...Harrison told me.”

“I don’t know how I feel about that,” I admitted as my face grew hot in embarrassment.

“Well, he did see us naked in bed this morning.” Orion quirked his lips up in a smirk.

“That’s because you’re a BLANKET HOGGER!”

“Well...ya.”

“Jeez, at least you admit it. That was embarrassing. I’m glad I was half asleep and didn’t notice anything until after he left,” I grumbled.

“You were cute when you freaked out though.”

“That was because I was NAKED!”

“That’s true. A good sight to see in the morning,” he purred, and his husky voice sent tingles through me.

“Ugh. I hate your sexy voice.”

“I like when you moan.” He claimed my lips in a heated kiss. When he was satisfied he released my lips and gave me a wide grin. “Do you want the spell?”

I didn't hesitate to answer. "Yes, but it can be reversed right?"

"Yes. Anyone can reverse it with your permission."

"Then that's not bad...does that mean we can have sex every day?" I asked with excitement.

Orion laughed. "Blessed Love, I don't have the sex drive for every day. Ask Finn."

"Why Finn?"

"Why do you think Pixies have huge families? Their sex drive is amazing, and their pregnancy time is a lot shorter than most shifters."

"Hmm. That's cheating."

Orion laughed harder and shook his head. "You're too much."

"I'm amazing." I grinned and leaned in to whisper in his ear. "Now, spell me up so we can fuck."

"I like when you're all commanding in bed."

"Same as how I love when you swear."

"Ya. Like that." Orion smirked and looked into my eyes.

"No matter what happens from here on out, know that I'm always here. And regardless of what our future holds, I'll always stay by your side. I'm your Blessed Love, just as you are mine. I won't ever let go and will always find you," he vowed. My eyes blinked a few times to hold back my tears.

"I'm happy to be your Blessed Love and am truly happy to have you in my life, Orion Meadow," I whispered. I knew after the spell was done, we'd spend the night making love like we had these last two days.

I'd just have to work on solidifying my bonds with all of my men, and I'd make sure Team Misfit remained a team for the sake of my heart that was already too deep in love to let go.

Bonding and Forgiveness



“Mom, I look like I’m about to go to war,” I pointed out as I studied my outfit in the mirror.

I met the gaze of her reflection as she smiled proudly at me.

Her mismatched eyes softened. “I think it fits you very nicely, Sweetheart.”

My cheeks flushed at her praise, and my gaze returned to review my appearance once more.

Today we were going to be shown around Alpha Pure. Mom and Harrison took today off to give us the full tour. We had to wear a certain set of clothes when walking around the premises, so people knew we weren’t intruders or simple guests.

Mom being the commander of this place, and I being her daughter, meant I had to wear similar attire. I didn’t know if people knew about my existence here, but they were about to find out.

I wore a pink tunic with gold stripes that ran down the cotton material and black tights. The black material of my tights barely showed because of the knee-high white boots and the tunic that fell past my knees.

My hair was in a neat bun, and I wore a gold necklace with a bright pink jewel that sometimes changed to purple depending on the angle the sunlight hit.

What really contributed to the commander look was the mini cape I wore that was very similar to my mother's. The gold cape shifted to pink, and the trimming was purple. I did love the overall look, but I didn't want to draw too much attention.

"I only need to wear this for today, right?" I asked, shooting her a pleading look.

She giggled and nodded in approval. "We just need the shifters to know you will bring no harm to them. A few of them may remember you which will be helpful. Those who don't will know by your attire that you are related to me. I also think our similar resemblance helps a lot."

"Mini-me," I mumbled, remembering when she used to call me that whenever we went out to the market of Versa to get groceries and all the town people would compliment our similarities. Aside from my eyes, I looked exactly like her.

It took me a few seconds to take in what she had said. "Some shifters may remember me?" I asked.

Mom nodded. "Yes. Many of the shifters who witnessed your birth are still with us today. You may meet some of them during our tour."

I turned and walked over to her large four poster bed made of white wood. I sat on the white sheets and looked at Mom, who began to get ready by brushing out the tangles in her long hair.

"Mom," I whispered, unsure if I should bring up my concerns now or later.

Mom looked my way and gave me an encouraging smile. “What’s troubling you, Sweetheart?”

“A lot of things. I don’t know what order to go in,” I admitted.

After another lovely night with Orion, I’d discussed with him what I wanted to talk about with my mother, but now that I had the perfect opportunity to confront her about our concerns, my mind was going blank.

“Just let whatever comes to your mind out. I’ll answer any questions as best as I can.” Mom assured me as she gave me another sweet smile and returned to brushing her hair, waiting for me to continue.

“Well, how long have you known the others? I mean like my dads?” I asked.

“I’ve known your dads for 30 years, 27 of those were us being married and living together,” Mom revealed.

“Who did you meet first?”

“Orlando and Magnor. They were pretty close friends back then, but very opposite. You wouldn’t expect them to be friends at first glance. Orlando was the smart nerd who got perfect scores, and Magnor was quiet but also smart and able to strike up a conversation if he had to. They didn’t get along in the beginning, but it worked out.” Mom sported a small grin as if she were watching her past in the reflection of the mirror.

“How about Harrison and Hellsin?” I asked.

“I met Harrison during our practical exam and Hellsin in my Advanced Magic class. Harrison is an individual who loves making people happy and was known by everyone. He was actually Aslan’s Prom King before we graduated. Hellsin was the athletic type, but it didn’t matter what he did, whether

it was a sport or academics, he always got a perfect score or led the team to victory. He especially loved Magic Football. I don't think they have it at Aslan anymore."

"Isn't that because he's like 8'5"?" I pointed out. "In fact... how um...well...hmm...this is awkward." I paused, trying to figure out how it was physically possible for Hellsin to be intimate with my mother, to begin with.

I mean, there's no way you can be 8'5" and have a small cock. Aww, shit. If he's my dad, there's no way I can think like this. Ah, I need holy water to cleanse my thoughts. AHHH!

Mom must have understood what I was trying to discuss. Her cheeks tinted a bright red as she glanced away.

"Hellsin has two forms, Sweetheart. His regular human form and his godly form you see guard the gates of the school," Mom explained.

"Oh. Well, that answers some questions." I muttered and looked away.

Mom laughed, and I turned to look at her. "I can guess what you're thinking, and that would be impossible. I may be a magician, Celestia, but I can't shrink cock sizes."

Red suffused my face, and I groaned. "Mom, this is extremely embarrassing."

"Really? From my daughter who has six boyfriends and is having a wonderful time with her alicorn lover?" Mom replied and winked at me.

"Mom!!!! How do you? UGH! It was Harrison wasn't it?!" I grabbed a pillow and covered my face. "Kill me now."

Mom continued to giggle. "Harrison doesn't need to say anything, Celestia. It's motherly intuition."

“Can’t you turn it off?” I muffled into the pillow.

“No, Sweetheart. It’s always on.”

I groaned again and laid back onto the soft sheets. “Mom?”

“Yes, Celestia?”

“Does your motherly intuition help with giving advice?” I asked, lowering the pillow to my chest as I stared at the high ceiling.

“It surprisingly does. How can I be of service to my loving daughter?” Mom queried.

I smiled and took a deep breath, trying to think of what I wanted to say. “I have a few questions, so I’ll just kind of state them all now, and you can elaborate on them?” Mom nodded as she waited for me to continue.

“My boyfriends are amazing. I know you haven’t met them all yet, but they each have such unique qualities. Orion is quiet at times, but he has many leadership skills. Finn is the one who loves to make everyone smile and laugh. I like to call him Lucky Charms. He acts silly on purpose, but he’s really intelligent and looks out for others. Hunter is Mr. Grumpy. He’s not grumpy all the time; he just attempts to be serious. He has his playful side though, and he tries not to show it, but he’s very protective of me and even my familiar, Arielle. Theo is the storyteller of the group, and he knows about a lot of things you couldn’t find in the library. He’s charming and romantic when he wants to be. Cairus is observant whereas Caio loves to analyze and ask questions on a whim. They’re an amazing combo in strength and brains.” I envisioned each of them in my mind as if they were right in front of me.

“I care dearly for them, but I’m scared I’m going to screw everything up because I’m not balancing myself evenly

between them.” I sat up with the intention of removing my shoes. “As of now, I’ve been around Orion and Finn the most, and I know we have similar magic and that’s what attracts us to one another, but it’s unfair for the rest of the guys. I feel it’s only a matter of time before one of them, or maybe all of them, get frustrated?” I explained, slowly taking both my boots off before I sighed.

I crossed my legs in the yoga pose and held the pillow tightly, resting my chin on the fluffy white puff of feathers.

“To be honest, I feel overwhelmed with everything going on, and I don’t know how not to feel that way. I don’t know what makes me special as a Blessed Child. Will that affect how the rest of school goes when I get back? I’m also dealing with these dark dreams, and I’m apparently a queen, but I don’t want to be. Not with the dark presence there. I haven’t been able to bond with the other guys yet what with the Trial’s we had at school before my confrontation with Dad as well as the incident at school where Arielle got hurt. I’m beyond overwhelmed, Mom, and I don’t know what to do.”

I lifted my head to look into those knowledgeable eyes. “I want to be the best girlfriend, student, mistress, and daughter I can be, but I’m failing in all those areas. I’ve been neglecting some of my men; I’ve had to miss tons of classes because of all the ups and downs in my health; I’ve been missing out on Arielle’s growth...literally, to the point where Hunter’s been watching over her when it’s my role as her Mistress to be there for her when she’s discovering herself. And I feel like a bad daughter because I told Dad that if I died, he shouldn’t cry. All these things are happening, and I don’t think I can handle everything. What should I do?”

Mom nodded and put her hairbrush down on her white vanity. She stood and walked over to where I sat, sitting next to my right side, and shifted her body so she could give me 100% of her attention.

“Celestia, from everything you just told me, I think you’re doing a wonderful job.” Mom covered my hands with hers, trapping them in between, and squeezed them in encouragement.

“I don’t feel like I am. I’ve made so many mistakes, and I’m continuing to make them.”

“Sweetheart, you’re only one person. You won’t be able to please everyone and be everywhere. With relationships like these, there has to be an understanding and compromise. Life has been chaotic for you, and I assume your boyfriends are aware of this and even witnessed it for themselves. They have to be understanding and meet you halfway in figuring out how they can balance your time. With school happening and all the situations you’ve dealt with in the recent weeks, it’s perfectly normal to feel frustrated and overwhelmed with your lack of time.”

“What do I tell them?” I asked.

“Just what you told me. Honesty is what gives longevity to any relationship. Trying to fight through it and continuing to wear yourself down is only going to cause you to crash or explode with frustration. You all have to be on the same wavelength for this to work. It’s no different when you have one boyfriend, Celestia. You talk to Orion about your insecurities and concerns, right?”

“Yes...I guess I do.”

“Then why can’t you with the others?”

“I...don't know? I just don't want to be a burden?”

“You aren't a burden, Celestia. In a relationship, lack of communication leads to unnecessary thinking and assumptions. You want your men to understand what's going on, and they need the reassurance that you are both okay and still in love with them. It's difficult to remind yourself that you don't need to be a hero and carry all the burden in the relationship. Rely on your men, just as they rely on you. Love them just as they love you, and communicate how you feel, especially when you don't know how to handle a situation.”

“Okay...” I whispered, lowering my head. “And my familiar and the issues with Dad?”

“You feel you're not a good Mistress to your familiar. Arielle, right?” Mom asked.

I nodded and sighed. “With everything that has happened, I haven't been able to keep an eye on Arielle. I trust her, and I don't think it's necessary to watch her every move, but I know she's reaching adulthood and I feel she's falling for more than just one of the familiars. I know she's not coming to me because she doesn't want to bother me...I just...” I trailed off and pouted my lips.

“You feel a little left out?” Mom asked.

I nodded. “Stupid, right?”

“No. You're like Arielle's mother. When she's entering adulthood and beginning to date and find out who she wants to be, you want to feel involved. I'm sure Arielle wants to tell you all about her adventures and her current progress with her familiar friend or friends, but her Mistress' health comes first. I don't know all the details, but I'm thinking she's just waiting for the right time to tell you, when you're not dealing with all

these changes happening with Aslan's intense trial schedule as well as all the other challenges you may have faced till now," Mom explained.

"So, she doesn't hate me?"

"I doubt your familiar hates you, Celestia. Have you done anything to receive hate from her?"

"No. I guess it's hard to go from being around my familiar all the time to nothing at all? Not to say she isn't there when I need her to be, but..."

"You miss her."

"Yes," I confessed.

Mom reached out to stroke my cheek with her thumb. "It's okay to miss her, Celestia. I have a familiar, but she's out doing her thing."

I looked up at her with wide eyes. "You do?!"

"Yes. She actually has her own team who help defeat Forsaken. She comes by once in a while, but our bond has grown so strong that she can do her own thing from afar and not need me to be there."

"Weren't you worried about her being too independent?" I asked.

I hadn't been bugging Arielle when she went out for air and didn't come back until hours later, and the one time I did Hunter distracted me.

I didn't mind her relaxing with the other familiars, especially when I knew Noah was a similar breed as her from what Hunter told me, but I just wanted her to not worry about telling me.

“Nope. Some familiars end up that way. With how powerful I was, it wouldn’t make sense to have my familiar with me all the time, and she needs to be able to feel confident in her powers and strengths. Once I became a Huntress, we were a part of many missions. My familiar was able to expel all that built up energy she had thanks to my large mana supply. However, once I began doing Alpha Pure and the administration stuff that doesn’t require me to be out on the field, it just made my familiar antsy.”

“You mean, for those of us who have a higher mana rate, it’s good for our familiars to go out and just exert energy and keep themselves occupied?” I asked.

“Yes. It’s recommended. I bet you guys haven’t gotten the chance to take the Level 2 Advanced Familiar Courses. It’s explained how some familiars are dependent on their Master or Mistress, while others need to be able to be free to do what they want. A familiar could be summoned with magic if you desperately need them. It’s recommended to let them do their own thing if they are more independent and the Master or Mistress has too much mana. It could be them going out to fly or maybe in Arielle’s case, hanging out with her friends and eventually a boyfriend,” Mom elaborated.

“Hmm. When you explain it like that, I don’t feel as bad.” *When we get back, I’ll talk to Arielle and praise her for being independent recently and let her know she can come to me even if I’m super busy or not feeling well. I want her to at least depend on me.*

“As for Orlando,” Mom began, but there was a knock on the door. “Come in.”

The door opened half way to reveal Orlando dressed in casual clothes and sporting a black eye.

Mom and I gawked as he walked in silently and closed the door gently, avoiding our gazes.

“Honey, what happened? Did you get into a fight with Harrison?” Mom rose from the bed and strode over to Orlando. It was the first time I’d seen him in simple attire; the black jeans and dark green t-shirt fit him nicely. His long blond hair was in a ponytail, and a few of the strands laid loosely on the side of his face.

“I’m assuming he got the story of what happened?” Orlando asked.

Mom sighed and inspected Orlando’s face. “Who hit who?”

“I walked in, minding my own business, and next thing I knew his fist landed on my face, and then I got lectured for an hour and a half about how shitty a father I am. Oh, and Orion got to watch the whole thing. I don’t know if he was amused or horrified.” Orlando sighed and flinched when my mother brushed the purplish bruise that took up the majority of the area around his right eye.

Mom tsked and shook her head. “It’s your fault. You know Harrison is peaceful until you piss him off.”

“But he hit me without even letting me speak. Totally violent behavior for a unicorn!” Orlando whined.

“Stop whining. You deserved it, and I’m still mad at you.” Mom huffed and crossed her arms.

Orlando pouted his lips and looked super depressed at her words. “Do you mind if I talk to Celestia alone?”

“I don’t, but you should ask her if she wants to talk to you, to begin with.” Mom motioned to me on the bed.

Orlando lifted his gaze to lock onto mine. I could immediately see the regret in his purple-green eyes, yet a part of me didn't want to make it easy for him.

“Celestia. Can we talk? Please?” he whispered. The vulnerability in his voice was enough to make me sigh in defeat.

“Sure,” I replied. *Listening to his reasoning doesn't mean I have to forgive him.*

“I'll go and calm Harrison. Knowing him, he's probably playing chess by himself to defuse his anger. Unicorns are rather difficult when they're angry.” Mom looked at me with an encouraging smile. She mouthed, “You will be fine,” to me.

I nodded as Orlando remained where he stood, staring at the tiled floor.

“I'll be around. If either of you needs me, just say my name and I'll teleport back,” Mom said, and with one final glance between us, she left the room.

We were both silent, neither attempting to make conversation. Eventually, Orlando sighed heavily and strolled over to the bed.

“May I sit here?” He pointed to the spot on my left.

I shrugged. “Sure. It's Mom's bed. Not mine.”

He didn't say anything but sat down and, once again, an awkward silence lingered in the room.

I didn't know what to say. More importantly, I didn't know how I felt. Even with everything Mom and Harrison had said, I didn't think it was enough for me to give him another chance.

It made me wonder if I was too forgiving, and if I should allow him to struggle to regain my trust. He'd already gained

it once, and it felt like he threw it onto the ground and stomped on it as if it didn't mean a thing to him.

“Celestia I-”

“What? You're sorry?” I asked, lifting my gaze to meet his. “That's all you're going to say. I'm sorry for discarding my daughter when she needed me the most. I'm sorry for making promises I couldn't keep. I'm sorry for having a stupid secretary who can't even tell me how many times you've come over to my office to see me! If you think saying 'I'm sorry' is going to cut it this time, it won't.” I huffed, unsure why I was suddenly so angry.

“Celestia, I was going to do more than just apologize,” Orlando whispered.

“What more is there to do or say?” I asked before I sighed. “I find out I have not one, but four dads. I realize the reason you and Mom have tension is that you're stuck at Aslan while she's stuck here, both of you living your dream without each other. Regardless of whatever the reasoning was, look how many times I asked for Mom, whether it was during our video calls or even when I desperately needed someone to talk to. Doesn't it bother you that in the end, you're apparently my main dad, or however it works, and Magnor did a better job at being a father, even when I didn't know it?!”

“Yes, Celestia. It bothers me,” Father muttered. I paused in my rant at his broken tone. He sounded as if he'd hit rock bottom.

“When I found out that Charlotte was pregnant with you, after everything we'd gone through, I was ecstatic. Words couldn't even describe how happy I was to be a dad, but I was also scared, Celestia.” Orlando pulled the hair tie out of his hair. His hands ran through the long strands that almost looked

like they shimmered up close and he took a deep breath before he continued. “I never experienced what it was like to have a parent, Celestia. I didn’t have a father figure or mother figure. I honestly don’t remember what my parents look like.”

I stared at him in confusion. “You...didn’t know your parents?”

“No. It isn’t talked about because it was many decades ago, but there was a time when there was a major Forsaken outbreak, and surprisingly enough, they were intelligent enough back then to hunt specific species.”

Orlando stared up at the ceiling and paused for a moment before he spoke again. “From the last bits that I remember, there wasn’t any warning. It was like any other day, and suddenly everyone was being killed left and right. Charlotte says I probably remember that specific event because of how horrific it was. I can’t remember anything after that. I just knew I had to run and, in the end, I was alone. For a few years, I lived in the wilderness and had to defend myself without any help from others. Eventually, I found a man who helped me for a little bit, but due to desperate times he wanted to sell me to Hunters.”

I was silent, and my gut dropped at his story, not even realizing Dad had ever been through something so traumatic. He had a nostalgic smile on his face as he went on.

“Honestly, at that point, I decided it would have been better to be alone. Why bother meeting people if I always had to worry about them setting me up for Hunters. Our kind is almost extinct, and there weren’t many of us before the forsaken attack. I trained myself every day and soon heard about Aslan Academy. I decided to give it a shot and

thankfully made it. That was where I met Magnor before we met your mother.”

He lowered his head and gave me a heartbroken look. “A bad habit of mine is I don’t handle stress really well. Instead of taking a moment to absorb everything, I kind of just pile it up, one after another and in the end, I focus on things that aren’t really the priority. My mind tells me whatever subject I was thinking about at that very moment has absolute priority, even if it’s far from the most important thing to focus on. When anything else grabs my attention, I automatically put it to the side to think about later, though it could be something extremely important.”

He rubbed at his eyes, and I noticed he was trying not to cry from the way he blinked continuously at an unusual pace. “The secretary delivered all your messages and every night before I’d leave the office, I’d want to come over...I did a few times...but...”

“But?” I pressed.

“It’s stupid, but I didn’t want to bother you. I’d been such a shitty father, and I regretted leaving and lying to you. None of us wanted this life for you. Not I, or Magnor, Hellsin, or Harrison. Jeez, Charlotte broke down when she had to go back to Alpha Pure because we had to be so secretive so that we won’t get hacked or discovered, and that’s why she had to stop sending letters. We never wanted our Blessed Child to be hurt by the society we currently live in and sadly enough, that’s exactly what happened.”

“You could have just told me. Just been honest,” I mumbled.

“Celestia. As parents, we’re supposed to shield you from the burden this world brings and dumps on everyone. We

should have been your rock to lean on, and that's what we wished for. To give you a future where the Council and their agenda wouldn't control you. We fell right into their trap, one by one, and that left us looking like horrible people to our own child who had hope in us. You believed in us, and even when times were hard, you didn't complain until it was too much for you to bear."

I glanced away to hide my eyes that were filling with tears as I bit my lip. "Why couldn't Magnor have said something?" I asked.

"He almost did. Now that I know what happened during your childhood, it kind of makes sense," Orlando acknowledged.

"What makes sense?"

"There was a night where Magnor teleported back here when I was visiting, and Hellsin, Harrison, and Charlotte were all present. It was the first time I'd seen Magnor break down and cry his eyes out."

A tear rolled down my cheek as I lowered my head, my ears listening in as Orlando continued.

"He wept to the point Harrison and Hellsin went back to Versa to see if you were okay. Once they came back, Magnor explained just generally that he hated how our circumstances were, and that you didn't know who he was to you. That you had no idea you had not one but four dads, and that we'd left you alone as if none of us cared. After Charlotte consoled him, he excused himself. Next thing we know, he threatened the Council. He said he'd quit if they didn't give him the flexible availability he needed."

I smiled as more tears rolled down my cheeks. “Magnor,” I whispered.

“He was the first ever to threaten the Council, and it was a little bit of a shock to them. With how powerful Magnor is, if he quit, they knew he’d be another asset for Alpha Pure, which would make our organization too powerful. Even if Magnor had his loyalty here, the Council felt more reassured having him go around training other students or coming on missions that were deemed complicated. It also gave them the chance to ‘keep watch’ on him because Magnor was knowledgeable and could do severe damage if he chose to oppose the Council. They gave in to his request, and that was why Magnor was able to stay for more extended periods of time with you compared to our chaotic work schedule.”

“I guess you all couldn’t do that without pissing the Council off and putting me in the line of danger,” I whispered.

“They were already keeping a watchful eye on you, Celestia. To be honest, I think that was why you were bullied the way you were. The Council was well aware that there were more unicorn shifters out there, which included Harrison. Yet, they registered you as the single one in Versa, as if you were lying. If I knew the Council’s real objective, I wouldn’t have approved of the registry or leaving you there. We could have taken you elsewhere, but Versa is one of the most peaceful dimensions, and it’s the easiest for Magnor to teleport to because of his connection with his home. I didn’t want you to struggle, Celestia. We wanted the best for our child...and we failed.”

He gave me a pitiful smile as tears streamed down his cheeks. “I don’t know how to be a good father, Celestia. I want to be...I really do. Sometimes it takes a huge wake up call

before I see what the real priority is. That was you saying if you died, then I shouldn't cry. When you left, I sat there in shock...thinking how the fuck could I let it get to this point. By the time I realized how bad the storm was and went outside, Magnor informed me you were with him and Finn and had been attacked by what appeared to be a Forsaken."

He used his bare arm to wipe the tears that stained his cheeks and continued. "That night...I wanted to quit everything. I told Magnor that I wished I could turn back time with a spell and start over in hopes of giving you a father you deserved. Sadly, there's no such magic."

I stared into his mismatched eyes as he looked directly into mine, both of us allowing our tears to continue to roll down our flushed cheeks.

"You are so very precious to me, Celestia. I know I suck at showing it... Charlotte tells me how I don't show my feelings enough until things seem to crash and burn. I'm not worthy of a second chance, and I don't expect you to forgive me. I deserve any punishment you want to give me, but I needed you to know that I'm truly sorry for not acknowledging you when you needed me the most."

He got off the bed and knelt on his knees before bowing his head to the floor. "Please forgive me, my Blessed Child, and if not, just know I love you, even when I don't show it."

I stared at him with my blurry vision and opened my trembling lip to say something...anything. A quiet whimper escaped, and I began to sob. "How can I say no to that?" I cried, furiously wiping away my tears with my fingers.

Orlando lifted his head, his tears falling to the floor. With the sight of his regret, sadness, and the slight hope that shone in his mismatched eyes that were identical to mine, I couldn't

hold a grudge. He deserved a second chance, especially after knowing what truly contributed to the situation and that he was dealing with things his way and had made a mistake.

“I forgive you, Dad,” I whispered.

He gave me a small smile before he stood and leaned in to hug me. “Thank you, Sweetheart. I’m so sorry.”

He consoled me while I cried, and eventually, Mom came back and helped in calming me as well. I hadn’t realized how much pain I harbored over the idea of Orlando not caring about me, and it came out through my tears and sadness as I let all of it go.

No one is perfect, but at least we can acknowledge and learn from our mistakes. As long as you can forgive, you can move forward towards a better future with the people you genuinely love.

Reunited



“Finally, this is the gate of Alpha Pure. It’s the general entrance where we come through if we need to leave, though there are a few secret exits for emergencies,” Mom said.

Orion’s hand held mine as we nodded our understanding, both of us still trying to absorb everything we’d just witnessed during the two-hour tour.

Alpha Pure was breathtakingly beautiful. The word couldn’t even justify how fascinating and majestic the sanctuary was in person.

The place we stayed in was the main building where all the administrative meetings, defense planning, and overall planning to maintain Alpha Pure were held. It was also where my mother and dad typically stayed, though they had a private unit in the mountain section of the place. *Yes, a mountain section.*

The landscape reminded me of the place Caio, Cairus, and I went during our exploration of New Aslan. It was filled with life, from the different colored trees to the clear blue water that looked like nothing could taint it.

The beauty of the wildlife was a small part of what really stood out at Alpha Pure. The number of rare shifters that had

made this sanctuary their home was mesmerizing.

Centaurs, Phoenixes, Fairies, and Pixies. Those were just some of the rare mythological shifters we'd read about in books and the Council themselves stated were nonexistent in our dimension and many others.

What made me gasp in awe was the vast valley of unicorn shifters of all kinds that lived here. There were at least 100 of them, 80% of them full unicorn shifters while others were alicorns and a few types I'd never heard of.

Orion was as blown away as I was when we took a lengthy tour around their section. It was a mixture of pink, purple, and gold wildlife. I would never have expected to see pink water, but it was possible when unicorns were involved.

They even had a rainbow waterfall, but that was deeper into the forest and was a sacred area.

Mom said Harrison could take us there if we'd like since unicorns and a few pixies were allowed entry without feeling the power level of magic that made it extremely hard for those who entered to stay there comfortably.

What brought me close to tears was the level of acceptance these shifters carried. No matter what the race, they had welcomed us with smiles and happiness.

I knew I was in special attire that made many of the shifters realize I was related to my mother, even without them getting a closer look at me to see our resemblance. They were just as kind to Orion, who wore simple white jeans and a white short-sleeved polo shirt with his hair up in a ponytail.

It was extra special when we met the unicorn and alicorn shifters. Many of them remembered me from when I was born

and immediately recognized my presence when I entered their territory.

We'd met some of the eldest unicorns and alicorns alive, and their openness to making us feel welcomed was indescribable. Orion was as moved as me, and we even met a couple who knew his parents and sister when he was really small.

They asked about Odion, but we did our best to say he wasn't around much instead of lying to them. Mom noticed our troubled expressions, and I had a feeling she'd bring it up later.

Mom didn't want us staying out too long, especially with the tearful morning I had with Orlando when he ended up joining us. He'd been quietly observing everything with Harrison, who appeared more serious than usual. Mom said he was still a bit upset, but he'd come around after some quiet time.

Now that we'd gotten a general overview of the place, we were allowed to wander around when my mother or the others weren't with us. The majority of the shifters had caught a glimpse of us and would spread the word that we were staying for a few days to those who hadn't had a chance to see us yet.

Being at the gates was a bit of a relief because I was exhausted and wouldn't mind a nice nap cuddled up with Orion.

"I think that's it. You two are off for the rest of the afternoon. Dinner is going to be at seven tonight because I have a live meeting to take care of," Mom said with a smile.

Orlando and Harrison moved to stand next to her.

Harrison stretched and then addressed us. “You two will be fine, right? We have some business to take care of.”

“Yes, we’ll be fine. It’s pretty easy to navigate. If we have issues, we can just ask one of the fairies or pixies,” Orion suggested.

Throughout our walk, we’d met many pixies and fairies in their little forms, and they were wonderful to listen to as they sang and danced in the air.

Everyone we’d met was super friendly and offered to help us if we needed anything, which made this tour a lot easier. If we couldn’t find our way back, we could always ask someone for help until we got used to it.

“Yes. We’ll be okay. Thank you for showing us around,” I replied. Orion and I both bowed our heads in respect, and the three of them gave us expressions filled with pride.

“You’ve grown up to be a wonderful woman, Celestia,” Harrison praised quietly.

I blushed and looked at the gate instead. “I guess,” I said shyly.

Orion chuckled. “Just admit you like being praised rather than acting shy.”

I turned to face him and pouted my lips. “You’re just as shy when people praise you!” I defended.

He shrugged. “Maybe.”

“It’s a fact!”

“I don’t agree with your observation.”

“Oh, you’re so lucky one of the guys isn’t here. Lucky Charms would agree with me!” I huffed.

Orion rolled his eyes. “Yes, because he loves pleasing you.”

“Nooooo!” I argued.

“Yessss!” Orion replied, using the same emphasis as me.

Mom, Orlando, and Harrison all stared at us with blank expressions as we continued to bicker.

“Next time you’re shy I’m going to record you!” I declared.

“Go ahead. I’ll prove you-” Orion began but flinched, suddenly looking surprised. I gave him a confused look as I tilted my head.

“What’s wrong, Ori-”

“*CELESTIA!*”

I jumped at the loud voice that echoed in my head, scaring the shit out of me. I placed my hand on my chest as if to slow down the sudden fast beat of my heart with my free hand and swiftly looked around.

“Arielle?!” I said out loud and tried my best to pinpoint her with vision.

“I heard Gabriel too,” Orion put forth.

“Who are Arielle and Gabriel?” Harrison asked.

Orion and I briefly turned him to answer. “Our familiars.”

“Huh? If you heard them, that means they’re past the barrier and in here.” Harrison’s brow furrowed.

“Which means Magnor’s here,” Orlando announced. “Or Hellsin.”

We moved closer to the gate, and my face brightened with joy when I saw two individuals flying towards the gate. Their human forms were visible, but they were half-shifted with their gorgeous wings out, allowing them to fly—one had large blue and pink flaming wings, and the other individual's wings flamed pink and white.

“I'll open the gate, hold on.” Mom performed a bunch of magic spells as she made her way forward, and the gold gate began to open. Orion and I exchanged a look of joy before we headed out in a fast walk.

As Arielle and Gabriel came into closer view, I let go of Orion's hand to run towards Arielle. She released Gabriel's hand and lowered closer to the field of green grass, a broad smile on her face as tears formed in her eyes.

“CELESTIA!”

“ARIELLE!” I beamed and opened my arms for Arielle's approaching embrace. She landed a few feet from me, and without a skip of a beat, broke into a sprint to meet me.

Right when she was seconds from my hug, she tripped. “BRU-REE!”

“AH!” I exclaimed, trying to skid to a stop, but it was no use as Arielle crashed into me, both of us landing on the green grass.

Instead of cursing, I laughed and wrapped my arms around Arielle. “My clumsy familiar!”

“I'm not clumsy!!!” she countered but was laughing hysterically as she held me tightly. “Mistress! I missed you to pieces.”

We rolled in the grass as we held each other firmly, and I finally felt whole again. I'd tried not to linger on it, but you

never felt fully complete when your familiar wasn't around. Now that she was in my hold, a wave of relief hit me, and I let my tears of happiness fall as I held her like my life depended on it.

“I missed you more, Arielle. I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to worry you, but I couldn't contact you.”

“Magnor told me there's a barrier thing that blocks communication from outsiders telepathically! I was so worried, Mistress. I knew you were alive, but I was still scared something bad had happened, Bru!”

We broke apart and sat up. I reached out to ruffle her hair, admiring the long dark purple locks with pink highlights that held bits of amber strands. Arielle's lingering magic caused the amber strands to glow.

She was still beautiful as always in her human form, and her amber eyes pooled with tears as she stared at me with a grateful expression.

“I'm okay. A few things happened, but I'm almost healed. I had a little injury during the exam, but it's not painful, though I maybe shouldn't have been rolling in the grass,” I admitted, feeling a slight nudge of pain in my thigh where I'd gotten injured.

“What happened? Can't we heal it?” Arielle asked, immediately scanning my body until her eyes landed on my left thigh. Her amber eyes became luminescent, and she frowned before returning her gaze to me.

“Why hasn't it healed yet?” she asked with a stern tone.

I had to blink a few times from the switch of her mood from overjoyed to seriousness.

“Um...to be honest, I don't know. Harrison's going to look at it.”

“Who's Harrison?” Arielle asked as she tilted her head and furrowed her eyebrows.

“Um...that's gonna take a while to explain,” I hedged.

“Celestia!”

Arielle and I both looked to our right, and my eyes grew wide as I saw a familiar Pixie shifter running towards us. Arielle helped me up, and I ignored the pain in my leg as I ran straight into Finn's arms.

“Finn!” I squealed as he lifted me up into his stronghold. I squeezed him tightly, my arms around his neck while those toned arms of his wrapped around my waist and held me up. I leaned back to stare into his tear-filled green eyes, and I immediately leaned down and kissed him passionately.

He slowly lowered me to the ground but kept his arms securely around me as he increased the intensity of the kiss.

“I think this is getting into the PG 18 lane,” Gabriel whispered.

“Hmm. We should leave them alone and tell Magnor they're going to have sex in the grass,” Arielle whispered back.

I snickered, and Finn groaned. It broke the kiss, and he rolled his eyes and huffed, “You two are ruining our moment.”

Arielle giggled, and Gabriel grinned, his pink hair glittering in the sunlight. Gabriel reminded me of Orion, his similar height, calm body language, and pink eyes giving him a “holy” appearance. His long hair was currently down, and it

shifted from dark purple to pink, almost reminding me of Arielle's hair.

"Wait. Where are the other familiars?" I asked.

"Oh, they're near the forest entrance. Axel's too big to fit through the gate," Arielle replied with a sheepish smile.

"Too big?" I asked.

"He's in dragon form," Gabriel revealed.

