

ALPHA

WOLF'S

*Secret Nanny*

ANIKA SKYE

# Alpha Wolf's Secret Nanny

[OceanofPDF.com](http://OceanofPDF.com)

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ALPHA WOLF'S SECRET NANNY.

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# About

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## Alpha Wolf's Secret Nanny



*My son's nanny is temptation on legs.*

*A human provoking the wolf in me.*

I agree to hire a nanny, but I don't have to like it.

I must hide my son who's existence is evidence that I broke our most primal law—I bred with a human.

So, I hire a stranger to protect my secret and my son from the other wolves.

But I never expect her.

A five foot nothing goddess who awakens my primal, animalistic thoughts.

With curves that provoke my alpha and my resolve never to love again.

But she comforts my son and claims my heart.

And when a rival abducts her, it will take my wolf and pact to protect my fated mate and our unborn child.

I only hope...*I'm not too late.*

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# Prologue



Sharp pains shoot up my feet as I run across the forest floor, stepping on rocks, branches, and who knows what else. The darkness encloses around me. Trees are everywhere, and there's no light in sight. I have no idea where I am, and the bone-chilling stillness of the forest tells me I'm not the only one afraid of the creature stalking me.

He's out there, somewhere.

Following me.

*Watching me.*

This has become a twisted game of cat and mouse. I stop looking side to side and trying to decide which way will give me a fighting chance, knowing eventually he always finds me.

But he won't kill me because that would end this nasty game of his. He is teaching me a lesson. That I'm never going to be able to run away from him. That I am his for as long as he wants me, and the only way he is going to let me go is if he dies.

Or if I die.

"Ah!" I scream as I trip over a fallen branch, landing face-first into the ground.

Groaning in pain and pulling myself up to rest a moment, I hold my ribs that smacked straight into the ground.

"Why can't my life be normal?" I whisper to myself, rubbing my knees. "I need to just g—"



A soft growl sounds through the forest, making me freeze in terror. Slowly looking up, my eyes widen in horror when I see the piercing yellow eyes that gaze at me from the darkness, glowing in the dim moonlight peeking through the leaves above me.

Seeing the glistening white fangs from the long snout of the beast, I wonder if he'll really do it this time. Will he kill me for running away, again?

“Griffin,” I plead, holding out my hands, but it's too late.

He lunges at my throat, snarling, and I surrender...

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# Chapter One

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## Charlotte Franklin



“Charlotte!” Samantha’s voice echoes near my ear. “Wake up!”

I shoot straight up in bed, feeling like my whole body is drenched in sweat. It feels like my heart is beating a million miles an hour out of my chest, and I think I am going to have a heart attack at any moment.

It was just a nightmare...

Blearily, and feeling the effects of the nightmare still lingering, I look up at my best friend of many years, seeing the worry on her face that I can’t quite decipher. Samantha is the only person who knows what I have gone through, and what I have done to get to where I am now. Honestly, she is the whole reason that I am alive.

Samantha and I met when we were in elementary school, and I can’t say that we were really friends yet. For whatever reason, we never got along and always seemed to be at each other’s throats. If I wanted something, she had to have it as well, and vice versa. She drove me nuts more times than I could count, and I hated that someone had to be up my ass all the time.

For a while, I thought she was jealous of me.

Later, I was quick to learn that she wanted to be friends with me, but because she had been an isolated child, she didn’t know how to make friends easily. She seemed to go about it the wrong way, and that made things even worse.

Over time, we slowly got used to each other and by the end of elementary school, we were inseparable. We always had each other's backs, and no one dared to go against us. Everyone liked us, though, always wanting to be on our good side because they knew we would have their backs as well—so long as they didn't do anything bad; we wouldn't take any excuses for that.

“Charlotte!” Samantha whispers, catching my attention once more as she kneels beside my bed, looking at me with complete worry. “You're scaring me. What's the matter?”

Groaning softly, I carefully sit up, clutching my throbbing head and hoping it would stop. “Sorry, Samantha, I was lost in my own thoughts. I'm okay now.”

“You're not okay!” she protests, sounding worried and pissed at the same time. “Do you know how scared I was when I heard you screaming out? I seriously thought that bastard had somehow found you and was hurting you.”

Wincing, I knew she was right, and that made me feel guilty. “I know. I'm sorry. I ... I was just having a nightmare. I didn't know I was screaming out.”

Her eyebrows furrow slightly, her lips pursing. “Was it that same nightmare that you've been having?”

“Unfortunately,” I admit, drawing my knees up to my chest, trying to feel safer. “Am I ever going to be normal again? Why can't I get him out of my head, Samantha? It's like he is just ... terrorizing my whole life, even though he isn't here.”

Samantha looks at me with pity, knowing what I have been going through. “I know. Don't worry. Jared and I think that we have found a solution for you to get as far away from here where that prick will never find you.”

My eyes widen in surprise, wondering what she is talking about. “What do you mean?”

She rises to her feet, brushing off her pants. “I'm not going to talk about it right now. Get dressed and meet me downstairs. Jared is waiting to talk to you as well.”

Before I can even say anything, she walks out of the room, shutting the door behind her. Lying back down, I gaze up at the ceiling, wondering if there was ever going to be a time that I wouldn't have to hide away in a room and not go outside without a disguise.

*Why can't he just let me go?*

Rolling onto my side, I gaze at the small, curtain-covered window in my room. This is the best place for me to sleep because the only way in is the door, or the small, little window. Samantha and Jared hide the door to my room, though, with a bookcase in case someone ever showed up to try and find me.

It's mainly for nighttime and whenever I don't want to go out.

It is for my own safety.

Deciding that it is time to get up and get ready for the day, I grab my towel and walk into the small ensuite bathroom. It isn't much, having just a small shower, sink, and toilet to use, but it helps when I need to be in here for a few days.

There is also a secret compartment that connects to the outside, where either one of them can leave me food, drinks, or any activities to keep me from being bored. For a long while, before I slowly let go of my fear that he would find me, there was no way that I would leave this room.

Oh, what he would do to Samantha and Jared if he found out they are hiding me...

He's already murdered more people than I even care to remember. He doesn't care who stands in his way, and he would strike them down without a second thought. For days, I had nightmares about the people that he killed. How they blamed me because of what he had done, because he killed them if they even looked at me the wrong way.

"Griffin," I whisper as I step into the shower, feeling the warm water pelting down on my body, "just where did we go wrong?"

As the water cascades down my body, I close my eyes, feeling myself getting lost in thought. I met Griffin in my

sophomore year of high school when he transferred to our school. At first, my eyes were just drawn to him because he was the most handsome man that I had ever laid eyes on.

Being the new star quarterback within a few weeks, he quickly became even more popular, and all the girls wanted him. At nearly six five, he towered over most of the other guys in our class, and he was at least twice as muscular, too. All of the single girls would go sit on the bleachers during football practice to watch him because he would have his shirt off, showing off his sun-tanned skin, rippling biceps, and drool-worthy abs. His dark brown hair was sun-kissed, a little more golden on the tips, and his blue eyes sparkled like the clear sky. He always seemed to have a big smile on his face, showing off his chiseled features and white, nearly blinding teeth.

I didn't think it was possible, but his eyes would randomly meet mine and never leave. I would always look away and blush, trying to conceal it, but I no doubt looked like a tomato, almost as red as my hair. I couldn't understand why he would be interested in me, though. I wasn't ugly by far, but I wasn't a cheerleader. I wasn't popular.

I'd never even had my first boyfriend.

But one day after practice, I was sitting alone in the bleachers; everyone else had moved closer to the football field. I had been working on some homework, wanting to get it finished so I wouldn't have to worry about it when I got home later. I could hear the girls start to squeal with excitement, but I didn't bother to look up, knowing that Griffin must've done something that set them off.

It wasn't that hard.

*Why do they have to act so desperate?* I wondered to myself, fighting the urge to roll my eyes. I smirked slightly, amusing myself at the idea that even though they fought for his attention, he still didn't give them the time of day.

*Does he like anyone?* I pondered, my eyebrows furrowing in concentration as I finished my math homework. Just as I was going to do the next problem on the page, a shadow moved

over me, blocking the sun's light. Frowning, I looked up, expecting one of the girls had come over to start something.

That was something they quite liked to do.

But when I looked up, I about choked when I saw a shirtless, sweaty Griffin standing in front of me, looking down at me with a big smile on his face. Feeling my heart pounding in my chest, I gazed up at him, wondering why he was here.

“Yes?” I whispered softly, feeling like my cheeks were burning once again.

His eyes twinkled as he grinned down at me. “Charlotte, right?”

*Oh my god, his voice is so sexy.* “Yes, that’s my name.”

Reaching out, he grabbed my hand and brought it to his lips, sending sparks through my body from his light touch. “I’ve been wanting to do this for a long time now, but I wasn’t sure if you would be interested. Would you like to be my date to the homecoming dance?”

My eyes widened in shock, and I greedily nodded my head. “Yes, I will!”

A pleased smile crossed his handsome face. “Good. I’m happy to hear it.”

Before I could say anything else, he had walked away, and all the girls looked at me with envy. I looked away and ignored them, though, burning with my own excitement. I couldn’t believe that the most popular guy in school had asked me to the homecoming dance.

It was a dream come true ... at the time.

Later, it would become a living nightmare.

Coming back to the present, I get out of the shower, drying off my body and my hair. The one thing in the world that I hate the most is wet hair. I pull my long, curly red hair into a messy ponytail, wanting to keep it out of my face. After debating on what I want to wear, I put on white lingerie, black skinny jeans, and a loose-fitted blue T-shirt with black sandals—simple but cozy.

I decide to add a little bit of makeup to my look, using eyeliner to make my green eyes pop a little bit. I have always been on the pale side with unblemished skin, so I never have to worry about doing a full face of makeup. Besides, I honestly think it is a waste of time.

“This’ll be good,” I murmur, picking up my dirty clothes and setting them in the basket.

Deciding this is just going to have to work, I walk out of my room and make my way downstairs. Samantha and Jared are waiting for me in the dining room, having already made breakfast. Even though I like to cook, Samantha normally does it in case something happens, and I need to run up to the room to hide.

Samantha has grown into a beautiful woman, and I have always admired her beauty. At five seven, she is just a few inches taller than me with a slim body, unlike my curvier one. Her skin is fair, and it doesn’t matter how much she goes out in the sun, she never seems to gain any color. Her long, wavy blonde hair is pulled back in a long braid, and her gray eyes seem to pop due to her makeup.

Samantha wore a plaid, long-sleeve T-shirt and ripped jeans. Samantha has always been a girly-girl, but over the past few years she has been slowly turning into more of a tomboy. I think it has a lot to do with me being in hiding, and that they are attempting to have a baby.

Unfortunately, I am the one ruining their lives.

Jared, on the other hand, we met at a party because of Griffin. Jared and Samantha locked eyes, like it was love at first sight, and they have been inseparable since. Jared is just as tall and as muscular as Griffin, but he has short golden-blonde hair and chocolate-brown eyes. I have to admit that Jared is handsome, but he’s not my type.

And two, he is a wolf.

“What did you find out?” I ask them softly, sitting down across from them.



Jared looks up at me, a solemn expression on his face. “Well, I didn’t want to tell you ... but Griffin is getting closer to finding you.”

I freeze, feeling like my heart has stopped dead in my chest. “What do you mean?”

Jared sighs, shaking his head. “He knows that you’re here. I guess someone recognized you when you were in disguise, but he doesn’t know that you live here, specifically. It is only a matter of time before he figures it out, though.”

“I see.” My shoulders slump in defeat. Frowning, I add, “I should’ve known this was going to happen.”

“Don’t worry! We have a plan!” Samantha tells me, biting down on her bottom lip. “A while ago, Jared and I applied for this nanny position down in Bradbury for you. It’s a few hours away, and it’s so remote, I don’t believe that Griffin would ever find you.”

“Did I get the job?” I ask curiously, feeling a little bit of hope welling inside of me.

“YES!” Samantha tells me excitedly. “We have a plane ticket for you to leave tonight. There, you will be safe, and he won’t find you! I promise.”

Tears well in my eyes, and I bow my head slightly. “Thank God! I don’t know how I’m ever going to repay you.”

Samantha reaches across the table, resting her hand on mine. “I just want you to live, and be happy. Maybe find someone who treats you right while you’re there. Okay?”

I don’t want to tell her that I never want to date ever again, but I know she wouldn’t like that. Instead, I nod my head, and when she lets my hand go, I dig into the food that is sitting in front of me.

Maybe it is time to start a nice life...

I just hope Griffin doesn’t find me...

Arriving at the airport, Jared and Samantha make sure I get to the correct terminal and wait for the plane with me. I can't help but nervously look around, worried that Griffin is going to show up and start something. How he would find me, I'm not so sure, but I wouldn't put it past him.

"They are boarding now," Jared murmurs, rising to his feet and giving me a hug. "We have our numbers written down in your notebook, Charlotte. Make sure to text us every now and then to let us know how you're doing. Just ... don't tell us exactly where you are at in case ... something goes wrong."

I hug the both of them, feeling the tears welling up in my eyes. "I love you guys so much. Thank you."

As we say our heartfelt goodbyes, I grab my suitcase and head onto the plane before getting settled in my seat. Gazing out the small window, I pray that my new life is going to be better, and I will finally be able to be happy and not worry about having to hide anymore.

A girl can wish, right?

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# Chapter Two

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## Winston Campbell



*A few weeks ago...*

“Come on, Winston, stop being so stubborn!” Le’Ann grumbles in front of my desk, slamming her hands down on the desk hard enough that I think it will break. “You know that you can’t keep doing this on your own! You need help taking care of Kaiden.”

“I don’t need any help,” I mutter, looking up from my paperwork as I glare at her, feeling my wolf shifting uneasily inside of me. “He is MY son, and I will raise him how I see fit.”

She crosses her arms over her chest, huffing in annoyance. “That’s not what I’m saying, Winston! You never expected to have Kaiden in your care. You’re not ready for this, and you can’t raise him *and* work your ridiculous hours. You can’t hide him from the pack either. They are going to find out.”

