



FERAL  
WOLF

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# **FERAL WOLF**

Darkmore Penitentiary

Book 3

Caroline Peckham & Susanne Valenti

# Table of Contents

[\*Dedication\*](#)

[\*Map of Darkmore Penitentiary.\*](#)

[\*Chapter 1\*](#)

[\*Chapter 2\*](#)

[\*Chapter 3\*](#)

[\*Chapter 4\*](#)

[\*Chapter 5\*](#)

[\*Chapter 6\*](#)

[\*Chapter 7\*](#)

[\*Chapter 8\*](#)

[\*Chapter 9\*](#)

[\*Chapter 10\*](#)

[\*Chapter 11\*](#)

[\*Chapter 12\*](#)

[\*Chapter 13\*](#)

[\*Chapter 14\*](#)

[\*Chapter 15\*](#)

[\*Chapter 16\*](#)

[\*Chapter 17\*](#)

[\*Chapter 18\*](#)

[\*Chapter 19\*](#)

[\*Chapter 20\*](#)

[\*Chapter 21\*](#)

[\*Chapter 22\*](#)

[\*Chapter 23\*](#)

[\*Chapter 24\*](#)

[\*Chapter 25\*](#)

[\*Chapter 26\*](#)

[Chapter 27](#)

[Chapter 28](#)

[Chapter 29](#)

[Chapter 30](#)

[Chapter 31](#)

[Chapter 32](#)

[Chapter 33](#)

[Chapter 34](#)

[Chapter 35](#)

[Chapter 36](#)

[Chapter 37](#)

[Author Note](#)

*This book is dedicated to our PAs Erica Collins and Telisha Mortensen. They work so hard to help keep us organised and deal with our lost, wandering ways beautifully and we are endlessly grateful to the moon and back for all they do for us.*

*But let it be known that no dick in a box gift goes unpunished...*

*So now you will fear the chocolate dick and the bag of jelly dicks you sent us forevermore, for you have been immortalised within these pages. And certain dooooooooooom awaits you.*

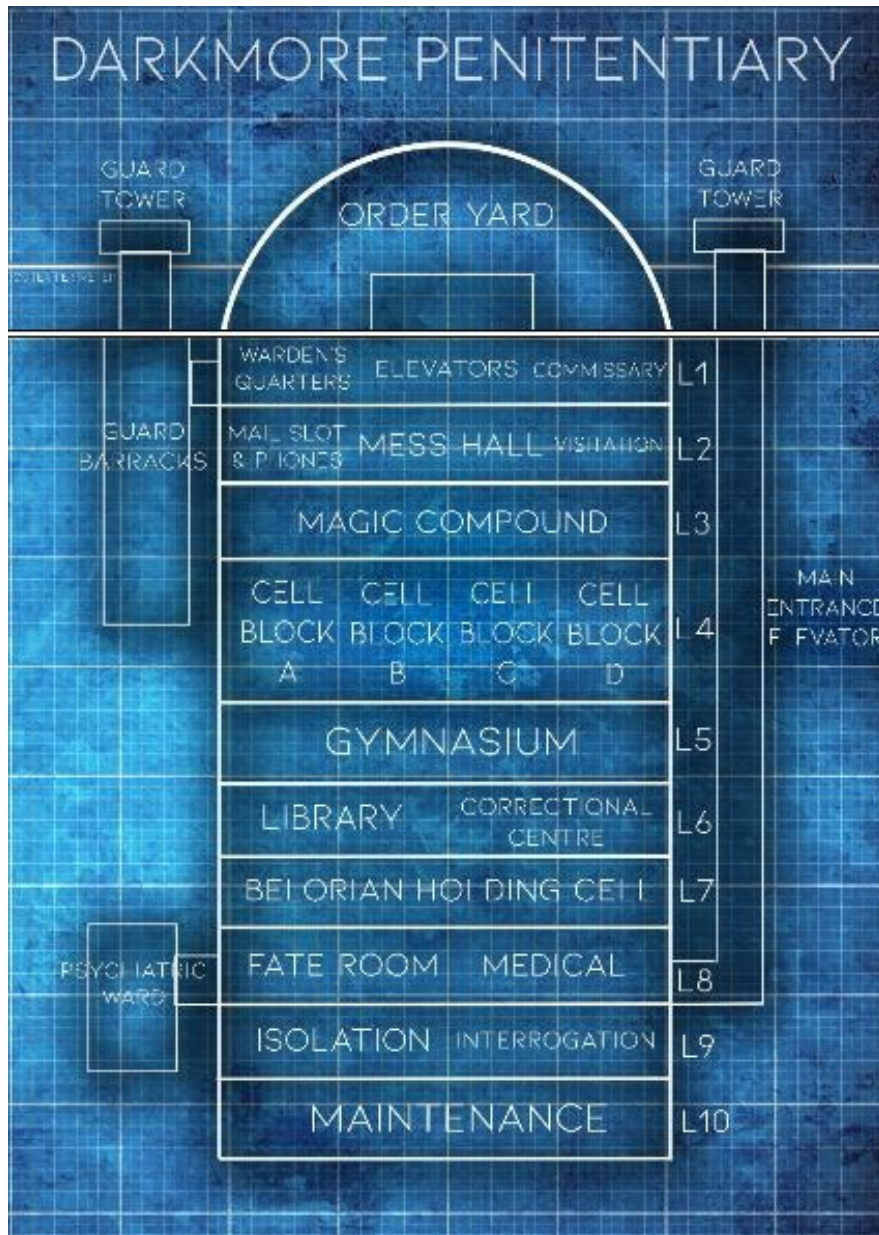
*Be warned, one more dick in the mail and you may find yourselves reincarnated to die at the hand of Lionel Acrux in [Zodiac Academy](#), or perhaps you'll come back as a chocolate dick cake which Middle Kipling will stumble upon and have his way with in a [Ruthless Boys of the Zodiac](#) novella, or maybe you'll show up in the [Harlequin Crew](#) series as a Dead Dog to be fed to JJ's pet starfish, or a Cocoa Krispie in the hands of Brooklyn and Niall in [The Death Club](#), or an innocent squid emoji at the mercy of Saint Memphis in a [Kings of Quarantine](#) rewrite from the squid emoji's POV!*