"Axel's a Dragon?! You mean Axel aka Theo's familiar?" I asked in shock. *I didn't know there were Dragon familiars.*

"Me neither until recently," Arielle replied in my mind.

Gabriel smiled and nodded. "The others are in their familiar forms. Noah's there to make sure Axel doesn't burn everything, and Asher stayed asleep."

The Familiars of Aslan was the term I'd given Arielle's group of "friends". Noah, Gabriel, Rainer, Axel, Griffin, and Asher were my boyfriend's temporary familiars before the prank incident that sent Arielle into recovery. The thought reminded me about her arm, and I looked at it in wonder.

Arielle noticed my gaze and gave me an appreciative smile "Faelia healed it for me."

"Ah. Thank goodness." Relief swept through me.

Faelia Blessheart was one of my recent friends that I'd made thanks to Arielle. She took care of many of the familiars at New Aslan and had helped me out during the change room incident when a bunch of girls had attempted to jump me.

I had the situation under control, but it was hilarious to watch them scurry away practically naked at Faelia's sight before Arielle displayed a hint of her power.

“Hellsin and Magnor are coming,” Arielle announced, and she and Gabriel began to head towards the two men in question as they appeared from the forest entrance onto the green grass beneath us.

I smiled as I watched them before I turned back to Finn who had a wide smile on his face. “I missed you so much, Cutie Pie. Are you okay? Are you hurt? How’s Orion?” He asked the series of questions before he pulled me into another heated kiss.

I melted in his arms, enjoying the taste of him and the way his body pressed against mine. I hadn’t realized how much I missed him, making me yearn for the others’ embraces as well.

We pulled back when we were out of breath, and I smiled. “I can’t answer when you’re kissing me silly.”

“Oh,” Finn replied and blushed.

I heard a deep chuckle and turned to see Orion and Magnor, who looked as if they had been standing where they were for a while. My cheeks burned, and Finn and I pulled apart.

“Nothing to see here,” Finn murmured.

Orion snorted. “Sure.”

Finn grinned in response and Orion moved over to hug Finn.

“I surprisingly missed your snoring ass,” Orion teased.

“First, that’s a horrible way to say you miss someone. Second, I don’t snore. Third, since when did you start swearing?” Amusement laced Finn’s tone.

“Celestia said it’s sexy when I swear.”

I groaned, and Finn broke out in laughter. “Orion! Oh, boy. Please remember not to admit those things in front of the adults.”

“Oh. Oops?” Orion replied, and he shyly glanced away.

I wanted to tease him, but Magnor’s troubled expression caught my attention. I could tell he was doing his best to hide it, but I knew him too well and noticed it right away.

I made my way over to him, and when I stood in front of him, he lowered his head and whispered, “Sorry for not telling you.”

I hadn’t thought about how I would react when I confronted Magnor about him being one of my real dads, but now that I was in the moment, I held no anger towards him. In fact, I was happy.

Even with how crazy life had been for him and the amount of work the Council tried to put on his shoulders, he took the initiative to threaten the Council for the sake of my wellbeing. Even though I didn’t know all the facts or reasons, he was the reason I was able to stand here and be loved by so many.

I’d felt like I was alone in the world, but thanks to that fateful rainy night, he’d given me a second chance at life. It brought me a fantastic familiar, my boyfriends, and now the discovery that I was born into an amazing community who accepted me as a unicorn shifter with four dads who loved me in their own way from near or far.

I lifted my arms up and gave him a serene smile. “I missed you, Dad.”

His silver eyes widened, and they filled with tears as he gave me an appreciative smile. “Who did you take your

forgiving personality from?” As he muttered the question, the first set of tears rolled down his cheeks.

“You, silly. Definitely not Harrison or Orlando. Though I don’t know much about Hellsin, so maybe we’ll confirm that question later.”

He chuckled, shaking his head, but walked into my hug and wrapped his arms around me.

“I’m so glad you’re safe, Celestia.”

“It’s thanks to Orion and Harrison. It’s a long story.”

“As long as you’re breathing,” he whispered. “Thank you for being such an amazing daughter.”

I hugged him tighter and closed my eyes. “Thank you for being a loving father. I’m glad to finally know.”

We held each other tightly, and I listened to him weep into my shoulder. His reaction was enough for me to realize that everything would work out. Just because I couldn’t get my childhood back, didn’t mean I had to linger on the past.

I was loved regardless of my circumstances, even if I didn’t feel it back then until Magnor came back to my life. Now that we were all reunited, I hoped to rekindle my bonds with my dads and Mom, and then fix my bonds with my familiar and men who loved me dearly.

Sometimes a catastrophe in one’s life can lead to a happy ending.

My Loyal Familiar



“**B** ru-Ree, Bru-Ree!”

I grinned and lifted my gaze from my phone to stare at Arielle still in her human form. She was buttoning the last few buttons on her pink pajamas.

It was evening time, and Arielle and I had just finished a long bath in the hot springs. *Yes, Alpha Pure had a mountain that hid a wonderful hot spring that held healing properties to relieve muscle aches and soreness.*

After our little reunion, I was formally introduced to Hellsin as one of my dads. It was an intriguing conversation and interesting to see all my dads and Mom together in one place.

“I’m glad to see you are safe, Celestia.” Hellsin greeted me with a calming smile. He was in his tall form, and I had to look up, feeling like I was staring at a skyscraper rather than my dad.

“Thank you, Hellsin...um...” I trailed off, unsure how to bring up the conversation.

“She wants to know how your giant ass met Charlotte,” Harrison announced, walking over to us and giving Hellsin

the side eye.

“Why are you here? You always mock me in this form,” Hellsin grumbled.

“I do not. It’s not my fault you’re a giant and people question how you’re married when your cock is like a damn pol-AH!” Harrison began, but Hellsin shoved him over like he was a bug, sending him flying into the couch of the living room.

I gawked at a groaning Harrison, and Magnor shook his head as he made his way over to Hellsin. “He doesn’t understand what a pushover he is when you’re in this form.”

“Not to mention Celestia’s here. No one cares about your mockery regarding my cock size.” Hellsin huffed.

I blushed harder. Mom pinched her nose in an attempt to keep her patience, and Arielle wore the same shocked expression as I did.

“Your statement completely contradicts what you’re trying to avoid,” Orlando pointed out with a sigh.

“Shut up, black eye!” Harrison huffed.

“Fuck off Harrison, or I’m telling everyone you have the smallest cock in the room.” Orlando glared at Harrison with narrowed eyes.

“You JUST said it!” Harrison shouted.

“If you two are going to go all fighting style, can you take it outside? Last time you two battled, there were hoof prints all over the tiled floor. Took forever to clean up.” Hellsin sighed and pursed his lips.

“Let them fight. At least we get the evening with Charlotte to ourselves.” Magnor shrugged, appearing unconcerned.

“Um...daughter still here.” I waved my hands for added effect. The four of them looked at me like they just realized I hadn’t left.

“You four suck,” Charlotte complained, walking over to where I stood. Arielle followed and moved to stand behind me. She put her chin on my shoulder as we looked at my four dads.

“Aww, Charlotte, don’t be like that,” Orlando whined.

“Ya, Sweetcakes. Just blame Orlando. I can give him another black eye!”

“No thanks.” Orlando huffed.

“This is why we never like you two being in the same room,” Magnor complained.

“Oh, please. You and Orlando used to fight all the time in our youth.” Harrison canted his head to the side with a raised brow.

“Ya, before I grew up. Orlando, however, is still the same,” Magnor said with a dull tone, sounding bored.

“I’m stronger than you!” Orlando countered.

Magnor grinned, a glint of mischief coursing through those silver eyes. “Wanna bet?”

“Violence is never the right answer, yet I’m stuck with three best friends who can’t keep from fighting each other,” Hellsin muttered.

“We don’t fight!” All three of them yelled.

Orlando stared at the other two. “Stop copying my thoughts!”

*“Really? Are we going to have this conversation again?”
Magnor said with an annoyed voice.*

*“I still haven’t beat common sense into your brain yet!”
Harrison stood from the couch he’d landed on and strode over
to Orlando. Orlando tensed up and moved Magnor to stand in
front of him.*

“Magnor, protect me from this enraged unicorn!”

*“I’m really glad Celestia didn’t take any of your stupid
traits,” Magnor admitted.*

*“That’s rude.” Orlando kept himself behind Magnor
anyway as Harrison was two steps away from them.*

*“Are you two going to play nice or do I have to throw both
of you into unconsciousness like the last time Orlando thought
he was stronger than an enraged unicorn?” Hellsin put forth.*

*Orlando and Harrison paused as they looked up at
Hellsin, who didn’t seem like he was joking.*

*“That’s not fair. You’re a fucking giant!” Harrison
snapped.*

*“Ya, I agree with the unicorn on this one.” Orlando peered
around Magnor as he spoke.*

*“Can you two return to your mature adult ways for a few
minutes so Celestia, your DAUGHTER, can actually have
some lingering respect for you?” Charlotte insisted.*

All four of them paused and looked my way again.

*Arielle shook her head. “Doesn’t matter how old men get.
They still act childish.”*

“Hmm, true,” I replied with a nod.

“Agreed,” Charlotte noted.

Hellsin chuckled while the others had shy expressions on their faces. Hellsin's body submerged in a bright gold light, and when it dimmed, I stared in shock at his 6'7 form. He looked similar in appearance to his other form. His long locks were neatly plaited in Cornrows, and the ends had gold beads that looked real. Hellsin wore a simple black top and black pants, hiding his abs, chest, and biceps with his shirt, but it was thin enough to show the definition of his muscles.

His laugh was surprisingly comforting rather than mocking as he stared at all of us who looked shocked at the sudden change.

"Don't see me for a few months in this form and act like I'm a completely different person," he acknowledged.

Magnor nodded. "It's been awhile."

"Not my fault when I've been the gatekeeper for Aslan. Anyway, Celestia knows who we all are now," Hellsin motioned to Arielle. "And so does her familiar, Arielle."

The remaining three guys nodded in acknowledgment, and Arielle and I gave him reassuring nods. "Yes, we know."

Hellsin nodded and walked over to us. When he stood before us, his lips formed a serene smile. "Seeing as we're in a different situation than when you were a student, I'll reintroduce myself. Hellsin Spearwood. It's nice to finally introduce myself as one of your more mature fathers."

"HEY!" Orlando and Harrison huffed.

Hellsin's grin widened. "See? Proved my point."

"Nice to see you again, Hellsin." I gave him a small wave. Arielle wrapped her arms around my neck and protectively stared at the four of them.

“Bru-Ree a minute!” she declared. They all blinked, and she practically dragged me three steps back before she pointed at the group, an arm still wrapped around my neck. “My Mistress deserves a GROUP apology,” Arielle demanded. They all stared at her like she’d lost her mind, but my mother had a pleased look on her face, and her lips curled up in a smile.

“Um...” Hellsin began but turned to the others for guidance.

Magnor put his hands in his pocket. “Doesn’t hurt. Celestia does deserve an apology from all of us.”

Arielle nodded. “Yes! She sure does! My Mistress went through hard times because some stupid Council decided you guys were needed elsewhere, rather than at home raising your Blessed Child you all wanted so much! You’re lucky Celestia even grew up to be a kind person. What would have happened if she’d become mean or even power hungry, huh?!”

They were all silent and lowered their heads. Arielle huffed. “Exactly. My Mistress has a heart of gold without your help! Well...Magnor’s an exception, but he’s still guilty!”

I smiled and lifted my hand to stroke her hair. “Arielle, it’s okay. I forgave them already. I understand the circumstances they were in. It’s all good.”

“No. You’re too forgiving.” Arielle’s hair glowed brightly as she squeezed me tightly.

“Gah! Arielle, you’re gonna kill me,” I mumbled.

“Stop being so forgiving!” Arielle countered.

“Fine, fine,” I whined, and I heard Mom giggle. We paused in our little dispute to look at Charlotte, whose eyes

sparkled brilliantly at our banter. She walked up to us and stroked both our heads soothingly.

“I agree with Arielle. You deserve an apology from all of us together. If I, as your mother, have to apologize every day, I will to earn your forgiveness, Celestia.”

Magnor, Harrison, Orlando, and Hellsin nodded in agreement before they lined up just behind Mom and knelt on one knee, bowing their heads.

“Please accept our gracious apologies,” Hellsin said.

“Sorry, Sweetheart. We’ll do better.” Orlando tried to bow even lower.

“Sorry, our precious daughter. Please forgive us,” Harrison stated.

“On behalf of all of us, I’m sorry we couldn’t do better. Please forgive us, Celestia,” Magnor whispered.

Mom had turned to look at each of them before she faced me once more.

“As your mother, I apologize for all the pain and heartache you have gone through. Let Arielle be our witness of this apology and help remind us of how precious our Blessed Child is. Please forgive us, Celestia, and please allow us another chance to prove ourselves to your Mistress, Arielle.” Mom stepped back to join my dads, kneeling down before us.

We both gawked at the five of them and frantically urged them to get up. “I forgive you! You can rise back up!”

*“Yes, Bru-Rree!!” Arielle added. I never expected them to all kneel, and now I felt awkward. **But to get their apology really does make me happy.***

They rose with wide smiles, and I walked up to each of them to give them tight hugs. After I gave my mom an extra long hug, I turned to face the five of them and smiled.

“It’s nice to know where I belong and be around people who love me. Thank you,” I said with a broad smile. I heard a few clicks like a shutter sound, and we all turned to see Arielle with her phone out in her hands. I let her have one for emergencies now that she’d been going out more often.

“I’m going to get one of the guys to help me make this into a HUGE picture and put it on the wall!” Arielle declared.

“Your familiar is rather independent,” Hellsin pointed out. I grinned proudly. “Yup! That’s just the way I like her.”

We all smiled, and Arielle giggled as she moved back to where we gathered to see the picture.

Arielle turned around and posed in her new pajamas. “Celestia, LOOK! They have phoenix birds on them!”

I gave her a sweet grin and nodded. “They fit you perfectly too. Mom did a good job for just one glance.”

Arielle nodded happily, looking more delighted than I’d seen her in a while. With everything we’d gone through since day one of Aslan, I understood her stress and worry.

“Arielle.”

She paused in her current pose with her hands up in the hair and her hip to one side. “Bru?”

“You wanna talk for a bit?” I suggested and moved further onto the bed. I crossed my legs and leaned forward to pat where she should sit.

She shot me a look filled with curiosity, exposing her sudden nervousness, but she nodded and moved to sit on the bed.

Once she crossed her legs and adjusted to face me, I smiled. “Thank you for coming all the way to find me with Finn and the others.”

Orion was showing Finn around with Harrison while Mom, Hellsin, Magnor, and Orlando were still in her meeting that was taking longer than expected.

They did have a break in between, but my mother made sure to use that time with my dads to make us dinner and set everything up for our dip in the hot springs. Mom had grabbed my stuff already while my dads got all the clothes set for all the guys including their familiars. *Arielle’s boyfriends*.

“You’re my Mistress! Of course, I’d come and find you! Doesn’t matter where you could be or what side you are on in this weird, confusing problem that’s happening. I’ll always be loyal to you, Celestia. Always!” Arielle vowed as she sat up taller and had a confident look on her face.

My smile widened, and I nodded. “But there’s something I want you to do as well,” I suggested. Arielle gave me an intrigued look, and I continued.

“I want you to spend some time with your familiar friends. Or well...boyfriends, right?” I asked with a raised eyebrow.

She stared at me in shock for what seemed to be ten seconds before her face grew beet red.

“Ho-How did...How did you know, Bru?” she stuttered. Her amber eyes showed how shocked she was that I knew they were her boyfriends.

“I’m technically your mom, Arielle. I could tell once you started sneaking out that something, or should I say, someone, caught your attention. It made sense when Noah came by with Miolana to do my checkup at home. You know, when you burned my pants.”

She groaned. “I didn’t mean to burn them. They were faulty! Yes, it’s the sweatpants fault!” she argued, and I giggled.

“It’s okay, Arielle. Orion made me new ones.” I gave her a reassuring smile.

She nodded slowly, but then her shoulders sank, and she grew quiet. “Sorry, Bru-Ree,” she whispered.

“Hey, I never said I was mad. Don’t give me that sad face,” I whispered back, leaning forward to stroke her head.

“But aren’t you disappointed in me?”

“Why should I be?” I asked giving her a sympathetic look. “My dream has always been for you to be as independent as I’ve always perceived you to be from day one, Arielle. No matter the situations you were put through when you were just four years old, you never ran away and cried. You fought. Even when circumstances were against you. You proved your bravery and independence before you ever met me. It was only a matter of time before you found someone of interest.”

I didn’t want her feeling bad. Not to mention she was still a teenager and very close to adulthood. She deserved to make her own decisions, and I wanted her to be ready to tell me, but with the pace that everything was moving at, and the future as unpredictable as it currently seemed, I wanted to ensure she knew I supported her.

“But...”

“Arielle Rainbow.”

She lifted her head to stare directly into my eyes. “I love you with my heart and soul, and that means I have to let you spread your wings and fly too. This is an opportunity for you to figure out what you want, Arielle, as your own person. You will always be my loyal familiar, and I know there will still be plenty of moments and battles ahead where I’m going to need you to be victorious. However, during those down times, I want you to have your own social life and well...love life,” I admitted.

“That’s okay? For me to go out and hang out with the guys or with Faelia?” she asked with wide eyes.

“Yes, Arielle. I give you permission to hang out with the other familiars and Faelia. Just don’t burn anyone else’s sweatpants.” I winked, and she smiled brightly before she got out of her crossed legged position to hug me.

“THANK YOU, MISTRESS! I’ll be good!” Arielle’s voice exuded such an abundance of joy. It warmed my heart to see her happy, and I hugged her tightly. I had known one day this would happen, but I couldn’t ignore the hint of sadness it brought.

I wouldn’t lose her as a familiar, and she’d still be able to find someone to love and, in the future, start a family. *Maybe she’d be like Mom’s familiar and have her own team one day?*

“You’re welcome, Arielle,” I replied, hugging her tightly again and enjoying the rosemary scent that lingered on her.

She pulled back and grinned happily before she shuffled forward.

“What are you-OMPH!” I began but huffed when she laid back down onto my stomach instead of my lap.

“Oops? I didn’t measure my height properly.” Arielle giggled.

“Why do I feel that was on purpose?” I sighed but smiled down at Arielle’s bright eyes.

We were silent for a moment before Arielle spoke. “You know, I never expected Hellsin, Magnor, and that Harrison guy to be your fathers too. I’m really happy Magnor is though.”

“Me too. I hope to have more time with Hellsin and Harrison. Maybe even Orlando once everything settles and he’s not busy. Mom has been really amazing, just as I remembered her. I haven’t seen her much in her commander role, but the times I have, she’s proven how passionate she is with saving as many endangered shifters as she can. It’s nice to know there’s someone out there doing just that.”

“It’s also nice to know you’re not the only unicorn. You can finally learn more about yourself.”

“That too. I don’t think we have much time now, and I’d like to go back and see the others. I doubt they’re super happy being left behind.” I worried my lip.

“Theo and Hunter seemed the most bothered. The twins looked rather calm. I think Noah said that Hunter checked in two hours ago to say he, Faelia, Othello, and Miolana are making sure the school runs smoothly since Orlando isn’t there. People seem to act out the moment he leaves,” Arielle explained.

“I bet. He doesn’t leave often. Some students take advantage of that.”

“Yes. I don’t know about Theo though. Axel said he’s still cranky and won’t talk to him when he tries to communicate telepathically.”

“I don’t know how to explain it, but I am worried about him. I feel like something is bothering him or he isn’t well? I don’t really know, but the last couple of weeks have been such a blur with the Trials that I can’t remember how he looked last time I saw him.” I sighed. “I’ll see him as soon as we get back.”

“Hmm, that reminds me. Where’s Sia been?” Arielle asked.

“Now that you mention it, I don’t know. Sia’s kinda been quiet lately. I think she came out a few weeks ago? Maybe...” I trailed off, unsure when the last time she’d taken over was.

“She took over when I walked with Noah to the familiar’s homes, but that was weeks ago,” Arielle mused.

“Maybe she’s exhausted like me? We have to balance ourselves out, which I haven’t been doing well at,” I admitted.

“I guess. The trials really did mess with you and your magical balance. Especially the last two. You’re okay, right? Harrison said he has to check your left leg tomorrow.” Arielle studied my left leg.

I was only wearing Finn’s loose pink t-shirt, which he hadn’t realized I’d taken yet, and light pink underwear. The large white bandage covered the spot on my thigh where I’d gotten injured. It didn’t hurt as much, but I was using magic from time to time to keep the area clean and hoped my light energy would encourage it to heal faster.

“Yes. They don’t get why it hasn’t healed yet, but Harrison is going to take a closer look with Magnor and the others, just in case,” I replied.

“Hmm. Okay...” Arielle stared up at me. “Just remember if you don’t feel well or anything, let us know.”

“I know. I’ll make sure you’re one of the first to know when I can.” I stroked her hair soothingly. She closed her eyes and nodded slightly, relaxing in my lap while I played with her long purple hair, enjoying the hints of pink and amber highlights running through the loose curls.

Sia...I feel like I’ve forgotten something. She didn’t participate in the Trials, right?

I had to admit I didn’t remember much of anything from Trial four. It was as if my mind erased it from my memory bank. *Maybe it was too much for me? I wonder what I’d seen with Finn again?*

I could ask him. No...I don’t want to remind him about what he might have seen or that part about his family. I need to talk to Mom about that. Maybe tomorrow.

I decided not to bother thinking about it, already feeling a headache starting to form from the mere thought of the Trials. I’d decided when we arrived here that it would be a little bit of a vacation for me to try and relax my mind from everything that had happened in New Aslan.

I was still worried about the Darkness and Odion coming to try and convince me to join him, but with how safe the sanctuary was, I wasn’t as concerned about it as I would’ve been elsewhere.

I’ll have to ask Magnor and the others for another locket. Hmm. I could ask Finn too. I’ll let them all make me one together? That will be strong enough to conquer any nightmares, at least until we figure out what’s going on.

“So...” I began and looked back down at Arielle who opened up one of her eyes to look up at me.

“So, Bru?”

“How many are you dating?” I asked with a sly smile.

Arielle blushed and closed her eyes. “All six... Bru.”

“All? Even the Dragon?! I thought you were only dating Noah and Gabriel!”

Her eyes remained closed, but her face grew redder at my comment. “I’m taking it slow with them. I’ve been dating Noah though, and I’ve gotten closer to Gabriel. There’s an actual order, so I’m kinda hoping to work on spending time with each of them and see where it leads.”

“Aww. My Arielle is growing up and has a harem of her own. Mommy’s so very proud,” I stated dramatically.

She opened her eyes to shoot me a glare. “Stop teasing me, Bru,” she whined.

“I’m not teasing. I’m proud,” I said with a wide grin.

“Sure, you are.” Arielle huffed.

“I am.”

“Hmph.”

“Awww, you’re all embarrassed.” I giggled at her flustered face.

“Ugh. I’m sleeping.”

“The others will be back soon,” I pointed out.

“Ya. Just wake me up when they’re back. I’m going to enjoy my sleeping time with my Mistress,” she mumbled, closing her eyes.

I wanted to tease her again, but her words meant a lot to me. We hadn’t slept in a room with just us in a while, and it was nice to watch her rest in her human form. I knew once she fell into a deep sleep, she’d return to her phoenix-harpy form,

so I was going to take every advantage to watch her. I did just that, my eyes lingering on my wonderful familiar who continued to blow me away with her love and loyalty.

No matter what the future holds, I know Arielle will always be by my side.

Matter of Time and My Charming Date



~S IA~

I walked through the colorful forest, the moonlight enhancing the variations of purples and pinks, causing its rays on the vast lake before me to glitter and glisten.

Even though the beauty of the night surrounded me, I didn't linger on it. I didn't care, to be honest. I knew I'd be tormented in moments, and the calming feeling that flowed through me thanks to the serene environment would evaporate into sadness.

I strolled towards the large clear lake as the cool breeze passed by me, fluttering my pure white dress and pink-purple hair.

The first step into the water was always the hardest, but I'd gotten used to the chilling pain. The feeling reminded me of the Darkness itself, but I knew this was nothing compared to what was to come.

At least when I submerged into the lake, it was silent. Its eerie songs would torment me all night long while Celestia slept.

I continued to walk forward and didn't care that I was a moment away from being submerged in the water. I had to protect it. Even if it took every ounce of me.

*My instinct automatically told me to take a breath before my head went into the water, but I held no fear in my mind that I'd drown. I could breathe under here, for some strange reason, which told my subconscious that this was nothing but a dream. **One I wished I could wake up from.***

Once I reached the very middle of the lake, my eyes landed on our prized possession. The crown I'd been desperately trying to protect from Him.

*"Him" was the Darkness. The entity who wanted Celestia for whatever plans He was brewing. Every day He tried to enter her dreams. Some days, there was nothing He could do to intrude on her deep sleep, but other days it was as easy as snapping your fingers. **That was when I came in.***

I doubted Celestia had noticed my long absence, and even if she had, I'm sure she wouldn't think of anything bad. After the Trial incident, I'd made sure to erase any lingering memories regarding what happened. It was for the best.

*Celestia had enough trauma on her plate. She didn't need Him to add more to it. Only half of the truth had been revealed. It was just a matter of time before she found out what her new role would be and how essential she was. **I had to try and prevent what was to come...or everything and everyone would be lost to Him.***

I reached the rock where the crown was perched. Even with it being underwater, it still glittered with positivity, and for a few seconds, I smiled and thought everything would be okay.

That thought was shattered in the next moment when the black mist began to close in on me from all directions, as usual. I reached out for the crown and sat there on the rock in its place, holding the crown to my chest.

One would question why I didn't wear it, but sadly, it wasn't mine to wear. My goal was only to protect it for its true owner who was fast asleep.

The black mist stopped right at my feet, and I closed my eyes in exhaustion, wishing I wouldn't have to deal with the singing for just one night. I waited for Him to show up, and as if on cue, I felt His presence as goosebumps crawled up my arms.

With a muffled sigh, I opened my eyes to meet His white ones as He smiled at me. The Darkness made up the majority of His body. Only His face peeked out from the black hood He wore to cover His black hair that matched the rest of the darkness around me.

"My Dear Sia. Again with stopping me."

"Better than letting you take over all the dimensions and using Celestia for your plot," I grumbled, my eyes feeling super heavy, but I fought to keep them open.

"Aren't you tired?"

"Yes. I am."

"Then why? You care for a world where you don't belong."

I gulped at His words as I ignored my approaching reality. I knew it wouldn't be long now. Celestia was growing stronger and more independent.

She would soon begin to harvest more power, and once she knew her purpose, it wouldn't be long until she didn't need my

existence anymore. **Then I'd be gone...**

"I care not for the world, but the people who try to make it a better place," I replied and slowly stood.

"You'd rather make the world happy and be here? Weak and lonely..." He whispered, and for a second I could hear the agony in His voice.

"I'm not weak. I...just need to sleep...for once. Give me just one night to rest, and you can torment me all you want," I muttered as I wobbled side to side. I knew I was standing, but it felt like I was in a whirlpool.

Something held my shoulders, and I struggled to open my eyes. When I finally had the strength for the simple deed, I realized He had caught me. I lifted my head to look at His white eyes that held a level of sadness I rarely got to see.

"The world would call you a fool for protecting something without receiving a reward," He muttered.

I grinned weakly at Him. "Yes, they would. Mock me for my foolishness to continue to fight a tempting invitation from a man who wants to give the stronger part of me his world. In the end, wouldn't I still be alone?" I whispered.

He was silent for a long moment, our eyes locked on one another as He looked deep in thought. "No."

"No?"

"In my world...you wouldn't disappear. One who can listen to the hymns of my people and continue to come here repeatedly, even on the brink of breaking down, you would deserve a spot where you are praised," He admitted.

My smile widened, but my eyes came to a close. I held the crown as tightly as I could, but I couldn't fight the Darkness

today. I was just too tired.

“I’d still be lonely,” I whispered, allowing the tension to leave my body as I relaxed into His hold. I thought He’d be cold, like the water, or how Darkness was always perceived.

For once, it was warm, and I couldn’t feel more at home. I thought He’d let me fall, or inflict pain on me for giving up on today’s fight, but today was different.

*He held me, and for a split second, I wondered if He could be a living person as well. I knew the person He was currently using was nothing but a host. He didn’t have a body, but if He gained His Queen, He certainly would. **And that would be the end of our dimension as we know it.***

Even with all of this information lingering in my head, I still let go, enjoying the dark companionship of an entity who was similar to me.

*One that would eventually fade and be nothing once more. **Just like me.***

Before my mind faded into the Darkness that surrounded me, I heard His last words.

~CELESTIA~

“Yes, Mom. Let me get Finn. Please, Mom?! I really want to be there,” I whined in the phone quietly, hoping Finn didn’t hear me.

“Yes. He’s finishing his shower. Eww, Mom! I won’t get distracted like that. Ugh, this sounds too weird coming from

you. Yes, fifteen minutes and we'll be there...maybe twenty, but I'll make sure we're there. Love you."

I smiled at the phone, watching the picture of Mom and me on the Caller ID that showed 58:00 minutes. Today was my sixth day at Alpha Pure, and it was the most relaxing one yet.

Magnor had teleported back to Aslan to let the others know I was fine and taking a moment to relax from the Trials before coming back. When he arrived, he assured us the school was still standing, and Othello, Miolana, and the others were doing a spectacular job holding the fort during our absence.

His visit had helped calm my anxiety and worry about the others, since our phones only worked within the protective barrier that hid Alpha Pure's location from shifters, humans, and even Forsaken.

Today I was going on a little date with Finn, wanting to enjoy some alone time, but Mom requested to formally meet him first. Orion would be around too, but I guess she wished to enjoy being formally introduced to my boyfriends. *Or future husbands, seeing as they had already claimed me as their wife thanks to those blessed marks.*

I looked down at the mark on my chest that was on display and smiled to myself at how he'd saved me from the Darkness in the stormy night.

I'd talked with Mom for a while, discussing plans for this mini date we were going on after we spoke with her, but there was a lot of planning involved. Finn had walked in while I was chatting with my mother, and I had to encourage him to shower so that I could finish my conversation with her for the sake of not delaying the date.

It was rather stupid for me to be acting like this was my first date ever, but there was meaning to everything, and I couldn't help being super excited for it all.

I giggled and ran over to the mirror to make sure I was dressed nicely.

My gaze scanned the long pink dress decorated with different colored flowers sprinkled with glitter. The sleeveless v-neck dress showed a good bit of my cleavage but seeing as my mother chose it, I assumed it wasn't against the rules.

Mom informed me that the baby pink dress was made by the Pixies yesterday, and I thought it was the finest material I'd ever seen.

Apparently, they loved showing some skin with their attire, and they assured that my dress was something they would wear at their special events, or in this case, my date.

My hair was left down by Orion's recommendation, and the one thin gold strand of my hair had tripled this week. My hair was now a mix of pink and purple with thick gold highlights.

I always figured my hair had a mind of its own, but I was getting a little confused by the rapid transition the last couple weeks. Maybe I was dealing with this color shift disaster because I'd stopped dying it black. The only good thing was it actually went well with my overall look, and everyone assumed I'd just been working on it.

My makeup was simple and courtesy of my mother who'd helped me out before she'd gone off to organize where Finn and I could have our date. My eyeshadow was a glittering pink that shifted to a deep purple with a slight shimmer, the shade dark enough to give me nice smokey eyes. Topped with

waterproof mascara, eyeliner, and a set of lashes, I looked very different than my usual look.

The pink blush she'd applied matched my complexion perfectly, which I found out later was because it was Mom's and matched hers.

I hadn't put on my lip gloss yet, knowing I wouldn't be able to resist kissing Finn at least once before we headed out. Once I had a few minutes of sweet kisses and passionate tongue action, I'd finish the makeup look with a light pink gloss with gold sparkles.

I made sure my white wedges were comfortable, just in case the place we were headed was mostly grass and required me to walk through the soft absorbent soil that wasn't very sturdy.

The click of the door caught my attention, and I walked over to my pink purse to slip my phone inside before I turned. My breath caught as I caught sight of Finn in an elegant white suit. His short pink hair had grown in length but wasn't long enough to reach his shoulders. He'd gelled it back, and he'd shaved to give him a smooth look, reminding me of when we'd first met before our written exam. His undershirt was a baby pink like my dress and his tie a mixture of pink and white stripes.

He walked towards me, and I gave him a seductive smile as my gaze trailed over his appearance again.

"Lucky Charms looks very charming in a suit," I purred, wrapping my arms around his neck. Those large hands of his landed on my upper waist and slowly glided down my curvy body, stopping at my hips.

He didn't respond, captivating my lips before I could even think. I moaned as I immediately dove into the kiss.

Just like how I'd been intimate with Orion, I'd begun to enjoy every minute alone with Finn to show him a bit of my love and compassion in the form of kisses and love bites.

As badly as I wanted to have a nice fucking from him, both of us had been exhausted for the last two days, and I was enjoying waking up in the hot sandwich of Finn and Orion.

Those hands of his skimmed down to my ass and squeezed it gently before he pressed me against him. It took every remaining brain cell to encourage me to break the kiss for the sake of pleasing my mother.

"Cutie Pie, do we have to go out?" Finn whispered as he caught his breath. "I'd much rather stay in and enjoy you." He leaned in and kissed my neck.

"Mhmm. Finn, we have to go. I promised. We'll pick this up when we come back."

He gave me another slow kiss, purposely sucking and nibbling on my flesh to leave a hickey. He released me from his amazing tongue skills that made my pussy throb in need and pulled back to give me a pout.

"I guess we should enjoy being here while we can. Everyone is really nice too."

I smiled and nodded, pulling him into a hug. "Did I tell you how much I missed you?" I asked.

He chuckled and returned my hug, kissing the top of my head. "I missed you more, Celestia. I wasn't too worried when I knew you were safe, but I couldn't help but be a little concerned until I saw you with my own eyes. Even if it's been

three days since we arrived, I still get a little anxious that you'll vanish."

"I won't vanish, Lucky Charms. Who's going to make sure the others don't tease you too much?" I asked with a playful smirk. I was rewarded with another kiss and a tug on my bottom lip.

"True," he whispered against my lips. "When we come back, we're not sleeping. Remember."

"Yes. I'll remember." I giggled quietly, knowing exactly what we would be doing. "What if Orion wants to join?" I asked.

"Sure."

"You're not serious." I raised an eyebrow at him as I looked up.

"I'm 100% serious."

"You and Orion? With me? Like...um...in the shows..." I trailed off as I blushed.

His dark eyes filled with lust answered my question, and he leaned in to whisper in my ear. "Yes, Cutie Pie. You. Me. Orion. In those wonderful sheets that smell like you." He tugged at my ear before he continued. "Just like the shows."

I had to stop myself from throwing away all our plans and kissing the sense out of Finn and that husky voice of his. He was making my body hot, and I was already dealing with the pent-up need to enjoy him in bed.

Man, this is place is making me a sex addict. I shouldn't even be having this much sex when all five of my parents live in the same building.