My wolf growls at the mention of the pack, knowing what they would want to do if they find out I had a baby with a human. “I can do as I please. It isn’t safe for him out there, at least not until we find out if he can shift when he’s older.”

As the Alpha of the pack in Bradbury, I have never taken on a mate, nor did I plan to have any children. I prefer working over romance—and keeping too busy to even want to pursue it. I always just wanted to wait for my true mate, who I knew was out there.

I patiently waited, hoping she would just show up on my doorstep.

Until that fateful day...

A little over nine months ago, Le'Ann and some of my closest friends wanted to go out to the bar and have a few drinks. I didn't really want to, knowing how much paperwork I needed to work on, but after some pleading, they managed to convince me to go out and have some fun. It was all going well, and I was actually enjoying myself.

That night, I decided to have a one-night stand with this human, expecting to never have to see her again after that...

I was wrong.

Nine months later, a baby wound up on my porch with a letter that changed my life:

***Dear Mr. Alpha,***

***You may recognize who I am, and I'm sorry that I had to use you this way. I needed to get away from my family, and the only way to do it was to get pregnant and be disowned. There was only one problem...***

***I don't want this baby. He's proved useful to me, but that's all I needed from him. So, I'm leaving him in your capable hands, and you will never have to see me again. Thank you!***

***Sincerely,***

***G.M.***

At first, I had thought it was some kind of prank, that I didn't actually make a baby with someone who wasn't my true mate. But when I picked up the tiny baby, a little afraid that I was going to drop him, my wolf immediately felt the connection, and it dawned on me that I did have this baby with a human. When his eyes opened and I saw those piercing gold eyes just like my own, it became clear to me, too.

So, I decided to name him Kaiden, and only Le'Ann and a few of my closest friends know about him. I can't let the pack

find out about him because they would try to kill him for being half-human.

I hide him for his own safety.

“Winston!” Le’Ann yells, snapping her fingers at me. “Will you listen to me? You need to find yourself a woman to raise him. No child should have to be raised without a mother!”

“His mother didn’t want him,” I growl back at her, feeling my wolf itching to be released, “nor would I have allowed her to raise him!”

Le’Ann purses her lips, but she knows I am right. “I understand, Winston, I do, but you can’t do this on your own. I’m not going to be around all the time to take care of him.”

“I’ll figure it out when the time comes,” I spit, going back to my work. “Now be quiet and leave. I just managed to get Kaiden to sleep. He hasn’t been sleeping well and has been keeping me up all night. Once I finish this paperwork, I’ll be heading up to take a nap.”

Le’Ann looks like she is about to start protesting—with a big frown on her face—but she doesn’t try to talk me out of it again. Without another word, she shakes her head and walks out of the room, softly closing the door behind herself.

Quickly, I check the baby monitor to see how Kaiden is peacefully sleeping in his crib. I let out the deep breath I was holding, wondering if Le’Ann was right. I don’t want a woman right now, that much is obvious, but I do think it might be a good idea to find a nanny for him. It would take the load off of my shoulders, and maybe I wouldn’t have to worry so much.

Finishing my paperwork, I hop onto a nanny homecare site and put in a listing for what I am going to need. I want a live-in nanny who will be there twenty-four seven, and they will be heavily compensated. As soon as I hit submit, it doesn’t even take twenty minutes for a bunch of applications to come through.

Wondering if I might actually be a little crazy for trying to do this online, I go through every application carefully, and it seems like I am rejecting each and every one. There is just something about them that doesn't sit right with me, and the explanations for why they want to be the nanny of my boy are a little weird.

*I want to be the nanny of little Kaiden because I've always wanted to be a mommy, and I would be a great fit for him.*

*I want to be the nanny of little Kaiden so he can grow up and know how to be a proper man.*

Some of them are even weirder than those, making me cringe at the mere thought of what they said. There is no one who could suddenly become Kaiden's mommy, nor would I expect them to. Kaiden is my son, which will never change, and no one is going to replace me as his family.

All I need is someone to help me when I need to go to work or deal with paperwork.

For what feels like forever, I honestly think that I am never going to find someone who is fit for what I need for Kaiden. Sighing, I look at the clock and see it is way past the time I want to go and take a nap.

Groaning, I am about to turn off the website when I another application comes through. I half debate on not looking at it, just wanting to be done and take a much-needed nap. For whatever reason, though, I clicked on it and open the application up.

*Charlotte Franklin*, I muse, looking her application over.

She's pretty young—college-age. *Does she not go to school?* I wonder. She didn't post a picture which is a little weird, but her resume is amazing. Although it looks like she didn't finish college, her grades were impeccable, and her recommendation letters are top-notch.

And even better, she can be a live-in nanny and doesn't mind working a lot.

I email her back from the application.

To [Charlotte.Franklin5@yahoo.com](mailto:Charlotte.Franklin5@yahoo.com)

From [WCampbell25@yahoo.com](mailto:WCampbell25@yahoo.com)

*Good afternoon, Ms. Franklin. I just received your application to be a live-in nanny for my nearly newborn son. After carefully going through your application and recommendations, I have decided that you are the best fit for what I'm looking for, and I would really like for you to come to my house as soon as possible and sign the contract. I look forward to hearing back from you!*

Almost immediately, I get a response.

To [WCampbell25@gmail.com](mailto:WCampbell25@gmail.com)

From [Charlotte.Franklin5@yahoo.com](mailto:Charlotte.Franklin5@yahoo.com)

*Thank you for your consideration, Mr. Campbell. Yes, I can be there as soon as possible. I look forward to meeting you.*

Pleased, I write down all her information in my little notebook, noting that she would arrive a few weeks from now. It is a lot longer than I thought it would take, but I am willing to wait for someone who might possibly be a great fit for Kaiden.

Leaning back in my chair and feeling like a weight has lifted off of my shoulders, I grab my phone and find Le'Ann's number. I hit the call button, bringing my phone up to my ear.

"Hello?" Le'Ann is quick to answer the phone, sounding a little confused.



“Hey,” I murmur, hoping that she isn’t too upset with me, “I need you to do me a huge favor.”

Le’Ann is silent for a moment before she cautiously replies, “Okay, what is it?”

“I hired a nanny to help me take care of Kaiden,” I explain to her as I grab my checkbook. “I want you to renovate the room across from Kaiden’s for her. Get all the necessities, and then when she gets here in a few weeks, I’d like for you to take her to the mall and get her whatever else she needs.”

“You’re being quite nice for someone who was just hating the thought of having a woman become a part of Kaiden’s life,” Le’Ann teases me, a weird tone in her voice.

“There’s a difference between finding a mate and having a nanny,” I retort, smirking slightly, “and trust me, I’ll make sure that she will NEVER fall in love with me.”

Le’Ann laughs. “Okay, Winston, whatever you say! Sure, I’ll start working on the room tomorrow.”

After telling her a quick goodnight, I hang up the phone, my wolf itching with the urge to run for a little bit. Since my house is surrounded by woods, I grab the baby monitor and put it around my neck so I can hear if Kaiden wakes up as I head outside, taking off my clothes piece by piece. As I stand naked beneath the full moon, all I can do is gaze up at it, feeling my wolf bristling in contentment.

Sighing, I close my eyes as the weird pressure rips through my body. I feel my bones snapping out of place and my upright body morphing into that of one on four paws. The whole transformation process takes less than five seconds, but sometimes the pain makes it feel like an eternity.

One would think that after a few times of shifting you would get used to it, but you never do. And the bigger the wolf you are, the more it is going to hurt. My senses heighten as I walk across the forest floor, feeling the leaves and branches crunch beneath my steps.

My wolf is excited for whatever reason, growling softly as we pace around, feeling this weird urge welling inside of us.

Something is going to happen, that much I know, but what it is...

There is only one way to find out.

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# Chapter Three

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## Charlotte



As soon as the plane touches down in Bradbury, I shakily walk off, feeling like my legs are going to give out on me. I have never flown in a plane before, and I can't really say that I ever want to do it again. Besides my extreme fear of heights, the turbulence for pretty much the entire ride was ridiculous. There were times that I felt like the whole plane was just going to sky-dive and kill all of us.

Retrieving my suitcase, it suddenly dawns on me about how I am supposed to get to this place when I have no phone. I pull out my wallet, seeing that I have a little bit of money that could possibly get me there. *I hope it's not a far drive for the taxi to take me*, I think to myself as I head out to the main entrance.

But that's where I see a man holding a sign that has my name on it.

I freeze for a moment. No one told me that someone was going to be here to pick me up. I inconspicuously look him up and down, immediately sensing that he is a wolf.

*Is he a part of Griffin's pack? Did Griffin somehow find me?*

As I study him closer, I know that I have never seen him before, and it makes me relax a little bit. The man is a little on the shorter side for a wolf, with a leaner body beneath his tailored suit. His short brown hair is slicked back, and his eyes are covered by sunglasses. He kind of reminds me of like a cliché bodyguard type of guy, and it makes me smile slightly.

I guess there is only one way to find out who he is.

Cautiously, I approach him. I know his eyes immediately latch onto me when I feel that shiver go down my spine, the same as a predator who has locked onto its prey. Steeling my spine—and not allowing myself to be this scaredy cat anymore—I approach the wolf with fake confidence.

I just hope that he can't tell.

"I'm Charlotte," I greet him, nervously gnawing on my bottom lip subconsciously. "Are you Mr. Campbell?"

He curtly shakes his head, lowering the sign. "My name is Joseph Garcia. I am Mr. Campbell's secretary. He asked me to come and pick you up as he has to work late tonight. Ms. Campbell and young master are at the house waiting for us to arrive."

"Ms. Campbell?" I question him softly, not having thought that I would be working for the mother as well. "Does the mom work as well, then?"

Joseph does not look at me as he takes my suitcase, carrying it out. "Ms. Campbell is Mr. Campbell's sister, Ms. Franklin. There is no mother in the picture ... but please do not tell Mr. Campbell that I informed you about this because he does not like to talk about it. It does not make him comfortable."

"I won't say anything!" I promise him, nervously fiddling with my fingers. "Is ... is Mr. Campbell a good boss?"

Joseph pauses for a moment, like he is thinking hard about what I just asked him, before he finally answers, "Mr. Campbell has been my boss for a few years now, and although he is strict, he is highly respected because he knows what he is doing. You will never have a boss as great as him."

"He's not mean, right?" I continue, watching him put the suitcase into the trunk of his car.

Joseph's head snaps towards me, his lips set in a firm line. "Listen, Ms. Franklin, I don't mind you asking me questions, but don't ask me such strange ones. It doesn't matter if Mr. Campbell is nice or mean to you. He will treat you based on

your own actions, and the only person that you can blame will be yourself!”

His words are harsh, but I can tell he is telling me the truth. And I guess he does have a point. All I need to do is lie low, take care of the baby, and try not to get on my boss’s nerves. It doesn’t sound too hard if you ask me, but I’m not perfect. No doubt I will make some kind of mistake at some point, but I just hope that he can give me some leeway.

“Get in the car,” Joseph grumbles, holding the door open for me.

Irritably, I get into the car and he shuts the door as soon as I am inside, barely avoiding crushing my fingers. My eyebrows furrow slightly as I buckle myself in and fight the urge to scold him for nearly breaking my fingers. Why does he have to be rude? Is that how all of them are going to be?

Sighing deeply, I close my eyes, trying to ignore my irritation. I can’t complain too much because this is getting me as far away from Griffin as I can likely get. And maybe, if I can save enough money, I’ll be able to move somewhere even farther away.

It is really tempting, I have to admit.

Thirty minutes later, Joseph pulls into a driveway that leads deep into the woods. It’s like the start of a horror movie, feeling like we are fully surrounded by all of these trees. Glancing around, I wonder if there is some sort of wildlife out there that could pose as a threat, but I have yet to see anything.

*What a strange area,* I muse.

“We’re here,” Joseph tells me gruffly, putting the car in park.

Stepping out of the car, my eyes widen in surprise as I take in the house before me, wondering how a huge house is just sitting here in the middle of the woods. I wouldn’t call it a mansion, but it is at least four stories tall, with a nice porch held up by pillars, and a pristine white color that surprises me out here in the wilderness.

*How do they keep the house so white?*

“Hurry up, Ms. Franklin,” Joseph mumbles as he grabs my suitcase. “Ms. Campbell is waiting anxiously for your arrival.”

I really hate being rushed, but I don't complain. I follow him into the house, not even able to look at the beauty of it as he rushes up the stairs without looking back at me to see if I am following him.

Although the house is quite beautiful, even on the inside, it is just so ... plain.

I don't know what it is, but the house feels a little lifeless. It is like there is no heart in this place, and that no one is attempting to do anything with it. I sigh, not even trying to look around to see if I can see anything that would give me a hint about my new boss.

This is so ... nerve-wracking.

“Ms. Campbell, she is here,” Joseph murmurs, standing outside a door that has the name ‘Kaiden’ on it etched in a plaque.

“Let her in!” I hear a beautiful voice call out.

Joseph reaches out and opens the door, motioning me to head inside. Steeling my nerves, I step into the room, seeing that it is fully decorated with baby stuff. It is very different than the rest of the house, that much I can figure out.

“Ahhh!” I hear a loud squeal just before arms wrap around me, hugging me tightly. “I'm so excited to meet you! My name is Le'Ann. I am Kaiden's aunt and Winston's sister.”

I hug her back, feeling a little weird, but I mask it. “Hi! I'm Charlotte.”

As she pulls back, I am immediately struck by how beautiful she is. Strangely, I immediately sense that she is indeed a wolf as well, and is dangerously beautiful.

Le'Ann is about my height, maybe a smidge taller, and I am immediately jealous of her slim figure that is accentuated by her fitted clothing. Her long, curly black hair is pinned behind her ears to stay off of her face, and her eyes are a dark blue that practically peers into my soul. As I look closer, I

notice there are specks of gold in her eyes as well—an immediate sign of a wolf.