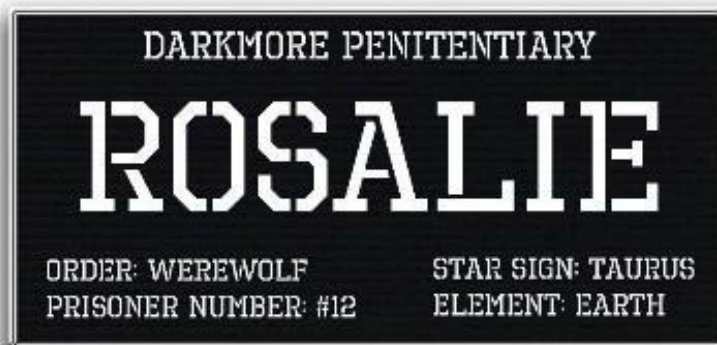
*Beware of the dick in a box, bewaaaaaaaaare!*

## Here is your map of Darkmore Penitentiary.

Your rights have been revoked, your punishment has been decided, your sentence is about to begin. Fight for your place like Fae, or die and be forgotten. This is your one chance for redemption. May the stars be with you.

Click to enlarge.





## **72 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...**

Sin tipped his head back and howled to the moon loud enough for it to hear him even through all of the dirt and rubble that separated us from this chamber of hell.

"Come on wild girl, take me by the balls and lead me on to freedom," he boomed, moving to my side and throwing an arm around my shoulders. "Tell me what you need doing to this fucker and I'll have it done." Sin nuzzled his face into the side of my neck, his stubble scraping against my skin and making a shiver dance down my spine as I kept my gaze fixed on Cain who still knelt before me.

"Are you going to make this easy or be a pain in the ass about it?" I asked him as he strained against the vines I'd conjured to restrain him. If the look in his eyes was anything to go by, he would very much be making this difficult.

"I'd sooner be strangled with my own entrails than do a single thing to help you and your band of murderous mutts," Cain spat, causing Ethan to growl as he stepped closer.

"We can make you talk easily enough, if that's what we have to do," he warned, his muscles flexing like the idea of that was pretty appealing to him.

"You're all crazy," Cain grunted. "You can't have seriously believed that

you would have been able to break out of here, did you? Even if that new bioweapon hadn't been waiting for you in there, you would have hit the ground level forcefield and been fried anyway."

"What?" I asked, my skin chilling as I wondered if his words might really hold any truth to them.

"See? Stupid. Every fucking one of you. There are layers upon layers of security here and even with magic in your grasp there's no way you could have broken through that forcefield. Magic that powerful would take an explosion worthy of the Savage King and then some to destroy. You were never even close to escaping. So just let me go now and maybe I'll go easy on you when your asses return from the hole – though I'm pretty sure the minimum term down there for an attempted escape is a year, so that might be a while."

I bit my tongue on engaging with him, cursing as I dropped the idea of trying to tunnel out of here again. If what he said was true, then that had never been going to work anyway. But that didn't matter now, all that mattered was making a new plan and utilising the time we had left before the FIB showed up.

"Leave the stronzo be for a moment," I commanded as Roary moved closer too. There were too many Alphas getting involved in this and I needed to take command before we ended up brawling for the spot in charge and wasting even more time. "We have other shit to deal with first."

I conjured a blade into existence in my hand, keeping it concealed as I looked around, hunting the group of dirty, exhausted escapees for the one whose luck had just run out as the need for his death rooted itself within me. Gustard's time blackmailing me for my cooperation was well and truly up. He had no way of contacting his help on the outside between now and the FIB breaking in here, and after that our work down here would be discovered and



none of us would stand a chance at busting out again. Which meant my patience with him had officially run dry.

But as I shoved my way between Ethan and Sin to look around at the rest of the inmates, I found that he wasn't there.

"Quel fottuto bastardo," I snarled, my grip tightening on the knife which had been destined to cut that fucker apart. "Where did Gustard go?"

My pack mates flinched at the bark in my tone and everyone looked around in confusion like they hadn't even noticed him leave. But of course the cowardly stronzo had turned tail and run already. I should have expected this. I should have stuck him full of holes the moment he'd emerged from that tunnel, but my mind had been more focused on Roary and making sure he was okay.

"Find him!" I snapped, my Alpha tone ringing out and to my surprise, not only did Sonny, Brett and Esme scatter to look for him, but the rest of the group took off to search the stacks too.

I turned towards the doors on the far side of the huge room and sprinted straight for them, finding one of them ajar as I reached it and cursing colourfully as I fell to a halt in front of it. I tugged the door open, the sounds of screams and victorious chants filling the hallway outside from the rioting inmates on the other floors of the prison mixed in with the occasional roar from the Belorian, but there was no sign of Gustard.

The others all appeared behind me as I whirled around and threw the library door shut again, grinding my teeth in frustration as I tightened my grip on the knife I'd conjured.

"There's no sign of him, Alpha," Sonny reported with a soft whimper of apology and I blew a frustrated breath out through my nose.

"Forget Gustard," I gritted out. "We don't have time to waste on him unless the opportunity presents itself. But if any of you happen to run into

him between now and the moment when we escape this place then feel free to kill him for me. The Oscuras will happily pay out a bounty on that motherfucker's head."

"Dibs!" Sin called, drawing my attention to him where he was now perched on top of one of the bookshelves. "I'm gonna kill him up good and make a bonnet out of his head. I always fancied the idea of myself in a bonnet."

I swiped a hand down my face as I forced thoughts of Gustard aside and tried to focus on what the hell we were going to have to do to get out of here now. Nothing I'd done up until this point was going to help us anymore. It was back to the fucking drawing board with time running against us, the Fae Investigation Bureau on their way, and a whole prison filled with rioting murderers ready to fuck up each and every plan I could concoct. Not to mention the fucking Belorian was running free in the halls ready to kill without mercy the moment anyone was unlucky enough to cross its path.