“You’re dangerous to be alone with,” I muttered, but leaned in to kiss his neck, ensuring he didn’t leave without a mark of his own. He moaned quietly when I bit his flesh gently and sucked on it. It wasn’t long until the area was a red/purple color, and I grinned in satisfaction before I pulled away.

“You’re going to make us late.”

“Am I?” Finn said innocently with an adorable face that made me laugh.

“Let’s go.” I reached out and grabbed my purse.

Finn quickly put his white dress shoes on before he stood and looked at me. “You sure we can’t stay behind?” he whined.

I walked up to him and slipped my hand into his. “It will be worth it. Trust me.”

Your Happiness Is My Salvation



“Why am I blindfolded?”

“We’re both blindfolded.” I pursed my lips and tried to keep the amusement at his question from my voice.

“Why do I feel like you’re lying?”

“Because you’re blindfolded and love that I’m easily directing you through this maze of a forest when you’re a pixie shifter and should be able to do it yourself without my blindfolded unicorn self,” I suggested.

He groaned but tightened his hold on my hand. I couldn’t help but smile. I enjoyed that he was willing to rely on me, and it just made this date much more exciting for what was to come.

I continued to lead the way, my hand in Finn’s as we walked along the grassy path towards the secret area Mom had prepared for us. It was late at night, and most of the shifters were asleep.

Only the sound of an owl hooting and the crickets singing their nightly song could be heard as we made our way to our destination.

“Cutie Pie, are we almost there?”

“Remind me not to go on road trips with you,” I teased.

“It would be fun. We’d enjoy different variations of music during the day as we drove to an amazing, quiet destination, and at night we’d enjoy ourselves in the perfect suites. Not to mention pulling over to the side of the road to enjoy some alone time.” He purred the last part, and again, my body went into “fuck me now” overdrive.

“Save that passionate voice for later, Lucky Charms,” I mumbled, and he chuckled, clearly sensing my embarrassment. He knew how to turn me on and wasn’t afraid to tease me.

I beamed at the lighted path that came into view, the cemented path decorated with gold, pink, and purple lights. As we neared our destination, I had to use my free hand to press it against my chest from the nervousness and excitement building inside me all at once.

We reached a large patio section, one that reminded me of fairy tales where the prince and princess would dance in the center of the garden, surrounded by flowers.

When we got to the wooden steps of the patio area, I warned Finn to watch his step. We made it up the stairs, and I led him to the middle of the white decorated wood that gave us a little shelter from the chilled breeze that blew on and off.

I turned to face my blindfolded pixie and couldn’t help but lean up and give him a tender kiss. He smiled against my lips, but I pulled away before it grew into something neither of us would want to stop, especially when we were both in a relaxed frame of mind.

“I go with my gut and conclude that you aren’t blindfolded.”

“You should believe in my amazing skills, Finn.” I reached up to remove the blindfold and watched him open his eyes.

He first met my gaze, an appreciative look forming on his face as he took my happy expression in before he glanced around us at the place we’d be having our date.

“This place...is beautiful. Celestia, how did you know where it was?” His voice held a hint of awe.

“Orion and I discovered it when we took our own tour around the place, and then Mom gave us a more detailed tour. She said Pixies love it here, especially at night. We’d come during the day, and it looked completely different than this. The light wires are made up of vines, and each orb holds a firefly couple! Every night they come to their homes and stay with their loved ones, creating the different lights we see now.”

“I never would have expected that,” Finn whispered, taking another glance around the place before his gaze landed on mine.

“Did you plan this date?” he asked.

“Yes and no,” I replied.

“Yes? No? Maybe so?” He sang the rhyme we learned as children.

I playfully slapped his chest as I grinned at him. “Yes, I did help organize this. I wanted some time with you because I missed you terribly. I was ecstatic that you came along with the others, and I wanted to do something that would make us happy.”

“Celestia,” Finn whispered and pulled me into a tight embrace. “And what about the no?”

“Well...you have to close your eyes and count to ten to see the next part.”

“Are you going to somehow make our dinner appear in front of us?” Finn asked.

“Kind of. Will you survive the ten seconds without starving?” I joked.

“Certainly. Make it 15 for extra measure.” He chuckled, and I gave him an appreciative look before I leaned up to give him one more kiss.

When we broke apart, he shot me a peaceful smile before he closed his eyes and began to count to 15. I scanned the area for Orion, and my eyes landed on my handsome purple-eyed lover who also wore a white suit. He silently walked towards us, and I moved out of the way to meet him halfway, leaving Finn in the middle as we went to stand a little to the left behind him.

Orion held my hand and quickly did a cloaking spell, hiding our presence.

“Fifteen.” Finn opened his eyes to see us not there. He glanced over to where we were but couldn’t see us. He slowly scanned the area with a puzzled look, landing on where Orion stood again, but couldn’t see us which left him looking troubled.

“I feel like I’m about to be pranked,” Finn groaned to himself. “Celestia? If this is a prank, you win.”

I had to stop myself from giggling. Orion wore a broad smile on his face, appearing amused by Finn’s struggle, and I turned to my attention back to Finn who seemed to have given up.

“Where could she have gone at such a fast pace?” Finn wondered out loud.

“Maybe she’s as swift as a pixie.”

Finn froze in place, his eyes growing wide as he visibly gulped. I heard the gentle sounds of heels clicking against the wood, and Orion and I turned our heads to see a magnificent woman with large pink wings that fluttered at a fast pace.

She was 5’8”, but her heels made her look 6’0” and she wore a radiant green dress that was short in the front but trailed down the back to the floor, allowing us a peek at her pink heels. The combination of clothing was typical for a pixie, and her blonde hair was tied up in a bun, the hints of pink showing at the loose ends that rested on her left side.

She looked like an older shifter, not due to her skin, which was as smooth as if she were in her mid 20’s, but because of the wisdom that lingered in her green eyes. Her lips were cloaked with red lipstick, and the brilliant smile that formed on those ruby red lips showed her pure white teeth.

Finn stared at the woman for at least a full minute before he responded. “Impossible.” He choked, tears already rolling down his cheeks as he stared at the woman with shock.

“That’s not how you usually greet your mother, Son,” she whispered, and Finn opened his trembling lips.

“Mom...you...you’re alive?” He whimpered as his body trembled. Her smile widened, and she took the remaining steps to close the distance between them, pulling her son into her arms.

“I would never leave this dimension until I made sure my children were safe and secure. We fought our hardest to get out of that Forsaken situation and were able to board the last

rescue ship before the dimension exploded.” She held Finn tightly as he began to sob.

“But-But they said you were all dead. They said they couldn’t find any remaining Charm pixies.” Finn delivered the words through his sobs.

“We didn’t use our real surnames because we didn’t know who Alpha Pure was. We’d heard horrible things, so we didn’t expect them to rescue us. I only revealed our identity when Charlotte and her daughter, Celestia, confronted us the other day,” she replied.

“Us? What do you mean by us?” Finn questioned pulling back to stare into his mother’s eyes. Her sweet smile widened, and she glanced back in the direction she’d come from and an older man and a slender woman walked onto the path.

Finn’s jaw dropped at the site of the two individuals who swiftly made their way towards them, the slender female ending up extracting her pixie wings and flying towards him.

“FINN!”

“Bloom.” Finn struggled to get the single name out. The girl landed a step before leaping towards Finn with her arms wide. Finn caught her by reflex as if she always greeted her brother that way.

“You’re okay! We’re alive! Don’t cry. I missed you so much.” She cried and held him tightly as he began to weep uncontrollably.

“I thought...I thought you were all gone.” He broke down, his sobs enough to make me blink my eyes rapidly to stop the tears from flowing. Orion pulled me into his arms, but neither of us could move our eyes away from the heartwarming scene.

“I know. We’re so sorry. We had to lay low until we knew for sure this was a safe place. We never expected we’d find you. I tried calling you many times, but it wouldn’t go through. I’m sorry.” Bloom sniffled.

She pulled back to cradle his face, wiping the tears from his eyes. She then stepped to the side, and his mother did the same as the older man reached where they all stood. When his bright pink eyes locked onto Finn’s green ones, he smiled.

“Now Finn boy. Did you really think we’d die so easily? You know us Pixies pack a punch when our lives depend on it.”

“Dad...” Finn whispered, and the man opened his arms up.

“We’re alive, son. Come and get a hug from your old man.”

Finn stepped right into his father’s arms and lost every last bit of composure as he broke down and wept.

I smiled at the scene, my heart full of happiness as my tears spilled over. This was the hardest secret to keep from him, especially after I begged my mother to take me with her during her commander duties to look at the survivors from the dimension incident.

I’d almost lost hope when we’d searched the majority of the Pixies until Bloom had caught my attention, her facial appearance all too similar to Finn’s. Only after Mom introduced me and I’d shown them a picture of Finn with me from my phone, did they realize we weren’t lying and that their son was here.

That was when we decided to plan it all out, and I knew this would be the best possible gift we could give Finn for putting our needs first, especially mine.

He should have been mourning his family, but instead, he went into the rain to find me that night and brought Magnor along. He'd made sure I was okay first, and if it weren't for the fact that I'd urged him to tell me what happened during our night at Magnor's place in New Aslan, he'd harbor that pain inside so that he wouldn't burden anyone else.

That alone was enough for me to want to do this and reunite him with the family he thought he'd lost. Orion rubbed my back and turned me around in his hold to kiss me on the forehead.

"Let's go back. I think Finn will be fine," Orion whispered, making sure his magic continued to cloak our presence and voices. I nodded in agreement, looking one last time at Finn who was on his knees still in his father's arms as he clung to him. His mother was rubbing his back, and Bloom was whispering soothing words to him, saying how proud they all were of him.

This was his chance to be with his family, and I didn't see the need for us to be there any longer.

"Yes. Let's go back to our room," I confirmed.

To see Finn's happiness was enough to make me want to save those shifters who were endangered, just like how Mom helped them gain their salvation thanks to Alpha Pure.

Not Scary But Addicting



“I ‘m trying to read, Orion,” I murmured.

“Hmm?” he mumbled.

“I can’t read when you’re kissing me like that. Haven’t you left enough hickeys on my neck tonight?” I pointed out.

His answer was yet another sizzling kiss that made my over-sensitive body hum in delight. I bit my lip to stop the moan that almost escaped.

“No.”

“What are the chances you made a bet with Finn about how many love bites you could leave on me?” I grumbled.

Orion was quiet, which only answered my question.

“I have no words for you two.”

Orion smiled against the flesh of my right shoulder but didn’t complain, giving me another kiss before he rested his head on my shoulder. “I’m tired, Blessed Love.”

“Are you?” I paused at the part I was attempting to read for the seventh time to turn my head slightly towards him.

He lifted his head and we shared a simple kiss before he laid it back down. “Yeah.”

“Why don’t we sleep? It’s two in the morning,” I suggested.

“Finn might come back. I want him to at least know we’re happy for him,” Orion revealed.

I smirked at his words, the action already hurting my cheeks from the amount of smiling I’d done today because I was so happy with the result of our swift plan.

I closed the book, remembering the page I was on before I placed it to the side of me. I turned over to look at Orion’s sleepy expression. “I’m happy you two have become so close,” I admitted.

“He might sometimes act like he’s not serious and jokes a lot within our group, but he’s genuinely an approachable person who is willing to carry your burden for you. I think that’s why I was able to go to him about Odion. I wanted to tell you too, but we got caught up with everything that was happening. I didn’t think it would be important.” Orion’s voice was soft as he spoke, tiredness evident in his tone.

“It’s okay. I want you to tell me when you were ready. I know it’s not a topic you want to discuss. Personally, I wouldn’t either.”

“You’re so understanding, Cutie Pie,” he mumbled.

I gave him a kiss on the cheek and hugged him, both of us relaxing in the bed. “I like how you alternate nicknames all the time. As for being understanding, I try.”

“Hmm. Can I take a nap?”

“Yes, you can.”

“You’ll wake me up when Finn comes back? That’s if you’re awake.”

“Yes. I’ll wake you up.”

“Okay,” he whispered and closed his eyes.

Within a minute he was asleep. I rested my head on his chest, listening to the slow beat of his heart and the quiet inhales and exhales.

Orion. I wonder how he’s still so kind when he’s been through so much? Living in the world for so many years, all alone.

Yet, knowing somewhere out there Odion was still alive but on a side that Orion couldn’t be on because of his own morals. *I bet he misses his brother...*

I closed my eyes and relaxed, wondering how life was going to be once we graduated from Aslan. I knew it would be years from now, but visualizing it in my mind was somewhat calming. I wasn’t afraid of the future, as long as my guys were all with me.

That would require me to make sure we stayed together, no matter how crazy New Aslan got. *Or if we had to face Odion one day.*

I drifted in and out of sleep, dreaming about each guy in a little moment. Each day I spent here was nice, but I think now that Finn was aware of his family and got a day or two to spend with them, it would be time for us to go back and keep the others informed about what was going on.

I also wanted to do some research and see if we could find anything about Odion’s past. He couldn’t have become one with the Darkness because he wanted to. There’s always a trigger to why someone decides to go to the dark side. Like how I almost did because of how hopeless I felt.

One of the questions I had was if Odion was born to be bad. Orion, by his nature, was of light. *Did that mean that Odion was destined to be a part of the Darkness? And if he was destined, did that mean he had to be a villain in all of this?*

The click of the lock caught my attention, but I remained still, not sure whether I was dreaming or half awake. The door closed lightly, and I heard the shuffling of clothes, but it didn't motivate me enough to open my eyes yet. *Could be Arielle...*

Something gently stroked my head, and I smiled at the comforting gesture. It wasn't until a soft pair of lips pressed against mine that I had the urge to open my tired eyes.

Green eyes met mine; their radiance of happiness made me smile with joy.

"Didn't mean to wake you, Cutie Pie," Finn whispered.

"I don't mind. We wanted to stay up, but Orion was tired. I was just resting my eyes," I explained. Finn nodded in understanding and crawled onto the bed, doing it so slowly that it wouldn't wake Orion.

He must have stripped out of his dress clothes because all he had on were his boxers. I wore a white lingerie set with pink trim and little jewels that decorated the bra piece. Orion was just in white boxers, and his long white hair was loose and spread out all over the pillow he was currently sleeping on.

"You two did more than enough. You should have slept." Finn spoke quietly as he settled into his side. I shifted off Orion to move into Finn's arms.

He gave me a tight hug and whispered, "Thank you."

"You don't need to thank me or Orion. We did what anyone would have done. You and your family deserved to be

reunited. All we did was produce the opportunity. Also, thanks should go to Mom who gained their trust before our arrival by saving them.”

“Either way, you two didn’t have to do all of that. You gave away the one chance for us to have a fancy dinner for a long time,” Finn acknowledged and pressed a soft kiss on my forehead. “You gave that up in order for my family to enjoy it while surrounded by new pixies and old friends we’ve known but lost contact with through our various travels.”

“You’ve done a lot for Orion and me. This is the least we could do for you,” I mumbled, resting my head on his chest. I reached out to stroke Orion’s arm, and he grabbed the blanket that had been on his left side and tugged on it until it was in his hold like a pillow.

“Blanket Hogger,” I grumbled, and Finn chuckled quietly.

“You can let him sleep.”

“I promised to wake him up when you arrived,” I replied, reaching out to stroke Orion’s arm again. It took a little longer than before, but he stirred and turned over, opening his tired eyes to look at us.

“Welcome back, Finn,” he mumbled before a yawn escaped him.

“Thanks, Blanket Hogger.” Finn grinned, and Orion pouted his lips.

I giggled while I changed my position, adjusting so that I could place my elbows on the bed and rest my head on Finn’s chest. “You know it’s true.”

“Hmm.” Orion sat up and rubbed at his eyes. “What time is it?”

“Four in the morning,” Finn replied.

“We seemed to be awake at four all the time,” I commented.

“True,” Orion replied.

“What have you two been up to at four in the morning?” Finn asked with a knowing grin.

“Nothing.” We both glanced away, and Finn chuckled again.

“Taking advantage of alone time, I see.”

“Just a little,” Orion admitted, running his hands through his white-silver locks and turning his body slightly so he could look at both of us.

“How did it go?” he asked Finn.

Finn closed his eyes but a smile still adorned his face. “Amazing? Wonderful? A dream? I’m still trying to absorb it all...” he confessed, and I could already see the tears beginning to form in his eyes. He moved to sit up, and I shifted off him to sit on the sheets with my legs crossed. Orion moved a bit closer, so it was us three in a little circle.

Finn glanced between us and smiled. “I don’t have words to describe how thankful I am...to be able to see my family again and then meeting all the other pixies here. Some of them I hadn’t seen since I was a little kid. Friends who I used to hang with, cousins and extended family. It made me realize how bad the current situation is with the Forsaken, and how little the Council is doing about it.”

Orion and I exchanged looks and nodded. “It seems like the Council isn’t concerned about the number of species

dying.” I was more than happy to share my thoughts on the situation.

“They only care about getting more Hunters and Huntresses to be on the same level or more powerful than the growing Darkness,” Orion explained.

“With the Hunters and Huntresses we have now, and all of the students at Aslan, I don’t think we’re enough,” Finn whispered.

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“It took the Forsaken no time at all to cover an entire dimension. Five to ten minutes? What makes them think they’re strong enough to conquer that when so many of their defense have become cocky and weak?” Finn grumbled.

“They’re becoming cocky?” I asked.

Orion sighed and nodded. “I had a talk with Harrison about it recently. No one is talking about it, but Hunters and Huntresses have been slacking a lot lately. So much so that many of them have died on the recent missions with average leveled Forsaken. Average level as in the one we first fought during our exam before the larger one appeared.”

“You can’t be serious. Why would they even be chosen for duty if they don’t keep up their role and training?” I asked. Finn ruffled his pink hair, ruining the once gelled look.

“Magnor explained to me that once the Hunters and Huntresses get accepted, they slack off because the Council isn’t checking. It’s as if having a ruler and team of representatives, but they only focus on the number of fighters that represent the kingdom and don’t send anyone to evaluate the physical and magical power those fighters hold.”

“With what you’re saying, we could have ten thousand Hunters and Huntresses, but only two thousand have enough strength to defeat a higher level Forsaken.” I tilted my head and studied them, waiting for confirmation.

“Yup,” Finn said.

“Exactly,” Orion replied

“Can’t we get rid of the Council?” I asked.

“We could, but it would have to be a large number of shifters from the majority of species requesting for that to occur. Also, if we get rid of the Council system, we would revert to the Hierarchy system with a King OR Queen,” Finn explained.

“King OR Queen?” I repeated.

“Normally it’s a King or Queen who will be the main ruler. It doesn’t matter if either of them has one lover or three. If a King is nominated, it doesn’t matter if he’s married. His wife will have the queen title, but that doesn’t mean she can rule in the King’s absence,” Orion elaborated.

“Has a woman ever ruled?”

“No,” Orion and Finn said together.

“How are you chosen to be King or Queen? Is it a bias thing?” I asked, seeing as there hadn’t been a Queen ever.

“It used to be chosen by the people, but the chosen Rulers would end up dying mysterious deaths caused by nature,” Finn replied.

“Caused by nature?” I asked.

Orion nodded. “My Father said the last ruler died of a poisonous bite while he was marching through the garden,

plotting to segregate a bunch of shifter races. His death made everyone realize that Mother Nature could decide who the next ruler would be, but then we gained the Council, which was supposed to be temporary.”

“But they have remained in power all this time,” I commented.

“Once you’ve enjoyed the luxury of being a part of a group where you can essentially get whatever you want, it’s tough to step down for someone else to take over and live that same life while you return to your normal life. They’ve overstayed their position in my opinion.” Finn sighed.

“I agree,” I replied before a yawn escaped me.

“We can talk about this another day. I’d like to enjoy ourselves tonight.” Orion grinned with a mischievous look.

“You said you were tired,” I countered.

“I had a nap. I’m not tired anymore.” He winked.

Finn shook his head. “Orion gets bolder every time I see him.”

“I agree.” I nodded in approval. “Mom and the others are in the other corridor. They would hear us.”

“Actually, they aren’t home,” Finn announced.

“What?” I asked, and Orion gave him a confused look.

“What you mean they aren’t home?”

“During our little pixie reunion, they all came to greet us, and my family was able to thank your mom for her assistance. She was with Magnor, Hellsin, Harrison, and Orlando. I asked if they were going somewhere, and they said they were going

out for the night since it's been a while since they've all been together," Finn explained.

Orion and I were silent, and I knew they must have gone elsewhere to do "other" things without their daughter and her boyfriends hearing it. I immediately discarded the thought from my head.

"How about Arielle and the other familiars?" I asked.

"They're visiting the mountain inn. They wanted to explore the caves and landscapes. Arielle told you this morning...er afternoon." Orion reminded me in a soft voice. I blushed, unsure when she'd told me. I wasn't the best person to talk to when I was half awake.

Finn had a sly smile on his face as he uncrossed his legs and crawled towards me. "What are you doing?" I asked with a raised eyebrow, my gaze lingering on his lips as my heart began to pick up in pace.

"Kissing you," he whispered, leaning forward to capture my lips. The kiss was slow, but I could feel the compassion in each movement. We broke apart to stare into each other eyes. I leaned back in kissed him more firmly this time, my body pulsing for more.

It felt like all the pent-up desire to be fucked had returned with a force, and that kiss initiated it. I lifted my hand and pressed it against his left cheek. I forced my tongue into his mouth, taking control of the kiss as our tongues intertwined while we enjoyed each other's taste.

My muffled moan was ignited by the sudden cool kiss that pressed on the sensitive spot on my neck, my mind realizing Orion wasn't going to sit there and watch us make out. *Not like I wanted him to.*

Finn tore his lips from mine and kissed the other side of my neck. They both began to leave kisses and bite marks down each side of my neck and shoulders.

Then their hands decided to play their role. Orion massaged my left breast while Finn used his left hand to stroke and play with my right.

“Ah...mhm...clothes...off,” I ordered. My eyes closed as I enjoyed the sensations of their warm lips biting and kissing my neck while their hands played with my breasts.

“As you wish, Blessed Love,” Orion whispered into my ear.

He paused his teasing, and I heard the sound of my bra unclipping. I sighed in relief when they moved their hands away to get rid of the rather annoying piece of clothing, and my body rejoiced at the thought of them teasing my bare breasts, especially my hard nipples.

They returned to their hickey leaving breast massage fun, and I was struggling not to squirm in my crossed leg position. My pussy grew wet with each kiss and pinch of my nipples.

Finn removed his hand from where it was and replaced it with his mouth, prompting another moan from me as I arched my back, loving how he sucked and then used his tongue to continue teasing my nipples.

Orion’s hand released my left breast, making me wonder if he was going to do the same as Finn, but instead the front side of his chest pressed against my back, as if he were on his knees.

Orion’s right hand landed on my right thigh, and his left hand trailed down the front of my abs and all the way to my lower region. I bit my lip, trying not to grow even more

excited, but as his fingers pressed into my wet pussy, the fabric of my white underwear was the only barrier between his fingers and my entrance.

He tauntingly continued the action, pushing the fabric inside me until it couldn't go any further before he retracted his fingers. It only took a few in and out taunts for the material to soak with my arousal, and I tried to keep my breathing in check when he began to kiss my neck once more.

Finn hadn't stopped his sucking action, switching from my right breast to focus on my left while continuing to caress my right breast at the same time.

My moans grew louder, and I struggled not to uncross my legs so that I could lift my hips. I desperately wanted him to stop teasing me and fulfill my growing urge to orgasm.

Orion continued until I moaned in frustration, and he and Finn chuckled. "You're making our Blessed Love impatient, Orion." Finn tsked teasingly.

"It's a big turn on though," Orion replied with amusement.

"Well, SHE wants fingers in her pussy and kisses." I huffed as I glared at Finn who had a grin on his lips as his green eyes darkened with lust. Orion pressed lips to my right shoulder, and I could feel his smile.

Instead of his fingers pushing back inside, he swiftly moved the fabric to the side, and before I could express my frustration again, a gasp escaped me as he slid both fingers inside with ease.

"Better?" Orion asked before he bit my neck hard, just at the same time Finn reclaimed my breast in his mouth.

"Fuck! Mhmm...yes." I moaned loudly, throwing my head back and struggling to stay still from his fingers that were deep

inside.

He drew back slowly and slid in just as slow, making sure he hadn't hurt me from the rough entry. Within a few strokes, he picked up the pace, and I lowered my head in time for Finn's lips to crash into mine.

When I gasped, he took the opportunity to dart his tongue inside, and I let him take control while one of his hands continued to pinch and rub the hard bud of my breast.

I began to pant, feeling my arousal grow. It was taking everything to not get out of my position, to spread my legs wider, but Orion was making sure my right leg stayed in place which was a curse at this moment.

"Faster, Orion. Please." I begged in a pleading tone, desperately needing to cum around his fingers.

"Not yet, my Love." After another deep thrust of his fingers, he pulled out altogether.

I groaned in frustration and turned my head to my left to try and see his expression, but he lifted his hands up for me to see the excessive coating of my juice on his fingers and allowed me to watch him suck it off slowly. *Heavenly hell... that was fucking hot.*

He must have noticed how the simple action turned me on because he grinned around the two fingers still in his mouth before he pulled them out and claimed my lips.

It was a bit sweeter than I expected. Orion took his turn to slide his tongue into my mouth, and I enjoyed every moment of it as his hand moved from hindering my leg to my waist. I spread my legs in a comfortable position, and Orion's hands moved back up to fondle my breasts.

My mind pondered about Finn, but that thought was answered with a gasp in Orion's mouth as I felt Finn's tongue slide right into my pussy.

"You taste amazing, Celestia."

Orion gave me a moment to catch my breath as he replied. "She does. I think you should reward her."

I adjusted my gaze to watch Finn. He on his hands and knees, sucking at my opening with greed. I was going crazy from the sensation of his tongue that licked my opening and trailed up to the little nub. He began to tease it with his tongue and sucked on it gently.

I squirmed as he kept going. "Finn, more!" I demanded in a desperate plea and turned my head back to ravage Orion's mouth. Orion continued to play with my nipples, pinching and grazing them with his fingers.

My muscles were twitching for more, and Finn delivered by pulling away and sliding his two fingers in. He began to thrust them in and out, not wasting time to bring me closer to the edge. Orion slowly moved to my left side so that I wouldn't strain my neck any longer, and I rewarded him by lifting my left hand and sliding it into his boxers to retrieve his cock.

He groaned at my touch and released my left breast. He shoved his boxers down low enough to make it easier for me while his right arm lowered me to lay back on the sheets. I spread my legs even wider for Finn, and he continued his thrusting.

Orion removed his right hand from under me to lower the other side of his boxers, releasing his long hard cock. I didn't

delay, moving my hands up and down his length while I moaned at Finn's ongoing thrusts.

"Yes, harder, Finn...ah." I gasped and bit my lip, feeling close to an orgasm. He went even faster, and my pussy clenched around his fingers as I came, a scream leaving my throat as I arched up and gripped Orion's cock.

He took a quick breath in and moaned at my unintentional squeeze, and his cock only grew harder at the action. I began to catch my breath as Finn slowly moved his fingers out of me and replaced them with his mouth to suck up my juices.

"So good." He groaned and sucked me harder, making me tremble. I reminded myself to return to stroking Orion's cock, and he began to moan as I quickened my pace.

I turned my head to see his hungry gaze, and I opened my mouth, hoping he'd understand what I wanted. He grinned, and I let go of his cock, allowing him to reposition himself and place the tip of his cock to my mouth.

I used my tongue to tease the head of his length first before I took it in. He went slowly at first, letting me get used to the side blow job, but he began to increase his pace and closed his eyes. I sealed my mouth tightly around his cock and sucked hard as he kept thrusting himself into my mouth.

"Fuck, Celestia. Yes, baby." Orion swore, and it only made me want to please him more.

Finn finished sucking my pussy dry, and I felt him move up my stomach to my breasts, his cock teasing my throbbing opening.

Finn moved his cock up and down my wet folds and slid himself in with a sigh. He began to fuck me with his hard cock.

They both went at the same rhythm, Finn's cock thrusting into my pussy as he sucked my breasts, and Orion increased his pace as his cock slid in and out of my mouth. He moved slightly closer until his cock was an inch from making me gag, but I fought the urge in an effort to please him.

I knew from his loud moans, quick thrusts, and rapid exhales, he was close to cumming. Finn was just as expressive, and his hot cock seemed to twitch inside me as he fucked me hard.

I quivered at the dual movement, feeling like I was on the brink of another orgasm. Finn released my breast and moaned.

"So tight, Celestia, fuck! I can't...can't hold it." Finn grunted and shifted his position just slightly, but the following thrust hit the spot that sent me over the edge of ecstasy.

"Fuck!" Orion swore. He stalled in his movement to cum into my mouth, and cause a chain reaction of Finn doing a final thrust and crying out as his load shot inside me.

I swallowed Orion's cum before he pulled it out, and I gasped, my body falling back to rest on the bed as I tried to endure the sudden pleasurable shocks that coursed through me.

Finn remained deep inside me, waiting for my body to calm down from its high.

"Shit..." I cursed through exhales, feeling exhausted but satisfied.

"You okay, Cutie Pie?" Finn asked.

Orion leaned down to give me a soft kiss. "Sorry, I was rough."

His apology made me grin before I answered Finn. "I'm fine...just need another moment or two," I admitted as I closed

my eyes and attempted to catch my breath.

“Take as long as you need, Cutie Pie,” Finn replied. It took another minute before I felt like I could move, but I noticed Finn’s cock twitch inside me, and I lifted my head slightly to give him a shocked look.

“Lucky Charms. You’re still hard?” I asked in astonishment.

“One round isn’t enough for me.” He winked.

I looked to Orion who shook his head with a grin on his lips. “Pixies. Gotta love them when it comes to sex.”

“Want to switch?” Finn asked.

Orion shook his head. “I need a moment. Have fun.” He wagged his eyebrows. “I’ll enjoy up here.”

I gawked at them both, but my body was already growing excited and a wave of anticipation coursed through me, particularly my lower region.

“You two are addicts.” I huffed.

They grinned.

“I think it’s our bond, Blessed Love,” Orion revealed.

“It makes you horny?” I asked as my cheeks grew hot at my words.

Orion smirked, and Finn chuckled. “Yes, Celestia. Isn’t that why you and Orion have been rather intimate these days?”

Both Orion and I looked at him with shocked expressions, and it took about five seconds to figure out who had been talking to Finn about such things. “I’m going to kill Harrison in the morning!”

“Maybe if we do it together, no one will notice his disappearance from existence,” Orion suggested.

“Remind me not to anger either of you.” Finn sighed but slid out slightly which made me moan at the sudden movement.

The glister of desire returned to Finn’s green eyes, and he leaned over to kiss me once before he pulled back. “Can we get back to fucking?”

“Lead the way,” Orion chuckled, moving to sit a few inches away from the top of my head.

“Where’s my sa- mhmhm.” I began to counter but was closed off by Orion, who lowered his head to kiss me. One of his hands already reached out to play with my breasts, and the other stayed pressed against the sheets to support him.

Finn leaned down and kissed my free breast and whispered, “Do you want us to stop, Blessed Love?” His husky voice was already making it hard for me to think straight.

Orion released my lips to let me answer, and I glanced into his pink eyes that were full of lust before I lowered my gaze to Finn’s hooded green eyes that were filled with want.

“No...keep going,” I whispered, my body already too far gone to argue. He gave me a pleased grin and pulled back to begin to fuck me nice and slow, and I moaned, letting my head fall back to look at Orion, whose softened expression and smile warmed my heart.

“Let’s enjoy this, Blessed Love.” Orion claimed my lips once more. I knew in that movement those lips would muffle my cries as I orgasmed again.

It made me realize that threesomes weren't scary. They might even be addicting.

Lingering Injury



~F INN~

I stared up at the ceiling wishing I could sleep, but I was overwhelmed by a bunch of emotions: happiness, excitement, worry, and a hint of fear.

I'd never been at a loss for words until I caught sight of my mom walking towards me. Since I'd received the phone call of my family's death, nightmares haunted me.

I tried my best to recall the last memories I had of them before I arrived at Aslan. Every time those fragments of memories started to play the scene that had occurred, my surroundings began to fade, and I was left alone in the pitch-black environment.

Those dreams had decreased, especially in the last two days of being here at Alpha Pure, but to be reunited with my family was like a dream come true. Even now, hours after I'd enjoyed the late evening with family and friends, I couldn't wrap my head around it. I was almost afraid to accept that it had happened because my fear was waking up and realizing it was all a lie.

Maybe that was why I couldn't sleep...or I was still calming down after the long sexual experience I'd just enjoyed.

I turned my attention to Celestia and Orion cuddled up on the bed; both of them were fast asleep. I reached out and gently moved a few strands of her long hair, the purple-pink strands holding a gold shimmer to them.

I noticed the change in Celestia, the way her magic had grown recently without her realizing it. I didn't know if it was because of all we'd been through as a team or if something else was contributing to her magical growth, but I knew we'd have to look into it soon.

My fear wasn't that her power was increasing, but rather that the wound on her left thigh that hadn't completely healed. My gaze lowered to the leg in question, the white bandage still in place after our intense threesome.

Harrison had told me to make sure we all went to sleep early because he wanted to have a look at Celestia with the others present to make sure nothing lingered in Celestia's wound. He sounded pretty confident that everything was okay, but I was still a bit worried.

I glanced at the clock that displayed 6:02 AM, and I sighed, sitting up to ruffle my already messy locks. *So much for going to sleep early.*

Celestia mumbled something incoherent before she turned to rest on her left side, her arm landing on Orion who stirred. I waited to see if he'd wake up, but he only turned on his right side and wrapped his left arm around Celestia, pulling her into his hold.

In seconds, they were both back to sleep, leaving me to admire them as they slept in peace. I was glad Celestia wasn't having too many nightmares compared to before, but I'd like to eliminate all of them if possible.

We still had no idea if Odion was the Darkness or hosting the Darkness, either way was bad for us. The guys didn't know the full extent of Orion's power, and I feared his brother Odion would be just as powerful. *If not more...*

I could tell Orion didn't want to hurt his brother, and that would be a disadvantage to us if he wanted to protect Celestia. As for the rest of us, I felt like we needed a lot more training to be on the same level as Orion or the Forsaken that had been growing stronger each day.

We just had to figure out what their source was. They had to be gaining from some type of source. *Could he be getting energy from Celestia through her dreams? Hmm, that wouldn't make sense. Her nightmares have decreased. Is the wound in her leg contributing to the increase in strength of the Forsaken? How would he make the connection though?*

I sighed and looked at Celestia again, staring at her for a long moment before a thought came to my mind. *Where has Sia been lately?*

She used to show up all the time at night, even when Celestia went to bed at super late times. I hadn't seen her for weeks, though Hunter and Orion had said she took over the day Noah came over with Miolana.

"What are you thinking about so early in the morning?"

I flinched at the sleep filled voice in my head, remembering that Rainer, my temporary familiar, could hear

my thoughts from time to time. Especially when I was stressed or worried.

Morning Rainer. How was your night?

“Good...it was hard to sleep. Too much noise.”

Noise? Um...not me, right?