Her features are fair and delicate, almost like a fairy, and it makes me a little jealous. I wish that I were as naturally beautiful as she is. Based on my own instincts, I can immediately tell that she is a nice woman, but I know that I need to remain on her good side.

Any wolf ... you dare not to cross them.

“I am excited to have you here, Charlotte,” Le’Ann murmurs softly, patting me on the arm. “Winston has needed much help since Kaiden came into his life, and I’m happy that my stubborn brother finally got it through his head to hire someone. Don’t worry, though. He can be a bit of an ass, but he is a good man and won’t be too mean to you.”

I am not sure how I should react to that, but before I can say anything, crying suddenly sounds in my ears from the crib. Almost instinctively, I walk over and peer into the crib, seeing a beautiful baby boy crying his eyes out. He has to only be a few months old, but when his eyes open, I see the striking golden color gazing back at me.

This is a wolf baby.

Without another moment’s hesitation, I reach into the crib and carefully pick him up, ignoring Le’Ann’s warning. I cradle him in my arms, gently cooing to him and smiling, seeing how he is looking at me with those intelligent eyes.

He really is a beautiful baby.

Almost immediately, Kaiden stops crying and holds onto my finger with his tiny fingers like his life depends on it. His hold makes my heart stumble in my chest, and I just can’t get enough of him.

“Wow, normally he would throw a fit if it wasn’t me or his daddy holding him,” Le’Ann tells me, a big grin on her face. “I just knew you were going to fit right in, Charlotte! Winston is going to be pleased to see this.”

All I can do is smile and nod my head, holding Kaiden close as I sit down in the rocking chair. Le’Ann hands me a



bottle to feed him, informing me that he's probably hungry since it has been a while since he last ate. Quietly, I feed him, smiling at how he latches onto the bottle like a hungry boy.

"Kaiden was not expected," Le'Ann tells me, causing me to look up at her. "Although we love him so much, Kaiden is the result of a one-night stand. Winston had no idea about him. Then, after Kaiden was born, she decided that she had no use for him and just left him on Winston's doorstep."

"That's so horrible," I tell her, meaning every word of it.

"It was," Le'Ann agreed, nodding her head slightly. "But I tell you, my brother loves Kaiden more than anything in the world. He doesn't care how Kaiden was created, just that he's going to make sure Kaiden lives a good life and that he is loved. Because of certain circumstances, not many people know about Kaiden, and he intends to keep it that way. That's why he was so afraid of getting help to take care of Kaiden."

"I see," I murmur, my eyebrows furrowing in thought. "Don't worry. Kaiden will be safe with me. I'll protect him and take care of him. I promise."

Le'Ann seems pleased by my admission, and as she supervises me on how I take care of Kaiden, she tells me everything that I will need to need to know—where rooms are at, which ones *not* to go into, and which one is my room. I am thankful for her help, because I didn't know if I was just going to have to learn all of this the hard way.

Maybe it won't be so bad meeting Mr. Campbell, then ... maybe he is like his sister.

Groggily, I open my eyes, hearing someone moving across the room. I didn't mean to fall asleep, but after I had put Kaiden back down for a nap, I ended up taking a rest on the couch and falling asleep there.

*But what woke me up?* I wonder.

Glancing over at the crib to make sure it isn't Kaiden babbling, my body goes absolutely still as I notice the shadow

of a large man leaning over the crib, reaching inside. My whole body runs hot as I realize some man has broken into the house.

*Is he going to kill Kaiden?*

Feeling my body jump into overdrive, I shoot to my feet and rush at the person, screaming as I jump onto his back, trying to wrestle him away from the crib. At this moment, I don't care what happens to myself, but I am going to protect Kaiden even if it means dying.

*“Get away from him, you creep!”*

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# Chapter Four

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## Winston



Growling softly as I pull into the driveway, I hear my phone buzz for what seems to be the millionth time. I swear, I am going to find my little sister and throw something at her. I don't know how women can just text and call for what seems like a billion times, but she is about to get on my last nerve. Can't she take a hint after the first time I ignore her?

Grabbing my phone, I finally answer it and bring it to my ear. "What do you want, Le'Ann? I just got home after a long day at work, and I am not in the mood for one of your stupid games!"

Le'Ann huffs on the other side of the phone, sounding like she just rolled her eyes. "I know, Winston, but I wanted to inform you that I met the nanny, Charlotte, and she is an absolute doll! Kaiden immediately took a liking to her as well."

*I highly doubt that*, I bitterly think to myself, knowing that my son does not take kindly to anyone but me and Le'Ann. I just know the moment I walk through that door, I am going to hear him crying out for me, something that has become a common occurrence if I am gone for too long.

"Well, I just got home," I mutter, running a hand through my hair as I climb out of the car. "I'm not sure if I will meet the girl tonight. I really don't want to have to wake her up if she is asleep. No doubt Kaiden is screaming his head off."

"I don't know about that. Charlotte put him to sleep just before I left," Le'Ann explains to me, surprising me a little. "I

think she's going to do very well with him, Winston. I can almost guarantee it."

I don't want to believe her as I pull out my keys to unlock the door. I am waiting for the cries, but even with my acute hearing, I hear none. Maybe Le'Ann is right; maybe this girl is a good thing to happen for Kaiden.

"I'll see you in the morning, Le'Ann," I mumble softly before hanging up on her.

I don't even care if I make her mad when I do so, I just need to go and make sure that my son is okay. Quickly but quietly, I head up the stairs to his room, opening the door. There is a strange scent in the air, almost like a vanilla sort of scent. I thought it would revolt me, but my wolf immediately perks up, demanding to find the person with the beautiful smell.

*It must be the girl*, I think to myself as I walk into Kaiden's room, the vanilla scent heavy in the air. I keep the lights off since my sight in the dark is amazing, but what I hadn't expected is to see a beautiful woman lying on the couch, fast asleep.

Quietly walking over, not wanting to wake her up, I stop mere inches from where she is lying, gazing down at her curiously. She is human, I can tell that, and her hair is a fiery red color, a mess around her. Her skin is fair and unblemished with delicate features.

She looks like she could break even if I just bump against her.

"Coo" I hear coming from the crib.

Attracting my attention now, I walk over to the crib and see that Kaiden is indeed sleeping peacefully, making cute baby noises in his sleep. I smile to myself, my heart soaring with my love for him. This is the first time I have ever seen him sleep so peacefully.

I wonder if it is the girl...

"Ahhhhh!" I hear the woman scream from behind me, and Kaiden's eyes fly open as he is quickly startled.

Before I can whip around and shut the stupid woman up, I feel a weight jump on me from behind, knocking me away from the crib. If I were human, I would've immediately fallen over, but I quickly move us around, pinning the woman against the wall easily.

"Get away from him, you creep!" she screams at me, trying to hit me between the legs.

My wolf practically growls, my groin painstakingly hard as she struggles against me, cursing me. Her body brushes against mine, her breasts pushing against my chest. I push my leg between hers, trying to get her to stop moving and listen to reason. Her body rears up, and before I know what is happening, she quickly slaps me across the face.

Using her smack as a distraction, she pushes away from me and rushes to Kaiden, gently picking him up as she cautiously backs away from me and heads to the door. I just watch her, making sure that she doesn't hurt my son with her idiotic ways.

She must think I'm a burglar.

"Ms. Franklin," I murmur coldly, my voice coming out icier than I intend. "I'm sorry for startling you, but I need you to calm down. My name is Winston Campbell. I am Kaiden's father."

I watch her body tense up, her eyebrows furrowing in confusion as she reaches over and flicks on the light, her eyes immediately meeting mine now. I'm not sure what I read in her eyes, but I can see that she has no ill intent there.

Kaiden isn't crying in her arms either, stunning me slightly, but I don't dwell on it. He is gazing up at her, a big smile on his face, like he is content in her arms. *Just who, exactly, is Charlotte Franklin?*

"Oh my god, I am so sorry!" she quickly apologizes, cautiously crossing the room back over to me. "When I woke up, I just thought you were some weird stranger who was going to hurt Kaiden. It didn't even cross my mind that you'd be ... well, the father."

Ignoring her apology, and not even really caring, I hold my arms out, wanting my son now. I'm sure it was all a fluke, and he must not be feeling very well. Almost immediately, she hands him over, extra gentle as she placed him in my arms. I see the light in her eyes when she looks at Kaiden, and I quickly turn away.

I hope she realizes that she will never be more than his nanny.

"I appreciate you trying to protect my son, but what if I had been a real burglar?" I ask her softly, but my voice still comes out cold. "You could have easily been killed. I hope you realize that."

"I don't care," she firmly tells me, making me freeze for a moment. "I'm not going to let Kaiden get hurt."

For a moment, I'm unable to look at her, wondering why she would do something for a baby that she has never met. Glancing over, I see she is looking at the ground, biting her plump bottom lip nervously. Her eyes are a beautiful green color, and kind of remind me of emeralds.

Yes, she is beautiful.

Dangerously so.

"Wah!" Kaiden starts to cry in my ears, and fat, crocodile tears fall down his chubby cheeks.

I gently rock him, knowing how he likes it, but for whatever reason, he just continues to cry. My eyebrows furrow in confusion, wondering what could be wrong with him. Nothing has changed, and normally being in my arms causes him to settle down quickly.

"Kaiden," I hush him softly, my heart clenching at the fact he is crying his poor little heart out. "What's the matter? You don't normally do this."

Before I can do anything, Charlotte speaks up, "Let me try."

My head snaps up, and I glare at her for even wanting to try to take my son from me. She isn't looking at me, though,

but down at the screaming Kaiden who is getting louder with every passing moment. Feeling a little conflicted, I end up handing Kaiden to her, promising myself that once Charlotte realizes she's not going to be able to put him to sleep, then I will take him back...

If only it worked that way.

My eyes widen slightly as Kaiden slowly calms down, practically nuzzling his head against Charlotte's ample chest, closing his eyes. Within minutes, he has fallen fast asleep, his little chest rising and falling evenly now.

It makes me jealous.

My son doesn't like anyone, especially not a stranger!

"See? He's okay now," Charlotte murmurs softly, moving over to sit down on the couch and looking up at me with a big smile on her face. "Did you have a good day at work, sir?"

My wolf growls in response, wanting to rush over and put Kaiden to bed before bending her over that little couch and having my way with her. I flinch slightly at my primal, animalistic thoughts, taking a step away from her to gain some distance.

"Are you okay?" she asks me sweetly, egging my wolf on even more.

"Fine." I spit out a lot harsher than I intend, before turning around. "Go and get some sleep soon. I'm heading to bed."

I don't wait for a response as I quickly walk out of the room, leaving the nursery door slightly ajar so the noise won't wake Kaiden up. I flee to my room, feeling like my heart is going to burst out of my chest, and quickly unlock my door and escape into the sanctuary of my bedroom.

*Fuck my life!*

I lean back against the door, closing my eyes as I try to calm down my heart and my raging erection. My wolf paces around wanting me to turn back around and go and get her. I am unsure why I feel this way, but I don't like it.

*She's just a human!*



*Why do I feel so connected to her?*

Growling, I walk into the bathroom that is adjoined to my room before stripping off my clothing and turning on the shower, making sure the water is nice and cold. The water seems effective at cooling off my body and clearing my head, causing me to think straight.

Bracing my hand against the wall, I decide then and there that I'm going to keep a wall between Charlotte and me. She will do her job, she will take care of Kaiden, but I am going to stay as far away from her as possible.

It is the only way that I'm going to protect her ... from myself.

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# Chapter Five

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## Charlotte



I have never woken up so early, but this morning I got up at five o'clock to get ready for the day. After getting dressed and waking myself up, I go to Kaiden's room to see that he is awake but not crying. He full-on laughs when he sees my face, a big smile on his little face.

He really is too cute.

I get him changed and dressed for the morning, sitting in the rocker to feed him. Kaiden is silent the whole time, just comfortable watching me no matter what I am doing. I don't mind it, though. I like the fact that he really isn't a fussy baby. Le'Ann had made it seem like I was going to have trouble with him, but he's honestly one of the best babies that I have ever met.

After I finish getting him all ready, I pick him up and make my way downstairs to where there is a little swing for him to be while I make breakfast for Winston and me. It doesn't take me long to make pancakes, scrambled eggs, and bacon. There isn't much in the fridge, so I make myself a little list so I can go to the store later.

"What's this?" I hear his gruff voice come from the doorway, instantly making my head snap up.

I have to admit, Winston Campbell is an extremely handsome man, and even more so than I ever thought Griffin was. At six seven, at least, he is way taller than Griffin, and even more muscular. His muscles bulge out against his suit, barely able to conceal his massive physique. He has quite an

intimidating size, that much I can tell. His short, midnight-black hair is slicked back away from his face, and his golden eyes are as bright as Kaiden's.

The sign of a full-fledged wolf.

His full, pink lips are set in a frown that mars his handsome face, and his nose is slightly crooked, like it has been broken a time or two. He has sharp, angular Adonis-like features.

*How is a man so beautiful?*

Seeing how he is glaring at me, waiting for an answer, I quickly speak up, "Ah, yes, I made breakfast for you! I made pancakes, eggs, and bacon. I hope you like it. I wanted to go to —"

I freeze, feeling like I am completely ignored as Winston walks past me, seemingly trying to make sure that we don't touch as he heads over to Kaiden. Leaning down, he presses a soft, tender kiss to Kaiden's forehead, murmuring that he would see Kaiden later, before he walks out of the house, shutting the door a little loudly behind himself.

"Did he just ignore me?" I ask myself, feeling a little baffled and hurt at the same time.

*What did I do?*

Gritting my teeth together, I sit down at the table and eat my part of the breakfast. My stomach feels like it is refusing, but I don't have a choice. I don't want the good food to go to waste. I just feel a little bitter about the whole thing. Sighing in irritation, I finish everything until I am full, and then I pack the rest away and put it in the fridge to be used later before washing the dishes.