"What do you need, Rosa?" Roary asked me in a low tone, taking my hand and pulling it away from my face so that I could look up at him.

Fuck he was gorgeous. His long, dark hair hung around his strong face and chiselled jaw, his golden eyes heating as he drank in the sight of me too. Like, this seriously wasn't the time for it, but I couldn't help looking at him for a long moment, remembering the words he'd spoken to me, reliving the way his kiss had tasted on my tongue. Was that all just some delusion I'd conjured for myself, or had this man I'd hungered for for so long really just told me he loved me?

"I need..." I dragged my gaze away from him and glanced between the rest of the inmates surrounding us. All of them were looking to me, waiting on me to come up with a solution which was thoroughly out of my grasp. But I'd made them a promise and I sure as fuck wasn't going to just give up on the

idea of freedom for us now. "I need to talk to Dante," I said firmly. It was still at least a few hours until I'd be able to actually get a call out on account of Jerome blocking the lines of communication from the prison for us, but that was fine. I'd need those hours to figure out the rest of this plan. "As soon as we can get a call out again, I need to speak to my cousin and make a new plan for him to come get us. And I'm going to need to be able to make as many calls as required over the next few days. The FIB will be informed about the riot, but if Cain is right then they won't get involved for another three days. They don't know anything about the escape attempt so there's no reason for them to start a man hunt. Which means we have to get ourselves organised and be ready to move fast when the plan comes together."

"You still have a plan?" Esme asked hopefully, her eyes brimming with excitement as her chest swelled and her tits almost burst free of her shirt.

"Yep," I replied. *Working on it, anyway.* "So, Pudding - how many of those transmitters can you get me in a hurry?"

"I will get you all the transmitters you need, hound," Pudding assured me in his low, deep voice. Even now when everything had gone to shit around us he didn't seem in the least bit fazed or hurried. He just stood there stoic and serious, his huge and solid presence somehow reassuring amongst the aftershocks of the carnage we'd just survived. "I just need to collect more supplies."

"Good. Do that then. Brett, Esme and Sonny, you guys go with him and help keep each other safe. If you see any sign of the Belorian then just fucking run-"

"Hold up," Sin interrupted as he leapt down from the top of the bookshelf. He was still only wearing his boxers and the sight of his bare flesh was all kinds of distracting. My gaze lingered on the ink that decorated his dark skin for several long seconds and I made a mental note to insist he got himself

some clothes sharpish. "I've got just the thing for the beastie." He moved to the row of shelves to the side of the door and returned with a bundle of lemons in his arms before handing them out to the rest of us.

Why the hell did he have lemons stored here? Where the fuck did he always manage to find so star damned many of them in the first place?

"I'm still planning on killing you for letting that thing out," Ethan snarled as he snatched his lemon and shoved it in his pocket. None of us were going to be dumb enough to refuse a lemon but I was pretty sure each and every one of us was mad over the fucking Belorian currently running the halls once more.

"Get in line," I agreed, shooting Sin a scowl which he just winked back at. I liked that. I shouldn't have liked it, but I did. Damn that stronzo.

For the love of the moon, that Incubus was going to end up getting me killed one of these days.

"In case that wasn't clear, the Belorian hates lemons," I explained as Pudding inspected the yellow fruit he'd just been given. "So squirt some of that juice at it if it gets you cornered. Other than that, just be careful out there and I'll catch up to you guys soon."

The Wolves all surged forward to hug and nuzzle me as Pudding pulled open the library door.

"Are you sure it's best for us to leave you, Alpha?" Sonny asked with a concerned frown and I hugged him tight for a moment before nodding.

"Yes. I need to focus on getting us out of here and it will be easier done in a smaller group. I need the three of you to protect Pudding and help him get whatever he needs for creating those transmitters. If I can't call Dante and tell him when to meet us then this whole thing will come to nothing. I'm trusting you."

Brett whined, leaning in to nuzzle me before taking Sonny's hand and

linking their fingers together. I smirked as the two of them gave each other the moon eyes, wondering how long it would be before they just announced that they were exclusive and stopped bothering with the pack orgies. Esme sobbed dramatically as she flung her arms around me and I laughed as I patted her on the head and told her she was a good girl. My intended teasing only made her beam at me though and I guessed she just loved her place at the bottom of the pack.

“We’ll get you all the transmitters you need, Alpha,” she promised. “I’ll do whatever it takes to get them for you. I’ll suck any cock, run any race and will even trade my tits for what you need if that’s what it takes.”

“No need for any of that – especially not the tits, Esme, they’re too nice to trade,” I teased and she grinned wider.

I gave them a moment to follow their instincts as the three of them wrapped their arms around me, nuzzling and licking me before barking at them to get them moving when they didn’t back down.

I watched as they all followed Pudding out into the corridor and I could only pray to the stars that they’d be alright out there amongst the rioting inmates, and that the lemons would protect them from the Belorian if they were unlucky enough to cross its path.

"And what do you need me to do with my dipping stick now?" Plunger asked, making me flinch as I was forced to look at him directly for the first time since he'd emerged from the tunnels with Roary. Thankfully he'd shifted back out of his wrinkly Mole form, but he was still butt ass naked and that really wasn't a sight I wanted to see. He had his hands on his hips and he was swinging his ass from left to right so that his little cock bounced between his thighs.

“Per l'amore della luna,” I muttered beneath my breath. *For the love of the moon.*

My upper lip curled back. I didn't really have any intention of including him in my plans if I could help it from here on out, but if we did end up needing his Order powers again then I'd be kicking myself later if I did anything to him now.

"We need a bucket of potatoes," I said, quickly averting my eyes as I yanked the door open again. "And we need them fast."

Plunger shimmied on past me with his butt shaking from side to side, apparently not in any hurry to locate any clothes.

"Your wish is my command, fair mistress," he said as he headed on out into the corridor and I shuddered as I closed the door behind him once more.

"What are the potatoes for?" Ethan asked curiously, pushing a hand through his dirty blonde hair in an attempt to tame it but it just flopped back down into his eyes again.