“No. Let’s just say some of the guys really enjoyed the night.”

Oh, okay.

“Now what’s troubling you?”

Hmm. Maybe you would know something, Rainer. Can Forsaken drain energy through a wound or perhaps a split personality? Like an alter ego.

“Yes.”

“Really?”

“Ya, that’s rather obvious. Shifters don’t know this? Why do you think it’s important to heal a wound that you receive from a Forsaken?”

I just thought because they can turn into a Forsaken.

“That fact is true, but there’s more than one way to change a shifter to a Forsaken. It can be a slow progress. If the wound doesn’t heal properly, the Forsaken or “Darkness” can drain their energy with ease. They purposely won’t take a lot or they do it in a way that won’t be noticed. If you’re referring to an alter ego who holds power, they’re essentially a power outlet for Forsaken. Only a matter of time before they’re tainted and give in which will make it harder for the other half to fight off the urge to join the Darkness as well.”

Fuck! Seriously?

“Yes. What’s wrong?”

Celestia obtained a wound during her confrontation with Odion. Orion explained he was taken over by the Darkness and sent Celestia flying into some trees. A large chunk of bark went through her thigh, and though it’s healed on the exterior, it’s still pretty bruised up and hurts her from time to time. We’ve been delaying her treatment since things have come up, but Harrison said he’d make sure to view it today before we head back to Aslan.

“I’d get that checked as soon as possible, Finn.” Rainer’s voice went cold, and my gut dropped as fear began to build inside me.

Is it bad?

“Doesn’t she have some sort of other personality?” Rainer questioned.

Yes. Sia.

“And have you seen her lately?”

No...

“Whoever tainted the tree that injured Celestia can drain her magic through the connection, and Sia sounds like the perfect battery to drain from without anyone noticing, including Celestia,” Rainer confirmed.

Are you sure?

“I’ve watched my Master die from this, Finn. Trust me.”

I was quiet, looking back at Celestia and Orion.

Shit.

“Magnor should be awake. He’s always doing some meditation thing in the meadow near the waterfall. Asher has

enjoyed hanging out there and talking to Magnor the past two days. Go check and inform him.”

Alright. Thanks, Rainer.

“No worries. I’m going back to sleep.”

Okay. Sleep well.

I moved out of bed and quickly put on some sweatpants and a t-shirt. I walked over to Orion’s side and tapped him on the shoulder. It took a few more taps before he mumbled something and opened his eyes.

“What, Finn?”

“I’m going to go find Magnor. Just letting you know.”

“Why?” Orion asked, fighting to keep his eyes open.

“I have to ask him something. Just sleep. We may need to train when we get back to Aslan so get as much rest as you can,” I urged.

I didn’t want him worrying about it until I was sure. I figured he’d blame himself for the problem at hand if it were truly happening.

“Okay...night,” he mumbled and closed his eyes, snuggling a bit closer to Celestia, who hadn’t moved during our quiet talking.

Once I knew he was back asleep, I brought the blanket up to cover their naked bodies and moved to the door.

Time to find out what’s going on.

“That should do it,” Harrison declared, rising from his crouched position.

I glanced at Celestia’s thigh and was relieved to see the once purple-red bruise that had been there for days was finally gone.

Celestia was dozing off, her head beginning to fall to the side before she’d lift it up in dazed confusion. Her eyes slowly closed again, and she started to lean to one side.

Orion walked over to where she sat on the medical table. He lifted himself onto the table to sit next to her and wrapped his left arm around her shoulder to ease her into resting against him.

She didn’t even fight to open her eyes again, and her breathing slowed down, alerting me that she had fallen back asleep.

With an appreciative smile, I moved to stand next to Orion, and Harrison began to perform another assessment of Celestia. Magnor, Orlando, Hellsin, and Charlotte waited on the other side of the small medical room, watching closely.

I was able to find Magnor where Rainer had suggested I look, and Asher was with him. I didn’t mind Asher being there as I explained what was going on along with Rainer’s suspicions. Magnor got Harrison within five minutes, and we’d sent Asher to get Charlotte and the others.

It wasn’t hard to wake Orion, but Celestia was extremely groggy. We ended up changing her into shorts and Orion’s shirt before carrying her to the medical room located on this side of Alpha Pure.

Harrison took ten minutes to perform an overall assessment of Celestia before he focused on the area in

question. It was the first time I got to see a unicorn shifter use healing magic, and it was more powerful than what the other guys in the group and I were capable of.

Even Magnor's powers ranked half as strong compared to Harrison's, and that was the primary reason he was letting Harrison do most of the work and giving him space.

Celestia was in and out of sleep the entire time, and the moments she was partially awake, she'd just give us a confused look and fall back to sleep.

"How bad was it?" Orion asked quietly. He'd looked depressed for the majority of the assessment, which was something I'd been trying to avoid, but I knew he'd figure it out eventually. I didn't want him blaming himself for this, and I intended to tell him that once Celestia's parents were gone.

"She'll be okay. Both her and Sia. The Darkness was draining a large amount of energy from Celestia, but not enough for her to notice," Harrison explained.

"You mean to say Celestia has a lot more power, and that was but a fragment?" I asked.

"I'd say the connection absorbed about 30% of Celestia's power. She must not have noticed or experienced exhaustion because she's been relaxed and hasn't used energy in a while. If this were Aslan, however, the situation would be a lot worse," Harrison elaborated.

"You mean because she'd be spending a lot more magic doing classes and tests?" Orion asked.

Magnor moved to where Harrison stood. "Yes. She would have felt groggy or would have taken a number of naps to get through the day."

Charlotte, Hellsin, and Orlando shuffled a bit closer to join the conversation.

“Is she exhausted now because of the draining of energy from that dark source?” Charlotte asked.

Orion and I both blushed and glanced away. *How awkward would that be to explain we had a threesome early in the morning and left your daughter spent. So very awkward.*

“No. She must have gone to bed late. I can guess she stayed up waiting for Finn, correct?” Magnor suggested, looking at both of us.

I love Magnor!

“Yes. She stayed awake till I came back at four in the morning,” I admitted. “We talked for a bit and well, by the time we went to bed it was five something?”

“It’s seven thirty right now, and we kind of woke her up when we were carrying her,” Orion added.

“She’s just sleepy, Charlotte. I made sure to check when I did the scan. Nothing to worry about,” Harrison concluded. She sighed and nodded, and Hellsin and Orlando put a comforting hand on each of her shoulders.

“She’ll be okay,” Orlando whispered.

“It’s good Finn caught on to it,” Hellsin added.

“It was my familiar, Rainer. He said it had happened to his master.” I was very grateful Rainer had given me that information.

“It’s more common than people believe.” Harrison ruffled his black locks and sighed. “No one likes talking about it, but it should be discussed way before students graduate.”

“I’ll see if it can be added to the curriculum,” Orlando replied.

“What now? We just go back?” I asked.

“And where can we learn more about my brother?” Orion kept his expression blank as he put forth his question.

“You want to know more about your brother?” Harrison asked.

Orion nodded. “Odion is after Celestia for a reason. I know he wouldn’t go through all this trouble to stalk Celestia throughout our time at both Aslans without a strong motive.”

“You’re saying he was watching from the beginning?” Orlando appeared a little distressed by the news.

“Milkshake.”

We all turned to Celestia who had a silly smile on her face, as she snuggled closer to Orion. He sighed and reached out to stroke her head. “Let’s put Celestia to bed, and then we can talk about the details.”

I nodded in approval and the others said their verbal agreements. I walked over to the medical table and slid my arms under her, lifting her into my arms with ease. Orion hopped off the table, and we all headed back to the room we’d been staying in.

Everyone waited outside as I took Celestia in. I didn’t see the need to change her out of her clothes, and I laid her on the fresh sheets of the recently made bed. The maid who would come by every morning to clean the rooms must have been in while we were gone.

Celestia turned over and began to pat the empty right side of the bed, clearly on a mission to find one of us to cuddle. I

smirked and leaned over to give her a pillow before I pressed my lips to her forehead.

With a smile, she hugged Orion's pillow and sighed. "Orion and Finn," she mumbled. I had to hold in the chuckle threatening to escape at how adorable she looked. I waited until I knew she was fully asleep before I leaned back to stretch.

"Bru."

I blinked and turned to the window and saw Arielle in her phoenix form sitting on the outside ledge of the closed window. When her amber eyes locked onto mine, she fluttered her wings and began to hop up and down to catch my attention.

I made my way to the window and opened it, allowing Arielle to fly in. She completely ignored me and landed next to Celestia in a heartbeat, hopping around her as if she were doing her own little assessment of her Mistress.

I couldn't help but smile at her antics. I left the window cracked in case Arielle wanted to leave later and walked over to where she was currently sitting on the pillow Celestia was cuddling.

"She's fine, Arielle."

"Bru-Ree, Bru?" she replied.

I still had difficulty understanding her compared to Orion and Hunter. They seemed to have learned the language of Bru-Ree thanks to Noah and Gabriel being their familiars, but I had a hunch she wanted to know if Celestia was really okay.

"Yes. She's fine. Harrison, Magnor, and the others did a long assessment of her and were able to heal the wound on her thigh. There's no connection to the Darkness anymore. She's

safe and is resting because she was up until five in the morning.”

Arielle stared at me with those big amber eyes, and I sat on the bed and stroked her head. “Trust me, Arielle. I wouldn’t leave Celestia’s side if she weren’t okay. Rainer told you Celestia was getting looked at?”

“Bru.” She nodded.

“He told me to take her in. I’ll thank him when he wakes back up. Now, I need to have a quick meeting with Celestia’s family and Orion. Are you going to stay here?”

“BRU-REE!” Arielle said happily, stretching her wings out that ignited into pink and blue flames. She enjoyed a few more head strokes from me before she flew over to snuggle in between the pillow and Celestia’s neck.

I rose from the bed and took one last look at the two of them. *Mistress and Familiar...I wonder if we’ll be able to make our familiars permanent? I doubt any of us are leaving Celestia, so maybe they’ll want to be our familiars to be close to Arielle? Guess I’ll ask Orion and the others when we get back.*

I walked over to the door and put my hand on the doorknob, taking a deep breath.

We have to get stronger somehow. How would we do that with so little time...

New Role at Aslan



~O RION~

“Arielle’s with Celestia. We shouldn’t need to watch her,” Finn announced as he walked out of our room and closed the door gently.

We all nodded and followed Charlotte who went into her commander mode. The others looked serious too, which made me wonder if me mentioning Odion was a mistake.

Is it because he’s my twin that I don’t want him to be hurt? That’s stupid though...he wants to take Celestia from me. Is it really his intention or the Darkness controlling him?

Finn placed his hand on my shoulder, and I stared up at him in confusion. “Stop worrying. We’ll figure something out.”

“That’s something I’d say,” I grumbled.

He smirked and patted me again, urging me to start moving. I hadn’t even realized I’d stopped and the rest of the group was already turning the corner, Harrison the last in line and waiting for us to catch up.

We swiftly made our way down the hall to meet him before he gestured for us to go before him. The room we were

going to look like the entrance to a private library. Upon entry, my eyes scanned a large number of books on the many shelves around the room that went up to the ceiling. *Wow...*

I had to snap myself out of staring at the hundreds of books and moved to sit next to Finn at a large table that could fit at least 12 people. Once we were situated, Orlando looked at me.

“Why do you want access to your brother’s files?” he asked.

“Wait, isn’t he allowed because he’s family?” Finn interrupted, giving him a judging look. “It shouldn’t be a question. Odion is Orion’s twin.”

“Doesn’t matter if family or a stranger. I have to ask the reason for it.”

“Isn’t it just a simple file that you keep in your office with the rest of the students of Aslan?” I asked.

“No. That’s a general file. You requesting Odion’s files means the entirety gathered over the years, or at least whatever is available before he went off the radar,” Orlando explained.

“Faelia was able to get into the files though. Didn’t she retrieve Orion’s?” I mumbled innocently.

Orlando blushed, and Harrison chuckled. “Everyone underestimates, Faelia. I’m glad she hasn’t met Celestia or that would be problematic.”

“They’ve met,” Finn and I said together.

Harrison gawked, and the others sported with broad smiles.

“I feel their friendship is going to cause trouble,” Hellsin mumbled quietly.

“You all know Faelia? I figured only Orlando and maybe Hellsin would know,” Finn pointed out.

“Yes. Faelia is an excellent student and has helped Aslan during troubled times with her team. She could become a Huntress already but has chosen to remain on campus with her team to delegate students and teach certain classes that specialize in Fae or hybrids of any race.” Admiration filled Hellsin’s voice as he explained.

“Wow. No wonder she’s so knowledgeable.” I was impressed.

“She can see the future as well,” Charlotte disclosed.

“The others and I witnessed it before we came here. She saw Harrison carrying Celestia and the guards carrying Orion. That’s how Magnor knew they were safe,” Finn added.

Magnor nodded in agreement. “Faelia has a strong level of foresight. If anything bad is going to happen, she’ll see it.”

“That’s a little reassuring,” I mumbled.

Maybe we’ll have a chance of figuring out when my brother will make a move.

“Orion, I can get access to your brother’s files, but I’ll need a week or two to request the Council for them. Seeing as your brother isn’t a student, it’s a more difficult process.”

“I understand,” I replied.

He nodded in approval before his expression grew serious. “Now, back to the last topic we’d been discussing. Odion’s been watching Celestia?”

I sat up taller and took a deep breath, deciding I needed to hide my own insecurities until this talk was over. “I believe so. Before I arrived at Aslan, I met my brother once. He told me

not to hate him for what was about to happen, but I didn't understand it. As twins, we can feel when the other is close by. I don't know if it's the same for all twins, like Cairus and Caio, but when I was younger, I could sense Odion. Sometimes I could even talk to him. However, after my dad sent him to be trained because he was becoming a little problematic, that connection vanished. I couldn't sense Odion, even if I tried my hardest. That connection rekindled when we met before Aslan, and at times I feel his presence but can't see him. It doesn't matter if I try to track him down, I just can't find him." I did my best to make them understand what I meant.

"Do you feel him now?" Magnor asked

"No. I haven't felt him since he ambushed us during the exam."

"It's going to be a problem if he's after Celestia," Hellsin declared, his voice rock hard with a hint of anger.

Finn and I looked to him and saw his darkened eyes.

"It seems like everyone in the room agrees with that, but I feel we're missing something," Finn stated.

"I know the general understanding of what a Blessed Child is, but what makes Celestia so important? Not to mean she's not important to us as a person, but with how serious you've all become, Celestia seems to be...the key to something?" I was determined to get more information, and I felt as if they had the knowledge we needed.

Finn ruffled his hair and added. "Celestia's seemed to be targeted on many occasions. From the snakes in her locker back at Old Aslan to her being included in every Trial thanks to the Council, or Odion? Who knows. Either way, I feel we're

putting the full blame on Odion when there could be a bigger picture here. We don't have enough information to judge Odion for specifically being the cause of the Darkness targeting Celestia."

Celestia's parents exchanged looks before Charlotte spoke up. "I understand your debate." She rose and walked to the head of the table, grabbing the attention of all of us.

"Whatever is said right now, stays here, Finn and Orion. I know you trust your team, but I have yet to meet them and don't know if they would be able to keep this information between your group."

Finn and I exchanged looks and nodded. "We understand," I vouched.

She glanced at her husbands, and they all nodded for her to continue. With a calming breath, she went on.

"The Darkness can't get a hold of Celestia. It's not because she's a unicorn shifter, but it's in regard to her being a Blessed Child. Her creation not only meant she was born solely with our combined powers, but also that we had to ask Mother Nature herself."

"What?" I exclaimed, my mind already beginning to piece together what I hoped she wasn't going to state.

"Hold on...you mean like..." Finn trailed off. Not many species knew about the details surrounding Mother Nature and how her contribution to shifter life could determine how strong a shifter could be.

"In order to finalize Celestia's birth, we had to travel to a place that's a little outside of Aslan's soil. New Aslan, for your understanding. I doubt either of you has gone there, but there's a sacred dimension within the forest. It's hard to find unless

you fly around and explore the area, but the entire forest will change into a colorful paradise when a Blessed Child enters.”

She bit her lip, struggling to say the right words to explain what I now knew was exactly what Finn and I were thinking about. *The tales we'd heard about the fate of Blessed Children chosen by nature themselves.*

“Celestia was born on those lands, particularly at the bottom of the lake that is the border between Alpha Pure's land and New Aslan's. It was a water birth at first, but minutes before she arrived, the waters swirled around us, and we were lowered to the very bottom of the lake and protected by the water. None of us understood it at the time; then we researched it.”

“She's a Queen...” The words sounded forbidden to my ears, but I couldn't keep the thought inside my mind. It was like I had to speak the truth out loud, and my eyes only widened when Charlotte nodded.

“Celestia's birth was blessed by Mother Nature, and with that included her chosen right to rule when the world is in crisis.”

“Is that why you guys wanted to do your best to hide her from the Council?” Finn asked, looking just as shocked as I.

“Yes,” Harrison said with a serious tone. “If we had kept things as they were regarding Celestia, they would begin to dig into the details of her birth.”

“When you obtain Odion's file, you'll see how detailed some of the documents inside are, some aspects revealing things you may not know about yourselves,” Hellsin added.

Orlando sighed. “If they found out what Celestia was, they would have eliminated her as fast as they could. An ‘accident’

if you will,”

“Because they don’t want to give up their positions,” Finn concluded.

“Exactly. Now that we know a glimpse of what Celestia experienced as a kid, I’m thinking maybe they do have a hunch as to what role Celestia will play,” Hellsin whispered.

The others looked at him with confusion.

“What do you mean?” Harrison asked.

“This is a theory I’ve been considering, but after hearing about what happened with Celestia, why would a whole town go against one child over her being a unicorn shifter? Think about it for a moment.”

Hellsin stood and stroked his chin as he began to slowly pace, looking deep in thought. “Some of the townspeople are not young. They’ve been alive for decades, and before the hunting of unique species began, many lived in Versa. That was the reason why we chose it to be Celestia’s new home when we felt that Alpha Pure would be too risky. How could they go from knowing about unicorn shifters and even seeing them as tourists and visitors, to bullying Celestia for being one?”

“I’ve pondered that for years, and never got a definite answer,” Magnor admitted. “The Council must have had some type of influence.”

“What if the Council’s purpose was for Celestia to kill herself?”

We all stared at Harrison who rose up and walked to the opposite head of the table on the left. “If they knew or had a hunch of what Celestia was, what better way to get rid of her than to let her take her life and have no one to blame for her

death? At her age and with the low crime rate in Versa, it wouldn't be possible to kill her and get away with it. Even with the increase in Hunters, everyone knew how strong Charlotte and Orlando were. No one would believe Celestia, even at her young age, would get killed so easily. Too messy.”

“You're trying to say that the Council set up the whole town to bully Celestia until she killed herself? Celestia could have defended herself easily,” Finn argued.

“But she wouldn't,” I pointed out. Finn turned toward me, and I continued. “When you're a kid and someone picks on you, are you immediately going to fight back with no one to support you? Support as in your parents being able to come in and defend you and have the teachers and principal hear both sides of the story. In Celestia's case, everyone was against her, and both her parents...or I should say all her parents, were too far away to do anything. It wasn't until Magnor had come into her life when people backed off.”

“It's true. Celestia would have been put in the bad position automatically because the Principal would have already chosen sides. If they were bribed to bully her to the brink, no one would show their support,” Orlando grumbled.

“So she'd kill herself, and they would continue to rule,” Magnor concluded.

“But that didn't happen, and Magnor interfered before their plan could succeed. That meant they had to wait till she attempted to go to Aslan,” Hellsin confirmed.

“Wait, but Othello is a part of the Council. Or...was? Does that mean he's in on it?” I asked, remembering when Celestia and I had spoken about it.

“Othello and Miolana are our insiders. They are essentially our eyes within the Council. However, now that Othello been dropped, I feel they’re beginning to realize how strong Celestia will be when she unlocks her powers,” Harrison explained.

“Unlocks her powers?” I asked.

“And Celestia is already pretty damn powerful in her unicorn form. There’s even more? Also, do you think that’s why she was chosen to do all the trials? Maybe it’s the Council’s way of seeing if they could break her down before she could gain enough knowledge of what she truly is?” Finn suggested.

Everyone was quiet for a moment before Charlotte, who’d been quiet for some time, spoke up.

“Being chosen by Mother Nature and having the combined powers from all five us, means Celestia can use every element and harbors a little bit of each of us. She’s, of course, a unicorn shifter and took that from Harrison, but she has my magic power—if not more. She also has Orlando’s ability to foster knowledge, especially magic spells, Hellsin’s strength and agility, and Magnor’s ability to adapt in any situation. Some of those abilities might seem common to you, but on a battlefield fighting a forsaken, all of those qualities are needed to conquer.”

She then looked to me. “Celestia doesn’t have all her powers unlocked. When she was a baby, she displayed power at a rapid pace, and we decided to lock half of her power within herself. Even with that lock, she ended up getting D.E.M, and that was how Sia was born.”

“That means you’re going to conduct an Awakening Ceremony sooner or later, right?” Finn asked. I’d heard about

the ceremonies, but never knew why they were conducted. I assumed it was a ceremony done to acknowledge a shifter's growth into adulthood or before they went to Aslan.

“Yes. We'll have to do it sooner rather than later if the Forsaken are after Celestia.”

“What's the plan then? We need to go back to school for the sake of the others. Celestia doesn't say anything, but she's a bit antsy being away from the rest,” I explained.

“We didn't leave them on good terms so to say. If we don't go back and ‘fix it,’ we may have some tension in our group,” Finn elaborated.

Charlotte pondered for a bit and looked toward Orlando. “Are you able to grant them two weeks off? One next week and one a week or two before exams?”

“Yes. With Celestia's injury during the exam, I could get Harrison to make a report, exclude anything regarding the Darkness issue, and state she was injured and needs another week of recovery. Some of your team have to attend classes though. At least three.” Orlando clarified.

“We can both go, and we'll talk with the others to rotate,” I offered.

“Sounds like a good plan to me,” Finn confirmed.

“Alright. Orion? Orlando will get you Odion's files, but I'd like you to come here to read them. They are valuable documents, and it's too risky to read them elsewhere,” Charlotte ordered.

I nodded. “I understand.”

“As for Celestia's Awakening Ceremony, she'll have it where she was born at least one week before your exams. That

will give her enough time to recover.”

“Is it an energy draining ceremony?” I asked.

Hellsin spoke up. “Yes. It involves all the individual’s power leaving the shifter’s body and combining into the locked power to make themselves whole. Once that step is complete, it re-enters the shifter. It takes a few days before the combined power settles.”

Magnor stood up. “Which means Celestia will have limited magic. I think it would be wise if your whole team came for the event as protection. I doubt anything will happen, but with how the Forsaken have been acting up and appearing randomly, it’s best to be safe rather than sorry.”

“I approve of that. Any other suggestion?”

“What will happen with Odion? Are you guys going to punish him...or kill him?” I asked.

Charlotte gave me a small smile as her expression softened in her motherly features. “We aren’t like the Council. Celestia is dear to us, but we won’t judge someone without having all the facts to make the final decision. If Odion is being controlled by someone higher or the Darkness itself, we’ll take that into consideration.”

I sighed in relief, and Finn smiled and reached out to pat my shoulder. “Told you.”

Harrison yawned and began to stretch. “I think it’s bedtime.”

“None of you guys slept?” I asked innocently.

We stared at their expressions, half of them looking away and the remainder blushing slightly. Charlotte cleared her throat. “We had a few business things to take care of.

Anyways, you two should go to sleep. You'll have to journey back to Aslan in the evening."

We both smiled as we nodded in agreement and rose to our feet.

"Thank you," I whispered.

"We'll ensure this information stays here until you're ready to tell the others," Finn vowed.

"Excellent. Get some rest," Charlotte encouraged.

We said our goodbyes, and we made our way back to our room, both of us quiet as we thought about the meeting we had.

I have to find out how to protect Celestia and discover more about Odion. With Celestia's new role, this could lead to something greater than all of us.

This could lead to war.

Neglect and Dual Comfort



“**W**HAT?” I exclaimed, looking at Cairus and Caio like they were both insane.

“We tried talking with them, but Hunter seems to be in a bad mood, and well, he got ticked off with Theo and...uh...” Caio looked at Cairus who appeared rather calm for the current situation.

“Essentially Theo was acting really antsy, and Hunter seems to be dealing with something. Theo said something that ticked Hunter off, and I think you should know phoenix shifters have bad tempers.”

Oh no...

“Alright. Before I panic, is the house still up? Do we have a home to go to? Did Hunter burn down Aslan? Am I going to slave for the rest of my life trying to pay back my dad...or dads? UGH!” My gut had been telling me something was up, but I didn’t think it would be bad.

We’d returned to Aslan and dropped our familiars back at their home with the intentions of returning to the dorms, but Caio and Cairus met us halfway and decided to warn us that things weren’t as great as we’d expected them to be.

Orion wrapped his arms around me from behind and squeezed me tightly. “Blessed Love, breathe.”

I bit my lip, trying to be stubborn, but Finn came over and stroked my head soothingly. “Cutie Pie, it’s not that bad. Let’s go see for ourselves and let the twins explain. We can’t do that if you pass out from not breathing. I also don’t want to be lectured by Magnor, please.”

I groaned, but followed their instructions and took a deep breath.

“I knew this was going to happen, or well...I felt like something was wrong. Especially with Theo, but I didn’t expect him to leave. Like did he quit? Is he not coming back? Like...like...does he not...” I trailed off, not wanting to say the words as I tried not to fidget in Orion’s back embrace.

Caio and Cairus both frowned, both of them walking up. Orion moved away to give the twins space, and they reached out to grab my hands; Cairus took my left and Caio my right.

I wanted to keep calm and not overthink things, but the anxiety that I’d kept ignoring pushed through the barricade I’d mentally made, and now I fought back tears, doing my best to stay calm. *Or close to it.*

“Cutie Pie, Theo still cares about you and so does Hunter,” Caio whispered, his mismatched amber-gold eyes filled with worry.

“Dearest, Hunter and Theo were just going through some things before the final Trial, and their worry for you escalated it. They needed some space from each other to deal with their own insecurities,” Cairus soothed.

I lifted my gaze to both of them and gulped. “So they... don’t want to break up?” I asked hesitantly. The both of them shook their heads from side to side.

“Hunter...I’m only guessing because I don’t know for sure, but my instincts are telling me the anniversary of Hunter’s brother’s death is coming up or is really close,” Cairus admitted.

“Oh fuck!” Finn cursed and pulled out his phone, tapping on the screen for the calendar. His eyes widened, and he swore again.

“It’s today,” Finn announced. We all gawked at him, and he ruffled his pink hair as he sighed.

“I normally remember, but with the fourth Trial...it flipped me off my game. Hunter gets pretty anxious and has a short temper close to the date. It’s not his fault. It’s just a coping mechanism for him.”

“Grumpy...” I mumbled, feeling bad that we’d neglected the signs.

“It could also be because he switched to his phoenix form during the Trials. That could have easily triggered memories too. Hunter isn’t the type to reach out when he’s struggling with something,” Caio disclosed, and Cairus nodded in agreement.

Orion crossed his arms in thought. “I agree. With the Trials and Celestia getting hurt, that could have brought another wave of anxiety for him.”

“There’s also another thing,” Caio admitted. The three of us looked at the twins who looked at each other hesitantly.

“What? He did burn the house down, didn’t he? Arielle burns everything she finds when she’s angry,” I stressed,

knowing not to piss off my familiar.

Magnor and I had a few occasions during my rebellious teen years and boy, I was thankful she'd had only two angry outbursts and that Magnor had been home for both of them.

Let's just say we wouldn't have had a home left.

"The tension kind of amplified when they realized Celestia was blessed marked," Cairus said.

"Huh?" the three of us asked in unison.

Orion furrowed his brow in confusion. "Why?"

"Ya, why? Sure, I get maybe all of you could have been upset because we hadn't really disclosed it since we were dealing with the Trial shit and Darkness, and well the fucking stress of everything, but it's not like we didn't tell you guys on purpose," Finn defended.

Caio and Cairus nodded, giving the three of us sympathetic looks.

"We know." Caio smiled.

"Not everyone can see the whole picture guys. Also, remember their races are a little different than ours," Cairus added.

"What do you mean?" I asked

"Phoenix shifters value mating like any of us, but if their current interest is suddenly taken, they won't pursue and go into depression instead," Caio revealed.

"Wait, what? Is that true? I never dealt with that with Arielle," I argued.

"Arielle is a special case. She's a hybrid. Her harpy side would influence that sensation. Not to say she wouldn't be

depressed, but the harpy side of her would be okay to move to another mate. Harpy shifters can have multiple mates with no problem, but phoenixes are a lot harder and invest their hearts into a mate when they've gained interest," Cairus replied.

"You mean, for example, if Arielle was a full phoenix and Noah and Gabriel met her at the same time. If Noah ended up officially dating Arielle, Gabriel would back off?" Orion questioned.

"Yes," Cairus and Caio said together.

"Does that mean Hunter's backing off?" I asked in despair.

The thought of losing him since I was at Alpha Pure was there, but I assumed it would never happen because Hunter was really understanding.

However, if this is a phoenix thing, did I fuck everything up without realizing it?

"I don't think so. It's just his instincts kicking in," Caio defended.

"Also, with his brother's death anniversary and worrying about whether you're okay or not...I think it just got to him, and his only outlet was snapping at Theo who's dealing with his own stuff."

"Did you guys try to talk to him?" Finn suggested.

"Yup, but he's kind of closed off when it comes to personal stuff. He opens up to you, Finn, because he's known you for years. Celestia would have a better shot at finding out what's going on than any of us," Cairus replied.

"And Theo? What's wrong with him?" Orion asked.

"Uh..." The twins both trailed off and looked away.

“What happened? I know you said he left Aslan, but there has to be a reason,” I pressed, not enjoying this waiting game.

“Cairus and I think it was a vampire issue. From what Faelia said, during this time of the year, vampires need more feeds than usual. It’s like in their biological makeup,” Caio answered.

“We noticed during a recent assembly regarding the next semester that a lot of vamps were missing. That’s when Faelia explained it to us. I think he went home to get more blood tablets, but we’re not sure. Othello said he requested to leave for medical reasons which are common for vampires. Even if he’s technically a half breed, bats are related to vampires in some way,” Cairus pointed out.

I took a calming breath and looked at Finn and Orion. “Can the twins and I have a moment? Please,” I whispered. They both nodded in understanding.

“We’ll go to the house first,” Orion announced.

“See if it’s not burned to the ground,” Finn declared. The twins both smiled, appearing relieved as Finn and Orion said a quick goodbye and headed down the block towards our house.

They both squeezed my hands comfortably, and Caio motioned to our right. “Let’s go sit in the park for a bit.”

I simply nodded, and we made our way over to the swings. My thoughts were all scattered in my mind while I wondered what to do. *I have Hunter dealing with his instincts telling him to let me go with his brother’s death anniversary being today, and Theo dealing with his blood needs along with probably feeling left out too.*

I glanced between the twins, both of them walking slightly ahead, but my hands were still in their grasps. *Do they think I*

don't love them as well? I guess I haven't been spending as much time with them as I have Finn and Orion, and they've been silent about it. That's not fair to them...

Once we situated ourselves on the three individual black seats, we were all quiet, enjoying the back and forth swaying motion of the swings.

“Are you guys mad at me?” I asked as I slowed down the pace of the swing. “I mean, are you two frustrated with me? I know I haven't been good at sharing myself. If you're angry, you have every right to be.” I lifted my gaze from the sand below our shoes to look to my left where Cairus was before turning my right to where Caio swung.

“No.” They spoke in unison.

“Why? Shouldn't you be?” I didn't want them not to be honest for the sake of my feelings. Sure, I wouldn't deny that I had worried about this happening, but I didn't act on it, and that was the reason we were dealing with this.

There were many ways I could have told them I was okay or given them some reassurance. Magnor teleporting to deliver them a verbal message that everything was okay wasn't enough.

I could have written a letter to each of them and explained the situation without giving away any critical information. Or I could have sent Arielle to check in too. Would they have been more reassured if I sent her instead of Magnor going?

“Cutie Pie,” Caio whispered. “We aren't mad at you. We get it.”

“But...how do I know for sure? I'm sorry if I'm a bundle of nerves and stupidity, but I'm second guessing everything because I knew I wasn't doing a good job juggling everyone. I

told Orion about it too...I just. I don't know. I felt like when I came back I could pick back up with how everything was in our relationship and everything would have been okay?" I confessed, needing to have some type of outlet, and I knew the twins wouldn't judge me for overreacting.

"I'm not like this because I'm afraid of you being angry with me. I'm panicking and afraid because I don't want to fuck this up. I care for each of you, but with everything that happened and what's still going on, I'm just overwhelmed. It's hard for me to talk about these things with all of you because...I'm not at that level yet?" I tried to explain.

I looked between the guys on either side and sighed. "I'm not saying I wouldn't tell either of you stuff, it's just..." I sighed again and gave up trying to find some explanation. It was already hard enough to think straight with all the worry coursing through me and then try to explain why I'd felt more comfortable with Orion and Finn versus the others.

Cairus got off his swing walked over to me. He knelt down before me and reached out to my hands that were now settled on my lap to hide their trembling thanks to my pent-up nerves.

"Dearest, we get it. None of us expect you to come to all of us when you're dealing with something and need someone to talk to. We don't want you to come to us because you feel obligated to. We'd rather you do what you just did because you want to talk about something that's lingering in your mind."

I looked into his bright blue eyes, and he continued. "When we heard about the Blessed mark, we were just a little taken aback. However, we figured you and the others must have found out exactly what it was recently, or at least Finn and Theo. Orion is pretty knowledgeable, so I wouldn't be

surprised if he did know what it was but wanted to tell you alone first.”

Caio hopped off the swing mid-air and landed with ease onto the sand. He walked over to stand next to his brother who still knelt before me. He crouched and patted our joint hands, leaving his on top.

“Cutie Pie. Cairus and I are patient. Tiger shifters like to analyze and get to know their mate from afar before approaching them. We both love you, and we understand that you’re overwhelmed. We can tell you try to spend time with all of us. With classes and training grouping us all over the place, and the small amount of time we have after classes are over, we get that we aren’t going to spend a day a week with you.”

“It would be a silly expectation to have because this isn’t a lifestyle that is steady. We’ve all been prepared for Aslan’s craziness, but I don’t think we expected it to be as crazy as what we’ve experienced so far and that’s not anyone’s fault. Not yours, or ours, or any of the other guys. It’s not even your dad’s fault,” Cairus noted.

“Everything that is happening is due to something going on with Mother Nature, and no one can determine which path anything is going to take. What we CAN do, is brace ourselves for whatever changes are to come and communicate which is what we’re doing right now. Hunter and Theo weren’t necessarily raised in a family or home where they got that reassurance. Tiger shifters understand that not everything is a race and there could be a reason to everything,” Caio confirmed.

I looked between the two of them and gave them a worried expression. “Then you’re honestly not mad. Are you both okay

with waiting a little longer? I don't know what to do right now. Hunter needs me, but so does Theo. I don't want to push you two to the side either. I don't want to neglect anyone, and if I spend too much time sorting everything out, then Finn and Orion may get concerned." I sighed, lowering my head.