"Whatever. I won't let it get to me," I mumble to myself while gathering everything that I will need when taking him to the store. "Alright, Kaiden, let's get prepared to go to the store."

Kaiden laughs, like he understands what I am saying. As I put him in the car seat, I debate on if I should call a taxi or not. I really doubt that Winston would just leave me a car, but

deciding to be a little more safe than sorry, I go into the garage and see a perfectly good car to use.

*I'm sure he won't mind*, I think to myself, making sure the keys are in there and that Kaiden's car seat will fit. I obviously have my driver's license; I'll just have to ask Winston to put me on his insurance later. When I had been driven here, I saw a grocery store not even a mile down the road.

"Alright, Kaiden, let's go!" I tell him excitedly, strapping him down in the car.

It isn't long before I am driving down the street, being extra careful so I won't disturb Kaiden. It is surprisingly a quiet little town, and barely any cars can be seen. It makes me wonder how big the town is if you hardly see anybody.

It's a good idea, though, since Griffin won't be able to easily find me in a little town people don't often visit.

Without the GPS, I find the grocery store in no time. I honestly thought it would take a lot longer than it does, and I want to make sure that I am able to get back to the house without any trouble.

I make sure to place a blanket over the top of the car seat in order to protect Kaiden's identity since they told me that Winston doesn't want anyone knowing about him. Kaiden is fast asleep anyway, so this will help me get in and out as fast as I can. Grabbing my purse, I carry Kaiden inside, ignoring the weird stares that I receive as I get his car seat situated in the cart.

I check on him one more time, making sure that he is good before I go through the store. With the limited amount of money that I have, I make sure to get a lot of the necessities that I was unable to bring with me. I also make sure to get the things that are on sale, since I don't want to waste too much money on expensive things if I don't need to.

"Hello." A woman suddenly appears next to me, startling me slightly. "I've never seen you before. Are you new here?"

Feeling a little nervous, I am not sure how to answer that, but I nod my head. "Yes, I'm new here."

Her eyes flicker to the car seat where Kaiden sleeps peacefully. “Is this your child?”

For whatever reason, I have this odd feeling that I need to lie. That this woman has ill intent and that I need to protect Kaiden from this woman.

“Yes, he’s mine,” I mutter coldly, moving away from her. “I have much shopping to do. Thank you.”

Before she can say anything else, I walk away, wanting to get out of there as quickly as possible. I finish getting the rest of my groceries and head to the check-out aisle, paying for my things that I need. Thankfully, I have enough money to cover it.

Heading out to the car, I put my things into the trunk before grabbing Kaiden and the car seat and pushing the cart into a stall. I have this odd feeling that we are being intensely watched, and it is honestly freaking me out to the point that I am afraid—for myself, or Kaiden ... or both of us.

*I need to get out of here.*

After securing Kaiden down in the backseat, I jump into the driver’s side, making sure that I am securely settled in before heading back to the house. Suddenly, I am overwhelmed by this uneasy, queasy feeling that something is going to go wrong...

I just don’t realize how it is entirely all my own fault...

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# Chapter Six

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## Winston



Furious, I come to a sudden stop with a loud screech that I am certain she can hear from the inside. Jumping out of my car, I slam the door shut, feeling like my blood is boiling from the rage I am feeling inside of me.

How dare she take my son out?

Why didn't she tell me that's what she wanted to do?

Stupid, stupid human!

"Charlotte!" I yell the moment I walk through the front door. "Charlotte, where are you?"

"Shh!" She hushes me as she walks down the stairs, looking at me cautiously. "Kaiden is asleep. What's wrong?"

"What's wrong?" I roar, watching her flinch back in shock, but I don't stop ... I can't stop. "What's wrong is that you took out my son! You specifically knew that I didn't want him to be known to the public, but here you took him out for the whole town to see!"

Charlotte winces. "I—I needed to get a few things. I'm sorry, I didn't think—"

"No, you didn't think, you stupid girl!" I spit, the worry for my son overshadowing my compassion to be nice. "Do you realize how much danger you could've put him in today, Charlotte? What if you had been attacked? What if someone stalked you back here? How the fuck would you defend yourself?"



Her hands ball into fists, and she clenches her jaw. “You’re being unreasonable, Winston! No one is just going to do that unless they are a psychopath.”

It pisses me off even more that she isn’t taking responsibility for her actions, and I can’t stop the words that fly out of my mouth. “I should fire you for your stupidity, Charlotte! You’re lucky that nothing bad happened!”

Charlotte glares at me now, a fire brewing in her eyes. “Why are you screaming at me when you never specifically told me that I couldn’t take him out? All I knew is that you preferred that nobody know about him.”

I know, in a way, that she is right. I obviously can’t sit down and talk to her about what I’m really afraid of since she doesn’t know about werewolves, but I also can’t be swayed by her words. I am doing this for her own safety, for my son’s safety.

“Don’t ever take him out again!” I spit coldly, not even looking at her. “Now go up to your room. I will take care of *my* son tonight.”

I think for a moment that she might try to fight me—I can feel a fiery spirit inside of her—but that quickly changes when I hear her spin around and run up the stairs, her bedroom door closing behind her. I sigh, closing my eyes as I try to control my temper.

I shouldn’t have been so mean to her.

I should’ve explained to her why I feel this way.

But the words stuck in my throat, and there is no going back now. Sighing angrily, I grab a glass of water, downing it before heading up to Kaiden’s room where I can hear him sleeping soundly.

Hovering over his crib, I feel this protective need building inside of me, afraid of what could happen to him if someone finds out about him who shouldn’t. He is half-human, and I know there are wolves out there who want to kill him because he is a tainted bloodline. I know this for a fact because I’ve

known wolves who mated with humans, and one of their enemies slaughtered their baby.

It ended up with the parents committing suicide.

Bowing my head slightly, I reach into the crib and carefully pick him up, trying not to shake him awake. Kaiden shifts slightly since I moved him, but he quickly falls back asleep, sighing in contentment. My little boy ... nothing can disturb him, that much I can easily tell.

Walking over to sit in the rocking chair, I hold Kaiden close to me. Enough so to feel his warmth, but not enough to smother him too much. I inhale his scent that I have gotten so used to, which slightly calms my wolf and me down.

I wasn't even sure how to react when I had found out that Charlotte had taken Kaiden out of the house and to the store. I knew it would be a good idea to keep an eye on Charlotte these first few days or weeks, but I didn't think she would massively screw up on the first day.

I do think that I might owe her a bit of an apology, though...

As much as my pride doesn't want me to.

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# Chapter Seven

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## Charlotte



The following morning, I don't really give a damn, feeling more than just a little exhausted after I had spent the majority of last night crying my eyes out. I don't know why it bothered me so much since I don't believe that I did anything wrong when I took Kaiden out yesterday. It's not like anyone saw him!

I just don't understand why Winston had to yell at me the way he did. I honestly thought that his wolf was going to take over and that he was going to attack me. When those blazing golden eyes locked on me, I thought that I was going to be his prey by how pissed off he was.

It was like he didn't care whether or not he hurt me.

It was like he didn't care that I wasn't trying to put Kaiden in harm's way.

I was just the bad guy in the situation, no matter what.

In the kitchen, I listen to Kaiden babbling in the swing as I make breakfast. Today, I just decide to make a simple omelet in case Winston decides to fully ignore the breakfast I have made once again. It wouldn't surprise me, so I'm trying not to get my hopes up about anything.

It was obvious yesterday and it's obvious now that he does not like me, nor does he care about what I do unless I do something that he forbids entirely.

I sigh, trying to push these dark thoughts aside. I didn't want to get in even more trouble with him because I can't afford to lose this job. If I lose this job, then I will have no

place to go. I suppose that I might be able to make it back to Samantha and Jared's place, but it is only a matter of time before Griffin finds me.

It would be like walking right back into the wolf's den.

Quite literally.

Maybe I should just apologize to him and get it over with. Yes, I have my pride, but it's not something that I should dwell on. Sometimes I just have to be the bigger person and get it over with.

"Good morning," I hear his gruff voice say from the doorway.

I couldn't look at him, afraid that he would notice that I was crying all night. "Good morning."

It is silent for a moment as I hear him sit down at the table, which I wasn't expecting him to do. Glancing over my shoulder, I see that he is sitting there, drinking a cup of coffee and looking at the newspaper. It is almost like yesterday never happened.

"What are you making?" he asks me curiously, his voice a little softer than I expected. "It smells delicious."

My heart thuds somewhat erratically in my chest, and I feel a lot more nervous that I want to let on. "Omelets."

I put the one I had been making onto a plate before turning around and setting it in front of him. I half expect him to just ignore it and not eat it like yesterday, but much to my surprise and happiness, he actually sits there and practically scarfs it down.

"Would you like another one?" I ask him, since I'm almost finished making the next one.

"Yes, please," he murmurs, his voice a lot softer than I expect.

Within seconds, I place another omelet in front of him, smiling to myself as I turn away to see that he is actually eating the food I made him. I make myself my own omelet, turning off the stove to sit across from him. I notice then that

he has completely finished the second omelet by the time that I sit down. He must've really liked it.

"It was good," he murmurs softly, not looking up from his newspaper. "I've never been a fan of omelets, but that was really delicious."

"What's your favorite breakfast item?" I ask him curiously, wanting to make things that he will enjoy as well.

He glances up, those golden eyes boring into my own as he smiles softly. "Scrambled eggs with cheese on top. I kind of regret not eating the breakfast you made yesterday. It looked good."

My heart thuds erratically in my chest, and I can't help but wonder if he can hear it. With his heightened wolf senses, I can believe it, but I also don't want to believe it. It would be a little embarrassing if that were the case, because then he would immediately realize how nervous he makes me, and I really don't want him to know that.

"Will you be working late today?" I ask him, clearing my throat.

"I'm going to try not to," he tells me, finishing the rest of his coffee. "Since it was just Le'Ann and me taking care of Kaiden, I have neglected a lot of my work for the past few months. Now that you're here, I am going to hopefully get caught up, that way I'll be able to come home earlier."

"I see," I whisper, debating on if I should apologize now, but I decided against it. "Well, I hope you have a good day."

A few minutes later, Winston finishes what he was doing and sets his plates in the sink. As he did yesterday, he kisses Kaiden on the head as a goodbye before he leaves, quietly closing the door behind himself. I make sure to go and check that it is locked, and find that he has already done it.

Standing there for a moment, I gaze at the door, wondering why he acted so strangely today. It is like he was hiding something, or maybe that he feels guilty for everything that went down last night. I would hope that he feels bad about

yelling at me, but I can't say that I expect him to ever acknowledge it.

"Well, Kaiden, it looks like it is just you and me," I tell him softly, watching him giggle at my words.

Before I can do anything, though, I hear the door unlock and glance up. I see that Winston has walked back in, a weird look on his face. My eyebrows furrow in confusion, wondering why he came back inside, but it is quickly answered when he holds out a phone to me.

"Here, I want you to take this," he tells me, placing the phone in my hand. "You can personalize it as much as you want. Le'Ann's and my numbers are in here. If anything happens, you call me. Okay?"

Wordlessly, I nod, gripping the phone in my hand. I can't believe that he gave me a phone so easily, and then left as easily once more. *How did he even realize that I don't have a phone? Has he been watching me?*

"Just ignore it, Charlotte," I whisper harshly to myself, shaking my head. "Don't think too much into it!"

Sighing, I go back to cleaning the house like I originally planned. I keep Kaiden as occupied as possible, feeding him and changing him when needed. The house isn't a complete mess, but it did need a good dusting. It is obvious that Winston hasn't had anyone to take care of the house, so it's a good thing I'm here now.

"Nanny Charlotte is going to take good care of this place," I tell Kaiden, smiling to myself, "and you."

"Who are you?" I hear a male's voice practically growl at me, making my blood run cold.

Spinning around, I see two men standing in the doorway, barely able to fit. By their glowing eyes, I immediately recognize them as wolves, but I have never seen them a day in my life. How did they get into the house? What do they want?

The red-haired wolf glances toward Kaiden, a murderous look in his eyes. "Are you Alpha's mate? Is that child tainted with the blood of a human?"

Fear creeps up my spine, and almost instinctively I move toward Kaiden, realizing that they likely want to kill him. Is this what Winston meant by wanting to keep Kaiden away from the outside world to protect him? Do these wolves really want to kill an innocent baby?

“Speak, human!” the blonde wolf spits, glaring at me like I am trash. “If you don’t tell us what’s going on, we will have no choice but to kill the both of you!”

Quickly, I pick up Kaiden, hugging him close to my chest as I glare right back at them. “Don’t you dare lay a hand on either of us! Winston isn’t here right now, but if he finds out what you’re trying to do ... it won’t be pretty for either of you!”

The blonde wolf smirks, his nails elongating into claws. “Do you honestly think we are afraid of an Alpha who taints his bloodline by fucking a human and knocking her up?”

It instantly dawns on me that they think I am Kaiden’s mother.

“You can’t touch us!” I protest, hearing the fear in my own voice that I desperately want to conceal but fail to do so. “Winston ... he won’t forgive you, nor will he let you get away with it.”

The red-haired wolf stalks closer, his eyes gleaming with a bloodthirsty look as he gazes down at Kaiden. “I’ve never had the luxury of sinking my teeth into the body of a half-breed child. I wonder how tasty his blood is...”

Cowering in horror, I take a step back, trying to remain as calm as possible.

It is in a wolf’s blood to chase its prey... I can’t give them the satisfaction.

“He is not tasty!” I snap fiercely, seeing their eyes now move from him to me. “He is just a baby, and innocent at that! How could you live with yourselves if you just killed him for no reason? That makes no sense to me.”

I am hoping that I can somehow get through to them, to make them see reason, but my heart sinks in my chest as I



realize my words aren't going anywhere. They are not going to stop, and if I don't do something right now, they are going to kill both of us.

“Hand over the baby,” the blonde wolf mutters, holding out his hands like he actually expects me to hand Kaiden over, “and we might just let you live.”