"Getting rid of Plunger, duh," I replied and Roary chuckled as I strode between the three of them and headed back across the library to where we'd left Cain.

My thrashing heart settled a little as I found him where I'd left him, on his knees and restrained by my magic. He bared his fangs at me and I smiled sweetly in return, taking in the sight of him in the sweatpants and t-shirt he was wearing. He looked almost...normal out of his guard uniform and I couldn't say I minded the way his biceps pressed against the material which was trying to contain them. Of course, the reason his muscles were so tense was because he was very much trying to break free of the restraints I'd placed on him so that he could attack me, but even so, Cain looked hot in normal clothes. If I'd met him under any other circumstances I was sure I would have been all over him, but in our current predicament I was going to have to settle with keeping him as my prisoner. I guessed the tables had really turned on us in that regard.

"We need your help," I said firmly as I came to stand before him with Ethan, Sin and Roary at my back. The weight of their domineering presences laid on my shoulders as they held themselves in check and allowed me to take the lead. I loved the way they did that so naturally, letting their naturally dominant personalities make way for mine.

"Get fucked, Twelve," Cain spat.

I sighed, wishing he'd just give in instead of making this more difficult than it had to be, though I couldn't say his attitude was unexpected. I guessed we'd just have to do this the hard way.

"Give me a few minutes with him," I tossed over my shoulder to the others, my gaze remaining fixed on Cain's.

Ethan growled and Roary muttered a complaint, but when I shot them a warning look, they all gave in and headed out of sight between the closest shelves.

I twisted my fingers through the air beside me and constructed a silencing bubble around me and Cain before taking an overturned chair from the floor and placing it down in front of him.

"Let me have it then, boss man," I offered, leaning back in my seat and tilting my head as I surveyed him beneath me. He looked angry enough to burst; there was a vein throbbing in his temple and the corded muscles in his neck strained with the desire to get to me. Hurt me. Hell, I'd bet a little round of our hunting game would turn savage pretty damn fast if I let him chase me while he was in this mood. Not that the idea of that was appealing or anything, but there was just something about a man who looked ready to snap my neck that got me hot. What could I say? I had a type and I wasn't shy about it.

"You played me from the start," Cain growled, the vines restraining him creaking as he fought to break them, and I leant them a little more magic to

make sure he didn't. "You used me. Manipulated me. Made me think that we-"  
" he cut himself off and snarled as he skirted his gaze away from mine.

I sighed, slowly dropping down to my knees in front of him and reaching out to cup his jaw in my hand as I turned his gaze back to meet mine.

"Tutto quello che ho sempre voluto era essere libero," I breathed honestly as his grey gaze met with mine. *All I ever wanted was to be free.* "Yes, I played you," I admitted because we both knew it was true and I wasn't ashamed of it either. I'd done what I had to in order to rescue Roary and I was never going to feel bad about that. "I used you. Manipulated you. But that doesn't mean it was all a lie."

The hurt and betrayal brimming in his eyes said he didn't believe one word of that. I looked down at the silvery curse mark which coated his arm, reaching out to run my fingers over it and feeling the way his muscle flexed beneath my touch. I traced the pattern of the rose vine and felt a shiver pass along my skin at the contact as I felt the magic within it which bound us to one another. Moon magic. Something so far beyond either of us and yet linked to us all the same.

"We're connected, you and I," I said slowly. "I didn't mean for it to be the case and yet it is. Which means the moon wants us to be connected."

"Connected by a curse that will end up killing me," he growled angrily. "A poison. Just like you're a poison."

"The moon doesn't work in shades of black and white," I disagreed with a shake of my head that made my black hair spill forward over my shoulders. "Her light casts us in something in between. Her power isn't good or bad - it only has the potential to be either. It's what you do with it that counts. So maybe this is a curse. Or maybe it's a blessing in disguise."

"A blessing that will kill me by making me bleed to death out of my eyes and asshole?" he deadpanned and I couldn't help but laugh. It wasn't funny



but it also kinda was, at least as a visual for whenever he pissed me off.

"You never know."

Cain blew out a harsh breath and I met his gaze again as he just stared at me, hatred coating every line of his features. "Lay it out for me, Twelve. How long until you don't need me anymore and just cut my throat?"

I frowned at him, shaking my head as I sat back on my heels. "I don't have any intention of killing you, Mason," I said honestly. "You don't have to believe that if you don't want to, but it wasn't all a lie between us. I care about you. Even after you threw me in the hole and left me to rot for saving your life. I should have killed you for that. I would have killed anyone else for it. I don't fully understand it, but the two of us are linked whether you like it or not, and I've always known to follow my instincts when they guide me like they are with you now."

"Excuse me if I don't believe a word from your lying mouth," he muttered.

I huffed out a breath, losing my patience with him as I moved to sit on my chair again and leaned forward to look down at him.

"Believe what you want to, boss man, but this is how it's going to go. I'm getting out of here. And I'm taking my friends with me. To do that I need your help and I'm going to get it one way or another. So tell me - we have three days until the FIB step in, but how long do we have before more guards head down from the surface?"

Cain surveyed me for a while before shrugging. "Forty-eight hours. Give or take. They'll be observing the situation using the CCTV and they'll be quite happy to let this violence play out. No one cares if the scum down here kills each other. And the Belorian is out and doing its job too. So whatever this impossible escape plan of yours is, you're going to have to put it together damn fast and even then, there's no chance it will work."

I gave that some thought then nodded. "So if they can see the CCTV, I'm

guessing we can too?"

Cain said nothing but that was an admission in itself.

"And I'm guessing that you can get us into the surveillance room too?" I pressed.

Nothing again. I smirked at him and got to my feet, disbanding the silencing bubble as I called the others back over to join us.

"We need to get an idea of what's going on in the rest of the prison," I said, looking between them. "And Cain had the great idea of us using the CCTV surveillance room to check it out."

"Oooh, good plan," Sin said as he causally tossed a lemon up and down. "Can I kill him now?"

"No," I bit out and he pouted. "We still need him."

"You're just saying that because you want to fuck him," Sin lamented and Ethan growled loudly.