"How do I fix this because I'm clueless. I've never dealt with this before, and it scares me because I'm...happy? I'm happy to have men in my life who care dearly for me compared to when I had no one. I just want to make everything better."

"Dearest, just be you. We all know you're trying, and if our schedules weren't so jam-packed with everything that's been going on, it would have been much easier to balance all of us in this relationship," Cairus replied.

"For our time at Old Aslan, things weren't bad at all. It will go back to that once everything settles. For now, we understand that Hunter and Theo need you, and I can guarantee Orion and Finn accept that as well," Caio added.

They both reached out to press their hand on my cheek, and I looked between the two of them as they smiled.

"We don't care how long we have to wait, Celestia," Caio whispered.

"As long as you're happy and continue to be yourself." Cairus hummed.

"I feel like I'm not my usual self. I mean the side of me you all normally see. Strong, determined, ready to kick ass," I gave them a smile, but realized tears were running down my cheeks. "I feel like I'm not the same as before and maybe you guys won't love me anymore because of it? You fell in love with the strong me. Not this."

“Cutie Pie. We fell in love with YOU. All of you. Doesn’t matter if you’re happy, sad, mad, or unicorn drunk.” Caio grinned, and my smile widened at the comment.

Cairus wiped another tear that rolled down my flushed cheek. “Dearest. People don’t just love someone for the high times. They love everything about you. The good, the bad, the happy and sad. No one is perfect, and no one on this dimension or galaxy can be happy all the time. Team Misfit loves you, and if you ask Caio and me, we see a strong woman who wants to do anything in her power to bring us together. That in itself is an act of strength, and we’re happy to be in love with someone who was willing to give everything for our harem.”

Cairus and Caio stood, and they both presented a hand to me. “Let’s go back home and have a nice big breakfast,” Caio declared.

“Then Finn will help us find where Hunter went, and I’ll take you there. Once you’ve worked things out with Hunter, Caio can take you to Theo’s place. Does that sound like a plan?” Cairus presented.

I looked between the two of them, admiring their identical appearance, and lowered my gaze to their outstretched hands. With a deep breath, I placed my hands in theirs and smiled.

“It sounds like a plan,” I whispered.

They both appeared happy at my decision, and Caio smiled. “Once this is all settled, I call for a day with the Sun Twins.”

“Why does that sound like a television show?” Cairus muttered, sounding bored already.

“It would be an awesome cooking show if you took your negativity somewhere else.” Caio side eyed him.

Cairus rolled his eyes. “Nope. All I can envision is you trying to impress Dearest with cupcakes and end up getting caught up in kissing her and burning them all.” Cairus huffed. “Training session would be a better date.”

“First of all, I don’t burn anything. This isn’t an episode of Orion in the kitchen. And secondly, training is boring. No one needs to smell your sweaty self. We get enough of that taking your clothes from the hamper.”

“Not my fault you’re always on laundry duty and Orion can actually bake sweets. It’s just everything else that’s categorized as edible that seems to burn at his touch,” Cairus corrected.

“Is that a unicorn thing?” Caio pondered.

“Hmm...I wonder?” Cairus mused.

They both looked at me, and I shrugged. “I can actually cook, guys. Haven’t burned anything. Well, unless Arielle’s around.”

“Like her sweatpants,” Caio whispered to Cairus who nodded in understanding.

“RIP sweatpants. You were nice to take off.” I blushed and Caio laughed.

“You’re teasing Cutie Pie again. I bet you wished to take them off.”

“I do and I’m not ashamed of it,” Cairus said with a confident smirk as he winked at me which only made me blush harder.

Oh god, can I have a threesome with them? No! Celestia Rainbow, you will not be distracted by dirty thoughts thanks to their attractive personalities...and cocks. Oh, man, I miss those cocks. Maybe Arielle can do me a favor and burn their sweat- NO! FOCUS.

“You two are silly,” I mumbled but squeezed their hands before I leaned in to give Caio a long deep kiss. He seemed taken aback by the sudden move, but in seconds he was kissing me back with an urgent desire.

We pulled apart, and I turned over to give Cairus his kiss. He wasn't the least surprised, responding immediately to my lips and kissing me with the same amount of urgency.

If it weren't for my priorities with Hunter and Theo, I wouldn't have cared to fuck them right here and now. *Public threesome? Hmm...doesn't sound too bad. Maybe that's a unicorn thing? Shifter thing? I've been watching too many In-Public "shows."*

I pulled back and they both grinned, moving forward to give me a sandwich hug.

“Trust us, Celestia. Doesn't matter how long we have to wait. We love you,” Caio whispered.

“And we'll always love all of you, the good and the bad. The flawed and the flawless. Once we love, we give it our all, and we know you'd do the same for us,” Cairus assured.

“Thank you. Both of you. I love you, Caio and Cairus. I promise the wait will be worth it.”

I decided what their reward would be, and I couldn't deny the hint of excitement that ran through me.

*Dark Warning and My Sweet
Hunter*



“He’s most likely taking a walk,” Cairus announced.

I glanced around the green forest and nodded. “I think I can find him from here.”

“You sure?” Cairus asked.

I turned to face him and nodded happily. “Yes.”

“Coffee sure cheers you up.”

“I needed a cup so bad. Mom has decaf.” I groaned and placed my hand on my forehead for a dramatic effect.

He chuckled and slipped his arms around my waist, pulling me closer to him. “It’s not that bad.”

“It’s disgusting,” I argued and closed the distance between us with a kiss.

“Mhm...I’ve missed kissing you.”

“I kissed you two hours ago.”

“Not enough.” His lips brushed mine before he lowered them to my neck. I moaned quietly as he kissed the nape of my neck tenderly, transitioning from soft quick kisses to hot open-mouthed ones, the last kiss ended with a love bite.

“Cairus, you’re distracting me,” I mumbled trying to sound upset, but my low voice was needy.

“Oops,” he replied, but I knew he didn’t feel a hint of guilt. He kissed me one last time on the lips, allowing the moment to linger before he released me.

“As Finn would say, go get your man back, Dearest!” Cairus cheered.

I giggled. “Finn would not call me Dearest.” I leaned in to suck firmly on his neck, prompting a low moan from his lips.

With a final peck on the now red spot on the side of his neck, I raised my gaze to his, and he gave me a wide grin. I shot him a confident smile in return, loving how much he believed in me. “I’ll be fine. I want to spend the day with Hunter, so you can go back and rest.”

He nodded and lifted his hand to stroke my long locks. “Just be careful and remind Hunter that he’ll never lose you or any of us. We’ll never abandon him.”

“I will. Thanks, Cairus. I love you.”

“I love you more, Dearest.”

He gave me a kiss on the nose and turned around to walk away. In seconds, he was in his snow tiger form and dashed off in a full sprint.

I waited until he was gone from my sight before taking a quick check of my outfit: orange tank top with black shorts and running shoes. *Jeez, I look more like a jogger than anything. Especially with my hair up in a ponytail.*

I stared into the deeper part of the forest that was ahead of me.

Time to find Hunter.

Step after step, I journeyed deeper into the forest. *Where could my Hunter be?*

I'd been walking for twenty minutes and had yet to find Hunter. I wasn't worried about finding him, confident in my own magical abilities to scout him out, but I hoped he was safe.

I couldn't relate to losing a family member, but I could never forget the sense of loss I felt with Arielle when I'd discovered her that rainy night.

The amount of agony she harbored inside her after losing her family, friend, and nest was hard on her at four years, and even before we'd finalized our familiar and Mistress bond, I felt the weight of their deaths.

Though years have passed, I don't think the pain went away. It would dim in comparison to the fresh agonizing pain that came along from losing someone and knowing that you could never talk or physically see them again. A pain like that would never really go away.

I don't think anyone would want it to.

With what I knew about the death of Hunter's brother, Hunter's displayed emotion proved that he was still affected by it, even if it wasn't a huge response.

Our Trial had tested those emotions, and I was thankful he conquered a bit of fear he had. *But did it help him heal or open old wounds?*

I pulled out of my thoughts and a warm breeze passed by me, alerting my senses. I stopped in my tracks and closed my

eyes, doing my best to calm my mind for a few seconds and listen with my physical ears while heightening my other senses.

The warm breeze swept by me again, and this time I knew to go to the right. *Thank you, Mother Nature.* I made the suggested turn and walked forward, my eyes lazily scanning the area from time to time.

I was ready to continue walking, but the scent of cinder tickled my nose, my senses still heightened. I looked around me, wondering where the aroma came from until my eyes landed on a glimpse of brown hair that didn't match the shade of bark of the oversized tree standing to my left.

“Hunter?” I asked hesitantly, moving closer to see if it was really him. When I noticed his long brown hair that was tied into a ponytail and familiar set of clothing, I knew it was him, but I was a little worried.

Is he sleeping? He's sleeping...right?

Without a lingering second, I crouched down to push off the ground, pink magic circles forming beneath my feet to give me a boost of levitation. Calling my magic was an ease when I was anxious; in this case, my fear for Hunter's life was projecting itself through my power to levitate.

I landed on the rather thick branch that could almost fit the two of us and cautiously moved to Hunter's side with haste.

Once I was close enough, I knelt on one knee and reached out to press my two fingers against his throat while I immediately scanned his wrists and ankles.

My fear turned to relief when the beat of his pulse thrummed against my fingers. *Thank goodness.*

“Hunter?” I whispered again, lifting my fingers from his throat to brush my hands against his cheek. He stirred slightly, taking a deep inhale, but relaxed again.

“Hunter, love. Wake up,” I urged.

With how peaceful his expression was, I didn’t want to wake him up, but I also needed to make sure he was somewhat okay.

He groaned and opened his eyes a crack to look at me. He blinked a few times and reached out to me. “Celestia.” He breathed my name, his husky voice thick with sleep.

I wanted to respond, but his arms wrapped around me and pulled me into a hug which shocked me. “Hunter?” I asked.

He didn’t respond, he just continued holding me in his arms. In my position, I couldn’t really lift my head to check on him, but I could hear the beat of his heart and noticed how slow it was. *Did he fall back asleep?*

Seeing as I wasn’t in an uncomfortable position, I allowed myself to loosen up and enjoy the warm embrace. I didn’t feel sleepy but closed my eyes and wondered about everything that happened so far.

Blessed Child. I should have asked for more details about my birth. Hmm. Orion said on the way back that we’d have to come back to do some research on Odion. I could always ask Mom then. Not like I have a choice now...

I yawned and continued to think random thoughts.

You don’t know who you are, my Queen.

I opened my eyes again and was startled by the change in scenery. I stood at the edge of a lake, my now bare feet only seconds from the cool water.

My surroundings looked familiar, but I couldn't grasp where I'd seen this forest before. It almost reminded me of the place I'd go with the twins, but purer? More sacred and meaningful? Yet, I had no idea why.

My gaze scanned the area until they landed on the cloaked individual. "Odion?"

"Sadly, it is not," the man replied.

"Who are you?" I asked. "Are you the man from the storm?"

"Bingo, my Queen."

"That sounds weird from you...I mean, what the hell am I doing here?" I was unsure as to why I was more relaxed than I should have been.

In dreamland with this dark psycho and I'm acting like we're friends? What the hell is wrong with me?

"I'm not here to torment you today. Think of it as a check in."

"And why would you do that?" I snarled.

"You adapted well. A little interference was annoying, but it only means my plan is going well." He chuckled to himself.

"You really are crazy." I sighed, having no patience for Him or whoever He was. "Where's Odion and why am I here?" I demanded.

"Now, now. Are you harboring empathy for him? And you wanted to come here," He answered.

"Sorry, but you're not making any sense. Also, I don't know what you're talking about. I can't harbor empathy for someone who tainted his brother and almost framed him."

He walked over to me, and I stood my ground, not feeling a hint of fear which was a little worrisome to me.

I was afraid of Him before. What changed?

“That was my doing. Can’t kill the messenger when he’s only following my orders.”

“You’re controlling Odion?!” I snapped, glaring at him.

He reached out to press His hand to my cheek, and I froze at His icy cold touch. “Yes and no. You don’t understand what your role is?”

“What role? And you’re distracting me from the real question. Answer me!” I shouted.

“I’m not distracting. If I told you what I know, you would realize I’m not as bad as you think.” He smirked, and His thumb reached out to trail my bottom lip, the action making my heart skip a beat as I stared at Him.

“What...why am I not scared of you?”

“Why did Mother Nature make you so pure?” He countered.

What?

“I don’t understand,” I confessed.

“You don’t have to, my Queen. You will very shortly. However, my time is wearing thin.”

“What do you mean about Mother Nature? What am I missing? Why...what is this place?!” I threw question after question at Him, wishing there was more time for Him to answer them when He was being “polite” to me.

“Questions that I shouldn’t be answering, my Queen. However, I assure you they will be answered. As for what

you're not understanding...let say this." He leaned in closer until our lips were centimeters from touching.

"The Darkness is an element just like Light. The two coexisted before shifters and humans were created. What can influence the elements?"

"...People," I whispered.

"That's my Queen." He hummed with delight and my eyes never left His as His lips pressed against mine.

Why?

"Celestia?"

I felt something shake me a little harder than I was used to, and I lifted my head up in a fast motion to look around. *Where...wait...what?*

Something gently grasped my chin, and I was directed to look into a pair of dark orange eyes. *Hunter's wonderful fire like eyes.*

"Celestia?" he said again, and I stared at him like I didn't know what he was saying.

"That's not my name?" I said hesitantly.

Hunter raised his eyebrow at me. "What is it then?"

"Queen? My Queen...I think?" I said and blinked a few times, wondering exactly where I got that name from. *In fact, what was my dream just now? I had to be dreaming about something.*

Hunter didn't say anything, but he didn't look very pleased with my answer. I frowned and laid my head back down on his chest. "I think I need a moment. I feel confused," I admitted.

"Alright. Did you sleep last night?"

“No.”

“Why?”

“Uh...I was worried.”

“About?”

“You.”

I lifted my head, so I could rest my chin on his chest. He lowered his gaze, and I continued. “I’m sorry.”

“Why are you apologizing? You didn’t do anything. Just because you were a little delirious when you woke up doesn’t mean you should apologize. It happens to everyone.” Hunter defended me, and I gave him an appreciative smile, lifting my head to shake it side to side.

“No. I mean, I’m sorry for hurting your feelings. Like, not balancing myself with you and making you feel left out.”

“Who said you hurt my feelings?”

“The twins said you’ve been a little tense lately, and you got into an argument with Theo? Also, you weren’t pleased when you found out about me being blessed marked, and we all talked about it last night. I found out that phoenix shifters give up the people they crush on when they realize that person have a mate, and I was afraid you...would leave.” I rambled, saying the majority of my explanation in one breath.

He blinked a few times, looking a little shocked by my statement before he sighed.

“Cutie Pie. I wish you wouldn’t jump to conclusions,” he lightly scolded, lifting his free hand to tap on my nose.

I scrunched my face and pouted. “What do you mean?”

“I’m not mad at you.”

“You’re not?”

He shook his head and gestured for me to sit up for a second. I did exactly that, and he moved back to sit straight against the bark of the tree and patted his lap. “Come here, Cutie Pie.”

My body moved before I registered his command, and I was in his lap in seconds. Once his arms were securely around my waist, he rested his chin on my shoulder.

“Did I worry you?”

“Yes! I mean, I’ve been neglecting you guys,” I confessed.

“How is that?”

“Um, aren’t you upset that I’ve been with Finn and Orion more? Or that we didn’t get a chance to tell you about the blessed marks?”

“No.”

I sat there quietly, and Hunter chuckled. “You really worry unnecessarily, Celestia.”

“I do not! I just, um, was overthinking.”

“That’s the same thing,” he pointed out.

“Hmph, whatever. Now I’m mentally drained.” I sighed, feeling exhausted. *I’d spent all night worrying and thinking, and Hunter didn’t even have a worry?*

“You remember who you are now?” he whispered, his voice hinting at his concern.

“Oh. Yes. I think I was half asleep or something.” I brushed it off, not wanting him to worry himself. *Not like I remember what I dreamed about. I really need to work on writing them down or something.*

He was quiet for a few seconds and inhaled deeply, letting the air out at a gradual pace. “I’ve missed you, Cutie Pie.”

I turned slightly in his embrace, just so I could see his sad eyes, and I immediately pressed my lips against his. He gripped the material of my orange tank top that was slightly lifted thanks to my twisted position.

I broke the kiss to reply. “I missed you more, Hunter. Why aren’t you upset though, and why did you and Theo have an argument?”

“I was frustrated at the situation you and Orion were in. I won’t lie that the blessed mark thing didn’t bother me, but your life was more important than a mark. You’ve been caught up in the Trials and studies. You barely get time to sleep and eat properly. I couldn’t be selfish and get upset that I didn’t get a lot of time to spend with you.”

He moved his free hand to play with my ponytail while he continued.

“I understand the general concept of shifters, and I figured you’re close to Orion and Finn because your elements are similar. I also don’t mind if I’m not in that role as your first person to go to if something is seriously bothering you. It’s a natural response, and I shouldn’t have expectations that you’ll come to me for everything. None of the other guys should either.”

“As for Theo and I...he’s just been annoying. I could kind of guess why, but I wasn’t in the mood that day, and I just kind of snapped. I’m not very good at sharing my emotions with everyone. Caio and Cairus tried, but I didn’t want to burden them.”

“Your worries aren’t a burden,” I whispered.

“That’s because you’re our girlfriend, Cutie Pie. It’s different when I tell you versus the others. I’m okay with telling Finn stuff because he’s been my friend for years, and Pixies are just good listeners. I think it’s something about their aura that makes them more approachable. Orion has a similar feel to him.”

“Can you tell me why you were annoyed?” I knew it was his brother’s death anniversary, but I wanted to hear it from him. He looked away and seemed hesitant for a moment, but he replied anyway. “My brother died this very day all those years ago. I asked for today off because I don’t do well. I mean, I don’t function well.” He obviously struggled to find the right words.

“With my parents not really involved in my life much, it’s kind of difficult for me to connect with anyone on this day, aside from Finn. He normally remembers, but the Trial and news about his family’s death were already too much on him. Didn’t want to nag him for support. Finn knows I try to stay away from people and do my own thing. That’s how I cope, but Theo was being loud and asking all these dumb questions about why you weren’t back yet, and I couldn’t stand it. If it were any other day, I would, but not the day before today,” Hunter confessed.

“Hunter.”

“I shouldn’t have gotten mad.” He stared into my eyes and I could see his regret.

“It’s not your fault. I’m sure if you two talked it out, it wouldn’t be a big deal. We’ll deal with it tomorrow, together,” I suggested.

“We’re going to see him?” he asked.

“Yes. I told the others I’d spend today with you and tomorrow with Theo. Orlando granted me a week off thanks to my mother’s interference. My goal is to at least patch things with everyone and get you guys all caught up. Um, a lot happened.”

“You’re okay though, right? Magnor said you got injured during your fight with Odion.”

“Yes, I’m fine. Harrison healed the wound while I was sleeping.”

“Who’s Harrison?”

“Oh...he’s well...my...uh...dad?”

Hunter was silent as he blinked at me. “Celestia, are you confused again?”

I groaned and shook my head. “No! Ugh, it’s a long story, but I have four dads.”

“Four?!”

“Orlando, Harrison, Hellsin, and Magnor.”

“Magnor’s your REAL dad? On second thought, Hellsin? 8’5” tall Hellsin? How...no that’s just disturbing to think about.” Hunter shivered, and I giggled.

“He has two forms, Hunter. He’s only 6’7.”

“Only, hmph,” Hunter grumbled. “I feel short.”

“I like you as you are.” I hummed and expertly turned in his arms.

He smirked and helped me, so I could sit on his lap facing him with my arms resting on his shoulders.

“Sorry for jumping to conclusions. I just don’t want to lose you.”

“You’re apologizing too much today.”

“You deserve it though. I was anxious and really thought you were bothered.”

“If we were in a different scenario where life was like Old Aslan, then yes. Maybe I would be disturbed. However, our lives have been a clutter of events and challenges, and it’s mentally exhausting. You’re doing an amazing job handling it all.”

He pressed his forehead against mine and those orange eyes sparkled with pride. “I’m thankful to have a girlfriend who cares enough to make sure we’re all happy in this growing relationship.”

We kissed after that, and I realized my Hunter was the sweetest.

Loving Approval



“**W**here does this path lead?” I asked Hunter, my hand in his as we strolled through the thick forest. We’d been walking for about 45 minutes, and I still didn’t know where he was taking me.

“Just up this path and we’ll be there,” Hunter whispered and squeezed my right hand. During our walk, I explained everything that had happened during Alpha Pure. From my parents and birthplace to Finn being reunited with his family and the bits about the Council.

Hunter listened to everything closely as I went into the details of how I felt about it all and our current situation.

He agreed that we’d have to try and be ahead of whatever Odion was planning, but he didn’t think Odion was necessarily evil either, especially when he could have killed Orion and me during our confrontation but didn’t.

Now that Hunter was caught up, he wanted to show me something before we went back home. It was only early afternoon, and I wanted to enjoy as much time with him before we returned and headed to get Theo.

We finally reached a tiny clearing and another cement peddle path that appeared to lead to a small home up ahead. Hunter was quiet for a long moment as we stood in place.

I didn't say anything, not wanting to disrupt his thoughts. He squeezed my hand again, and I comfortably squeezed it back before we moved to the right towards a flower bed.

He brushed his thumb over the back of my hand and let go of it, taking a few steps forward and standing right at the edge of a bunch of flowers.

They all appeared newly blossomed and taken care of, the various colors of reds, pinks, and yellows looked mesmerizing together and made me sigh at their beauty.

Hunter crouched, and had a small smile on his face. "Hey, Big Bro,"

My heart dropped at his greeting and I took a quiet step forward to see the small rectangle shape of cement that I soon realized was a grave.

"It was hard for me to come down today. Don't know why really. I guess because I was scared to come alone? Finn usually comes with me, but he's been pretty busy. We thought his family was killed by the Forsaken, but they were rescued in time. It really is a relief." Hunter sounded a bit happy to share the news.

He took a deep breath, his body tense. "I'm happy for him. I just...wished maybe someone got to you on time. Maybe if they had...I'd still have my big brother with me."

I clenched my fist as my eyes teared up, and I bit my lip. Even after all these years, it still hurt Hunter that no one was able to save his brother in time. *He'd become a Forsaken...yet, they didn't even try to help him.*

"If you were here, I could formally introduce my girlfriend to you. See, she's standing right there. I brought her here without telling her, which was silly of me, but I really didn't

want to come here alone. Being all alone here is really hard.” He whispered the last sentence and trailed his fingers on the McGinty part.

“Mom and Dad didn’t come over this year. Maybe they’ll come later? I hope they do. At least the gardener made sure your grave is nice and perfect. I seriously miss you.”

He looked back at me with watery eyes, and I cautiously walked towards him and crouched beside him, putting my hand in his.

“Brother. There’s also another reason why I brought Celestia,” Hunter whispered and squeezed my hand. I looked at him and saw the wide smile on his face.

“I want to marry Celestia,” Hunter announced. *What?!*

“It wouldn’t be now. Maybe in a few years when we have established our careers, but I wanted you to be the first to know my intentions. I should have told her though...” He trailed off and looked at me with a shy expression.

“Celestia. I...want to be able to stay by your side. Through all the good and bad times; I don’t want to leave you. I know the others have left their blessed marks on you and have similar intentions, but before I intended to do that, I wanted to make sure my brother knew. He was always there for me and raised me when my parents couldn’t. He needed to know because if I tell him something as important as this, I feel it will last forever.”

“Hu-nter,” I choked out, and his unshed tears finally rolled down his cheeks.

“I shouldn’t be making you cry though. Bad boyfriend etiquette as Finn would say.” He chuckled and shook his head.

He rose, and I followed his lead, my hand still in his. His gaze returned to the grave and he smiled broadly.

“I want to be strong like you, Brother. I’m aiming to get stronger and more powerful. It’s thanks to Celestia that I was able to shift, and even though it was scary, I hadn’t felt as free and powerful as I did at that moment. That was something I’d forgotten, and I’m glad to have that feeling back.”

He turned his head and stared into my watery eyes. “Thank you, Celestia Rainbow, for being my wings when I couldn’t fly myself. Also, thank you for following me and trusting me. I really didn’t want to do this alone.” He sniffed as more tears rolled down his cheeks.

I lifted my arms and pulled him into my embrace. “Hunter. Thank you for introducing me to your big brother.” I hummed. “And it would be an honor to be your Blessed Love too.”

“This was where you grew up?”

“Yup. Finn and I used to have a bunk bed for when he stayed for longer periods of time. Eventually, I just got this bed and if he did stay over we just chose a side to sleep on. He takes up 2/3 of it anyways.” Hunter huffed and rolled his eyes.

I giggled quietly, looking at the picture of Hunter and Finn when they were younger as I stood next to his dresser in a loose t-shirt.

We’d spent the afternoon talking about his past and he showed me around his house. They had a cleaner and gardener

come down once a month to make sure the place was clean and up to date.

Hunter explained that they kept the fridge stocked to make sure if any of them came home, they could make something to eat and wouldn't need to go down to the town that was miles away to get food.

Hunter said he assumed they did that specifically for him because his parents could have easily flown there, making the hour or two walk a 15-20-minute trip by air.

After I'd made him pasta with extra cheese, we worked together to bake a little cake to celebrate his brother's life. I could tell it meant a lot to Hunter, and I hoped we could do this every year. *Even bring the other guys along.*

I placed the picture frame back in its spot and turned to study Hunter as he walked out of the washroom and stretched. I smirked at his bare chest and noticed he was only in boxers.

"Nap time?" I asked and glanced at the window that showed the sun was setting.

"Nah. Just more comfortable to walk in boxers. It's like how girls love walking around in long t-shirts they 'borrow' from their boyfriends." He winked.

"You guys all love it and you know it." I huffed. With a confident attitude, I strode towards him and purposely put extra emphasize in my walk.

"Yes," he said, eyeing my every step until I stopped right in front of him. "But I think I'd like you naked the best," he whispered.

"You've not gotten to see my naked yet," I whispered back.

“I want to.” He leaned in till our lips brushed. “I’ve always wanted to.”

I stared into his eyes, seeing the need in them, and I smirked and took a step back. My arms crossed over as my hands gripped the bottom of the oversized orange shirt, and I slowly pulled it off and tossed it to the floor.

With my eyes still locked on his, I reached back to unclip my satin gold bra with orange and green rhinestones and freed my breasts from their suffering.

He slowly licked his bottom lip when I lowered my hands to my underwear, tugging on the thin straps and moving them down my hips before letting them drop to the floor. Once I lifted one ankle, I used the other one to kick my underwear where my bra now laid on the floor.

My fingers ran through my long pink-purple locks with the sunlight making the thick gold highlights sparkle, and I could tell by the slight reflection in Hunter’s eyes that my mismatched eyes twinkled with hunger. *A desperate desire for him.*

I watched him pull his boxers down and nudge them to the side, giving me a front row seat at his wondrous cock that looked hard and ready for me.

He took two steps forward to stand right before me, lifting his hand to run through my hair, his hooded amber eyes never leaving mine.

“You’re so beautiful, Celestia,” he praised in a low voice. His hand left my hair and pressed lightly on my left shoulder. He traced over Theo’s blessed mark before he went down to Finn’s blessed mark, and I subconsciously lifted my wrist to show him the ones on my wrists from Orion.

“Where would I put mine?” he pondered.

“Thigh?” I suggested, and he grinned.

“I foresee the twins taking those spots,” he teased, and I blushed at his words and shyly looked away.

“I don’t know,” I mumbled.

Hunter chuckled and walked full-circle around me. On his second time, he stopped at my back. I felt his hand gather my hair and push it to rest on my right shoulder.

I didn’t know what his plan was, but I arched my back at the cool touch of his lips on the middle of my back. “Back?”

“I think it’s a good spot.” His breath tickled my skin. He moved around to the front of me and smiled, his hands resting on my hips.

“You can’t decide.”

“Maybe I can.” He winked, and I shook my head.

“You’re going to be an overachiever and try to make yours better than the others.”

“Pretty much.”

“You are something else.” I pressed my hands on his chest and stared into his eyes as I inched closer to him. His eyes began to close, but that small smile lingered on his lips.

“Yet, you still love me.”

“That I do,” I replied, and my lips were sealed by his. Our kiss was slow, neither of us in a rush. As the kiss began to grow more heated, a wave of urgency went through me and my body responded. I kissed him harder.

He must have felt it too because he responded and kissed me back firmly, our lips fighting to gain dominance while we

enjoyed the lingering taste of cake. His hands moved down to my ass, and his fingertips sank lightly into my skin as he pulled me into him., My lower body ignited at the feel of his cock at my opening.

He broke the kiss to trail his lips over my jaw and along my throat; his tongue brushed along my skin. I couldn't describe the electric feeling his touch caused, like every nerve was sending little tingles, and it only resulted in me feeling hot and horny.

He trailed back up from my neck and leaned in to whisper into my ear. "How wet are you, Cutie Pie?"

I bit my lip, feeling a hint of shyness at his question. I still hadn't completely grasped being directly asked that. With this being my first time with Hunter, I didn't know if being honest was okay.

"Yo-u can just check," I whispered, feeling my cheeks burn. I hesitantly looked up to see the broad grin on his lips, and that only made me gulp and my pussy throb harder for him.

He moved slightly back. I inhaled sharply when he dipped his hand between my thighs and his two fingers trailed my folds that were coated with my arousal. He nibbled at my neck while his fingers teased me back and forth, gathering more of my juices on his fingers and making me shiver at the motion that made me want him to fill me with his cock.

"Hunter." I breathed his name in on a gasp, moving my hips forward. His fingers finally slid inside me, and I moaned again, wanting him to move.

"You're so wet for me, Celestia." His low voice was music to my ears and his praise made me want more.

“Hunter. I want you.” I moaned, lifting my right arm to wrap around his neck, pulling him closer to give him a fierce kiss. He kissed me back deeply and stalled in his finger movement before he pulled them out completely.

I almost growled, the sound only reaching my throat. Hunter chuckled before he scooped me up with ease and carried me over to the bed. “You need more patience, Cutie Pie.”

“You said you like me the way I am,” I countered.

“I do,” he replied, lowering me to soft black sheets. Once again, his cock was right at my entrance, sliding along my folds like his fingers once did. I stared at him with a desperate need.

“Hunter,” I growled this time and he chuckled again.

“I like when you tell me what you want,” he whispered.

“You know what I want.”

“That I do.” Hunter grinned mischievously, sliding just the tip of his cock inside me before he pulled it out.

I groaned in frustration. “Hunter!”

“Say it, Celestia,” he commanded, and I could tell he needed me to say what I wanted. *The words would satisfy him, and I bet would turn him on even more.*

“I want you, Hunter McGinty. Fast and hard. Now fuck me already,” I demanded. Hunter didn’t reply, thrusting himself inside me in one quick movement that made me cry out.

It felt so good to feel him fill me up, and we both stilled for a second to savor the sensation of my pussy surrounding his cock completely.

He didn't stall for long, pulling back and driving inside me repeatedly at a steady pace. I moaned and gripped the sheets while my breasts bounced up and down due to the force of his thrusts.

Both of us were vocal, enjoying the rapid rhythm. My hips would move to meet him halfway and he'd moan, loving how I stayed up to his tempo.

It wasn't long till he changed his position slightly and leaned forward to slam his lips against mine while we moved even faster; our muffled moans grew louder.

I hooked my legs firmly around him, and I gasped at how deep his cock was now inside me, my muscles growing tighter as I drew closer and closer to my climax.

"Hunter. Oh baby, faster. More. More," I begged, closing my eyes and letting my body take over in gaining what it wanted.

"You like that, my love?" he whispered, and I didn't think he could get deeper, but he did, hitting right at my womb. My back burned slightly, but I couldn't focus on it, my exhales and moans echoed off the walls, and my body tensed further with every stroke.

"Hunter. Hunter! A bit more...so close!" I screamed, tightening my arms around his neck to make us so tightly embraced that he'd stay deep within me.

"Shit! Celestia!" Hunter cried out, and his hot semen filled me, throwing me over the edge as I shouted his name.

We both stilled, enjoying our climax before we relaxed. Hunter rolled us over, letting me rest on top of him as we both caught our breath.

“Are you okay, Celestia?” Hunter asked, and I moaned a reply, needing a few more seconds to calm down.

I could feel Hunter’s hands trailing my back. His touch was tender and made me flinch when he reached my left side.

“Hunter, too sensitive,” I whined, moving away from where I assumed his hand was which only made me moan, his length still deep inside me.

“Sorry, Blessed Love,” he murmured, and it took me a second to take in his words before my eyes widened, and I lifted my head to look into his joyous smile.

“It worked?!”

He nodded. “And it came out beautifully.”

“How can I see? Your cock is in my way!” I huffed, trying to sit up, but his arm that was around me tightened.

“Easy there. I’m not done with you.” He grinned, and I gawked at him.

“More?” I asked in shock.

“If you didn’t know, Phoenix’s are like pixie shifters.” He winked, and I felt my cheeks grow warm, yet my pussy clenched around him, already excited for another round of pleasure.

Hunter noticed, and his grin widened. “Seems you don’t object.”

“No...I still wanna see my blessed mark though. How big is it?”

“Pretty big...” He trailed off, looking even more pleased.

“Oh no. Don’t give me that look, Mr. Grumpy.”

“I’m not grumpy though. I’m very thrilled with the results.”

“It takes up my whole back doesn’t it.”

“Two-thirds?”

“UGH!” I groaned. “Over-fucking-achiever. You just had to be better than everyone else.” I wasn’t really upset by it, but it left me wondering how it looked.

“You wanna see before we get busy?” he asked.

“Yes!” I replied.

Hunter closed his eyes, and I felt the sudden charge of magic. I knew something was forming behind me, but I didn’t know exactly until a drop of cool water fell on my back. I looked over my shoulder to see the oval-shaped mirror that was made out of water.

“You can make wat-HOLY UNICORN!” I began but was thrown off at how beautiful my new blessed mark was.

It mainly consisted of wings, and on closer inspection they were flaming ones that reminded me of his or Arielle’s when they were in their burning phoenix forms. It was very detailed, the fire wings having every line and detail to make it look very realistic. If it was in full color and not just outlined in black, it would have looked real.

“Hunter...it’s beautiful.” I looked back at him and he appeared so calm and genuinely happy.

“I’m glad you like it, Celestia.”

I glanced back at it one more time before the water began to evaporate and the remnants floated up as air, vanishing from our sight.

With a new resolve, faced Hunter once more and gave him a tender kiss. “I really do.”

“Thanks for coming with me here, Blessed Love. I love you.”

With one final kiss, I prepared to enjoy the night with him, but I couldn't help but reply.

“No. Thank you, my Blessed Love, for being so understanding and accepting of me. I love you even more.”

Clan of Troubles and Sweet Coffee



“Out of all the people in the galaxy, my ass has to meet this pathetic fool.” I groaned out loud, not caring that the person in question was right in front of me with a scowl on his unattractive face.