No longer thinking, I bolt out of the room as quickly as I can, hearing the ferocious snarls coming from behind me. I can't hear them chasing me, though it feels like they are on my heels, but I can't look back. I don't dare because I fear I will trip, and everything will go to Hell.

I go to the room where I feel like we will be safe.

Throwing the door of Winston's room open, I step inside before quickly slamming it shut behind me. I lock it and rush to the window, wondering if I can jump from here, but it is too high.

It would be suicidal.

Kaiden is now crying softly in my arms, not wailing like I thought that he would. I bounce him gently, trying to settle him as I dig into my pants pockets, fishing out the phone that Winston gave me. I dial his number, praying that he doesn't let it go to voicemail.

I can hear the growls getting closer.

“Hello?” Winston growls softly from the other end of the line, like he didn't expect me to call him. “Charlotte, what did you need?”

“There are two men here,” I whisper softly, praying that the men won't hear me. “They broke into the house... They are after Winston, and they think that I am his mother.”

“What?” Winston snarls from the other end. “Where are you? Where is Kaiden?”

“We're in your room,” I explain, trying to see where I can hide. “I locked the door, but I don't think it's going to hold them. Where should we hide? How far are you from here?”

“Five minutes,” he promises me, and it sounds like he is running. “I will be there in five minutes. Hide, keep Kaiden as quiet as possible...” He pauses for a few seconds before speaking again, “Beside my bed, go to the nightstand and go to the bottom drawer. Open it.”

Not even bothering to ask him why he wants me to do that, I round his large bed, wondering why he needs such a large bed but not dwelling on it. Opening the nightstand drawer, I freeze when I see what is inside.

“What do you want me to do with this?” I whisper, reaching in and feeling the cool metal against my skin. “Why do you—”

“They go into that room ... you shoot the bastards,” Winston says harshly, his tone unforgiving. “Don’t worry. Even if you kill them, I will protect you.”

“I don’t want to have to kill someone,” I admit, but I hold the gun firmly.

“If you don’t,” he murmurs in a firm voice, “they will kill you.”

*BANG!*

I flinch in fear as I hear one of the wolves slam what sounds like their fist into the door, making the whole door rattle. Keeping Winston on the phone, I carefully back away, keeping a quiet Kaiden close to me.

Kill or be killed.

It is an animal’s instinct.

And these men are animals.

“Little human,” I can hear the blonde wolf say tauntingly through the door, “I know you are in here. I can smell your fear. You won’t get away from me that easily.”

“Leave!” I yell, poising the barrel of the gun at the door. “I’m only going to ask you this once!”

“Oh no, little human.” He chuckles, and I feel a shiver of fear run through my body. “There’s nothing you can do here.

No one is going to save you. You might as well die by my hand, honestly.”

“I’m not going to tell you again!” I snap, feeling my blood boiling inside of me. “Leave!”

I scream in terror as the door is kicked off the hinges, slamming against the floor with a loud *thump*. The phone slips from my hand as I grip the gun tighter, and I feel my body shake as I try to keep a steady aim.

His eyes lock on the gun in my hand, his eyebrows furrowing slightly like he hadn’t expected me to have it. “What are you doing with the gun, little human? You’re going to hurt yourself.”

“I’ll shoot you,” I promise him, steeling my resolve so I won’t back down. “I’m not afraid to do it.”

A wicked grin spreads across his face as his eyes move to something behind me. “I’m hoping for it.”

*Crash!*

I jump to the side as I hear the window shatter behind me, glass digging into my skin from the sheer force of the window breaking. Whipping around, I see the red-haired wolf coming through the window, his cold, gray eyes locked on me.

“Damn, I thought I could grab you easily.” He growls softly, his body starting to morph from the change. “You have to submit, or we will kill you slowly.”

Without a moment’s hesitation, I lift the gun and fire at him. My heart sinks in my chest when I see how much I missed, but when I try to fire once more, no bullet will come out. It is like the gun jammed, and now I am screwed.

“Time’s up, human.” He growls menacingly, and in the blink of an eye, he has shifted in front of me, now on all fours.

With bared fangs, he crouches low, his murderous gaze on me. *He’s going to kill us*, I conclude, feeling my body shaking with fear. *Where is Winston? Why isn’t he here yet?*

We’re going to die...

As the red-haired wolf lunges for me, I fall to the ground, cradling my body above Kaiden's, who is screaming beneath me, fat tears streaming down his face. I cry out in agony as I feel the wolf's claws rake across my back, slicing my flesh open. My whole body feels like it is on fire, and the wolf's hot breath is on the back of my neck, preparing to go for the kill shot.

In a matter of seconds, I feel the overbearing weight lift off of me, and a crashing noise comes from behind me. A sickening *crack* floods my ears, like someone's bones have just been broken. The ferocious snarling and growls indicate to me that someone else has come into the room and attacked the wolves who were attacking me.

Although my body protests, I manage to lift my body up from the ground and look over my shoulder. My eyes widen in surprise and horror when I see an enormous, black-haired wolf standing above a mangled red-haired wolf whose eyes are wide and lifeless. I want to puke when I realize that his neck is at an odd angle, and he is not breathing anymore.

His neck is snapped.

Hearing Kaiden crying beneath me, the black-haired wolf's eyes snap over and meet mine. My whole body shudders at the intense gaze of those golden eyes, which look familiar but I can't put my finger on it.

Whine.

*Bastard*, I bitterly think as my attention turns to the blonde wolf who is now on his back, submitting to the other wolf. His neck is bared, making for an easy kill shot. *He should be dead! Why isn't he?*

I cry out as I shift my body, the wounds on my back feeling like they are getting even bigger. Tears stream down my face as I try to muffle my cries, but it is no use. My whole body shakes from the intensity of my cries, and it seems as though my whole world is crumbling down.

At least Kaiden is safe...

“Charlotte,” I hear a familiar voice whisper softly. “Charlotte, it’s me. You’re safe.”

I recognize the voice of who is talking to me, so I look up. And that’s when I see that it is Winston standing beside me—completely naked, but I can’t dwell on that. Then it dawns on me that the black wolf was Winston, and he is the one who saved us.

“It’s okay,” he murmurs softly while crouching down, a hard expression on his face. “I’m so sorry I couldn’t get here on time, Charlotte. A doctor is coming. Don’t worry.”

“Winston!” Le’Ann yells as she rushes into the room, eyes wide and frantic. “Oh, my goddess, Charlotte, it’ll be okay! We’re here now.”

As dots start to form in front of my eyes, I barely notice as Winston picks Kaiden up and hands him over to Le’Ann. I am not sure why it happens when it does, but the last thing I remember is seeing Winston’s worried face hovering above me, and I think that he is saying something to me.

I close my eyes, feeling like a weight has been lifted off of my shoulders.

At least Kaiden is safe now...

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# Chapter Eight

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## Winston



*Why did you do this, Charlotte?* I bitterly think to myself as I gaze down at her pale, nearly lifeless face in the middle of my bed, the thin blanket brought up to cover her body as much as possible. Doctor Gregory first explained that Charlotte is going to be dealing with a bad fever because of the infection she would get from the wolf's claws.

And second, she's human.

She's weak.

I shouldn't have brought her into this mess.

"It's not your fault," Doctor Gregory murmurs as she removes her gloves, having finished her initial assessment of Charlotte's condition. "You couldn't have known that Lucas and Abel were going to do something so terrible. Besides, Abel is dead and Lucas is getting his punishment."

"I don't understand why she didn't leave Kaiden and run for her life," I mutter, keeping a firm hold on her hand. "She's human. She can't face a wolf. What was she thinking?"

"I'm thinking that she wanted to protect an innocent child," she explains, shaking her head. "I understand that you don't trust a lot of people, Winston, but many would do it to protect the life of a child ... even if that meant dying themselves."

"She just met him," I mutter, feeling my blood running cold, and my wolf begins growling softly. "It doesn't matter if he's a baby. She's an idiot!"

“Well, this idiot saved your son’s life,” Doctor Gregory corrects, a small smirk on her face, “and I tell you what. You’re going to owe her that for the rest of your life. She’s a strong human, that much I can tell you. You’re lucky to have her around.”

Doctor Gregory has been working for me for many years, and she worked for my parents too, when they were still alive. As a wolf and a doctor, she has had and seen her fair share of injuries and bloodshed, but never has she seen a human jump in the way to protect a wolf. Humans have forever been seen as weak and useless, and basically, they are considered a waste of space.

It’s what I’ve thought as well.

“I’ll be back tomorrow morning,” she tells me while gathering up her things. “If she wakes up, just make sure she is getting enough fluids, and if she feels like it, make her eat a little bit.”

“I will,” I promise her, knowing that Le’Ann will be taking care of Kaiden while Charlotte recovers. “What time will you be here?”

“Ten,” she says as she heads out of the room. “Have a good night, Alpha.”

My eyebrows furrow slightly because she doesn’t ever really refer to me as Alpha, but I am not going to ask her about it. I hear the soft click as she shuts my bedroom door, leaving me in the quiet room that smells of bleach and disinfectants.

While she was taking care of Charlotte, Le’Ann had cleaners come in and get rid of Abel’s body and clean up the blood. I want to rip Lucas to shreds, wondering why he dared to defy me and do all of this, but Le’Ann convinced me that we can use him as a warning of what would happen if anyone else tries to go after Charlotte or Kaiden ever again.

Unfortunately, it already went around the entire pack that I had a child with a human.

My secret has been revealed.



That is okay, though. I think there are laws that need to be changed.

“Mmm.” I hear a soft groan come from the bed, and it immediately catches my attention. “Hurts.”

My head snaps up, and I see Charlotte shifting uncomfortably on the bed, her eyebrows furrowing in slight confusion. As her eyes open, I see the dull pain in her once vibrant green eyes, and it looks like the life has been sapped out of her.

“Charlotte,” I whisper, trying to keep my voice soft, but my anger is raging inside of me. “Hey, it’s okay. You’re safe now.”

Her eyes blearily meet mine, a soft smile on her beautiful face. “Winston ... Kaiden, is he okay?”

Why isn’t she asking about herself?

“He’s fine,” I promise her, as my heart is about to pound out of my chest. “It’s all because of you that he’s okay.”

She sighs in relief. “Good, I’m happy to hear that.”

When she doesn’t say anything else, I worry my temper is about to boil over. “Aren’t you worried about yourself, Charlotte? If that bastard had gone any deeper, you would have surely bled to death!”

Charlotte flinches, unable to meet my eyes as she looks away. “I know, but I couldn’t let them hurt Kaiden. There’s a difference between me and him. Even though I don’t want to die, he still has his life to live, and he’s innocent. He sure doesn’t deserve to die.”

Not even thinking about it, I reach out and gently cupped her cheek. “You don’t deserve it either, Charlotte. You’re a human. You’re not strong enough to take on a wolf.”

“I don’t care,” she admits, meeting my eyes straight on. “If I had to do it all over again, I wouldn’t change a thing ... no matter how mad you get at me for it.”

I want to stay mad at her, but seeing the determined look on her face, I can’t even do it. My heart pounds in my chest,

like it is going to explode from this strange emotion raging inside of me. My wolf is howling, trying to tell me something, but I can't quite understand what he is saying.

I'm not sure that I even want to know.

"Can I get some water?" she asks softly, trying to sit up in the bed to go and get it herself, but I won't let her.

"Lie back down!" I tell her firmly. "I'll go and get it."

I think she might try to protest, but she settles back in the bed, her cheeks a little flushed as she avoids my eyes. I smile softly, my wolf and I feeling a little pleased that she obeyed us so well. Startled by my own possessive thoughts, I shoot to my feet, quickly walking out of there before I do something that I might regret.

She's a human; I shouldn't be thinking that way.

I take a few moments while in the kitchen to steady my breathing, making sure to keep my wolf under control. It doesn't happen very often, but there are times when he takes control and does whatever he wants.

Takes whatever he wants.

And it makes me wonder if he is now interested in Charlotte as well...

*What is he thinking?*

After getting water and chicken noodle soup into her, Charlotte falls back asleep peacefully. I want to get some more meds into her, too, but I don't want to wake her up and disturb her. I contemplate going to a different room to sleep, but decide against it since I don't want to leave her alone in here.

Sighing, I walk into the bathroom to take a quick shower, feeling like I am covered in death. That bastard's blood is still on me, but so is hers. I honestly thought, when I was holding her in my arms, that she was going to die there. It felt like my whole world had come tumbling down.

Drying off my body, I pull on some boxers—though I normally prefer to be naked—since I don't think that she would like to wake up to me naked beside her. I have nothing to be ashamed about, but I think that she might be a virgin, and I don't want to defile her innocent mind.

As much as I think it might be a good idea...

Turning off the lights as I go, I crawl onto the bed beside her, keeping a good distance between us so there won't be any misunderstanding. My wolf is pacing around in my mind, growling at me to get closer, but I am not going to listen to him. He is seriously nuts if he honestly believes that I am going to get close to her while she is injured like this.

I just need to close my eyes and forget about it...

I hope.

I'm not sure when I actually end up falling asleep, but before I know it, I am in the middle of a flowery field, the full moon beating down on my back. Normally on the full moon, my wolf would be out of control, and he would take over.

But I feel fine.

*Growl!*

Looking over, I see my wolf running through the field, looking like he is happy and free. My eyebrows furrow in confusion, and I step closer, wondering what he is doing. I feel like I am having an out-of-body experience, which is quite strange.

“Winston.” I heard a soft, melodic voice calling out to me. “Winston, come closer.”

Looking around, I see a woman dressed in white standing in the middle of the field with thick, black hair shrouding her face. Her skin is pale, but her lips are a ruby red and in a soft smile. She is gazing at something down on the ground that I have yet to see.

*What is she looking at? Who is she?*

As if she were reading my mind, she looks up and her blazing, silver-like eyes meet mine, and it is like my whole

world is crumbling beneath me. Never in my entire life have I ever thought she would come into my dreams. I have heard of it happening, but I never believed it myself.