"Like hell she does," he said angrily while Roary threw a death glare Cain's way too, both of them moving closer to me like they wanted to make sure Cain wasn't able to get a good look at me.

"She does," Sin insisted. "And he wants to fuck her so bad that he's hard right now, even though he's all tied up and at her mercy and shit - unless that's what's getting you hard, Officer?"

"Fuck off," Cain snapped. "I wouldn't fuck her if she was the last woman in Solaria."

I turned and looked at him with a raised eyebrow because we both knew he'd very much enjoyed sinking his dick into me and even the anger he was feeling now was unlikely to have doused the heat that burned between us.

"Liar," Sin growled furiously, taking a step forward like he'd kill Cain for that remark and I moved between them, slapping a hand against his bare chest to stop his advance.

"We don't have time for this," I said firmly. "You should stop worrying about who wants to fuck who and just concentrate on finding yourself some clothes."

"This escape business is no fun at all," Sin grumbled, turning away from me like I was disappointing him with the fact that we weren't all currently taking part in a murder spree followed by an orgy. *Honestly.*

"Come on. We need to get downstairs," I insisted, using my magic to take control of the vines restraining Cain and handing them to Ethan and Roary so they could corral him along with us.

Cain instantly tried to run, putting on a burst of Vampire speed which caused the two of them to curse him as they fought to hold him back. I quickly conjured another set of vines around his upper thighs to restrict his movements before handing them to Sin to control and smirked at Cain as he glowered at me.

Once it was clear that our pet guard couldn't escape us and he was giving us all his most terrifying death glares, we headed for the exit.

I tried not to let the crushing weight of our failure dampen my spirits as I thought of Dante circling in the sky overhead, wondering where I was, freaking out when I didn't show up. I couldn't contact him until the block Jerome had put on the outgoing communications for us was lifted anyway and I needed Pudding to make more transmitters too. So right now, I just had to concentrate on the next part of our plan, which meant getting into the CCTV surveillance room on level eight.

Sin, Roary and Ethan all hustled Cain along between them as I led the way to the exit, the knife I'd conjured held ready in my left hand while my right was raised to cast. Roary was the only one of us with his magic still locked down and I lamented the fact that we hadn't taken the opportunity to unlock his cuffs while Nixon's remote still worked before he'd died. Not that we'd

had more than a few seconds to act in that moment, but it was still really fucking annoying now.

I pushed open the library door, hesitating a beat as I caught sight of the bloody puddle which marked the corridor outside and the yells of the riot echoed down to us from the upper levels. It looked like the Belorian had made a feast of someone here recently and I really didn't want to run into that thing again.

I paused to thump Sin in the arm and he gasped in horror.

"Why?" he asked.

"You know why," I replied and he nodded solemnly before shooting me another damn wink.

I stood there for a few moments, listening out for any signs of that monster and double checking my lemon was in my pocket before deciding the coast was most likely clear.

I jerked my chin in a command for the others to follow me and quickly led the way outside. My heart pounded as we went and I made quick progress to the stairs at the far end of the corridor, trying to tune out the random screams and victorious yells in favour of anything closer to us which might pose an actual threat.

We were at a huge advantage having access to our magic, but I wasn't going to be dumb and get us killed by thinking that somehow made us immortal.

We made it to the stairs and started hurrying down them, skirting the half-eaten remains of several inmates who had clearly run into the Belorian. Unless of course there was a cannibalistic Fae currently roaming the corridors in their Order form. And in this place, that was highly likely too. *Perfetto*.

We moved quickly, jogging down the stairs past the seventh floor where the Belorian's cage sat empty at the far end of the darkened space and on to

the eighth floor beneath it.

A shriek of fear caught my attention, followed by more screams just before a terrified Fae in an orange jumpsuit rounded the corner ahead and started racing up the stairs.

"The Belorian is coming!" she wailed and fear speared through me as I froze, looking between my men as the need to get to that CCTV surveillance room warred with the desire to run the fuck away from the star damned monster which roamed these halls.

"I'm on it, sex pot!" Sin announced as he tossed his vine to Roary before dropping his boxers and shoving them into the front of Ethan's jumpsuit. "You can pop those up your butt if you like, honeypie," he added with a wink.

He shifted while Ethan was still cursing him and a gasp escaped me as he became the Belorian's ideal wet dream - which happened to look exactly the same as itself - and took off with an excited roar towards the corridor beneath us.

I didn't waste any time overthinking it and started running after him at full pelt. Ethan and Roary forced Cain to follow and all four of us picked up the pace as we headed after Belorian Sin.

More inmates raced into the stairwell as we reached the corridor, all of them screaming and terrified and I was forced to shove them aside as we went against the flow.

"It ate Gertrude!" Laura screamed as she passed me. "Run, Alpha!"

"You run," I commanded in my Alpha tone. "And make sure the whole pack band together somewhere to keep each other safe. I'll come find you later."

Laura hesitated but she couldn't fight the command in my voice and she raced on up the stairs with a mournful howl as she ran to do as I'd said.

Sin roared a greeting to the Belorian as he charged towards it, and I swear the thing looked happy to see him as it looked up from its meal of some poor bastardo's head. Probably Gertrude.

I ignored every instinct in my body which was commanding me to run the fuck away and kept going, sprinting past Medical which was locked up tight and heading straight for the surveillance room halfway along the corridor.

The Belorian spotted us and my gut plummeted as it lunged our way, but Sin intercepted it, a weird monster giggle escaping his shifted form as he shook his ass at the terrifying creature and drew its attention to him instead. Then he took off, running for the stairs and leading the monster after him as he went.

I fisted the lemon in my pocket but sighed in relief when I found I didn't need the damn thing.

I skidded to a halt before the door and Roary shoved Cain forward, raising one of his bound hands to the access panel beside the lock.

I pressed my blade to Cain's throat, giving him a hard look which warned him not to fuck with me while Ethan conjured blades of ice to press against his back too.

"Open it," I commanded, looking around as the Belorian roared again.

Cain snarled, but I could see the acceptance in his gaze and I quickly removed the vines binding his hand and slapped his palm against the reader.