“You’re one to talk, Rainbow. How’s the unicorn gig going for ya?”

I had to take a moment to ask the heavens to give me patience dealing with this fool. *All I want to do is find Theo and get out of this place.*

Hunter and I had spent the majority of the night talking. After having three more rounds of sex, neither of us were sleepy. Exhausted, yes, but we couldn’t fall asleep when we tried. So we talked until just before sunrise.

Then Hunter shifted into his phoenix form, and we watched the sunrise while he hovered above Versa. It was the first time seeing it at that height, and it felt like a magical moment with Hunter being in his phoenix form.

After he switched back to his human form, he didn’t break down like he had during the Trial. He looked content with himself and a little stronger than before.

After we returned and took a long shower together, I called Caio to tell him that Hunter was going to take me to see Theo. I thought it was a better idea and would give Hunter a chance to talk with Theo once we figured out what was going on.

Thankfully, Hunter knew how to get to where Theo's clan housing complex was because he wasn't at his place. The clan's house complex consisted of the biggest mansion I'd ever seen and housed about fifty other small homes; a few of them were individualized for one person and some with couples and families.

When we'd arrived, we were directed to one of the smaller complexes where it stated Theo was. Didn't think I'd have to meet this asshole.

"Alright, Vincent. Where's Theo?" Hunter sighed.

The taller woman, our guide, appeared just as bored with Vincent's delaying efforts, her arms crossed and her eye twitching with annoyance.

"Vincent, I have things to do," the woman announced.

"Oh Esmie, let me have my fun. This fake unicorn has been fun to tease for years. She's on my property, so my rules."

"Your FATHER'S property," Hunter snapped.

Vincent ignored him and looked at me with a wide smile. "I haven't seen you for a while. Where did you go? Ashamed of being a nobody?"

"Vincent, can we do this another day? I'll even come back just for you to annoy me. I need to see Theo," I grumbled, stepping closer to him as I scanned the neatly kept home. Two other vampires who looked familiar caught my attention, and their grins widened when they landed near me.

“Well damn! Is that Ms. Nobody?” one of them stated.

“I’ll be damned. How do the useless ones turn out attractive as fuck?” the other one said. I wasn’t even phased by their words and glanced back at Vincent who looked so happy that his friends had arrived.

“What did you say?” Hunter took a threatening step forward. A heat wave hit us with such force I felt like I was suddenly in a furnace. The two other guys cringed, both of them taking a step back while Vincent grimaced.

“Turn down the heat, stranger. This is my property. Get the fuck out!” Vincent snarled.

“Make me,” Hunter growled back, his amber eyes practically glowing.

Esmie didn’t seem bothered. She held a hand fan, of which I had no idea where she’d gotten it from.

“Each time I tell you not to bite at things you can’t chew, but there you go,” She sang, the eerie sound in perfect tune.

I sighed and closed my eyes, heightening my senses to see if there anyone else was in the house. *Don’t want to waste time picking a fight if Theo’s not here.*

It only took me thirty seconds to pinpoint one other heartbeat, the sound rather thready and slow. *Maybe that’s Theo.*

“Is Theo here or not, Vincent? I’m really cranky right now.” I huffed, wishing Hunter had coffee at his place. No sleep and coffee were a bad combo, and that meant my level of patience was wearing thin.

“He’s in his room, but you can’t see him.” Vincent smirked, taking a step to stand right in front of me. “Now,

Nobody. Why don't you take your fake unicorn ass out of my house and run along? Theo deserves to be with his boys. Not some slut who brings her feminine boy-"

Like my body was going to let him finish the sentence. Everyone gasped when I had Vincent up against the wall, his legs off the ground with my hand gripping his throat. He choked and gasped, looking at his friends for help but they stayed put. *It was safer for them to not interfere because this unicorn was NOT in the fucking mood.*

"Listen, Vincent. I've dealt with your nonsense once. I don't have the patience for it today without a luxurious cup of coffee. So, you and your friends are going to go out and get me a nice premium blend from the other side of town, or I'll destroy this place and blame it on you," I snarled.

I loosened my grip and allowed him to fall back to the ground. Esmie giggled and gave me a wink. Vincent scrambled off the floor and flashed his fangs at me as his eyes glowed red.

"You come on my property and think you can do whatever the fuck you want!"

I took a step forward, but this time I let every inch of my power out, projecting it through the house like it was gravity itself.

"Fuck!" The two vamps cursed and immediately went to their knees like I was royalty. I noticed Hunter was tense and seemed almost in pain. Esmie appeared impressed as she continued to fan herself, watching Vincent grit his teeth as he slowly fell to his knees.

I pinched my nose and had to calm myself.

Relax, Celestia. It's not worth destruction. Though that sounds super delightful. Can I kill them all too...oh wait? Unicorns aren't supposed to kill...right...hmmm.

Shaking my head, I opened my eyes and stared at Vincent. His eyes widened in fear, and he inched back to press against the wall. His fear only excited me, and I took another step forward before I crouched to smile at him.

“Now. Let's try this again. I want coffee, Vincent. The best fucking coffee in Versa. And you and your pathetic piece of shit friends are going to get it for me while I have a chat with Theo. Actually, bring me the best lunch from the finest restaurant for three, and milkshakes. Make sure you don't poison them. I'll know, and I'll make sure that cowardly soul of yours enjoys hell. Understood?” I said as sweetly as I could, but the tone was flat and lacked affection.

“Understood! We're going!” he screamed, and before I could blink, was out the door with his two friends. I could sense Esmie's eyes on me for a long moment, but she didn't say anything as she closed her fan and turned around.

“Take your time. Theo could use some friends. See you later.” She gave us a backhanded wave and walked down the stairs and towards the main mansion.

I rose up and took a few slow breaths, hearing Hunter close the door. *That was weird. Why am I disappointed? Jeez, I really wanted him to die. Maybe I would feed his soul to the Forsaken. He'd learn a lesson the next time he was born not to bully anyone.*

I felt a pair of hands land on my shoulders and they began to massage me slowly. I sighed with a small smile, needing the mini massage to help me calm down.

“Celestia. Are you okay?” Hunter asked.

I glanced over my shoulder and saw his serious expression, but I didn't know why he seemed upset.

“Yes, why?” I asked innocently.

“Your eyes were black.”

“Black as in?”

“Pure black,” he announced.

“Oh,” I replied, thinking for a moment. He pulled his hands away, and I turned to look at him. “What color are they now?”

“The usual purple-green,” Hunter commented.

I shrugged, not seeming like it was a big deal. “Must have been my magic. Spooking him worked,” I said proudly, feeling immensely satisfied.

He deserved it. I was far kinder to him than I should have.

Hunter didn't look please and took a step forward. He reached out to cradle my face in his hold.

“Celestia. Are you SURE you are okay? You aren't feeling weird?” Hunter pressed.

“I'm fine, Hunter.” I gave him a small smile and patted his hands with my own. “I just really need coffee and to make sure Theo's okay.”

He stared at me for a good fifteen seconds before he nodded and pulled me into a hug. “Alright, if you say so,” he whispered.

I hugged him tightly, loving how warm he was. “Blessed Love, don't worry. Vincent doesn't scare me.”

“I know,” he replied. “I’m more worried about you.”

“Why? Aside from my lack of sleep and coffee, I feel really good,” I assured him, leaning back to peer into his worried eyes.

He sighed and gave me a single kiss. “As long as you’re okay, that’s all that matters to me.” He gave me a small smile. “Now go check on Theo. I’ll get you a coffee and something to eat seeing as I think it will take Vincent and the others a long time to be back from getting us the finest coffee, food, and milkshakes at eight in the morning.”

I giggled. “Thank you,” I purred and tugged at his lower lip before giving him a deep kiss. We broke apart and he nodded, pressing a kiss to my forehead before he turned around and headed out the door.

“I’m impressed you didn’t tell him I was here.”

I glanced to my right to see Odion relaxed against the kitchen table, a steaming cup of coffee in his hand.

With a sigh, I walked over to him.

“You shouldn’t be lingering in the shadows and trying to give people heart attacks. You aren’t a vampire,” I commented and stood in front of him.

It was hard not to glance at the cup of coffee in his hand, the rich scent taunting my nose. I could tell just by the aroma there was milk in it, and I wished I could drink it.

Odion sighed; his almost white-lilac eyes softened as he offered me the cup.

I beamed, took it without a second thought, and grinned at him. “Thanks.”

“I feel you are forgetting I’m your enemy.”

“Only if you didn’t offer me coffee. This can be a temporary peace offering,” I replied and stared at the cup of light brown liquid with happiness. “How much sugar?”

“Three.”

“Perfect.”

“You have a sweet tooth.”

“You sound as if you don’t have one too, Mr. Three Sugars,” I countered and took a long sip of my newly claimed coffee.

“Something’s wrong with you.”

I sighed in relief at the lingering taste of the hot liquid and stared at him. “What do you mean? Because I like sweet coffee like you?”

“No.” His eyes scanned me from head to toe.

When they trailed back up my body, they stopped at my left thigh which had a small scar from the wound Harrison had healed.

I didn’t want to wear the white shorts and the black top, but that was the only thing Hunter could magically create after taking his first classes from Orion on the art of making clothes with magic.

“When did you get that?”

“What?”

“The scar on your left thigh.”

“Oh. After you left, I learned first hand about your brother’s temper.” I shrugged, drinking more of my coffee.

When he raised an eyebrow at me, I swallowed and decided to elaborate.

“Your brother tackled me and sent me flying into the trees. Those black, tainted ones. A large piece of bark went through my thigh. I couldn’t heal it properly because I was attending to your brother who was all ‘overtaken by Darkness’ thanks to his older twin brother.”

Odion grimaced, appearing a bit bothered by the news, but I returned to finish the cup of coffee. I walked over to the sink and placed it there before I turned and leaned against the counter to stare at Odion.

“Why are you here?”

“Checking things,” he mumbled and walked over to one of the stools, the sound of the scraping of the legs against the wooden floors annoyed my ears as he pulled it out. He patted the top and looked at me. “Come here and sit.”

“Why?”

“Can you stop wasting time, please? I can’t be here much longer.”

I frowned but did as he asked, walking over to the stool and sitting on it, my legs barely touching the ground. Odion came to my left side, and his hands slowly trailed down the scar.

“Why are you so intrigued by a scar? Actually, I still don’t get why I’m so relaxed with you around. Aren’t you supposed to kill me?”

“Not in the mood right now,” he replied, his attention focused on my thigh.

“You have to be ‘in the mood’? That sounds a little dirty.”

He lifted his gaze to meet mine and sighed.

“I can see why my brother likes you.”

“Do you like me?” I countered, the words coming out before I even thought about it.

*Okay, maybe something is wrong with me this morning?
Why did I just ask that?*

He was quiet for a moment.

“A little.”

“A little as a friend?” I pushed, and mentally cursed.

Dammit, Celestia. What’s going on?

“I’ll answer that another time.” He pursed his lips.

“That means you do.”

“No, it doesn’t.”

“You’re like your brother.” I tilted my head and studied him.

“We’re different.”

“Different, but the same,” I mumbled.

He didn’t fight back but looked up to stare into my eyes.

“Have you been having nightmares?”

“Come again?”

“Nightmares.”

“I don’t...remember?” I answered honestly.

He didn’t appear pleased, but he closed his eyes and his hand suddenly felt hot. I stayed still as best I could until a small whimper escaped me.

“I’m almost done,” he murmured, his eyes still closed.

I looked down at my thigh, noticing the black magic circle that was glowing on my skin. A black mist began to penetrate

my skin, and I froze at the sight.

What the flying fuck is that? A ghost?

Odion moved his hand from my thigh and took a step back. He raised his arm up and a large scythe materialized, causing me to gawk at him. In one smooth movement, he cut the floating Darkness in half.

An eerie sound escaped from it, and it glowed white and dissipated. I blinked, feeling a little different.

Light-hearted?

“What...was that?” I asked.

“Darkness likes to play tricks. Your wound was healed, but the person who healed you didn’t eradicate the lingering dark power that was injected into your body when you were stabbed. At least I know your tolerance is rather strong.”

“You helped me?”

“I guess,” He replied with a calm look that reminded me of Orion’s.

“Would I have become a Forsaken?” I inquired.

“If your body was too weak to defend yourself, yes. It’s gone now. Nothing to worry about.”

“Is that why you’re here?”

“No...”

“You’re lying.”

“...”

“You came to check on me.” I smiled, hopped off the stool, and looked up to him. “Thank you, Odion.”

He pouted his lips and glanced away, his cheeks tinting with a hint of red. "I'm leaving."

"Hey, wait!" I huffed, reaching out to grasp his hand.

He stopped and slowly looked back at me. "What?"

"Is the magic circle going to stay there?" I asked, peering at the lingering mark. He looked at it and turned around.

"Guess it will give me away." He mumbled.

I gave him a confused look, unsure what he meant. He knelt down and took a deep breath, leaning forward until his cool lips pressed against the front of my thigh.

Wh-wha-WHAT?!

I didn't even know how to respond as I stared at him in disbelief and the mark slowly faded. He pulled away and studied it as if to confirm it wasn't there anymore. With a slight nod, he rose back up to see my open jaw look.

"Yo-you..." I couldn't speak the words.

"That will protect you. If there's a time you're in a jam and my little brother can't help you, just summon me. I'll most likely come. Depending on how I feel," He said with a shrug and turned around again.

He took two steps and paused. "You should go check on your friend upstairs. He's low on blood."

Oh shit! Theo!!!

"How do you know that?" I asked.

"Gave him a few packs of blood two days ago. For vampire friends, those guys don't even check on him, yet I'm called evil. Stupid," he grumbled under his breath.

"Odion..."

“Bye, my Queen,” he said casually, and before I could say anything more, he was gone.

“What just happened...” I whispered.

It was like I just saw a completely different person, leaving me wondering who was really who?

Theo's Insecurities



“Theo?” I whispered, peeking into the dark room.

No response was given, but I knew someone was here just by my instincts. I moved inside, closed the door quietly, and raised the bedroom light just enough to be able to see that it was a cluttered mess.

Clothes scattered around everywhere, books toppled over on the bed so that it looked like a table for books, and my gaze lingered on the empty blood packets on the dresser next to the door.

I frowned and immediately searched harder to try to find Theo.

No one came to check on him? What kind of sick place is this?

The idea that Odion, who was supposedly our enemy, brought him blood packs, was still sinking in, and I didn't understand which side he was on.

Is he really being controlled by the Darkness? That side of him...was from the person we confronted during our exam.

“Theo,” I said a bit louder and noticed the lump in the corner. I tilted my head, seeing slight movement.

“Theo,” I repeated, and it moved again, making me sigh in relief as I made my way over to him.

He was huddled in what looked like a fuzzy grey blanket, and I knelt down in front of it and slowly stroked what I hoped was his head.

“Theo? It’s me, Celestia.”

He was silent, but he moved the blanket slightly until a pair of glowing red eyes met mine. “Theo? Shit, what’s wrong? Are you hungry? I mean for blood not food?” I questioned.

He stared at me with a painful expression and looked away.

“Go away, Celestia. I don’t want...to hurt...you,” He slowly replied; the slur in his voice made me realize it was a lot worse than I thought.

“Theo, when was the last time you fed?”

“Two...days.”

Does he normally feed that often? He wasn’t taking his blood tablets every day from what I remembered. What switched?

“Why haven’t you taken anything?!” I snapped, trying to find pills somewhere. I decided to move, but I felt something grasp my hand, the touch clammy and cold.

I looked back to Theo who seemed desperate, his eyes specifically on my neck. He blinked a few times, looking as though he was fighting his inner desires and he bit his lip.

“I’m going to get your pills,” I assured him.

“There’s none.”

“What?”

“No...more. I finished mine...others hid theirs in a different hou...se...complex,” he whispered, and I noticed the slight tremble in his body. *Shit, this is serious.*

I moved back to his side and knelt on the ground. “Can you control yourself if I let you bite me?” I questioned.

He slowly nodded. “Never hurt...Cutie Pie.”

I gave him a sweet smile and reached out to hug him, hoping that would help keep him warm as he drank some of my blood.

He didn't delay, his tongue delicately licking the part near his blessed mark before he sank his fangs into my flesh. I hissed and flinched at the sharp pain, but my body relaxed in seconds. I moaned quietly as the hot sensation that began to run through my body like at the Trials returned with force.

Each suck made it harder for me to think straight and the growing pleasure that pulsed through me repeatedly made it tough to stay still.

Theo's hands moved down my sides and stopped at my hips, and before I knew it, I was on my back against the floor and Theo was still feeding on me. I endured it as long as I could, waiting until the room was spinning and I saw black spots before I whispered.

“Theo. I can't,” I breathed.

He took one last gulp and retracted his teeth, licking the sensitive area which only made me press my legs together in an attempt to ignore the throbbing happening in my lower region.

I opened my eyes to stare into his; the glowing slowly began to dim, but I noticed the hunger in his eyes, and I knew it wasn't for my blood anymore.

"Celestia," he whispered.

"Hey, Blessed Love," I purred, grabbing his t-shirt and pulling him down for a steamy kiss. He felt stiff from my quick move, but he kissed me right back, the two of us making out on the floor. He broke apart and gave me a sympathetic look.

"Cutie Pie. You're buzzed again."

"You never explained what that was." I smirked, lowering my eyes to his lips.

"When I drink your blood, it makes you horny," he elaborated, getting to the point which I liked. *Wasting time with explanations when we could be kissing...or fucking?*

"Uh huh."

"Take a few breaths, Celestia."

"I don't want to," I mumbled and leaned up to kiss his neck.

He groaned but didn't push me away. "Cutie Pie, I can't fuck you on the floor."

"Why not?"

"It's not hygienic."

"Sex isn't hygienic. Far from it."

"I can't believe I'm arguing about this. Baby, no floor sex."

"It's your fault the bed is occupied," I pointed out, moving to kiss the other side of his neck.

“That...ugh.” He let out a grunt which only proved my point.

“Shower sex?”

“When the buzz is gone, you won’t want to have sex,” he revealed.

“Why not?”

“Because...I don’t know,” he replied, sounding unsure.

I grinned and leaned back to give him a seductive look.

“You know I had a spell put on me?” I purred.

“Spell?”

“Orion put on a spell. I can have sex as much as I want.” I hummed in delight.

This weird state of euphoria was making my flirtatious actions easy. I didn’t need to worry or think about things. The words would just flow from my mouth with no regrets.

Theo blushed at my words, but I could tell the hint of excitement in his eyes, seeing the gears work in his mind.

“Did it work?”

“Sex all week and no pregnancy in sight,” I declared.

He shook his head. “You’re definitely buzzed, Cutie Pie.”

“Still don’t get how being horny is buzzing. Where’s the buzzing sound? Why am I even thinking about this? I want Theo,” I declared giving him a pouting look.

He chuckled. “Take a few deep breaths, and you can have me.”

“Liar.”

“I promise.”

“Still don’t believe you.”

“I’ll let you do whatever you want in the shower if you do as I say,” he offered.

I thought about it with my fuzzy mind. “I want fast hard sex, and you to press me against the glass like they do in the shows.”

“Shows?”

“Porn shows.”

“You...actually never mind. We’ll talk about that later. Sure, Cutie Pie. I’ll make sure to press you against the shower glass and fuck you senseless if you take a few deep breaths.”

I smiled and did as instructed, taking a deep inhale and letting it out slowly. The moment my mind cleared, I felt my cheeks grow red, and Theo’s smile widened.

“Welcome back, Cutie Pie.”

“I’m gonna live in a hole forever,” I groaned, lifting my shirt slightly to hide my face. Theo chuckled and moved back to sit on his heels while I sat up.

“It’s not your fault. I drank a bit more than I should have,” he confessed, looking sad. “Sorry, Celestia. I should have asked if you were okay before feeding off you. I just couldn’t think straight.”

“Why are you apologizing? There’s no need for that. Why didn’t you ask for anyone to get you more tablets?! Do I need to beat Vincent up?”

Hmm. Killing him sounds more appealing with a purpose.

Theo ruffled his hair and shook his head. “No. Um...I think I know what happened.”

“What?”

“I think it’s because of the blessed mark.” Theo reached out and trailed his finger on the bat-shaped mark that had a little heart beneath it.

“You knew what it was?” I asked.

“Not initially. Othello explained it to us after Finn had left with Magnor to find you and Orion. I hadn’t realized I’d made it...and was upset.”

“Do you regret it?”

“No.”

“Then why were you upset?”

“I wanted to do it properly.” He met my shocked gaze. “I wanted to formally say I love you and wanted to mark you. I didn’t think I would have made it by biting you, and it frustrated me. I mean...the others were able to give you blessed marks in situations where they saved you. For me... you were the reason we passed the Trial. I felt I failed you.”

“Theo. That’s not how it works,” I whispered, reaching out to place my hand on his cheek. “It’s thanks to you that we survived the last moments of the exam. If you hadn’t lifted me up and summoned your bat wings, there would have been no way I could have gotten out of there myself.”

I moved forward to give him a soft kiss and pulled back to smile at him. “I’ve always loved this mark, and to be connected to you makes me really happy. I’m sorry I didn’t tell you that I knew. It just slipped my mind with the Trials, and I never got the chance to bring it up after that.”

He smiled back and nodded. “I think because of the blessed mark the blood tablets aren’t working.”

“Huh?”

“The entire week, I’ve tried to take the tablets to manage my hunger for blood, and they’ve done very little. I normally take it once or twice a week if I need to, but by the third day of your absence I was taking five, and they did nothing. I requested to leave to come back here, thinking something was wrong with me,” he explained.

“Is something wrong?”

“No. Esmie said that because I’ve bonded with someone, I’ll only be satisfied with them. Kinda like a mate.”

“That means you needed my blood,” I confirmed.

“Yes. I know Orion brought some blood packets two days ago. I think it was two days. It’s a little hard to tell the time when I can’t find where my clock is.” Theo scanned his chaotic room.

“Orion...are you sure?” I realized he must have thought it was Orion and not Odion.

“Ya. I think so? Maybe I was hallucinating altogether because it kinda looked like his brother from the picture Faelia showed, but there’s no way Odion would come help me when he’s a part of the Darkness.”

I was quiet, unsure whether to tell him or not. *I need to tell Orion first. Theo won’t believe me, and he’d inquire how I know it was Odion, to begin with.*

“Maybe it was him then,” I conceded. “How are you feeling?”

“Best I have all week. How are you? I missed you,” he murmured, outstretching his arms for a hug. “I may smell though.” I laughed.

“So a shower?” I hummed teasingly but leaned forward to fit myself into his embrace. He held me tightly, pressing a kiss to my neck before he rested his head on my shoulder.

“I missed you too, Theo. A lot happened. Hunter wants to apologize too.”

“Is he downstairs?”

“No, he went to get me coffee and food. He should be back soon.”

“I didn’t mean to snap at him. I’m a bit intolerable when I’m low on blood. I know from the twins that Hunter’s brother’s death anniversary was coming up. I just really couldn’t think straight,” he admitted.

“It’s okay. He felt bad too and understood,” I whispered. “Is that why your room looks like a tornado went through it?”

“Uh...kinda?” he replied. “Sorry, it’s so messy. I would have attempted to clean up if I could have moved.”

“Next time you need blood, just tell me. Do you know how long you’ll last?”

“I should be good for a month. Maybe even two. I don’t need a lot of blood unless I use a lot of power.”

“Maybe once my blood levels go up we can reserve some just in case I’m not around? At least you won’t get to this state again.” I leaned back to look at him.

“You’re okay with that?” he asked.

“Are you?” I countered.

“Yes. For emergencies. I personally like biting you though,” he admitted.

I smirked, licking my lips as I lowered my gaze to his lips that had a tint of my red to them thanks to his previous blood sucking.

“Our agreement still stands?”

“You mean...you want to?” he asked, looking surprised that I brought it up.

“Well, you need to shower. I wouldn’t mind showering. So we can have some fun showering together, then start cleaning up after Hunter gets back. You guys apologize, we clean up, and back to our beloved home in New Aslan we go.” I hummed like I was telling a story.

His smile widened as his eyes softened. “We don’t realize how lucky we are to have you.”

I blinked, feeling a little embarrassed by his praise. “I’m just me. Don’t see how I bring luck.”

“If people could be a quarter like you—kind, happy, and willing to love without boundaries—maybe we wouldn’t be dealing with Forsaken,” Theo said quietly. He stood and offered his hand.

I placed mine in his, and he helped me up, his arm immediately wrapping around my waist to make sure I didn’t fall back from my unbalanced gait.

“Still a little wobbly,” I admitted.

“You sure you’ll be able to handle slippery shower sex?”

“There has to be at least a substitute position that doesn’t require my balance.” I huffed.

Theo’s eyes darkened, and he scooped me up, walking straight out of the room and towards the bathroom. “There is. Depends how quiet you can be.”

“No one’s home.”

“Huh?”

“I shoed them away.” I grinned with pride and Theo laughed.

“Why am I not surprised?”

“You shouldn’t be. That should be an expected predicament when Vincent meets me.”

“He doesn’t remember Aslan, does he?”

“Didn’t look like it. He called Hunter a stranger.”

“Hmm good. He’s a spoiled ass,” Theo declared.

“I agree,” I replied and left another kiss on his neck. “We can forget about him by focusing on us.” I practically purred and drew Theo’s attention as his head lowered to look down at me.

“Hmm.” Theo hummed, pressing lips against mine moments before he carried me into the large washroom and closed the door behind him.

He set me down and helped me take off my clothes, both of us stalling to kiss and leave love bites as proof of our soon to be lovemaking.

With my hand in his, we walked over to the clear glass shower, and Theo turned the water on to warm up before he stepped inside first. He gently pulled me inside and steam began to fog up the glass.

I moved into the hot stream of water, taking a moment to drench my body from head to toe. Once I was wet and ran my hands through my hair to pull the now straight locks back, I adjusted to let Theo have a turn.

Theo stepped into the stream, letting the water drench his body as I had. I stared at the beads of water that ran down his muscular back before he turned around to let me watch the water run down his chest and abs.

My gaze moved to his cock, and I didn't realize I was licking my lips.

“You think we could fit in a blow job?” I suggested, meeting his eyes. I noticed them brighten up at the suggestion and I moved to where he stood, reaching for the bar of soap.

After lathering a generous amount of the unscented soap in my hands, I rubbed up and down his cock, cleaning it at a slow sensual pace that would heighten his arousal. Once he was clean, I didn't delay, kneeling down to do the deed. *Just because we don't have time, doesn't mean I couldn't enjoy the speedy process by pleasing him a little.*

I flicked my tongue around the tip of his cock, lifting my gaze to see his half-opened mouth as he stared at me with heated desire. In seconds, I let his length slide into my mouth, and I began to give his cock 100% of my focus.

Suck, lick, suck lick. Moving up and down his cock and listening to his soft moans and increased exhales was turning me on. I could feel myself getting wet, and my nipples hardened.

“Faster, baby.” Theo moaned. I felt his fingers run through my hair, gathering a bit to grip. He held my head in place and began to move his hips, his thrusts getting faster and faster as I took him in.

He growled through clenched teeth seconds before he released his load inside my mouth. I took every shot of hot

cum, swallowing it before he slowly drew back until his cock was out.

I caught my breath and licked my lips, looking up to see his pleased smile.

“Now it’s my turn to please you.” He grinned and offered his hand.

He helped me up once more, and I thought he’d press me to the glass door frame, but he moved me to rest my back against it, making me a little confused.

“Arms on my shoulders, Cutie Pie,” he instructed. I did what he said.

“What are you planning?” I narrowed my eyes at him, and he answered by sliding his hands down my body until they reached the bottom part of my ass. He lifted me up with ease, and I hooked my arms around his neck, waiting until he had me securely in his hold and pressed against the steamy cool glass.

“I think this position will let you rest while I do all the work,” Theo teased, his cock at the tip of my opening.

“I haven’t done this position before,” I admitted, feeling excited and nervous. It was my first time with Theo.

“Me neither,” He whispered and gave me a playful kiss. “It’s nice to watch in shows though.”

My eyes widened when he pulled back with a knowing grin. “Wait! You watch-AH!” I was cut off by him lowering me onto his cock.

He groaned, biting his lip and making sure he had a good hold on me.

“Yes, Cutie Pie. Now let’s stop talking.” He breathed in and just like that he was pumping himself in and out of me, my back pressed against the glass as he held me.

I would never have thought I could be fucked in this position that made me feel like I was floating in the air, the pleasurable thrusts pulling moans from me and making me beg.

“Faster, Theo. Yes, yes..ah....more!” I gasped, feeling the building of my orgasm.

“That’s it, Blessed Love. Moan for me. Enjoy every fucking stroke.” Theo grunted, driving his cock even deeper.

Even though we were heavily into the sex, my mind lingered on his use of Blessed Love, making me feel like he’d finally acknowledged our bond, and it only turned me on more.

“Theo... please...a bit more,” I pleaded, loosening my grip so I could grab his shoulders with my hands, the action causing my fingernails to dig into his skin.

“I’m close, Celestia. So damn close,” Theo confessed and slammed his lips against mine.

I broke the kiss to cry out, my body locking up. I pressed my head against the glass as I came.

“Shit!” Theo cursed, and he gave me a final thrust before I felt the warmth of his cum fill me. He held me in place, waiting for me to calm down as my body trembled and I tried to catch my breath.

“Fuck, that was good.” I tiredly lowered my head to see Theo’s broad smile.

“I think Hunter’s back. I sense someone downstairs.”

“Hmm,” I mumbled, leaning in to kiss him. “Too bad. He could always join.”

Theo blushed, and he raised an eyebrow. “You’d do a threesome?”

I grinned and giggled. “Maybe?” I prolonged the sound and Theo sighed.

“Why do my instincts tell me you’ve had one?”

“Uh...”

“How much sex have you had this week?”

“Um...you mean in terms of sessions? Or rounds?” I asked with an innocent grin as I blinked my eyes.

He stared at me in shock and shook his head. “Pixies.”

“Why does everyone assume it’s Finn?”

“Because he’s a pixie. They love sex. Actually, no, Orion is slick and would have every opportunity with you.”

“You’re not wrong,” I admitted, and he chuckled.

“It’s okay,” he whispered, pulling himself out. He helped lower me to stand but turned me to press against the glass. I looked back at his devilish grin, his red eyes almost glowing with want.

“I’ll just have to catch up.” He winked and slid back inside me once more.

Sex is addicting as fuck...

Cooking with Caio



~TWO WEEKS LATER~

“Finally! A day off with Cutie Pie!” Caio crowed in delight, tying the strings of his apron together.

I finished tying my hair into a ponytail and grabbed my apron. “Let me get the flour from the pantry.” I headed down the hall while I placed the protective wear on, tying it as I hummed happily.

I wore black jean shorts and a red crop top and didn’t want to get flour all over the new clothes that Theo had created.

The guys had been taking turns making me clothes for the last two weeks, apparently accepting the challenge to be better than Orion. Today, Theo had made mine, right before he, Orion, Hunter, and Finn went to class.

The last two weeks had flown by, the majority spent with all the guys. Thanks to Orlando, he’d allowed them to play hooky, but we had to promise to get excellent grades for our exams. That led to us getting a chance to check out a few dimensions. Harrison and Magnor came with us, taking us sightseeing to the dimensions they normally traveled to.

One of the dimensions was an entire galaxy in itself, making it feel like it was an alternate universe. It was a pretty fun time, and we'd met a few shifters like ourselves, specifically a girl who we determined had an obsession with unicorns. *She was adorable.*

After "crashing" her birthday party, we ended up making many friends, and I was intrigued by the different shifter races, ones I'd never heard of. *Even the time of year was completely off compared to ours.*

It made me want to help our dimension, kind of in the same way our new friends were helping theirs.

Once we returned, we got straight back to school life, making sure to keep our grades up. Seeing as today's class only required three to four of our team, the others had volunteered to go to class, giving Caio, Cairus and I the entire day to ourselves.

Cairus decided to go back to sleep, saying he was exhausted from training. The other guys were aiming to become stronger after meeting a set of knights during our travels.

I think it was the break we needed after the chaotic Trials, Alpha Pure, and then the tension that was building between us.

We not only grew closer, but I noticed the guys were getting along even better than before. Orion and Hunter were opening up more; Theo was more energetic; Caio and Cairus worked on helping each other fix any weaknesses they had, and Finn seemed to have matured a lot and was giving off leader vibes now compared to his usual playful self.

Everyone was growing stronger in such a short period, and it was nice to be able to witness it.

Arielle had been getting closer with her official boyfriends, and I encouraged her to stay at the familiar house complex to get to know the guys more.

It was still weird not having her around all the time, and I wouldn't deny the hint of loneliness I felt by it. But I knew she'd remain loyal to me either way, and this was a step both of us needed to take so we'd grow and become stronger in preparation for the future.

I hadn't seen Odion anymore after that, and from the guys' reports, I hadn't had any nightmares lately. The problem was they hadn't seen Sia either, and even though I reminded myself to look into it, it never failed to slip my mind.

Like I kept forgetting, or the thought would fade whenever I wanted to act on it.

After this break, we'd have to be 100% focused on our studies with our exams coming up in five weeks. When I'd spoken with Orlando yesterday, he said I'd need a week off before my exams, something about some Awakening Ceremony I'd have to do to unlock my powers?

I wondered if it was a unicorn thing, but he reassured me that my mother would explain to me the significance of it and why we had to get it done. It wasn't scary or anything, just a simple ceremony, and the guys were allowed to come which was a big bonus.

Surprisingly enough, Orlando replaced his old secretary, bringing in a new one who ended up being Finn's older sister. She was a super-fast learner, and Hellsin recommended her to Orlando who agreed to it.

Now I could waltz right in and check on Orlando, and he'd stop what he was doing to give me his time and attention.

Sometimes, I'd make him lunch, and one of the guys would come with me before class, just to drop it off on his desk when he was so immersed in his work. I knew he appreciated it a lot, and it felt like we'd rekindled our bond a little more.

I'd do the same with Hellsin, going over to the gates to greet and chit-chat. The twins always trailed along whenever we had outdoor classes or on the days I delivered to Orlando; his office was not far from the gate.

Overall, things had been rather quiet, almost peaceful, but I wondered if it would last.

I got the flour and a few other extra ingredients we needed to bake some sweets. Arielle's birthday was tomorrow, and we wanted to bake her and her boyfriends the perfect cake. They were planning to get her a bunch of gifts, but only Gabriel was good at cooking, and he was acting as the distractor to make sure Arielle didn't pick up on what we were planning.

Caio said he'd help, knowing what ingredients we needed and magic spells to ensure it was familiar safe. We were also going to bake a cake for ourselves, just for fun. With all morning available to us, I wanted to enjoy it before I did training with Cairus.

I reached the kitchen and placed the goods on the island while Caio was setting the temperature for the oven to preheat.

He stood from his leaning position to meet my gaze. "Excited?"

"Very. I've missed us hanging out and baking," I confessed.

He sauntered up to me and grinned. "Me too."