*Why is she here?*

“You have a lot to learn,” the Moon Goddess murmurs, kneeling down on the ground as my wolf walks forward, lying down beside whoever is on the ground. “Your mind has been so clouded that you don’t even realize the signs. You don’t even listen to your wolf, Winston. You need to open your ears and realize the truth.”

As I get closer, my eyes widen when I see my wolf wrapped around Charlotte’s peacefully sleeping body, his head lying on Charlotte’s belly. I furrow my eyebrows, trying to think long and hard about what exactly the Moon Goddess is talking about.

It’s just not clicking.

“You’ll figure it out soon enough,” she promises me, a wicked smile on her face as she turns her attention back to Charlotte and my wolf. “When you least expect it, you will.”

“Tell me what you m—”

My eyes fly open, and I gaze up at the ceiling of my bedroom, remembering everything that happened in my dream. But what I don’t expect is to feel a weight against my side and her gentle breathing by my ear.

Glancing over, my heart skips a beat when I see Charlotte curled up against my side, her cheek resting on my chest as she is fast asleep. The warmth of her body and the feel of her against my own, I feel my dick twitch with excitement, and I inhale her sweet, intoxicating scent.

*What is she doing beside me?*

*Doesn’t she realize how dangerous this is?*

My wolf growls in contentment, wanting to wake her up and kiss her. To claim her for my own, to make her my m—

I freeze, realizing what I had just been thinking. In that moment, it immediately dawns on me why I have been so

attached to her and why I want her so badly, even though we've not known each other for very long.

Careful to not wake her up, I rush into the bathroom, feeling like my skin is on fire from the urge to rush in there and bury myself as deeply inside of her as I can go. To fill her with my seed so she smells of my scent, so no one would dare to even try to touch her.

Not if they want to live...

Closing my eyes, I reach down and slip my hand beneath the waistband of my boxers, feeling how hot and swollen I am. I can only imagine her wrapping her tiny hand around me, feeling a little nervous as she strokes my throbbing length to her delight.

I need her.

I want her.

I'll do whatever it takes to have her...

My wolf growls in agreement, making me realize what he has been trying to tell me...

Charlotte Franklin is my fated mate.

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# Chapter Nine

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## Charlotte



Cradling Kaiden in my arms, I can't help but glance over at Le'Ann who is on her phone, her eyebrows furrowed slightly at whatever she is either texting or reading. Kaiden drinks his bottle in contentment, his eyes halfway closed as he drinks. Kaiden and I grow much closer as the weeks go by, but there is something that I don't quite understand.

After what happened with those wolves a few weeks back, Winston has been avoiding me like the plague, avoiding as much contact as possible and only speaking to me when need be. It is driving me a little insane, making me think that I did something wrong, but I am too afraid to even ask him. What if he tells me that he no longer wants me to work with him? That he doesn't think that I am capable of taking care of Kaiden anymore because I am human.

At the same time, though, he is driving my mind wild.

Even though he is constantly trying to avoid me, he is also taking care of me. He helps around the house—cooking breakfast and cleaning—and he even helps more with Kaiden. He acts like I can't handle myself, and that I am going to break at any moment. Thankfully, since he went back to work, I have a lot more leeway and I don't need to worry about him every moment of the day, but he makes sure that Le'Ann swings by for a few hours every day while Winston is working.

Then he comes home not too long after.

I have to admit that even though it is a little nice to have help so I can recover, I can't help but feel useless. It's my job

to take care of the house and Kaiden, and here my boss is having to do it for me. I understand his concern for my well-being, but my doctor gave me clearance to start working a few days ago.

If she doesn't think I should work, why would she let me?

"My brother is dumb," Le'Ann suddenly says, catching my attention. "I know that he thinks he's doing the right thing by smothering you and not letting you work, but don't take it to heart. He really doesn't have any ill intent, and he just wants to make sure you are fully recovered before trying to make you work full-time again."

"I know," I admit, feeling a little guilty that I thought so badly about Winston's intent. "I just don't know why he thinks I'm so fragile. Doctor Gregory wouldn't have cleared me if she didn't think that I could go back to work, don't you think?"

Honestly, I think that I am making sense, and by the look on Le'Ann's face, she knows that I am right. I am unsure what she wants to do next, but I flinch when I hear the doorbell ring from downstairs.

*Who could that be?*

"That didn't take as long as I thought," Le'Ann murmurs excitedly, a gleam in her eyes that tells me she is up to trouble. "Once you put Kaiden down, meet me downstairs. I have a surprise for you."

Before I can ask her what she is talking about, she is already gone.

Not too much later, Kaiden falls asleep in my arms, and I make sure to not stir him as I put him down for his nap. I make sure the baby monitor is on before I head out of the room, leaving the door slightly ajar in case I don't hear him through the monitor. I know he can be loud when he wants to be, so I am not too afraid I won't hear him, but I want to be certain that everything will be alright.

Walking downstairs, I'm not sure what I expect, but seeing racks of dresses in the living room never crossed my mind. My



eyebrows furrow in confusion as I watch her go through each and every one of the dresses, humming softly like she is having the time of her life.

“What’s with the dresses?” I ask her curiously, seeing her perk up and look at me when she hears my voice.

“They are mine,” she explains, gently grabbing my hand and dragging me closer. “Find a dress that you like and try it on. I bet you’ll look beautiful.”

I don’t really want to put on a dress—still a little confused as to why she wants me to in the first place—but I decide not to protest as I go through the dresses. Nothing is really catching my eye, as I don’t want something too flashy or exposing, but just as I think that I am not going to find one that I like, I am proven wrong.

I still, my hand grasping the white fabric of the dress, and wonder why it caught my attention so easily.

“Oh, I’ve never worn that one before,” Le’Ann pipes up, a wicked gleam in her eyes. “Why don’t you go try it on?”

I take the dress off the hanger and go into the bathroom, closing the door behind me. Stripping off my clothing, I put the dress on, feeling it flow past my hips to around my knees. The lacey fabric brushes gently against my skin, and I turn to look in the body-length mirror, wondering if this is really me.

I initially thought that the dress would be a little too revealing, but the modest dip in the chest and back show off only a little bit—not enough to really be embarrassed about. The fabric clings to my waist and upper torso, before flowing out past my hips, giving me a little more movement. The straps on the dress are about a two-finger width, but it suits me perfectly.

Turning to look at the backside, it shows the curve of my butt perfectly, and thankfully covers the nasty wounds that are healing on my back.

The dress ... it is perfect.

“Can I come in?” Le’Ann asks me from the other side of the door. “I have shoes and makeup.”

My eyebrows furrow in slight confusion, and now I really wonder where this is going. Deciding that I don't want to really question it, I open the door and let her in. I'm not sure how much time we spend, but Le'Ann ends up doing my hair and makeup, making me look a lot better than I normally do.

It's like she is getting me ready for something specific.

"Le'Ann, Charlotte!" Winston calls out. "Where are you?"

"Almost done, Winston!" Le'Ann responds, and it is like a smack to the face.

*What does she mean by that?*

Handing me a pair of flats, I see then that they were my size, which seems odd, because Le'Ann's feet are much smaller than mine. I don't question it, however, as I put them on, letting her help me to my feet and lead me out of the bathroom.

And that's when I see him...

I freeze when I see Winston standing in the middle of the living room, dressed in a nice black suit with a bouquet of red roses in his hand. His hair is slicked back, giving him a more mature, handsome look.

*What is he doing? Why is he here?*

"Go have fun!" Le'Ann whispers, pushing me toward Winston. "I'll take care of Kaiden tonight."

I am not sure what she is doing, but the next thing that I know, I am in Winston's car and we are pulling up to a nice restaurant. Finding a parking spot, Winston wordlessly turns off the car and gets out, rounding the car to open the door for me. My heart is a pounding mess in my chest, and I am feeling more and more nervous as I look up at him.

"Come with me," he murmurs softly, holding his hand out to me.

Even though he makes me nervous, I reach out and take his hand, feeling like my world is now becoming complete. It is strange how his touch can put my mind at ease, but I am never going to question it.

All eyes are on us as we walk into the restaurant, and by their stares, I know that some of them are wolves as well. I cling to Winston's arm, feeling a little more nervous because I am not sure what is going to happen next. The last time I faced a wolf besides Winston or Le'Ann, they tried to kill me.

They nearly did.

"Don't worry," Winston murmurs softly, leaning down to press his lips against my temple, startling me slightly. "They won't touch you again. Not with me around. They won't dare to."

My heart thuds a little unsteadily, but I nod my head.

"I have a reservation under Campbell," Winston says, his eyes locked on the host who won't even look at us.

The host clears his throat, shaking his head. "I'm sorry, Alpha, but I can't permit the two of you to come in here. It will make others think that it is normal for a wolf to be with a human."

Even though we aren't dating, it is still like a punch to the gut.

"How dare you?" Winston snarls, eyes blazing as he towers over the host who shrinks back in fear. "She is my guest, and you dare to turn us away? Do you wish to d—"

I stop him before he can say anything else, not wanting him to kill the host in front of all of these people. "Winston, it's okay! I saw the garden very close to here. Let's just go walk through that."

Winston looks like he is going to protest, but he must've seen the look on my face because he ends up sighing and relenting. The look he gives to the host is still murderous, and it wouldn't surprise me if he wants to rip his head off once more, but he turns us around and walks me out of the restaurant. It is embarrassing, that much I can tell, but at least we won't be somewhere we aren't wanted.

Where *I'm* not wanted.

“I’m really sorry, Charlotte,” Winston apologizes to me as we walk through the majestic garden, his lips slightly pursed. “I might be the Alpha, but it seems like even I can’t get these bastards under control.”

“It’s okay,” I admit, nervously biting down on my bottom lip. “I don’t blame you for their actions. If they want to be pricks, then let them... But can I ask, what is an Alpha?”

Winston must realize what he admitted, but this time he doesn’t stray away. “Basically, the Alpha is the leader of the pack. Although I do have control of almost everything, it doesn’t mean that everyone will listen. I’m not a dictator. I never even wanted to be the Alpha in the first place... It just ended up happening this way.”

“I see,” I murmur, jumping slightly when he takes my hand in his. “Winston?”

“I want to tell you something,” Winston murmurs softly, turning to face me. “I know this might sound a little crazy, but after you got hurt, I had a dream about you and the Moon Goddess. My wolf was there as well, curling against you, protecting you. I realized he has been trying to tell me the truth about you... I didn’t understand right away, but I knew I needed to avoid you because I was afraid I wouldn’t be able to control my wolf for much longer.”

“What do you mean?” I ask him, almost afraid to hear the answer.

Winston draws in a deep breath. “I believe that you’re my fated mate, Charlotte. It is rare for a human to be a wolf’s mate, but it’s not impossible. At first, I thought there was some kind of mistake, but that isn’t the case.”

I stare at him, processing his words in my mind. I am not sure how to take it, wondering what exactly he means by this. I’ve heard of a ‘fated mate’ before ... from Griffin. When he wanted me to do things for him... When he tried to make it so I would obey his every command.

“Winston,” I try to speak, but he cuts me off.

Leaning forward, he presses his lips against mine in a tender but sweet kiss. My whole body freezes, wondering if I am actually dreaming. *He's kissing me? What does he want from me? Does he actually want me, or does he want to possess me like Griffin did?*

Before I can say or do anything, Winston pulls away, pressing his forehead against mine. "Don't worry. I won't ask for an answer right now. When you're ready, you can come to me."

And just like that, he drops the subject.

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# Chapter Ten

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## Winston



Sitting behind the desk of my office, I can't help but feel a little distracted, unable to concentrate on my work. My mind keeps straying back to Charlotte and Kaiden, wondering what else I can do to somehow show her it would be a good idea to give me a chance. Ever since my confession and our kiss, she's not said a word to me about it, nor has she even looked at me.

*Did I make a mistake? Should I not have kissed her?*

*Should I have waited?*

I've tried to remain as neutral as possible, not wanting to push her to give me an answer, but I have to admit that I've been trying to inconspicuously do so without her realizing it. I do little things for her, from giving her flowers to holding the chair out for her, and even feeding her while she feeds Kaiden. The last part, she wasn't too keen about, but eventually she gave in to me. I hate all of this for happening, and I wonder if I should've gone about it a different way.

"Mr. Campbell," I hear Secretary Garcia call from the intercom. "I have learned some troubling news. May I come in?"

"Come in," I mutter, wondering what else could go wrong tonight.

Putting my work aside because I can't concentrate on anything anyway, Secretary Garcia walks in, a somber expression on his face. I know then that something is terribly wrong, and I am not sure I am going to want to hear what it is.

"What's going on?" I ask him, leaning back in my chair.

He hands me an envelope full of photographs. “The scouts have been noticing a rival wolf getting really close to the border, like he is looking for something. Any time we try to get close to talk to him, he runs off. I have a bad feeling that this wolf is up to something.”

I carefully examine the photographs, wondering if I have seen the wolf before. Irritably, I toss the photographs onto my desk, shaking my head in frustration. The wolf does look familiar, like I have met them before, but I can’t quite place my finger on it, nor will I even try to.

“Strengthen the border patrols,” I tell Secretary Garcia. Frowning slightly, I add, “This wolf can try what he wants, but he’s not getting past our borders. Tell everyone, if they come across him, to try to detain him. But if they can’t, then follow him as far as they can. He’s going to mess up one way or another.”

He nods his head, bowing slightly before he turns on his heel and walks out of the room, closing the door shut behind him. Leaning back in my chair, I gaze up at the ceiling, feeling this unwelcoming unease overcome me as I try to think long and hard about what I am going to do next.

Ever since Charlotte came here, nothing has gone right.

I’m going to have to ask her to tell me the truth.

I just hope that she does.

My wolf paces eagerly in my mind as I head up the stairs to the front door, feeling like my body is worn down but there is nothing that I can do about it. All I could think about today was Charlotte and Kaiden, wondering what I am going to do. I didn’t expect Charlotte to just jump in and be Kaiden’s mother, but she’s so good with him.

It makes me wish at times that she actually is his mother...

She’s a good person, that much I can really tell.