He resisted for a moment, but a monstrous roar sounded from the corridor to our right and Sin reappeared, the Belorian hot on his ass as he shifted into a man with white hair and Harpy wings before yelling at us to open the fucking door.

Cain cursed before using his magic to unlock it and we all fell through the door, Sin sweeping in last before Roary slammed the door behind us and locked it up tight just as the Belorian crashed into it from the other side. My

pulse jackhammered, but relief settled in me when the door didn't give.

Cain lunged towards Ethan with a spurt of his speed, but I'd been expecting that and I quickly yanked on the tether I held to my magic, wrapping his free hand up tight again and locking it to his side before binding his ass to a chair in the middle of the room and rooting it to the wall for good measure.

Ethan tore into his lemon with his teeth and squirted it all around the doorframe which was rattling under the assault the Belorian was waging against it.

We all looked between each other for a moment as the Belorian continued to try and batter the door down before Sin started laughing as it finally gave up and headed away with a frustrated roar.

"This might just be the best fucking day of my life, kitten," he said to me enthusiastically. "All I need to top it off is to wet my dick between your thighs and I could die happy tonight."

He bit his lip as he looked me over hopefully and I couldn't help but laugh. He was naked and pretty much fully hard already and if we didn't have a prison to break the fuck out of and a monster trying to tear the door down, I'd have been sorely tempted to take him up on that offer.

"There are spare guard uniforms in that closet," Cain snapped, glaring at Sin like he'd love nothing more than to break his neck. "Put your fucking cock away, Eighty-Eight."

"Why? Is it turning you on too much?" Sin challenged, fisting his dick and grinning at Cain as he ran his thumb over his piercings.

"It's fucking distracting is what it is," Ethan grumbled as he moved towards the screens which covered the wall to the left of the small room.

"He's right," I agreed, offering Sin a flirtatious look as I admired his body for a moment before shaking my head to dismiss his Incubus spell. Or maybe

it was just a *him* spell, but either way I couldn't spare the time for it now.  
"You're distracting and we need to concentrate."

Sin huffed like a thirteen-year-old who'd just been told to clean his room then stalked over to the closet to find some clothes.

I moved to Ethan's side, my arm brushing against his as we looked at the feeds from all over the prison. There were a lot of blind spots, but also plenty of coverage to give us an idea of what was going on in general.

"The Lunars have taken control of the Gym," Ethan commented, his lips twitching with pride while I snorted dismissively.

"Yeah and the Oscuras have the dorms. I think I'd prefer access to the beds and the shower block over sleeping with a dumbbell for a pillow - but nice work there, champ." I clapped him on the shoulder patronisingly.

Ethan snarled playfully, giving me a little shove and I shoved him right back, the mate bond buzzing between us as we riled each other up. In fact, I was seriously tempted to wrestle him a little, just to show him who was boss here.

"If you were paying more attention to the screens than your little Wolf mate then you'd have noticed what's going on up on level two," Cain snarled and I reluctantly stopped tussling with Ethan as I gave my attention to the screens showing that area of the prison.

It took me a few moments to piece it all together as I looked between Sparkle and her herd of heavily tatted Pegasuses who were running up and down the corridor outside the visitation rooms, banging on doors and looking like they were yelling about something.

"Hastings just escaped them and locked himself inside the commissary room on level one," Cain snapped when I didn't say anything. "They were chasing him, but they didn't see him go in there. It won't be long before they find him though. Unless you don't give a fuck about him now that you've



finished using him?"

My lips parted on some kind of snide comeback, but it fell still on my lips as I spotted the decapitated body of a guard strung up inside the Mess Hall on one of the other screens. I hadn't wanted any of the guards to get hurt during this escape, but I couldn't really be held responsible for the actions of the other inmates either.

"If we start trying to save guards, this is all going to fall apart fast," Roary warned, moving to my other side as he looked over the screens too and my gut twisted uncomfortably. "We have to focus on getting out of here."

I bit my lip as Cain muttered to himself about him not being the least bit surprised by that choice.

My gaze skimmed over the screens where Sparkle and her gang were still hunting for Hastings and I continued to chew on my lip. My little choir boy wasn't cut out for this. He was sweet and weirdly innocent. Hell, I even liked him in a platonic, weird little brother kind of way.

"No, Rosa," Roary reiterated, taking my arm and trying to draw my attention to him.

"And you seriously think I'm going to help you do shit?" Cain scoffed. "He's a good man. And you know it. But do you care? No. You got what you wanted from him and now he's disposable because all you give a shit about is saving your own ass."

"None of us give a fuck about any of the asshole guards in here, kitten," Sin teased and I looked around to find him in a pair of black guard's trousers and boots. He'd opted to remain shirtless which was probably for the best as we didn't need the added drama of anyone mistaking him for an actual guard when we went back out there.

Cain shot me a disgusted look which said I was even worse than he'd thought I was and I frowned anxiously.

"We have time," I muttered, glancing back towards level two. Sparkle and her gang had returned to the Mess Hall for the most part, all of them stomping their feet - some in Fae form, others shifted into their Pegasus Order forms. Hastings was still stuck where he was, but for now at least they didn't seem to be close to finding him. "We need to make some calls before our plans can progress very far, and the communications are still blocked at the moment anyway. Hastings doesn't deserve to die down here."

"You've got to be kidding me," Sin said in disbelief, but both Roary and Ethan seemed more inclined to listen to me.

"You really wanna risk heading up through the entire prison for the sake of one guard, love?" Ethan asked me curiously and I shrugged.

"He was nice to me when other guards were cruel." I shot Cain a scathing look to make sure he understood who I meant. "And I've never seen him treat any of the inmates like dirt the way a lot of the guards do."

"He does seem to be irritatingly decent," Roary agreed reluctantly, pushing a hand through his dark mane.

"Well we aren't just going to go and help a guard out for nothing," Ethan said, turning to Cain. "If you want us to save him then you can agree to help us out properly in return."

"That's fair," I agreed, arching a brow at Cain who looked inclined to tell us to get fucked.