He gave me a peck on the lips and we got to work. It was when we had settled everything into the oven to bake that we

got a chance to talk.

“Doesn’t it feel like it has been super peaceful these last two weeks? Like from when you got back with Hunter and Theo all the way till now?” Caio asked, sitting on the stool.

“Ya. I like it. Almost feels as though we’re finally living a normal school life? Normal for Aslan anyways,” I replied, taking a side glance at Caio’s current appearance.

His short hair was messy, but it still made him look attractive. We’d taken our aprons off, and he was just in a pair of yellow mustard sweatpants that hung low enough to give me a glimpse of his V-lines.

He noticed my analyzing gaze, and his hand reached out to brush away a strand of my hair that had gotten loose from my ponytail.

“No fun for you today.” He winked. I blushed and pouted my lips.

“I don’t know what you mean.”

“You know exactly what I mean, but you need a little break, or you’re going to get addicted.” He chuckled when my face flushed beet red, and I groaned, looking away.

“I’m not a sex addict. Is that even an addiction? I mean, it IS addicting, but c’mon, it’s not in the medical dictionary as an actual problem,” I grumbled.

“It is, Cutie Pie.” Caio laughed.

I crossed my arms and glared at him. “I wasn’t interested anyway!” I declared, hating the fact he was having a good laugh at my embarrassment.

“Are you sure?” Caio raised an eyebrow at me, sporting a playful grin on his face.

“I’m sure! I don’t need you or your 7A cock!” I declared. He laughed even harder and slipped off his stool to walk over to where I was.

I gulped when his hands landed on my thighs, spreading them to give him enough room to stand right between them. He then pressed his hands against the island behind me, so he was literally right in my personal space, his lips inches from mine.

He purposely moved his hips slightly forward, making his groin press against the joining of my shorts where my pussy clenched at the move.

“Caio.” My voice was low but didn’t hold enough threat. It gave off my need, and Caio noticed it immediately; his grin only widened.

“I thought you said you don’t need me?”

“I don’t...you’re the one who said I need a break.” I pouted. I did get his point and wanted to hold off for what I wished we could do, my imagination planning it out for weeks without telling Caio. *Or Cairus.*

“You do. Maybe,” he whispered. I couldn’t ignore our closeness any longer, leaning forward to brush my lips lightly on his. My hands pressed against his abs, trailing up to his chest as we deepened the kiss.

He moaned when I lightly pinched his nipple, wondering if it felt the same for him as for us females.

“Celestia.” He groaned, his hooded eyes staring at mine.

“How does that feel?” I asked, my curiosity lingering in my voice.

“Really nice.” His cheeks were a hint of pink. “Sensitive.”

I looked at his nipples, lowering my hands to his abs, but moved forward to flick his right nipple with my tongue. He gasped, and I glanced up to see his eyes were closed, and he appeared to have enjoyed that.

I flicked it again before I latched my mouth on the area to tease his nipple inside my mouth. My tongue swirled around it, and I noticed with every teasing circle it got harder.

“Cutie Pie, easy.” He shuddered, and I pulled away to move to the other one, giving it the same treatment. It felt nice to please him for a moment and hear his low moans.

After teasing his nipples, I began to kiss all over his chest. When I looked up at him, his lips claimed mine before I could blink, and it was my turn to moan, both of us cranking up the passion.

I had no idea how much time passed with us kissing and leaving love bites on one another. We just lived in the moment, enjoying the pleasure that came from kissing. It wasn't until I heard footsteps and a low chuckle before I snapped out of my heated daze.

“Look what's burning.” Cairus tsked.

It took both Caio and me a second to understand what he meant, the scent of something burning catching our attention. *SHIT!!!!*

Caio broke the kiss, and we turned our attention to the oven. “Aww no!” I yelled, seeing the smoke start to escape the oven.

“I got it!” Caio announced. I thought he'd open the oven, but he stood in front of it and closed his eyes.

“*REVERSOANDO!*” A large orange circle formed beneath him, the tattoo on the right side of his neck glowing bright

gold. He pressed his hands together like he was praying.

I felt the magic leak off him as the smoke began to move backward, drifting back into the oven. After a minute, he outstretched his arms out like he was slashing something on both sides of him.

“Done!” He declared proudly and then glanced over to his brother who still had a grin on his face. “Don’t give me that grin. It’s your fault!”

“How? I wasn’t the one kissing Celestia to try to win her favor,” he teased.

Caio groaned. “Go away,” he whined.

Cairus chuckled as he walked over to the fridge. He opened it up and grabbed two bottles of water.

“Why do you need two?” I asked.

He strolled up to me and answered with a kiss. “For later, Dearest. Try to resist my brother’s advances.”

I watched him walk away, and Caio moved over to playfully punch him in the arm. “I’m going to interrupt you during training.”

“We’re playing with sharp swords. You can come, but I don’t guarantee your cock will survive.” He hummed, his voice echoing from down the hall.

“Stop trying to always cut my cock!” Caio huffed.

“I’ll think about it,” Cairus called back. I giggled, sliding off the stool and walking over to get the oven mitts. I opened the door of the oven to see the golden results of our hard work and reached out to pull it out.

“Caio, can you get the frosting?”

He slowly looked back at me, his eyes clearly checking my body out then the tray of our soon to be cakes.

“Earth to Caio? Frosting?” I repeated, and he blinked out of his daze and blushed.

“Ya coming!” He swiftly turned around and opened the fridge to get the frosting out. I smirked, placing the tray quietly on the island and creeping up to him.

He rose up, looking to see if he chose the right frosting, and I leaned up to place a kiss on the right side of his neck. He stayed completely still and moaned, making me grin against his flesh.

“Get your mind out of the gutter, 7A,” I purred, tugging his ear with my teeth. I let him go and waltzed back to the island, sneaking a glimpse over my shoulder to see Caio’s appreciative look as he bit his bottom lip.

Let’s see if I can survive the day to implement my plans tonight.

Training with Cairus and Drunken Love



“**S**top avoiding me!” I growled, doing a backflip to avoid his attack, and I dashed forward to try and strike him.

He was just as quick, blocking my attack and easily pushing me backward, making me lose my balance.

I fell back on my butt, immediately lifting my swords to cross one another; Cairus’ sword struck mine, and we both tried to force the other to move.

Sweat was dripping down my face, the rest of my body already drenched from our three-hour training session. Even with me wearing a pink sports bra and matching short shorts, I couldn’t help but work up a sweat when Cairus was in training mode.

It didn’t matter that he was fighting his girlfriend. He was fierce and showed no mercy.

Just the way I liked it.

I grinned, centering my power in my swords and began to push him back. He noticed my surge in energy, and he decided to counter with his own. Those blue eyes of his became luminescent, and the tattoo on the left side of his neck glowed brightly.

I shivered at the sudden drop of temperature, and before I knew it, my legs were frozen to the wooden floor.

“Oh, C’mon! That’s bullshit!” I exclaimed and released my burst of energy to push him back to the wall.

A cold whirlpool of wind emerged just before he hit the wall, stalling the impact.

“Not in battle.” Cairus grinned with triumph, walking towards me.

“Oh really?” I huffed and took a deep breath.

“Dearest, you’re not actually going to-”

I didn’t let him finish, blowing a stream of glitter at him. He stared at me in confusion and waited to see what would happen.

“Dearest. You would have been dead if you used such a move.”

“Wait for it!” I urged. “It’s just having a slow reaction because you suck.”

“Really?”

“Totally. Now as we wait, can you unfreeze my legs please?” I asked sweetly.

He sighed, sliding his swords back into their scabbards and walked over to my feet.

He crouched and closed his eyes, concentrating on dissolving the block of ice. It slowly began to dissipate, turning into a cool mist instead of a pool of water.

“You realize your enemy would never release you from your hold.”

“They would if I asked nicely?” I suggested, blinking my eyes.

He smirked and shook his head. “Your glitter has yet to activa...” He trailed off and his eyes grew heavy.

I quickly switched position, going to my knees and reaching out to catch him as he fell over to my left.

“Gotcha.” I caught him before he hit the ground and slowly lowered him.

“Never underestimate the power of a unicorn,” I declared proudly, realizing Cairus wouldn’t even be able to respond because he was asleep.

“Damn. It’s more rewarding when he- EEP!” I began but felt something wrap around my waist, pulling me right against Cairus chest.

I blinked and lifted my head to see Cairus’ weak grin. “Nice try, Dearest, but you need a bit more strength in your glitter.”

“You’re just resisting my glitter charm,” I grumbled.

“I guess. Hard to resist you though,” he whispered, tightening his hold around my waist.

“You say your brother tries to make me swoon a lot, Sweet Talker.” I sighed, but a small smile formed on my lips.

I rested my chin on his chest and continued staring at him. “Are we training on the floor now?”

“Hmm. Seeing as I kinda can’t move at the moment thanks to a certain unicorn’s glitter magic, I guess we can take a break.”

“See?! It IS useful,” I said with pride and giggled as he rolled his eyes.

“Yes, yes. You get the last laugh,” he mumbled, running his hands through my ponytail.

“What should our sweaty selves do while we wait for my magic to wear off?” I hummed.

“You could just reverse it.”

“Nah. I want you to suffer.” I winked.

“So mean.” He sighed, but a small grin formed on his lips. “Wanna just talk?”

“That would be nice,” I admitted, rolling off him to rest right next to him. We both stared at the ceiling, and I pondered what to talk about.

“I’m a bit nervous.”

“About school? Or regarding the ceremony your parents want you to participate in?” Cairus questioned.

“A bit of both? I feel more nervous about this Awakening Ceremony though. I mean, I feel powerful as is. Would unlocking my powers be beneficial?”

“Are you concerned something bad will happen if you do unlock your powers?”

“Yes,” I whispered, raising my right hand up to stare at it. “What if gaining that power means I lose something dear to me? That’s what happens in fairy tales and stories. Power comes with a price, and I’m a little concerned that the price would leave me feeling more hurt than powerful.”

It was honestly a weird feeling to have, and I didn’t understand why. *It’s not like I’m losing any of the guys or*

Arielle. I don't think I'll lose Sia either. She'll always be a part of me. Yet, I feel like I'd lose something?

“Have you researched why Sia hasn't been appearing lately?” Cairus brought up.

“No. I keep forgetting. It's kind of weird. I always remember, but right before I try to bring it up, the thought kind of poofs? If that makes sense,” I explained.

“Hmm. I just had a thought...but it's gone now,” Cairus admitted. I turned my head to look at his concentrated expression.

“You don't remember?”

“I did a moment ago when I brought up the question, but when I wanted to say it, um...I totally forgot,” Cairus confessed, turning his head to meet my intrigued gaze with a confused one. “That's a first for me.”

“Hmm, weird,” I commented. “Guess we're over thinking it?”

“I guess? What was the original question?” Cairus shyly asked. I nervously giggled.

“To be honest, I don't remember. Um...OH! Me being nervous!”

“Ah. The ceremony should be just fine. All of us will be there. Arielle and the familiars will also be there. You don't have anything to worry about. Do you know where it is?”

“Not sure. Mom said it's a spot between Aslan and Alpha Pure?”

“You've been able to talk to her?”

“Yes. She sent a letter to Orlando and after he gave me a general summary about it. She’d rather tell me in person, but they’re dealing with some more surprise attacks of Forsaken.”

“This Forsaken trouble is getting out of hand. The Council hasn’t even addressed it. Aren’t people complaining? Or the ones who survive the attacks standing up for themselves?”

“To be honest, I don’t know. It feels as if everyone is ignorant about it OR they’re too afraid to confront the Council?” I suggested.

“What’s the point of having a Council if you can’t bring forward issues that are happening around our dimension? If they aren’t even doing anything to stop what’s going on and only Alpha Pure is assisting, shouldn’t they just overthrow the Council?”

“I feel if this were another galaxy like the one we visited, they wouldn’t let the Darkness run through their dimensions and cause chaos,” I commented.

“I think they were called realms,” Cairus corrected.

“Same thing.” I shrugged and noticed his grin.

“I think after your Awakening Ceremony, we should suggest for your family and maybe a few more representatives to see the Council and find out what is being done to lower or even eliminate the Forsaken.”

“That sounds like a good idea. If my mother and dads can gather even a small group of leaders or a spokesperson of each race to confront the issue that is clearly affecting multiple dimensions and shifters alike, we could get some answers,” I added.

“I think it’s a good plan. Let’s talk to the others about it tomorrow, and we can aim to do that after your awakening.”

“I feel better now.” I smiled.

I sat up, resting my hands on my knees and looked to him. “Can you move now?” I asked.

He nodded and sat up. “Much better.” He stretched out his arms and legs as if he were getting out of bed in the morning.

“I’m glad.”

He smiled while crossing his legs and looked at me with a softened expression. I pressed my left hand on the floor, my eyes drifting to his pink lips, and I began to close my eyes as I watched him lean forward to meet me halfway.

Our lips pressed lightly against each other, our movement starting out slow and beginning to deepen.

“Boo.”

We both flinched at the creepy sound, breaking our kiss to look to our left. Caio crouched before us with a wide grin on his face.

“You’re a fucking ass!” Cairus huffed, reaching out to punch Caio who chuckled.

“Takes one to know one.”

“Argh!” Cairus grumbled.

I laughed. “Hi, Caio.”

“Hey, Cutie Pie.” Caio leaned over to kiss me lightly on the lips. “I had to get payback.”

“I figured,” I replied, looking down at the small tray with wrapped sandwiches. “Did you make us tuna sandwiches?” I asked happily, realizing I was starving.

“Yup! Thought it would be a good meal before you guys finished up. The others are staying out tonight, so we get the

house to ourselves!” Caio declared.

“Which means...” Cairus grinned, looking at his brother with a mischievous grin.

“DRINKING PARTY!” they said in unison.

“Drinking? We have alcohol? I thought I wasn’t allowed to drink.” I huffed. They both looked at me and smiled.

“We can have a little fun just for once. We won’t drink a lot,” Caio replied.

“Yes. We’ll have a nice dinner and end it with drinks and board games,” Cairus encouraged.

I smirked and clapped my hands. “Then I’m in! It will be fun. I want ice cream with whip cream for dessert.”

“Count me in.” Caio winked and offered us our food. I looked between them as they began to talk about different training techniques and smiled.

This is going to be a fun night.

“Peace and JOY! Happiness for all!” I sang, spinning around and letting glitter rain down on me.

“She’s so drunk,” Caio declared.

“You should have watched her when I went to pee,” Cairus argued.

“I didn’t think she’d drink all of it? Like jeez, how do unicorns chug a bottle of 40% vodka without dying?” Caio replied.

“We’re so doomed,” Cairus groaned.

I giggled at their conversation, waltzing over to them and giving them my best hip left and right strut. “I’m sexy and I know! I ain’t afraid to show it.” I danced and giggled harder at their flushed expressions.

“Totally bad idea.” Cairus shook his head.

“Orion warned us. I think we should take a video to ensure everyone knows what happens when she’s drunk,” Caio suggested.

“Sure. Take a video while I figure out what spell to use to lessen her drunkenness,” Cairus directed. I gave him a wide grin, moving over to wrap my arms around his neck.

“I’m not drunk,” I whispered, staring right into his eyes with my wide ones. He froze in place and I giggled, pulling him into a kiss.

“Dearest, you’re really drunk and taste like vodka.”

“Do you like vodka?” I purred, pressing my body against him.

He gulped and blushed. “No...but it tasted nice when I kissed you,” he admitted.

“I got that on video. I’m so telling.” Caio sounded amused as he held his phone up.

“Ugh,” Cairus groaned, placing his hands on my hips. “Dearest, baby, you need to stay still for a second.”

“Why? I wanna kiss.” I pouted innocently.

His face grew redder and he sighed. “You can kiss my neck while I think for a second,” Cairus replied, and I grinned happily, leaning in to do as he suggested.

“That’s so cheating.” Caio sighed, lowering his phone.

“You can tak-AH! Dearest, don’t bite so hard,” Cairus whined. I sucked on his flesh right after, and a struggled moan escaped his lips. “Caio, take her. I can’t think either.”

“I know! Let her kiss you for ten seconds,” Caio said, and he was out of the living room and up the stairs. I grinned and slowly turned to Cairus who shook his head.

“Drunk unicorns could kill us all.”

“Maybe, but at least the world would be filled with peace, quiet, and GLITTER!” I lifted my hands up dramatically, and he stared at me helplessly.

“You’re not serious.”

“Very serious.” I giggled at his lost expression.

He sighed and walked over to the couch, sinking into the soft seats and patting his lap.

“Come here, Dearest. I get to distract you while Caio thinks of a miracle,” Cairus urged.

I squealed, skipping over to him and sat right on his lap.

“I meant you looking the other way, not you facing me,” Cairus corrected.

“Sitting on your lap has no directions. I can sit north, south, east, and west, and you can’t say anything,” I declared, putting my hand up to salute him.

“Why are you saluting me?”

“I don’t know,” I said happily.

He smiled and reached out to run his hands through my loose locks, pulling me in for another kiss. They were just little kisses, but his hands left my hair to move down my

sensitive skin, making me roll my hips slightly to press my lower region against his groin.

He moaned into my mouth, deepening the kiss, and his hands lowered to my hips, encouraging me to move again. I did it again and again, shifting back and forth to feel the bulge of his cock against my underwear, thankful I wore a simple short dress that was easy to take off.

His tongue slipped into my mouth, taking full control while I increased my pace and let out a breathy moan.

Cairus broke the kiss and tightened his grip to still my movements, catching his breath as he pressed his forehead against mine.

“Fuck...Dearest, too close,” he admitted, taking deep breaths to calm himself.

I leaned in to kiss him. “Were you going to cum?” I purred quietly.

He lifted his hooded eyes to meet mine and gave me a quick kiss. “Yes.” His honest reply made me smile sweetly.

“I like how honest you are,” I whispered, leaning forward to kiss the other side of his neck that didn’t have a bright hickey at his nape.

“I thought I’d wait till you were done,” Caio announced.

Cairus let out a long sigh.

“You do the weirdest things.”

“Encouraging my brother by standing back to let him enjoy an orgasm from his lovely girlfriend is doing you a favor, brother,” Caio replied. “Cutie Pie. Cairus and I have a gift.”

“A gift?” I asked after I finished leaving another love bite on Cairus’ neck.

“Yes, a gift. But you can only get it if you sit still and let Cairus work,” Caio encouraged.

I nodded and sat very still, excited for my gift. Cairus smirked and took a deep breath, closing his eyes.

“Calmluna Clarity,” he whispered, magic flowing from him and moving around me.

I blinked a few times, feeling more alert. “Huh?”

“Welcome back, normal glitter Cutie Pie Dearest,” Caio announced.

“Was I drunk?” I asked.

“Very,” Caio and Cairus said together.

“Oh...hmmm. Magnor always warned me about that. It couldn’t have been that bad.” I huffed.

“We have a video, but first you get your surprise. Um...” Caio trailed off, looking at Cairus who sighed.

“It was technically supposed to be after we um...bonded, but uh, guess Caio had to bribe you with something.”

“Bribe...Hmmm, what is it?” I asked.

Caio blushed, walking over to sit on the couch to present me the pink wrapped gift with a purple ribbon bow.

I grinned at the packaging, loving how it had tiny gold sparkles on the ribbon and box. I opened it with ease and stared at the item inside that was cushioned in rainbow tissue paper.

“A unicorn...pen?” I asked, slowly looking from the item to stare between the both of them. I watched both their faces

grow beet red as they glanced away in opposite directions.

“That’s not a pen,” they said in unison.

I glanced at it again, picking it out of the box and noticing the button in the middle of where the adorable head was. There was small lettering on the side, and I squinted my eyes to read it.

“Unicorn...wand...vibr...VIBRATOR?!”

My mouth lost slack as I looked up at them in utter shock. “Yo-yo...you bought me a...vibrator? Like, like, the ones in the *shows*? An adorable unicorn vibrator?!”

They both stared at me and replied together. “Yes.”

I blinked, feeling my cheeks grow hot, but a wide smile formed on my face. “I love it! I mean...uh, well...I shouldn’t be super happy, right?”

“You can be happy,” Cairus replied.

“Wait, you LIKE it?” Caio asked.

“Well...” I blushed, looking at the item as I tried not to meet their surprised gazes. “I’ve kinda always wanted one but can’t order anything without Magnor’s credit card, and he’d ask me what I bought so...I have just been using my fingers.”

They were both silent, and I tried not to fidget at my confession. I hadn’t been this honest, always feeling embarrassed about it.

I noticed them both approaching, and I lifted my head to look at their broad smiles. “Want to go upstairs and try it?” Caio suggested.

“Amongst other things,” Cairus encouraged.

I grinned at both of them before I picked up my new unicorn vibrator and moved to the stairs. “The first one to catch me gets to enjoy a blow job!” I announced, staring at the twins’ reaction as they exchanged glances before they bolted to catch me.

I giggled and raced to their bedroom, ready to have a long fun night of fucking.

“FUCK!” I cried out, my head falling back as my body trembled, the vibrator still buzzing away deep inside my pussy and making me whimper and sob as I was hit with aftershocks.

Caio pulled it out, giving me a moment’s peace as I tried to catch my breath. *Shit...so good.*

I was in the twins’ bedroom, all of us naked, and the twins were enjoying their time with my new vibrator. *As in, enjoying sliding it in and out of me and making me cum over and over again until I begged for mercy.*

Now we were horny, sweaty and in dire need of a good fuck, the idea that I’d wanted to try with them coming into my mind.

“I want both of you,” I put forth, my needy eyes meeting their hooded ones.

They both blinked, clearly understanding what I meant, but Cairus replied. “As in front and back?”

I slowly nodded. “I mean...I haven’t done the back with any of the others. I kinda wanted to experience it with you guys. Silly right?” I nervously giggled, but the excitement that morphed onto their identical faces made my heart skip a beat.

“Not silly,” Caio whispered.

“Not silly at all,” Cairus replied.

They looked at each other as if they knew what they wanted to do and Cairus walked over to the dresser near the door, opening the top drawer to reach into the very back. He pulled back with a packet of lube, and I sat up, unsure what I’d have to do.

“Um, what position am I supposed to be in?” I asked.

“Let’s have Caio on the bed since he’ll be front. It’s your first time so it will take a bit to adjust to my size,” Cairus explained.

I simply nodded, deciding to wait and see where I was supposed to go once Caio laid down on the bed. I worked better with pictures than information.

Caio laid back on the bed, his cock ready for me. I knew it would slide into my wet pussy with ease. I ran my hand through my hair before I crawled over to position myself, slowly sliding myself down his length.

We both moaned, and I leaned down to give Caio a passionate kiss. I could feel Cairus’ hand begin to rub my ass cheeks.

Caio broke the kiss to whisper to me. “Cutie Pie, just relax for a moment. You’re going to be tight, but Cairus will go slow. If you don’t like it, just tell him. He’ll pull out.”

“Okay,” I replied and tried to remain relaxed. I felt Cairus’ cock at my backside, feeling the cool lube against my skin. His tip pressed against my anus, and I bit my lip, feeling a little nervous.

Caio lifted his hand to brush my cheek. “Relax,” he purred, pulling me down for a kiss. I moaned, deepening the kiss immediately as I let my body fully relax.

Cairus slowly slipped himself in, his length going deeper until he was fully seated inside. I let out a whimper, feeling both their cocks. It felt like they were in one hole, the thin barrier between the two nearly non-existent

“Dearest? Are you okay?” Cairus asked, and I broke the kiss to reply.

“Yes...just need a second to get used to it,” I admitted, my heart pounding against my chest.

I was so excited to experience double penetration like in the shows and thrilled to be doing it with the twins.

“I’m ready,” I encouraged, deciding I was ready to continue. I knew it wouldn’t hurt once they started to move.

They both started in unison, moving their cocks slowly out and back in. My eyes fluttered closed as I groaned, enjoying the strange sensation of their cocks rubbing my insides against one another.

I felt so hot, and sweat continued to roll down my face and body as they began to build their pace. Their moans started to grow louder while their exhales were faster.

My own erratic breathing could be heard between my moans and whimpers before I leaned down to kiss Caio once more. He fondled my breasts while we devoured each other’s lips.

Cairus was 100% focused on fucking my ass, and boy was it damn good.

We began to pick up the pace, and I was losing myself to the dual amount of pleasure I was experiencing.

“Yes! Yes, yes, more!” I begged, my body felt like it was on fire, and pleasurable tingles began to run through me as my climax started to build, growing stronger with their joined thrusts.

In and out, thrust by thrust, I was getting closer and closer to cumming. I could tell from their rapid breathing that they were just as close.

“Caio! Cairus! Please faster! I’m...I’m...” I moaned, trying so hard not cum until they did, but I was struggling to hold back; my muscles clenched tightly around their cocks.

“Fuck, Celestia,” Cairus grunted and Caio moaned loudly.

“I can’t...shit!”

They both thrust three more times, and that was all they needed to come undone, both of them filling my body with hot semen and igniting my climax as I cried out in ecstasy.

My arms began to burn, the area in the middle of my bicep on both arms feeling hot. I fought to open my eyes, noticing the newly acquired blessed marks on both sides. My left one glowed a bright blue and the right a golden-amber. The symbols were identical: miniature tigers roaring upward.

All three of us remained frozen, waiting to calm down from our high, and I weakly moaned, falling back for Cairus to catch me.

“Shit, Dearest, you okay?”

“Fine...just...don’t...move,” I begged through heavy breathes, trying not to orgasm again.

“She’s on the verge of a second orgasm,” Caio revealed.

Cairus turned my head slightly and claimed my lips, kissing me so deeply. I felt his hand reach my pussy and his fingers rapidly circle the bud of my clit.

In seconds I was cumming again, and I whimpered into Cairus' mouth. When he released me, I rested my entire weight on him, my muscles feeling like jello.

Cairus helped me off Caio and laid me in the middle of the bed as I zoned in and out. It wasn't until I heard the light switch being flicked off and approaching footsteps, was I able to open my eyes.

Cairus hovered over me and leaned down to kiss me. I closed my eyes and kissed him back, feeling a soft kiss on the nape of my neck.

Breaking the kiss with Cairus, I turned my head to kiss Caio who'd lifted back up to meet my approaching lips. We pulled apart, and I sighed.

"I love you, Caio and Cairus," I whispered.

They both grinned, looking happy with my words.

"We love you too, Blessed Love," they said together

"We need to do that again."

They chuckled, wrapping their arms around my waist and snuggling close to me as I closed my eyes.

"We will," they whispered.

I knew there would be many more threesomes to come.

Park Childhood and Discovery



~**T** HREE WEEKS LATER~

“Orion?” I called out, placing the fifth book about unicorns back on the shelf.

We were back at Alpha Pure, in the private library Mom showed us hours earlier. Our exams were next week, and we’d been given another week off to prepare and conduct the Awakening Ceremony that would happen tomorrow.

Today, Orion and I decided to do some research on his brother; Orlando brought the files over during the afternoon. I knew he’d entered at some point as Orion talked to him for a bit, but I was so immersed in the book about unicorns, I’d zoned them out. *Totally something Orlando would do.*

I actually couldn’t help it. The vivid information that practically talked to my soul was strong and full of unknown intel. I was blown away. I couldn’t believe my mother had gathered almost every publication that talked about unicorns, placing them all in here for the day I’d want to learn more about myself.

There were many types of unicorns, starting with the general type of the magical light beings, and going into detail

about Alicorns, Dark Riders, Jewel Unicorns, and more. There was even a rainbow unicorn with wings!

Back before Hunters began to kill our kind, there was a dimension full of unicorns. They even had a Unicorn University that hosted tons of different types of Unicorns and trained them to harness their powers and aid in destroying Forsaken across the dimensions.

There was so much information that it was hard not to be overwhelmed by it. But for me at this moment, it felt like opening presents on my birthday and not books that held knowledge I'd never gotten the privilege to read and enjoy. *Until now.*

By the time I finished the book, three hours had passed, and I noticed the two lunch boxes in front of me—one with my name on it and the other with Orion's. Just the idea of Orlando bringing Orion and me food warmed my heart. That's when I decided to find where Orion was, so we could eat the food that was still warm thanks to the thermal containers.

I frowned when I couldn't see Orion, deciding to go upstairs to the second floor and search for him. I walked the entire oval-shaped floor, looking between aisles of books to find my alicorn lover.

It wasn't until I heard a quiet sniff that I paused, looking down the aisle to my right and noticing the hint of white hair that poked from behind the end of the large brown bookshelf.

When I heard the sound again, I frowned, walking down the aisle with our lunches in my hand. Orion was sitting on the ground, his back pressed against the side of the bookshelf and his legs crossed, an opened black folder on his lap and a picture of him and Odion smiling widely on the left half while

a thick document rested on the right. A few tears stains tainted the white pages.

“Orion?” I whispered and crouched to put the lunch boxes to the side before I crawled right up close to peer into his tear-filled face. “Blessed Love. Why are you crying?”

He lifted his sad eyes that were filled with tears, but when he opened his mouth, more sobs escaped him. “I didn’t know,” he cried. He continued to sob as his shoulder shook from the whimpers that left him.

I bit my lip hard as I removed the file from his lap. I then pulled him into a tight hug, letting him cry into my shoulder. Orion’s crying was almost unbearable; my heart clenched in agony for him.

I didn’t understand why he had broken down, though the file clearly held the answer as to why. *What did he read that could make him cry like he’d lost another person he loved?*

“Orion, it’s okay. Just breathe,” I coached, rubbing his back soothingly. He held me so tightly, his hands gripping my v-neck t-shirt, and I consoled him for some time before he calmed down.

When he stopped crying, he didn’t say a word; he sat there quietly as he fidgeted with his fingers. I reached out for the lunch boxes and plopped down right next to him, opening his up and offering it to him.

He stared at the array of food; the rice, BBQ beef, vegetables, and portioned avocado pieces looked appealing and made me hungry. He stared at it for a moment and reached out to take it from my hands, whispering a quiet thank you as he picked up his fork and started to eat.

I smiled and crossed my legs, opening my lunch box, and took my fork out to eat my portion. We ate in silence, but it wasn't uncomfortable. I didn't want to pester Orion for information as to why he had broken down. My curiosity could wait until he was ready.

We finished our meals, and I slipped my hand into Orion's as I rested my head on his right shoulder. He squeezed my hand tightly and closed his eyes, making me wonder if he was going to sleep or not.

Seeing as we had a few more hours until the group dinner, I wasn't worried, hoping a nap would help him deal with what he'd read.

After about an hour of being lost in my own thoughts, Orion spoke.

"Aside from seeing Odion before my entry in Aslan, I hadn't seen him in years. I knew we met once more before my parents had died, but I barely remember it. I think I was in trouble though, or about to be attacked by something. For a second, he was right there, and I guess whatever wanted to hurt me disappeared." He lifted my hand that was in his to stare at it.

"I saw him for a few seconds before I blacked out, and when I did wake up, I was at home in bed with a fever. I told my parents I saw Odion, but they just assumed it was the fever doing its work at playing tricks on me." He sighed and turned his head to look at me.

"Odion and I were pretty much inseparable. We shared a bed, we liked the same things, we did bath time together, and we wouldn't dare train without the other. It was like that until we were six."

“What happened when you turned six?” I asked.

“Odion is a Dark Rider which meant he had a strong personality compared to me who was shy. Not to say that Odion isn’t as shy as me, but if he saw something wrong or hated a certain person, he was verbal about it. To me, it was just saying what bothered him. To others, they assumed he’d turn into an evil shifter and cause chaos. Or even worse, become a Forsaken.”

“That’s so judgemental. You guys were only six,” I countered.

Orion nodded. “Exactly, but the pressure from the town we were staying in was enough for my father to decide to separate us. He knew how to train an alicorn, but he’d never trained a Dark Rider. So, he hired someone to train Odion, and the plan was for him to return a few years later once he could control his dark element.”

Orion used his free hand to run through his hair, and he tilted his head back to rest against the shelf, taking a deep breath before he gulped.

“The file...was hard to read because I found out that’s not what happened.”

“He wasn’t taken to the trainer?” I asked.

“No, he was. The problem was the trainer himself. He didn’t train, Odion. He abused him.”

“Abused...as in...physical? Like, beat him?” I asked to clarify. The words were hard to say for me, especially after seeing the kind side of Odion a few weeks ago.

“Both.”

“Both?” I repeated, unsure what he meant by it. I’d never been beaten or abused by Magnor, only by the bullies and people who ignored the torture.

“A few years later, the Trainer was arrested for physical and sexual assault of unicorn shifters. He was sentenced to death and the shifters that were still in his care, were sent to better homes, but the damage was done. Odion wasn’t a part of that group that obtained freedom.”

I was rendered speechless, the multitude of words sinking in as I imagined little Odion from the picture with his bright lilac eyes. “Where...where did Odion go?”

“He... from the records of what the Trainer said during the investigation, Odion couldn’t take the abuse anymore, and after trashing a good portion of the barn he was chained to, he ran away. However, the Trainer found him, and instead of killing him, he thought it would be more fun to throw him into a forest filled with Darkness.”

“What?! Wait, why weren’t you guys informed about this? How is this in a file instead of you and your family being informed about everything and sending a search party for him?!” I snapped, my voice laced with anger.

Orion lowered his head to look at me and gave me a sympathetic smile. “Because Odion was thrown into a forest of Darkness, they assumed the worst and thought he died. There’s a letter in there from the High Council that stated they didn’t see the benefit of informing us of Odion’s passing, so encouraged everyone to play a part in the lie. My parents thought my brother was fine and the Council assured them he was excelling.”

Orion’s lip trembled as he continued.

“I didn’t know...I had no fucking idea. Even when we met that one time before Aslan, he didn’t tell me. Maybe he wanted to but cared more about seeing me off as I headed to Aslan. I hated that he’d never once called. Never once sent a letter or at least told me he was okay. We used to be able to talk to each other telepathically, but because of the long distance, it felt impossible even to say anything and hope it got through to him. I’d pent up all this anger for him, wishing he’d been there to help me protect our parents and sister. Here I find out years later that my poor twin brother was assaulted, chained to a barn, and when he could barely move from starvation, thrown into the dark forest to die where all the contained Forsaken linger.”

He lifted his free arm to wipe his tears and swallowed. “It makes sense now. He’s not a part of the Darkness because he wants to be or it’s in his nature. He was thrown onto a desolate land that may have saved him from death. All this time I was angry at him for leaving me, yet he lived such a lonely life, knowing his family was elsewhere. Even after I informed him of our parents’ and sister’s death, I could still see the loneliness in his eyes and felt that he wished to be there. A person who went from a happy family to a world that treated him so poorly and still mistook him as a bad person. Now I don’t know what to do. What do I even say to him? Sorry you were physically and sexually abused, and we did nothing about it? Our dearest...apologies for being ignorant about your training and not going to check on you ourselves and listening to a group of old assholes who thought we were better off not knowing? How...can I...face him again?” Orion whispered the last sentence, and I wrapped my arm around his shoulder and let him cry into my chest, my own tears spilling over.

“When Odion finds out...he’ll forgive you, Orion. He’s the only family you have left and can feel you, just like you feel him. He’ll understand the regret you have, and maybe he realized you didn’t know? What if his actions were a desperate cry for attention?” I suggested.