“Winston.”



I look up, and I see Charlotte standing there in front of me, Kaiden no longer in her arms. I still, wondering where Kaiden is at since she's normally always with him.

"He's asleep," Charlotte tells me with a weird tone in her voice that unsettled me slightly. "So, I figured this would be a good time to sit down and talk."

I am a little nervous to find out what exactly Charlotte wants to talk about, but I follow her into the living room nonetheless and sit down beside her. It is quiet for a long while, making me wonder if things are a lot worse than I had assumed.

"I was dating a wolf," Charlotte says suddenly, catching my attention. "He was everything that I had always dreamed about, and I thought that I was special just because I had his attention. Attention unlike anyone else. It was going great, and I honestly thought that we were going to be together for the rest of our lives. I wanted that."

Ouch! My wolf growls at the thought of our mate wanting another.

"But then I quickly realized that he wanted me as his possession," she continues, a glazed, haunted look in her eyes that makes me freeze at the sight. "He wanted me to never leave his side and to have ultimate control over me. It took me a long time, but I managed to get away from him with the help of my best friend and her mate. They hid me from him, and then I came here. And I met you, of course."

I remain silent, wondering where she is going with this.

"I honestly thought that you would be like him if I let you get close," she explains, shaking her head. "I quickly realized that it wasn't the case—that you aren't like him—but I couldn't help having that fear. The idea of being your mate scares me, knowing that nobody is going to accept us, even if it is fate."

"I don't care what they say," I growl softly, gently taking her hand in mine. "You are all that I have ever wanted, Charlotte. I treated you really shitty when you first got here,

but I promise that I am going to make things right. I promise that no matter what, I am going to make you happy. Just choose me...”

I gaze into her eyes, seeing how lost she is, but I hope that my words have somehow made it through to her. I understand how she felt, how she feared that I would be like her ex, but I would never mistreat her.

I would treat her like the Queen that she is.

Just give me that chance.

“Yes.”

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# Chapter Eleven

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## Charlotte



I'm not sure where the confidence comes from, but the next thing I know, I am leaning forward and pressing my lips against his, feeling his body tense against mine. I'm not sure what spurred me to do so, or if I misread the signs that he was giving me.

“W—” I try to speak as I pull back, wondering if I am going to be rejected now.

“Get back here!” he growls softly, grabbing the back of my neck and dragging me back to him.

I gasp in shock as his lips crush down on mine relentlessly and he tangles his fingers in my hair as he moves me to his liking, his eyes closed as he does so. Unable to help myself, and feeling my body craving the warmth of his own, I lean closer to him and wrap my arms around his neck. His body is like a warm rock against my own, and it makes me wonder how it would feel to be under him.

*How would it feel if he was buried inside of me?*

I clench my thighs together, trying to ease that craving growing inside of me.

Winston seems to notice, as he reaches down with his free hand, clutching my thigh in his big hand. “Tell me what you want, Charlotte. I won't do anything that you don't want.”

He is giving me the chance to back out, while gently rubbing the palm of his hand along the length of my thigh, leaving a searing heat through my pants as he does so. A part of me wants to wait, scared of the desires that are running

through my body, but the other part wants him to rip my clothes off and have his way with me.

I want that so badly.

“Make love to me,” I whisper softly.

Winston stiffens, like he wasn't expecting me to say that. “What did you say?”

I lean back, meeting his darkening eyes that tell me his wolf is on the verge of taking control. “I want you to make love to me, Winston. Please.”

I don't have to ask again.

I squeal in surprise when Winston easily rises to his feet, cupping his hands under my ass as he lifts me up. Instinctively, I wrap my legs around his waist, holding on for dear life as he practically sprints out of the living room and up the stairs. Before my brain can even process what is going on, we are already inside of his room, and he has me pinned down to his bed.

I can see the primal hunger in his eyes, like he wants to devour me whole if he can. Feeling a little bold, I reach out to unbutton his shirt, nervously brushing against the hard, but surprisingly smooth, contours of his chest. He just lies there, watching me with those dark eyes that make me even more nervous.

“I've never done this before,” I admit, feeling a little embarrassed.

Winston cups my cheek, a soft smile on his face. “Don't worry. I'll be gentle.”

I believe him, but I can't help feeling a little tense as his lips meet mine and he works on removing our clothing. My skin trembles from where his fingers brush against me, and I wonder how a man's touch could be so enticing. He is making my mind a jumbled mess, and I have absolutely no idea how I am going to be able to take it.

“Tonight's all about you,” Winston growls huskily as his naked body slides against mine, and I feel the hard ridge of his

erection pressing against my thigh. “If you feel uncomfortable with something, promise me that you will tell me.”

“I promise,” I tell him, feeling like my heart is about to pound out of my chest if he doesn’t hurry up already.

Winston’s lips meet mine once again, and my body melts.

*Wow, he really is something.*

His lips clash with mine, sweet and gentle, but also dominant, telling that he has control of the entire situation. He gently spreads my thighs, his fingers drawing a scorching path down my body before delving between the soft folds of my core, teasingly rubbing against my entrance. Soft moans escape my lips as he presses against my clit with a wild intent, his eyes blazing with the urge to bury himself inside of me.

I want him to, but I flinch when he tenderly sinks a finger inside of me, a slight pang of pain rushing through my body. My body shudders in response, and my breathing quickens as I realize that this is going to hurt a little bit. I don’t even want to think about how he is going to bury himself inside of me, but at the same time I really want to find out.

I need it.

I want it.

I want him.

“Please, I want you inside of me,” I whisper huskily, not even recognizing the sound of my own voice.

Nothing in the whole world could appease me then and there except for the feel of him inside of me. As our bodies become one for the first time, I hope he will never let me go.

I’ll never let him go...

“I don’t want to hurt you,” he murmurs softly as he braces himself on top of me, a gentle look in his eyes that barely masks the desire inside of him. “I’m not small, Charlotte.”

I peek down at his hard, twitching length that gives me a promise of what is about to come. It is a little scary, given it is my first time, but I don’t care anymore.

I just want to get it done with.

“Make love to me!” I beg him, wrapping my legs around his waist, feeling the bulbous head brush against my folds. “Please, Winston!”

I’m not sure if it is my words or my desperation, but he lines up with my entrance, teasing me slowly before pushing forward, and I flinch in pain when he gently works himself inside of me, feeling like he is going to split me in half.

“God, Winston!” I whisper softly, clutching onto him like my life depends on it. “I...”

“It’s okay,” he growls softly in my ear, his voice soothing and reassuring me everything is going alright. “Don’t hit me, but you feel so good wrapped around my cock. It makes me want to bury myself inside of your little hole and never let go.”

My cheeks burn from slight embarrassment, and I look away from him for a moment. “Don’t say things like that! You’re going to make me blush.”

It is true, that much I can say, and by how gently he thrusts inside of me, stretching me out to the point I wonder if I can go anymore, I know that he is telling me the truth. Winston stills for a long moment, letting me get used to the feel of him inside of me.

It is an odd feeling, that much I have to admit, but I don’t want to let it go either.

“Can I move?” he asks me softly, his body trembling against my own.

“Please,” I beg him softly, feeling my heart thudding erratically in my chest.

Sensuously, Winston thrusts inside of me, before pulling back and letting inch by inch of his hard, throbbing length leave my body, then slamming back inside of me. All I can do is hold on for dear life, feeling like my soul is going to leave my body by how good he feels inside of me.

He’s so beautiful.

He’s so sweet.

I'm lucky to have him.

"You're tightening around me so beautifully," he growls in my ear, his wolf coming through by the huskiness in his voice. "If this wasn't your first time, I'd put you on your hands and knees and show you who owns this body! Who do you belong to, mate?"

My eyes widen and my breath hitches at the erotic tone in his voice.

"Mate?" I squeak, feeling my heart leap into my chest.

I know he has lodged it into my brain that I am his fated mate, but sometimes it is really hard to believe it. He is just so wonderful, and I'm ... not. As a human, we have always been insignificant to wolves, as many believe that they would end up creating weak pups. It is a terrible feeling if you ask me, and I would never want anyone to feel that way, but at the same time, what else can I feel?

What if one day he decides that he didn't want me anymore?

That he doesn't want me to be his mate.

Would I just be cast aside like yesterday's leftovers? It is a terrifying thing to think about, and I definitely don't want to. But as he presses in again, I jump slightly at the deep pressure he inflicts inside of me.

*Fuck my life!*

"Stop thinking whatever you are!" he snaps, forcing me to look him in his eyes. "I'm not leaving you behind, and never would I give up my mate. Not the person I'm supposed to spend the rest of my life with. I can promise you that."

It is as if he just read my mind, and I wonder what I have done to ever get so lucky. It was as if yesterday I was running away from a crazed wolf who would no doubt one day kill me, to a wolf who wants to give me the world.

It is everything I could ever dream of.

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# Chapter Twelve

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## Winston



*Alpha! You need to wake up! Alpha!*

Feeling like my body weighs a thousand tons, I am startled awake when I hear Secretary Garcia through the mind link trying to get a hold of me. I growl in annoyance, turning over slightly as I feel Charlotte in my arms, fast asleep and cuddling close to my side.

Smiling to myself, I turn back over and press a soft kiss to her forehead, making sure not to wake her up. I quietly rise to my feet and check the baby monitor to see that Kaiden is still fast asleep.

Why did I wake up again?

*Alpha, we need your assistance at the border!*

Oh right, that.

Can't I have a moment of peace with my mate? It must be too hard for a wolf to ask for.

*A rival wolf has attacked a pack member and killed them, Alpha. We are unsure of where the wolf went, as it seems he has masked his scent. What would you like us to do?*

Really? That has not happened in a very long time; no one has dared to mess with us ever since I slaughtered an entire pack by myself. Quickly getting dressed, I make sure to check on the both of them while calling Le'Ann to come over and keep them safe. As I think harder on it, I decide to also have two wolves guard the house because who knows what this rival wolf is up to.

*I will be there shortly. Don't leave the body.*

It doesn't take me long to come to the place where the body was found—the stench of death heavy in the air. About five pack members, including Secretary Garcia, are hovering over the person's body, slight frowns on their faces as they no doubt try to figure out what happened.

“Alpha, it's James,” Secretary Garcia suddenly speaks up, making me grit my teeth in irritation.

James has been a loyal pack member for nearly forty years, and he was coming up on his retirement here in a few months. He has a loving wife and two beautiful kids who are just about to graduate high school. Seeing his mangled body on the ground, his eyes devoid of life and his expression contorted in misery, it is like he knew that he was never going to see his family again, and it brought him misery.

“Take him back to the pack house,” I tell them softly as I attempt to detect some sort of scent in the air. “He will have a proper burial, and we shall mourn his loss. First, we need to find the son of a bitch who did this.”

Carefully, his body is picked up and carried away, the smell of death following them. I only know how much this is going to hurt the entire pack when I make the announcement of his death.

We must avenge him.

Standing near the place where he died, I raise my head, letting the wind blow around me as I take in all of the scents that came from around. My lips purse in concentration, my eyes narrowing as I pick up on a scent that is familiar, but it is not one from my pack.

I know this scent.

Charlotte's words come flooding back into my mind about the wolf that hurt her. Who wanted to possess her and would do whatever it took to do so. It never dawned on me that he would find her, nor did I think it was possible since she is now hours away from his pack.

Griffin!

Charlotte is in danger!

I turn on my heel, shifting mid-jump as I rush toward my house, my heart pounding erratically in my chest. I should've known that something is drastically wrong, and I shouldn't have left her alone like this.

My blood runs cold when I see the door has been knocked off the hinges and the inside of my house is a complete disaster. What makes things worse is that the house is completely silent.

All three of them are gone...

He has taken them!

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# Chapter Thirteen

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## Charlotte



My head feels like it is going to split apart as my eyes flutter open. The damp air surrounding me makes me feel like I can't breathe properly. Faintly, I can hear the sound of Kaiden crying hysterically, like he is either hungry or scared. I decide that it is most likely both as I wonder when I fed him last.

My mind goes back to last night when Winston made love to me late into the night, bringing me up and over the edge more times than I can count. A soft smile makes its way onto my face as I remember how he held me gently, trying to be as careful as possible so that he didn't hurt me. I know that he wanted to pin me down to the bed and have his endless way with me, but he didn't do that.

He put my needs before his own.

A wolf's primal instinct is to mate roughly, to pin their mate down and spill their seed into them. Even though I could see his wolf lingering in his eyes, he put on a condom every time, and made love to me passionately. I never thought that having sex could be so magical—I thought that it was just the fucking of two people who might care about each other.

I clench my thighs together, feeling that familiar tingle that makes my blood boil.

I quickly come to my senses as I realize where we are, and my eyes widen in horror as I recognize the dungeon that Griffin has in the bottom of one of his warehouses where he keeps those who oppose him. Shooting straight up on the tiny

bed, I look around, everything coming back to me from the night before.

From Le'Ann showing up telling me that a wolf had died.

To hearing Kaiden screaming and my blood running cold when I saw an expressionless Griffin hovering over him in the nursery.

I don't remember much after that, just that I was knocked out as Griffin picked up Kaiden, and that's when I could hear Le'Ann screaming and arguing before it all went black.

"Le'Ann?" I whisper hoarsely, looking around the dimly lit room. "Where are you?"

"Here." I hear her soft, painful reply.

Looking over, I am horrified to see her chained to the wall by her wrists, her face and clothes bloody. From the bruising on her face, I can see that she no doubt was attacked while trying to protect Kaiden and me, and I feel the guilt rising inside of me. It is like no matter where I go, he is able to find me.

*How did he find me?*

"Where is Kaiden?" I demand, looking around as I hear him cry.

"I don't know," Le'Ann admits, her shoulders slumping in defeat. "After they knocked me out with wolfsbane, the next thing I know, I am chained to this wall."

"I know who did this," I admit, "and it's all my fault."

"No, it's not," she counters, shaking her head. "It is his."