Sin looked utterly perplexed by the suggestion that we were seriously going to go and save one of the men who had been in charge of keeping us locked up down here, but I was willing to trade him sexual favours for his cooperation, so I was sure I could get him onboard with it.

"Fine," Cain snapped, his gaze cutting back to the CCTV monitor again. "You save Hastings then I'll cooperate with you, and I might even believe there's some decency in you too. But if not then I won't be doing a single

thing to help you out and I'll take great pleasure in watching you fail in your hopeless escape attempt."

"Deal," I decided, not asking the others for their opinions because this was my train they were riding and if they didn't like it then they could just get off. "Roar, can you stay here and watch Cain? We can't risk bringing him with us and you're the only one I trust not to kill him."

"I wouldn't go that far," Roary muttered, cutting Cain a hate filled look.

I moved between them, forcing him to fix his attention on me instead and he gave in, nodding his agreement as I glared at him.

"You're leaving me tied up down here with the only one of you who doesn't have magic?" Cain asked. "We'll be dead before you make it back."

"I might not have access to my magic, asshole. But I have something a lot better than that." Roary kicked his boots off, quickly followed by dropping the rest of his clothes and I shamelessly ogled his tanned, naked body, earning myself a wink from him before he shifted into his enormous Nemean Lion form.

Me, Sin and Ethan were forced to back away as he took up almost all of the space in the room. I tipped my head back to look up at him, wrapping my arms around his thick neck and pushing my fingers into the dark fur of his mane as I held him tight for a moment.

"We'll be quick," I promised before peeling myself away and glancing at the monitors again.

The Belorian had moved up to the seventh floor and the corridor outside this room was empty. That was about as close to safe as we were going to get.

"Let's go then, kitten," Sin urged, taking my hand and tugging me towards the door. "We have a little popkin to rescue."



## 71 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...

“Why are we saving a guard again?” Sin asked as we all ran toward the nearest stairway in a unit.

“Weren’t you listening in there?” Rosalie asked in exasperation, her dark hair swinging above her ass as I watched it bounce.

“If by listening you mean staring at your tits. Then yes, sugar puff, I was listening with rapt attention,” Sin said with a smirk and I tossed an elbow his way that caught him in the chest.

“This is life or death, asshole,” I growled. “Pay attention.”

“To her tits or her ass? I can never pick which I like best,” Sin said thoughtfully. “Her ass is like a perfectly ripe nectarine waiting for my teeth and those tits are two juicy mangos just asking to be squeezed into a cocktail.”

Rosa let out a growl and put on a burst of speed to take the lead. My Alpha instincts roared at me to at least keep pace with her and Sin and I were soon battling to catch her as she ran upstairs like her legs were made of pure air. Damn, Sin was right about that ass though.

“No!” a male shriek sounded from up ahead. “Oh by all the stars and the divine throne of Solaria whose seat is graced by the most wondrous ass of-

ahhhhh!”

A roar and a chomp cut off those words and we all stopped dead in our tracks as the Belorian tore into its latest victim somewhere around the next corner. My gut twisted at the sound of crunching bones and a shudder tracked down the length of my spine. That was no way to die.

Rosa took a step back, her fingers twitching as she cast a silencing bubble around us. “We have to get past it,” she said, determination flaring in her dark brown eyes and the flecks of silver within them seemed to glint at me.

I found myself moving forward, ready to fight that terrifying monster and offer my mate the thing she desired. I didn’t want that death, but I’d risk it for her. I was her warrior and there wasn’t a battle I wouldn’t walk proudly into in her name. She caught my arm before I got far, shaking her head at me.

“I’m not scared, love,” I told her in a low tone.

“No, but you are a stupido cucciolo,” she whispered with a twitch of mirth on her lips.

“Did you just call me stupid?” I narrowed my gaze in suspicion.

“Nah.” She waved a hand at me but the teasing tilt to her lips said that was a lie.

Well I did just try to walk into the jaws of a insatiably hungry monster designed to kill Fae, so I guessed she had a point. Maybe I was alright with that though, seeing as the reason I was stupid enough to do it was that I got to claim this perfect Alpha as my mate. I’d take any burden that came with that to keep her, though I could practically hear my sisters taunting me for it already. I’d sworn to them I’d never take a mate because no one could ever tie me down. Now look at me. I was bound willingly, ready for Rosalie to slide a ball gag in my mouth whenever she fancied it. Sure, it hadn’t always been that way. But I wasn’t fighting this anymore. I was hers and she was mine. And I’d fight for the life we could have together and take every one of

my sisters' jibes on the outside with a smug as pie grin on my face too. *Yeah, Ethan Shadowbrook is a goner. And so be it.*

"Don't wait up, hot pots," Sin said and I glanced over my shoulder, finding him butt ass naked with a fucking boner. Again.

"What the hell are you doing?" I demanded.

"Feeding on your lust for one, kitten. And for two..." He sprang away from us, shifting into a huge Belorian right before us on the stairs. His skin was pale and smooth all over with black spines jutting out of his flesh in places. His face was eyeless and little more than a wide, gaping mouth full of sharp teeth. His legs curved into pincers at the front and he released a roar before running away from us up the stairs in the direction of the creature whose fantasy he'd just embodied. That shit was fucking unreal.

I shared a glance with Rosalie who grinned like this was just another day in paradise before we started moving after him.

But as we made it to the corridor where the gym was located, the two Belorians came tearing back down the stairs towards us and my heart lurched in fright.

"Fuck," I cursed, turning tail with Rosalie as we were forced to run for our lives, leaping off of the stairway and racing down the hall.

Both beasts chased us like mad, but one of them kept slamming into the other to try and get its attention.

*Come on, Sin, you insane motherfucker. Seduce that monster like your life depends on it, because it damn well does.*

The true Belorian set its eyes on us, roaring like it was starved despite its mouth already being soaked in blood. That thing was like a bottomless pit, eternally hungry, endlessly bloodthirsty and right about now hungering for a taste of Alpha Wolf. My ass was fine, but Rosalie's was a premium snack and there was no chance I was letting that thing near it.

“This way.” Rosalie grabbed my hand, tugging sharply and we stumbled into the gym, turning to cast our magic together to block the entrance.