“What if he watched from afar, and realized if he got a hold of me it meant he’d get your attention and you’d find out what happened to him? If it weren’t for his actions, we would have never found Alpha Pure or this new information. What if him acting like the ‘bad guy’ was the only way for him to be the good guy by helping us?” I finished.

Orion lifted his head to look into my eyes. “You think that’s what it is?” he asked.

“Yes. I think so. I didn’t tell you before because I wanted us to be alone to talk to about it first, but Odion was at Theo’s place.”

“What?”

“Theo was low on blood, and the blood tablets weren’t working. Vincent and the others hid their portions in another housing complex and didn’t check on Theo at all. Theo told me that you brought him packs of blood to drink, but I know that’s not true because you were with Finn and me.”

“He saved Theo?” Orion whispered.

I nodded. “Yes. Odion is being judged because he’s a dark element user. Just because he can use dark magic, doesn’t mean he’s bad. I think we’ve been misjudging him the whole time, but your gut told you he wasn’t evil.”

“Ya...whenever I thought of him getting in trouble, it scared me. I didn’t think he deserved it, but I assumed it was just because he’s my twin,” Orion admitted.

We both sat up and I moved to face him, crossing my legs once more and reaching out to hold his hand in mine.

“We need to find as much information on the High Council as we can. This is one of the prime examples of their incompetence. Orlando said Faelia had to get the file, right?” I asked, remembering the comment that caught my attention during my read.

Orion nodded. “They denied Orlando’s request for the file, so Faelia snuck in and got it and replaced the space with a replica that looks exactly like it.”

“Then we won’t have much time once they figure that out. We need more information. Like something that they’ve held back, and we have enough affected shifters to overthrow them and bring back the King and Queen hierarchy. Even if Mom ends up being a temporary leader, enough shifters will approve of overthrowing them thanks to her and Alpha Pure’s kindness with rescuing them from the forsaken attacks,” I concluded.

“That sounds like a good plan. We’ll start our search after your Awakening Ceremony?”

“Yes,” I confirmed and leaned over to press my hands on his tear-stained cheeks. “We’ll get justice for Odion, and then, you’ll get your brother back,” I whispered, pulling him down for a soft kiss.

We’d discovered what we needed to challenge the Council. Now it was time to find something so shocking, they would have no choice but to step down.

The only question was...what?

Awakening and Darkness Rages War



“**Y**ou’re nervous?” Orion stood to my left as we waited for my mother to signal us to enter the forest.

“Very,” I whispered, giving him the best smile I could.

He reached out to hold my right hand that was trembling from my nerves.

“You’ll do great. Just be calm.” He placed a kiss on my cheek.

I nodded and felt a hand slide into my left hand. I turned to see Finn’s confident smile. “Exactly. Plus, we’ll be there to reassure you.”

I heard footsteps from behind, and the three of us turned to see Hunter, Theo, Caio, and Cairus approach, all of them having similar expressions of hope.

“We’ll totally be fine. The task seems easy enough,” Theo declared.

“And your Mom said that you should feel where you have to go once we get to the destination,” Hunter reminded.

“You look beautiful, Celestia,” Caio and Cairus said together with wide smiles. The others nodded in agreement, making me blush as I glanced at my outfit.

I wore a pure white dress ensemble that made me almost feel like a Jinn. The top was a tube piece that wrapped around my breasts but exposed my waist, giving a glimpse of my abs that I'd begun working on to help with my core balance.

Long draping sleeves adorned with intriguing gold and pink symbols covered my arms and attached to the tube top by a gold metal circle.

My actual shoulders were bare, the sleeves only starting from the middle of my biceps which showed my blessed marks from Caio and Cairus on both arms. Theo's mark was visible on the nape of my neck, Finn's could be seen on my chest and half of the wing blessed mark from Hunter was noticeable on my back. Even though my sleeves were long, I could still see a glimpse of Orion's blessed marks on my wrists.

My skirt was one that was short on one side and draped down on the other side. In this case, my left leg was bare from my upper thigh to my ankle that held multiple anklets in gold, silver, and pink, and white material covered the other leg.

My hair was left down and in a bunch of tight curls, making it much shorter than I'd normally wear it. I wore my bracelets on their respective wrists, deciding to bring them along just in case I needed Sia. Even if she hadn't been showing up lately for whatever reason, I figured if I needed her, she'd be there.

As for my dual blades, they were on my back, but Harrison taught me a sheath spell to hide them. It was what he did when he went into to battle, confusing the enemy in thinking he had no weapons on him.

"Thank you, guys. You all look nice yourselves. Are those outfits comfortable?" I asked, staring at their clothes.

All of them wore a white two-piece outfit, looking like traditional attire.

The top was a loose, short-sleeve dress shirt with similar symbols that were on my clothes, and the white pants were loose but tight at the ankles. What I loved the most was the color of their symbols matched their eyes.

“Ya. Can move in them pretty well,” Theo replied.

“They’re a nice material,” Hunter added.

“I’m glad we were able to take group pictures on our phones before we arrived,” Caio put forth.

“I agree. I’m cherishing my picture with Dearest for eternity.” Cairus hummed.

“Watch, he’s going to post that all over the training room and claim the room as his,” Finn announced and Orion grinned.

“I can see that happening. Caio will claim the kitchen.”

“Are we claiming places? I call the living room,” Theo pointed out.

“Bathroom.” Finn and Hunter said together before Finn groaned. “Pick something else, like outside!”

“You’re the pixie. You love nature. You can have the backyard,” Hunter argued.

“Guess I’ll take the bedroom,” Orion claimed, and everyone looked at him.

“No.” The word was said in unison and he rolled his eyes.

“You guys are so threatened by me.” He winked and sported a proud grin, leaning over to whisper in my ear. “It’s

okay, Blessed Love. I'll make sure the room is decorated with our photo so they'll know where you truly belong," he teased.

I laughed, shaking my head and glancing around at the other guys who looked like they were planning Orion's murder. "That sounds nice and horrid at the same time."

"Is everyone ready?"

We all turned to see Mom and my dads walking towards us. They were in their own type of combat attire, making me curious if they were heading out to kill Forsaken.

"Yes. Are you guys leaving though?" I questioned, looking at my mother's white and gold commander gear.

She gave me a sweet smile when she reached where the others and I stood, reaching out to stroke my head comfortably.

"No. We'll be guarding outside here," Mom announced.

"Why?" Finn asked. Magnor stepped forward to answer.

"When there's a large shift in magic in an area, it will attract Forsaken. They're essentially attracted to the pull. We'll guard out here to make sure none of them enter the forest."

"There's none inside?" Theo asked.

"No. It's a sacred place. Evil shouldn't be able to penetrate there. Once the ceremony is over, you'll need to take care of Celestia. She'll be completely vulnerable. When you return here, and if we're still fighting, wait it out. Magnor will come and teleport you all to safety," Hellsin ordered.

The guys nodded, and I gave my mother a curious look. "The Awakening drains that much power? Shouldn't I feel more energized?"

Mother smiled. “No. You’re obtaining magic that has been outside of your body for a very long time. The combination of your current magic and the harbored magic will clash as they begin to morph together. The morphing stage is what’s extremely draining, and the shock of the new power will be hard on your body.”

“Guess it makes sense,” Hunter admitted. The others nodded, and I pondered for a moment.

“Will I still be the same?” I asked. “I mean like, it’s just a power upgrade, right?”

“That actually will depend,” Harrison announced. We looked at him as he stood there with his arms crossed, appearing relaxed.

“We don’t know what type of magic was held back. Only Mother Nature knows the reason for making you a unicorn shifter. You can be something more advanced, or you may gain more magic from your mother’s side. You could even be a hybrid; we honestly have no idea. It will all be revealed after your Awakening,” Harrison confirmed.

“Interesting,” Orion replied and squeezed my hand. “Celestia will be fine.”

“Don’t get why you guys are so confident,” I mumbled, and Mother laughed.

“You should be like them and believe. Just relax, Sweetheart. It’s not hard. Allow yourself to let go of your fears and listen to Mother Nature herself. You’ll feel a pulling sensation, and that will lead you to where you have to go,” Mother assured me.

“Okay. Let’s get this over with.” I took a deep breath and relaxed my shoulders.

I let go of Orion's and Finn's hands to hug Mom. "I'm so proud of you, Sweetheart," she whispered. "You don't know how happy I am."

I grinned, hugging her tightly. "I'm happy you're all here to support me," I whispered back.

I pulled back to see her glossy eyes and she nodded. "Do your best; I love you."

"I love you too, Mom," I replied with a wide smile, blinking back my own tears. I moved on to my dads. One by one I hugged them, each of them wishing me good luck and giving words of encouragement.

I almost cried when I reached Magnor and Orlando, both of them on the verge of tears, but their watery eyes were filled with so much pride, that I could practically feel it vibrating off them.

When I said my goodbyes, I walked back to the guys and stood in the middle between them; Orion, Hunter, and Theo were located to my left, and Hunter, Caio, and Cairus on my right. We glanced back at my mother who was standing a little forward, while Orlando and Magnor stood on her left, and Harrison and Hellsin on her right.

We all smiled and straightened to our full heights, ready to accomplish this deed.

"We'll be back soon," I announced, and they all nodded.

"Good luck and be safe, Team Misfit." Mother winked at my shocked expression at her mention our team name.

I exchanged looks with my men, and they nodded in approval before we turned and headed into the forest.

Time to awaken my powers.

“Hey. This is...” I trailed off, looking around the familiar clearing that the twins and I had come across back at the beginning of New Aslan.

“Have you guys been here before? It’s beautiful.” Awe filled Finn’s voice; his green eyes gazed at the colorful sky that was various shades of pink, purple, and golds today.

“Yes. We discovered this place when we went exploring after we arrived at New Aslan,” Caio confessed.

“It was beautiful, but it looks even more spectacular than before. Almost renewed,” Cairus added.

“It’s really peaceful,” Finn commented, sounding completely relaxed.

“Very. It’s hard to concentrate,” Orion admitted.

“I hope you guys don’t go shifting on us,” Theo pointed out.

“Best not. Last time Celestia did something, and it was kinda like all the living creatures gathered here,” Caio explained.

“It was like she was the owner of the land and was coming home if that makes sense? Caio and I were in our shifter forms, and we were sucked into the trance,” Cairus said.

I wanted to continue listening to their conversation, but I also wished to focus on the peacefulness of this land. It was as if no matter how many times you entered this part, it never stopped to take your breath away.

I closed my eyes and took a deep breath, my body buzzing with energy. When I opened my eyes again, everything seemed different. *Brighter. Stronger. More vivid.*

My mind told me the guys were still in their place, but when I looked to my left and right, they were gone. It was only me standing before the river bank.

What's going on?

I closed my eyes again, thinking my vision would return to normal, but it remained; surprisingly, it didn't scare me. I was at peace because this was my land. *My home.*

My eyes gazed at the water, and I felt the urge to step forward. *Forward. I need to walk to my throne. Yes. My kingdom.*

I took a step forward, but I felt something hold me back. The sound was muffled and far away, but it felt like someone was calling my name.

“Celestia? Cutie Pie?”

My body felt hot, and whatever was once stopping me let go. It was the perfect chance for me to move forward, and I took a step.

I thought my feet that were cloaked in gold flats would sink into the cold stream of water, but they didn't. I stood on top of it as a large pink magic circle formed beneath my foot. I noticed the silver anklets began to glow a lavender purple, and the buzz building inside me grew stronger, urging me forward.

I took another step, followed by another until I stood over the middle of the river bank with a gold magic circle under my left foot and a pink one under my right.

A sea of pure white fish passed me, heading straight towards the waterfall. *Follow.*

I followed their lead, ignoring the muffled sounds that I assumed were telling me to stop. My gut told me nothing would happen to me by entering the heavy waterfall. *That was my entrance after all.*

Before my body went under the waterfall, the heavy flow of water froze halfway, the other half dropping into the river but leaving the perfect entrance for me to walk through. Not a drop of water hit my body as I went in, and though I felt the waterfall's desire to return to its normal flow, I mentally told it to wait.

I knew in the back of my mind I was being followed, but they wouldn't harm me. That was enough of a motive to allow them in to witness my paradise. When I reached the end of the hollow cave trail, my foot landed on solid ground.

With a few steps forward, I stopped. I slipped off my flats and took the step forward into the soft grass. I stalled for a moment to appreciate the wide view of opened grass. To my far left and right was forestry, but I knew all I needed to do was walk straight.

I'd find what was mine if I went straight.

With a step forward, I glanced down to see the grass beneath me begin to blossom roses. The first step produced red roses, the second step formed orange roses, the third was yellow roses, and the fourth step was green roses.

Before I knew it, a rainbow of roses trailed behind me, and they began to spread across the grass towards the trees the rich rose scent lingered in the air and made me smile in delight.

Welcome home.

I hadn't felt so welcomed in my entire existence. I felt as if I really did belong to this world. *No, universe.*

A warm breeze passed by me, carrying my hair up with ease. The colorful rose petals wrapped around me, following the breeze's motivation of welcoming me.

I finally reached the border of the lake, the familiar scenery reminding me of something, but my mind couldn't pinpoint what that something was. All I cared at this point, was that my item was at the bottom of the lake, and only I could get there.

There was no need to take my clothes off, and I wasn't afraid of the water as I place my foot into it. This time, my foot plunged through the peaceful water, making little riptides through the clear blue surface.

Step after step, I walked deeper into the lake water, the muffled voices reaching my ear, but I zoned them out. My goal was within my grasp, and I didn't need any other distractions. With one last breath, my body submerged into the water, but my feet kept walking down the wet gravel ground below. I knew I could breathe underwater with little struggle, the clear fluid allowing me to inhale it.

I noticed that the jewelry and symbols of my clothing were all glowing, and my hair was completely gold. I continued walking until I reached the middle of the lake. That was where I saw what was mine.

My Crown.

I wasted no haste to reach it, continuing my timed pace towards the item that held the other half of my true power. *My true being.*

When I reached the stone that held it, I took a second to appreciate its wondrous beauty. No matter if it was in the depths of these waters; its beauty had no words.

I leaned down and picked it up, the biggest smile formed on my face as I stared at the rainbow crown that glittered in my hold.

With my eyes closed, the simple words came to my mind; the sentence that would unlock and fulfill me.

“Your Queen Is Home.”

My eyes fluttered closed, and my body grew so hot, I couldn't tell if I was standing or floating. I could feel every strand of magic begin to leave my body, to the point it was almost painful.

It was as though someone was ripping every thread out of my skin, and all I could do was silently scream and endure the pain. It sounded as though I was in a bubble, all the sounds and shouts that were happening around me barely reaching the surface.

I didn't know if I lost consciousness at some point, but it definitely felt like I was now floating, and my body was cold. Frigid as if I'd been left in the icy parts of our dimension for days. *No years.*

At one point, I thought I stopped breathing. It felt that way as my lungs begged for air, but I couldn't move. I was a statue, one with no magic to bear and no energy to breathe in the oxygen I needed.

Once again, my mind went out into darkness, and when it came back, I began to feel something warm start to enter me. It was a tiny stream at first, entering my chest where my heart

was. It began to warm my heart until the sound of its beat reached my ears that were surprisingly working.

The warmth moved from the heart to my lungs, and I took a gasp of pure air that filled them whole. From there, the warmth began to spread throughout my being, going to my stomach, arms, neck, and head, while the other half moved down my lower body to my hips, legs, and toes.

I thought once I felt warm, the energy would stop. It didn't. A wave of warmth continued to fill me, and I noticed the power that it brought. The strength I now had at my fingertips.

I wasn't just the Queen of this piece of land. I was the bearer of justice and the one who'd reveal the true Darkness of this world. I was the Ruler, and I'd gained the power I needed to obtain my rightful throne as Queen.

The warm wave began to dim, and I could sense the unicorn inside me, but it was different. It was more than just the magic that I now carried; I realized I could also control more than one element.

I could use all of them. Fire, Ice, Water, Wind, Earth, Light, and Darkness.

Mother Nature not only granted me life. She created me in her image, and I would now be able to save those who deserved redemption.

My feet felt the ground, but it was dry and warm compared to its cold damp feeling of being underwater. It took me a few seconds to realize my body wasn't underwater anymore, and I slowly opened my eyes to the walls of clear water that surrounded me in a wide circle that was a few feet wide.

The water walls stayed up and high, looking like they would remain that way until I walked back to the rose covered surface.

“Blessed Love.”

I slowly turned my head to the gentle voice, my eyes landing on Orion and the others who were lined up a few feet away from me. I could see the shock in his eyes and noticed his tear-stained cheeks as well.

My back felt heavy as if I had extra weight on me. I glanced back to my left to see my image, and the water went from a blue translucent to a thick reflective fluid, allowing me to view my new appearance.

My once purple and pink hair with gold highlights was now gold, only small strands of pink and purple lingered in the long curly looks. My once mismatched green and purple eyes were now pink and purple; my right being a pastel pink and the left being a light lilac that almost looked white.

My blessed marks were present, but they had a small glowing tone to them; the gold light looked like my cheeks were glowing. My lips were a soft pink, and my skin looked healthy with no flaw in sight.

My outfit was still the same, but it was completely dry as if I'd never been in the water in the first place. The symbols were still glowing strongly.

The shocking thing I was still trying to comprehend, was my pure white wings, the bottom half of them shifting to a lavender purple and the ends a darker shade of the pastel color. I could see hints of other colors that were a part of the rainbow, but they were so tiny.

There was no doubt about how much power was in my wings alone, one flap of them could defeat armies and purify those who wanted to be a part of the light.

My eyes returned to my blessed marks, slowly taking in their glowing beauty one by one. I ended up counting them, making sure they were all there. *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6...*

With a pause, I stared at the lingering mark on my thigh, a glowing black magic circle right at my thigh. *Seven?*

As much as I wanted to linger on the thought, I began to feel extremely tired. I called back my wings. Closing my eyes, I wished for them to retract into my back until I'd need them again. I could tell they would appear in any form I was in, either human or unicorn, making me wonder if I was even a unicorn anymore.

The buzzing feeling of magic began to fade, and in its wake, my exhaustion grew stronger until I couldn't stand.

"Celestia!" I heard a few of the guys call out, but the world was spinning so quickly, I couldn't tell if I was standing, falling, or even floating.

Someone must have caught me, but I heard multiple gasps, and I felt really cold all of a sudden, to the point I was trembling in someone's hands.

Bad...who is this person? I heightened my hearing as best I could, listening to whatever was being said.

"Who the hell are you?!" Hunter screamed.

"Let go of her!" Orion snapped.

"I'm afraid I can't do that. If she gets into either side's hand the war will begin, and there can only be one winner."

War? One winner? What's going on?!

“Dammit!!! Orion! break the barrier!” Theo growled.

“I’m trying!” Orion snapped back.

“How does he have so much dark magic?!” Cairus huffed.

“Who the hell is he in the first place?!” Caio yelled.

I tried to open my eyes, straining so hard to do something, but I had no energy left. *Shit, shit, shit.*

I could feel myself fall to my knees, the person who held me captive grabbing a fist full of my hair in his hand and a cool sharp item pressed to my neck.

“DON’T!” Orion screamed, and I felt a wave of power hit me and something shatter like glass.

“Move a step forward, Prince, and I’ll make sure your Queen dies.”

Everyone was silent, and I fought to open my eyes. It took three attempts before I finally did, opening them only slightly but wide enough to let me see the guys’ horrified expressions as they stared at me with fear.

“What do you mean Prince. I’m not a prince.”

The man chuckled. “Ah, you kids don’t know who you all are? Ah, your council is truly pathetic for not realizing the significance of your births and gathering.”

“What are you talking about?!” Caio snapped.

“We don’t know anything! Now, let Celestia go!” Cairus snarled.

“Prince of the Sun, Prince of the Moon. Do those terms ring a bell?” the man questioned. The twins froze, looking confused at the terms, but their eyes told me they knew

something about it. The man must have seen it too because he laughed again.

“I guess Mother Nature has failed. To think I will win once more even after you all banded together at your queen’s deathbed, plotting to come back once more. To try again and save this pitiful world that should remain in darkness.

What? Come back? What does he mean, come back?!

“You’re not making sense!” Finn growled.

“Ah. Prince of Nature, now, now. Don’t be so bitter because you’re a pixie now.”

“Wha...” Finn replied, appearing as confused as the twins had.

“To think...no one told you the extent of the legend?” the man asked.

Everyone was silent, and he snickered. “This is great. So fucking easy. I waited decades, DECADES to live this moment. To bring misery and kill the girl that would save everything, and you know nothing! Priceless!” His sinister laugh made me shiver, and I bit my lip, realizing I needed to get out of here.

“The only legend we know is the one with the reaper,” Hunter snapped.

“Ah. They didn’t tell you the rest?”

The rest? There was more.

“Ah. Typical of the High Council, if you ask me. They must have forgotten about my presence and got lost in their old traditional ways. Perfect for me, sucks for you. Maybe once I’m done ridding you of your supposed Queen, I’ll make

sure you get the rest of the story and you'll realize that you all failed, again!"

A dreadful feeling went through me, and I closed my eyes, trying my best to reach Sia.

Sia! I need you, please! I'm in danger. I can't do anything. I beg you to come out. SIA!

"CELESTIA!"

I heard a high, shrill voice call out. I knew right away it was my mother, and I could feel the ground tremble.

"CELESTIA! WE'RE HERE!! There were Forsaken trying to break the barrier of Alpha Pure! We couldn't get here till now. Where are you?! I'm almost there, BRU!"

I smiled at Arielle's frantic voice, and I almost wanted to cry, feeling like I wasn't going to last through this test. *Arielle...please. Don't come here...*

I zoned everything out, closing my eyes as tightly as I could and let myself immerse my mind in thinking about one thing.

Sia?! I really need you. I need you more than I ever have. Please. I can't lose the people I love. They're all here, and this man will kill them. I can't let that happen. I beg, PLEASE!

It was that moment my consciousness faded, hoping Sia would make her appearance. But one last thought entered my mind, one that felt like it wasn't my own.

The Old Darkness has returned and was ready to rage war.

The Choice Is Mine



~S IA~

I wanted to groan, but I felt like if I did, my life would end. The amount of fear that coursed through my body was almost unbearable, but I knew from the cool touch of something sharp on my neck and a loud cackle of sinister laughter, that I was currently at a disadvantage.

But not for long. It only took ten seconds for the memories to overload my mind, and I realized for the first time Celestia had summoned me. I didn't know how she did it, our switch never occurring unless magically induced, but I couldn't spend much time thinking about it.

I was already feeling her body's exhaustion, and if I didn't get out of this situation, we'd both face death.

"Say farewell to your daughter, Charlotte! Maybe next time you'll believe in the Blessed Legends!" a man declared, and I felt the blade move from my neck. I only had a split second, and that was all I needed.

"WAVEOSHALIGHT!" I screamed, lashing out as much light energy that I could manage.

"AHHH!" The man screamed as a wave of light magic burst through me in all directions, gathering enough power to

send everyone flying back.

I snapped my eyes open and ducked just in time to miss a wave of dark magic that passed me. I raised my arms and reached out for my dual swords, pulling them to defend myself for the next wave.

The man before me was tall, had jet black hair, and wore a long black cloak around his body. I noticed right away the artificial hand that was on his left, and the magically made leg that was visible when the wind blew the cape back.

His eyes frightened me the most; black like the dark element he used without a hint of white.

Is he the Darkness? No...he's not Him. Who is this man?

“SIA!” I glanced at Hunter and Orion who were racing towards me, but my eyes widened, and I lifted one of my hands out.

“WINDALASH!” I screamed, shooting out enough wind to stall them in their tracks. In that split second, a dark wall of flames shot out of the ground, growing higher and higher. I tried to run the other way, but the same wall emerged.

I glanced over my shoulder, and the dark flamed wall was already there. I looked back in front of me to see the man in question, his arms out wide as he smiled wickedly.

“You won’t escape me, Princess. I cannot let you live. I’m sorry, but you cannot ascend to being Queen.”

“I don’t know what you- AH!” I began, but I screamed, gasping at the pain that went through me. I lowered my gaze to black tendrils that were in the shape of sharp vines, three of the thin vines in my chest.

Shit...

I gasped again when another went through my stomach, followed by yet another one through my arm. Scream after scream escaped my throat until I had no voice left, blood beginning to fill my mouth.

I lowered my head to spit it out and fearfully glanced down to see my whole body pierced with the dark vines; my blood began to pool on the ground below me.

“One thousand years I’ve waited.”

I slowly looked up to meet his gaze as I struggled to breathe. “I waited to kill you again. You chose to abandon me but accepted the others. You chose to LOVE THEM, but I didn’t deserve love. Only hate, pain, agony,” He declared, taking a step forward.

What did I do...?

I wanted to say something, to defend myself, but I choked on my blood and spat it out as I coughed. It felt like thousands of needles had gone through me.

The man appeared pleased with my pain.

“You should have loved me, Queen. You should have accepted me as a candidate too. You’d rather only accept the good elements. Not the pitiful evil side of me that everyone abandoned. Even after being reincarnated, it looks like you’ve changed your selective ways, but I can’t let the New Darkness have you. You were MINE to treasure, but I was nothing to you.”

“New....New Darkness?” I sputtered.

“Yes. The NEW Darkness. Hah. I guess because I didn’t die, Mother Nature thought it would be hilarious to reincarnate a new me. A replacement if you will? That Dark Rider.” He chuckled, shaking his head.

“He should decide what he wants to be, good or evil, but NO! Meets a weak girl like you, and swoons over you and stops working on my revenge. I deserved to enjoy him killing you, but HE FELL IN LOVE. Pathetic! You won’t have a happy ending, because I will finish you,” he vowed, the wide smile on his face and gleeful black eyes making me realize how dead I was about to be.

“Celestia...I can’t help. I don’t have any more power. I’m sorry.”

~CELESTIA~

I gasped, feeling so much pain run through me I thought I’d pass out right there. I looked down and froze, seeing the multiple black vines sticking out of my body.

The memories flooded in, and I slowly glanced at the pink-black beads on my wrist that began to crack. Chip by chip, the beads cracked until it shattered and fell to the ground.

Sia?

I returned my attention to the man who was only a few steps away from me. I glanced around the dark walls, seeing the sky filled with different elements, but nothing was penetrating them.

“They won’t be able to save you. Not even Charlotte who begged Mother Nature to have you. Your fate has ended, Celestia.” He mocked my name and chuckled, raising his hand that formed a scythe.

“Who. Are. You?” I grunted through clenched teeth.

“The Old Darkness. The one from years ago that you had the choice to love but didn’t. You let the world influence you.

To say that Darkness could only be bad. I didn't deserve your love. I didn't deserve ANYONE'S love." He raised his scythe, taking the last few steps to reach me.

"You were the one person who could have changed my destiny. All you had to do was accept me. To love me. To look at me with those same eyes with longing, just like you did to the other Princes. Yet, you let go. Listened to the people. And the result? Your miserable death. But it wasn't enough. Not after those Princes made an oath to return and make sure you were reborn. It's okay. I'm inches away from getting my revenge."

Old Darkness? Princes? Reincarnation?

"Then when I'm done with you, I'll move on to your lovers."

My eyes widened, and I glared at him. "No!" I growled, blood running down my mouth.

"Oh, yes. I'll enjoy killing them all. One by one. I'll stab them with the same thorns that are draining your blood and kill them. I'll start with Prince of Light and watch the others' agony at their lost brother. Then Nature, Earth, Star, Sun, Moon, and finally, the New Darkness. Once they're all gone, I'll work on your family. After that, this dimension will explode just like the other one I've destroyed."

He stood before me and gave me a pitiful smile. "Farewell, my Queen. May we never see each other again," he whispered.

I won't die!

He slashed at me with the intention of decapitating me, but he let out a grunt. I glanced down to see a small block of ice holding back the tip of his scythe, and felt the blessed mark on

my arm grow hot, the bright blue glow coming from Cairus' blessed mark.

"What?!" he shouted, and I took the opportunity to take a deep breath, my lungs screaming at the action. But instead of blowing out wind, I blew fire that went straight into his face.

"ARGH!" He screamed and stumbled back to attempt to put off the blaze that was burning his skin. I could see Caio's blessed mark glowing brightly, and my back was hot like fire, leaving me to wonder if Hunter's blessed mark was doing the same as the others. I quickly tried to look at my back and caught a small glimpse of my wing blessed mark glowing bright orange, answering my questioning thoughts.

I returned my gaze to the vines and concentrated, feeling my left thigh grow hot. The Darkness that tainted the vines began to drift off them like a black mist, leaving the now green vines and evaporating into the air.

The black mark continued to glow, and I noticed Finn's blessed mark glowed brightly too, the vines slowly retracting out of me, making me scream in agony. I fell to my knees and tried to breathe, seeing my blood on the floor. That's when my neck began to burn, and I knew Theo's blessed mark was doing its work.

The blood that was on the floor began to lift from the ground, gathering and changing from a dark red thin substance to a thick, bright red liquid, the blood looking healthy like it would in a bag of blood.

Within seconds, it disappeared into small streams and went straight into my body through the holes the vines had left. I thought it would flow back out, but both my wrists burned, making me hiss in pain.

I looked at them through my tear-filled eyes; the bright white marks helped my body begin to heal, the parts that had been pierced slowly closing.

Once everything sealed up, the burning disappeared, and all the blessed marks dimmed in power and light. I fell to the sandy ground in a coughing mess.

I gasped for as much air as my weak body was capable of, realizing that the seven blessed marks had saved me as I coughed and shivered.

Am I alive? I'm...alive?!

“How?!!! No, no, NO!”

I fought to lift my heavy head, looking before me to see the man who termed himself as Old Darkness glaring daggers at me, his face half burnt and his hands trembling with rage. His scythe reappeared in his hands, and he ran forward.

“I WILL GET MY REVENGE!” he screamed.

My eyes widened, and I knew there was no way I could move in time for his attack. I squeezed my eyes shut, calling the only person I knew could get through the dark walls.

“ODION!”

A loud clashing sound rang around us, and my eyes snapped open to see the familiar 6'2 figure standing before me, his black hair flowing wildly at the gushing wind that tore through him and Old Darkness.

“YOU!” The man glared.

“Sorry, old man. She's mine,” Odion replied and with ease, pushed the man back. The move sent him flying into the dark wall of flames.

Odion twirled his scythe in his hand, spinning it faster and faster until a black gust of wind formed by the spinning action. It wrapped around us like a barrier, and Odion didn't stop until we were completely covered.

He took a deep breath and lowered his scythe, looking over his shoulder to meet my weak gaze.

"You came..." I whispered, tears rolling down my cheeks as I began to sob.

His once calm expression turned into a remorseful one as he walked over to me. He knelt on one knee and reached out to wipe a tear from my cheek.

"I told you to call me if my brother couldn't help," he mumbled, but I could hear a hint of relief in the tone of his voice. "You healed."

"You were watching?!" I exclaimed.

He glanced away but nodded. "I can't help you unless I'm summoned. The only way I could be a little bit of assistance was leaving the mark on you," he confessed.

"You...you bonded with me?"

"Yes."

"But...but...Odion! Yo- you know what that means!"

"I'm aware," he replied calmly.

"Why...why?" I asked over and over again, beginning to sob as I stared at him with weepy eyes. He gave me a small smile.

"I'll explain soon, but I couldn't let the woman my brother loves die...not again," he whispered, looking back at me.

Not again?

“And maybe...you’re not so bad. Pretty likable after some coffee,” he said with an appreciative smile.

A loud sound hit the barrier, leaving a crack. Odion frowned and looked back at me.

“Celestia. If you want to live or even see your lovers, familiar, and family again. We have to go.”

“Go where? Teleport somewhere?” I asked.

Another crack formed, followed by another. Odion rose and moved to crouch before me. He rolled me over and scooped me up in seconds, pressing me tightly to his body.

I stared up at him with wide eyes, desperate to know if I’d be able to come back here.

Won't he kill everyone? Mom, Dads, my lovers, Arielle and the other familiars. This whole dimension. Everyone and everything that's dear to me.

“Celestia,” Odion whispered, and I felt his cool lips press against mine.

I blinked, staring into those light lilac colored eyes that were almost white in appearance. He pulled back and spoke.

“They will live, but we won’t if we can’t leave. He can’t kill them without you. Where we’re going, you should be able to handle it since you survived having the Darkness inside you.”

Another crack sounded through the barrier, both of us glancing to see the dark eyes of Old Darkness.

He moved back and rose his scythe that was surrounded by black flames, ready to complete the final strike that both of us knew would shatter the barrier and finish us.

“Odion. WHERE?!” I demanded.

He looked me straight in the eye as the dark mist began to wrap around us.

My body shivered from the sudden drop in temperature, but Odion held me as tightly as he could against his body, the warmth being one of the last things I felt before my mind began to drift and my eyes grew heavy.

He gave me a small smile as his hair started to glow a silver-white, just as his brother’s hair did.

“The Dark World. The land for dark souls who are pinned to this world due to their impure actions. Welcome to my world, my Queen. I’ll show you who the true enemy is. I’ll teach you exactly who we all are.”

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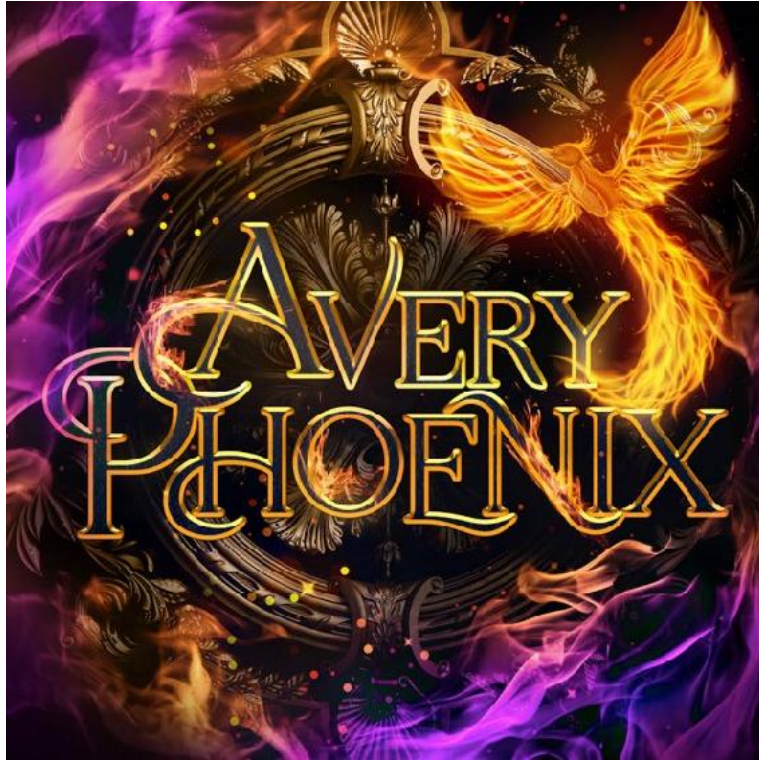
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Avery Phoenix is the new pen name of USA Today Bestselling Author, Yumoyori Wilson.

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