"Because I came here, I put all of you in danger." I disagree with Le'Ann and wish that I could jump to my feet and go and find Kaiden. "Where is—"

The door to the dungeon cell slams open, and my blood runs cold when I see Griffin Miller standing in the doorway, his murderous gaze on me. His once bright-blue eyes are as cold as ice, and his hair is cropped short, almost a dirty brown now. Tattoos litter his muscular arms, much more than what I

remember him having. If looks could kill, I would be ten feet under.

“Charlotte, do you know how long it took me to find you?” His tone is cold, and he crosses his arms over his chest, his biceps flexing intimidatingly. “Did you have fun running away from me? Did you like the fact that I needed to chase you?”

“I never wanted you to chase me!” I whisper, meeting his gaze head-on, which I haven’t been able to do in a long time. “I don’t understand why you treat me this way. I wanted to end our relationship, Griffin! You just wouldn’t take no for an answer.”

His nostrils flare with barely contained fury. “Nobody rejects me! I would’ve given you everything, Charlotte. A life, a home, kids! But you threw that all away, and for what reason? A stinking wolf that you just met?”

“I left you long before I decided to be with him!” I snap, knowing I am going to make him even angrier, but I don’t care at this point. “It’s not my fault that you’re a psychotic freak who can’t handle rejection!”

Before I can say or do anything else, I cry out in pain as he rushes forward and grabs me by the back of my head, fisting his hands in my hair to the point I am certain he is going to rip my hair out. Yanking my head back, my eyes water from the sheer force as he gazes at me coldly, his wolf lingering in his eyes as he looks like he is pondering how to end my life.

“You lay with someone else after I was so kind to you, Charlotte!” he growls coldly, and I suddenly wonder if I made the right choice by defying him like this and egging it on. “I wanted to give you the world. I wanted you to be my Queen, my Luna, my mate, and you betray me like this? For a man that you just met?! You do realize that he has a kid, right? Your children with him will never measure up, and they will never take over the pack!”

“I don’t care!” I spit, seeing the shock in his eyes by my outburst. “Whether they take over the pack or not, they will be equally loved by Winston and me. I love Kaiden like he is my own, and I would do anything for him. I—”



*Smack!*

My head whips to the side as Griffin smacks me across my face, making my ears ring as though I have just been hit with a sledgehammer. Griffin doesn't seem to care either, looking like he really wants to hit me again but is refraining from doing so.

"I'm going to tear this mark out and replace it with my own," Griffin growls, yanking me up by my hair and causing me to cry out in agony. "If you're pregnant with that bastard's child, I'll rip that out as well!"

I kick and scream for him to let me go as he drags me out of the cell. Le'Ann struggles behind me, but there is nothing that she can do at the moment. I don't understand what he meant by a mark, but at this moment, I'm sure that all he is going to do is hurt me.

*I can't handle this!*

*Winston, save me!*

"Alpha! Campbell and his warriors have breached the border! We need your assistance!" I hear a pack member yell out, and my heart thuds with excitement in my chest.

Winston has come to save me.

Thank the goddess he is here.

"Good, I'll show him who you belong to!" Griffin mutters coldly, and I can hear the promise in his voice that I know means no good can come of this.

I might just be a little fucked here.

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# Chapter Fourteen

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## Winston



As soon as I step over the border into Griffin's land, I know this is going to be a fight to the death. I do not want to put the rest of my pack in danger, knowing that Griffin's ego will ultimately be his downfall. My blood is racing at the thought of sinking my teeth into the tender area of his neck and not letting go until the bastard suffocates to death. He had the nerve to take what is mine—everything that I love.

I am not going to let him get away with it.

“You are trespassing, Campbell.” I hear his sinister voice come from in front of me. “I ought to kill you for your stupidity.”

Standing a ways in front of me is Griffin and a bunch of his men. The only person still in human form is Griffin, a cocky look on his face that shows me his arrogance. I want to swipe that smug smirk off of his face, knowing that this is entirely his fault as to why we are here now.

Shifting quickly into my human form, I decide to give him a chance to do the right thing. “You stepped into my territory first, Miller! You murdered one of my pack members, someone who has been loyal for a long time and was on the verge of retirement. You took my mate, my child, and my sister. All for what reason? Just because you can't accept the fact that she rejected you?”

“She did not reject me!” Griffin bellows, his eyes blazing with fury. “She was confused and scared because I wanted more than what she was willing to give at the time. We've

come to an understanding now, and with time, she will see reason that I am the best thing that will ever happen to her!”

“You better keep your hands off of her!” I spit, my wolf itching to come out and rip him to shreds. “She’s not yours!”

Griffin’s eyes sparkle with a cold rage. “Oh? Just because you marked her, you think she belongs to you? She will belong to me for eternity, I promise you that.”

My temper rises, and my pack members growl softly behind me as they sense the tension coming off of me. I don’t want to fight here, knowing it will end badly for all of us. People are going to die because of him, and I just can’t allow it.

Not this time.

“Let’s make a deal, Miller,” I tell him, and he goes still for a long moment.

“What do you mean?” he asks, his eyes narrowing suspiciously.

“Just me and you, fight to the death,” I tell him, seeing everyone else look at me in horror. “Whoever wins gets to keep both of the packs, and be Charlotte’s mate.”

Griffin’s eyes gleam with an odd look that unsettles me. “Oh, I must admit it sounds tempting to just rip you to shreds and take everything that belongs to you... I’d start off by fucking Charlotte full of my seed and killing that half-breed child of yours.”

I fight the urge to lunge for his throat, knowing I need to get him to accept the challenge. “What do you say, Miller? Are you too chicken to face me alone?”

I know I strike a chord when his eyes narrow. “Yes, I’ll accept this challenge. Everyone, back off!”

In the blink of an eye, Griffin shifts faster than I have ever seen a wolf shift before. Griffin is a big wolf, that much I have to admit, and based on what I do know about him, he is a skilled fighter, and it will take everything in me to beat him.

I have to do this for Charlotte and Kaiden.

Shifting, I square my shoulders, digging my claws into the soft earth as I growl deeply and duck my head slightly to stare him down. The members from our packs move away, giving us as much space as we might need. They know that they don't dare to stand between either of us and will have to respect whatever the outcome is.

Griffin lunges forward, faster than any wolf I've encountered before. Jumping aside, he slashes his claws at where I just was, instantly having gone for the kill shot. Growls of fury sound through the air as we circle one another, watching each other carefully as we try to gauge how the other one is going to react.

*I can't let him win.*

*I can't let him get Charlotte.*

*I'd rather die.*

Seeing that I am momentarily distracted by my own thoughts, Griffin dives low, biting down on my leg. Excruciating pain wracks through my entire body. Bucking him off of me, I feel my blood flow down my legs and splatter on the ground, tainting the Earth. It hurts to even take a step, but I am not going to let him see my pain.

It has been so long since I've had a real battle, I think I've grown rusty.

Tussling on the ground—clawing and biting one another while trying to get the upper hand, it quickly dawns on me that Griffin is stronger and quicker than I am. He has no doubt trained more, learned how to kill. I can't remember the last time that I did...

*Oof!*

I hit the ground hard as Griffin barrels into my side, and I feel like the wind is knocked out of me. My body aches, my head spins, and I can see my pack members watching me with wide eyes, their faces practically begging me to get up. Griffin's lips curl back into a sinister grin, which is pretty creepy in his wolf form, as he stalks forward, preparing to go for the kill.

*I'm not going down that easily, Griffin!*

*Not today.*

As Griffin lunges for my throat, I quickly shoot up, latching onto his leg and feeling his warm blood fill my mouth as I toss him aside. Not giving him a chance to recover, I bite into his underbelly, ripping the flesh like it is paper, his organs spilling out onto the ground in front of me.

Griffin howls in agony for a long moment before going silent, his body twitching slightly as he dies before me. I watch the life leave his eyes and feel as if the goddess has been looking down on me today, to help me get rid of this bastard for what he was trying to do. It doesn't matter now, though. I am the victor.

As the wolves howl around me in victory, I stumble my way along the tree line, following a wolf who will take me to Charlotte. My body aches, feeling like I am going to collapse at any moment, but I endure the pain.

I need to get to her.

As I walk toward the big house, the door opens and out walks Charlotte carrying Kaiden. My stomach churns when I see the bruising on her face. My shoulders slump with relief when I see Le'Ann come up behind them as well, looking a little battered, but I know it could be much worse.

Even though it causes me intense agony, I shift, knowing my body is about to give out, but I don't care. I run to Charlotte, seeing the tears stream down her face as she looks at me. I wrap my arms around her, making sure that she is okay.

“We're never going to be apart again!” I promise her softly as I see the dots form in front of my eyes. “I love you so much, Charlotte. So very much.”

And like that, the whole world goes black.

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# Chapter Fifteen

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## Charlotte



Sitting beside Griffin's bed, my heart aches as I gaze upon his mangled body, wondering why he had to be such an idiot. I know he went there to save me from Griffin, but getting himself hurt in the process ... I never wanted to see that. It relieved me to find out that Griffin will never bother me again, but the thought of Griffin having to kill him makes my stomach churn.

"What are you thinking so hard about?" I hear a familiar voice whisper, catching my attention.

I look up, and that's when I see Winston's eyes are open, gazing at me with a small smile on his face. My bottom lip wobbles as I fight the urge to start bawling. My heart pounds in my chest, but I hold the tears at bay. I don't want him to think that I am going crazy over here.

"You're an idiot," I tell him, finishing up the last of the bandages. "The doctor informed me that you lost a lot of blood in your fight. Why didn't you think a little more about yourself?"

"Because I need to protect you," he murmurs, his tone firm but soft. "You and Kaiden. I wasn't about to let that bastard kill me and get away with you. I couldn't allow it."

"But you still got hurt because of me," I mumble, feeling the backs of my eyes burning with unshed tears. "I—"

Glancing down, I am slightly startled when I see the sheets around his waist have risen a little bit. My cheeks burn hot as I



realize he has gotten hard because of me, or something like that. *How is anything in this situation remotely sexy?*

“Seriously?” I mumble, trying to not look but ultimately failing.

He grins broadly. “Sorry. You’re just too cute when you are trying to be mad at me.”

“I’m going to smack you.” I really want to, but I don’t think that I could ever bring myself to actually do it. “You’re such a pain in the ass, Winston!”

“I’m *your* pain in the ass” is his cheesy retort, making my heart flutter in response.

Carefully, I lean down and kiss him, hearing his soft growl of approval. His lips move against mine passionately, like he has been craving this for a long while. My heart pounds in response, and though I crave him, I don’t want him to push himself over the edge.

“I want you,” Winston growls softly, lifting his hips slightly off the bed, the sheets swaying slightly from the force of his hips. “Ride me, mate.”

“I don’t want to hurt you,” I admit, squeezing my thighs together in response. “I—”

Winston flings the covers aside, and my eyes widen as I gaze upon his massive, throbbing length, precum dripping from the tip. The seductive look that he gives me is enough for me to just say ‘fuck it’ and give him what he wants.

My clothes fall piece by piece to the floor, my heart racing as I carefully straddle Winston’s waist and feel the long, thick length rubbing against my folds. It is a little intimidating, that much I can admit, but I want nothing more than to bury him inside of me.

“I love you, Winston,” I confess, grasping his length before guiding it inside of me.

Both of us moan in pleasure at the deep position, and it feels like he is going to split me in half by the sheer thickness

of his dick. Bracing my hands on his chest, I try to get used to his size and wonder if I ever will.

Winston gently grabs my hips, smirking. “Move, baby girl.”

I’m not sure what spurs me to do so, but I cautiously rock my hips, trying to get a feel for the movement. I must be doing something right because Winston throws his head back, his jaw clenching from barely restrained control as his dick twitches inside of me, throbbing for me.

Feeling a boost of confidence, I steadily bounce on his lap, feeling his dick spearing inside of me with each thrust. Winston’s growls of pleasure are music to my ears, and I know that this moment just right.

Everything feels right.

My thighs clench from strain, but I can’t seem to stop myself from moving. I love the way he feels inside of me, pressing against that sweet, pleasure-filled spot deep inside. My thighs shake as I try to maintain that control, feeling sparks as I tip over the edge of oblivion.

Crying out in ecstasy, I look down and see Winston rubbing my clit in time with my thrusts and lifting his hips to bury himself even further inside of me. The wild look in his eyes is enough to propel me over the edge, and I see stars as I come on top of him. Winston grunts in pleasure and slams me down onto his lap, his dick throbbing inside of me as he spills his seed into me.

“Winston,” I whisper hoarsely, feeling the tremors course through my body. “I don’t know how much—”

Cupping the back of my neck, Winston drags me closer, pressing a searing kiss to my lips. “Marry me, Charlotte.”

I freeze, my eyes widening in shock. “What?”

Pulling back and gazing into my eyes, I see everything that I need to know. “I love you so much, Charlotte, and you coming into my life is the best thing that has ever happened to me besides Kaiden. I don’t know how I’m going to be able to

do anything without you, so I'm asking for this chance to give you everything if you'll have me."

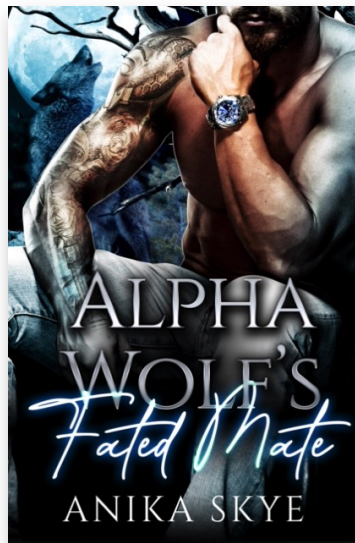
Tears well in my eyes before spilling down my cheeks. "Yes, I will marry you."

Winston pulls me back in for another passionate kiss, holding me close as we revel in one another. I never thought the day would come that I would truly be happy, and that I wouldn't have to worry about Griffin trying to find me. Winston has saved me from the devil, and there is no other way I could repay him. And with Kaiden by our side, we have our little family that will only grow in the future.



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