Her earth magic sent vines shooting across the double doors and I froze them solid with my water magic just as an enormous weight collided with them and made the whole frame shudder. But it didn’t give. *Thank the stars.*

“Dalle stelle,” Rosalie swore as my heart rate settled a little. “Is he gonna be alright?”

“He’s Sin, he’ll be just fine, love,” I assured her, knowing that bastard would never die that easily. He was like a cockroach on lala pills.

“Alpha!” Harper’s voice made me twist around and my heart jolted in my chest as I found my entire pack there, laying around the space in dog piles, all of their eyes pinned on us as confusion twisted their features. *Oh shit, I forgot they were holed up here.*

Harper ran over, wrapping her arms around me and I nuzzled her head for a moment to calm my second in command, feeling her heart thrashing. My gaze remained fixed on my other Wolves, the way they were getting up and stalking closer, but mostly how they were looking at Rosalie. *Not good. Not fucking good.*

They were glaring at her, muscles tensing and teeth baring all around us as they rallied against the outsider to their pack.

A growl rolled over my tongue as I released Harper, sensing the danger in the air.

*Shitballs, why did we have to end up here of all places?*

“He’s brought us the Oscura Alpha!” Dan barked excitedly and the hairs stood up on the back of my neck as the urge to shift rippled through my body. *Fucking Dan. I never liked you, you butt chewing suck up.*

“We can kill her good and display her in the Mess Hall beside that dead guard,” Jenny suggested with a yip. “And when the Oscura Clan come to

mourn her, we'll rip the rest of them to pieces too!"

*Hell fucking no.*

I felt Rosalie's eyes on me for a moment like she was assessing how I was gonna react to this. I felt her doubts, felt the way she took a small step away from me like she thought I was about to turn on her. And that killed me more than anything. I knew I'd failed her before now, that I'd been a shitty Wolf and an even shittier mate. But the time for fighting against this bond between us was over. And I'd stand against every star in the sky to protect her if I had to now.

Dan and Jenny led the other Wolves forward. *My fucking Wolves.*

"Stand down," I growled in my Alpha tone and a bunch of the weaker members flinched back, but others kept coming, their instincts to rally against their enemy strong enough to overpower my command as their Alpha.

"What do you mean stand down?" Dan cocked his head to one side, his stupid floppy hair flopping into his eyes. He'd grown it like that to try and look like me, but his hair was a shitty ashy blonde, it didn't have half the tone or body of mine. He was a piss poor copy pup and I'd been wanting to punch his smarmy face for a long time. He couldn't pull that hair off and we all knew it. "She's our enemy. Aren't you going to make her bleed, Alpha?" He licked his lips hungrily and I took another step forward, placing myself between them and her.

"I said, stand down!" I barked and a bunch of the weaker Wolves whined in discomfort at the way the energy in the room was splitting and tearing. If they didn't fall into line now then this was going to turn into something much nastier than I wanted. A full on breakdown in the pack hierarchy starting with a challenge for my position as leader. I needed to assert my dominance over them quickly or everything could be about to go to hell.

"Ethan," Rosalie hissed from behind me and Harper whined.



“He’s protecting her!” someone called from the pack though I didn’t catch who as I kept my gaze fixed on douchebag Dan in front of me, his shoulders squaring and his teeth bared. More and more Wolves were gathering at his back and my blood was burning hotter and hotter at the sight.

“I’m your Alpha,” I snapped, rising to my full height. “Stand. Down.”

“No,” Dan snarled, his chin raising defiantly. I knew the little prick had been priming up to this for a while, but why now? For the love of the moon, *why now??* “Not until you hand over the Oscura Alpha or kill her yourself.”

“You’re not going anywhere near her,” I growled and my pulse drummed furiously as I rose my voice and let it fill the whole room with my next words. “She’s my mate.”

Silence. The deadly kind.

“Harper’s your mate,” Dan threw back, his eyes wide with shock which was echoed on the faces of my entire pack as they stared at me. I got a flashback of the first day I’d arrived in Darkmore, asserted myself as Alpha of their pack and shown them my cock as I geared up for an orgy. My cock tended to have that effect on people.

“She’s not. I lied. I made her obey me and pretend to be my mate to cover for the truth,” I said, trying to keep her safe with those words, not wanting these furious eyes to turn on her after all she’d done for me. “But I’m done lying. Rosalie Oscura is my mate chosen for me by the moon. She and I can bring the packs together. Lunar and Oscura. We’ll be the strongest force in Darkmore.” The words fell so easily from my tongue, it was kind of impossible to believe how vehemently I’d been against them once. I didn’t even know when I’d decided I didn’t care about the war between us anymore, but I found myself remembering the words of the old Lunar King before he’d left this life forever. *If you’re ever lucky enough to find what I have found, then you will realise you would give up everything to keep it.*

Damn asshole had been right after all. It had all happened so fast. One minute I was a king who ruled the world, and the next I was kneeling at the feet of my queen, happy for her to do with me whatever she liked. Sure, there'd been some speed-bumps along the way, but now I was here, I couldn't see any kind of life that didn't have her in it anymore. And there was no enemy I wouldn't face for her. No battle I wouldn't fight. And no war I wouldn't win.

Horrified chatter broke out among my pack and anxiety tugged at my chest. Rosalie moved to my side, baring her own teeth and Dan's eyes honed in on her. Just him looking at her like that was enough to warrant his death.

"Traitor!" Jenny barked and a snarl ripped from my throat.

"I'm your Alpha!" I roared.

"You're no Alpha of mine, *love*." Dan spat on the floor between us and I raised my hands, gathering a swirling ball of ice between them as I spat a snarl. *Oh he did not just steal my word and use it on me. He. Did. Not.*

"They have magic," someone gasped in concern.

"Alpha, you need to run," Harper hissed, but I ignored her.

"Are you challenging me?" I demanded of Dan and he stepped closer once more, clearly ready to face the consequences of his subordination as he swept that floppy fucking imposter hair from his too close together eyes. *Call me 'love' one more time, I dare you.*

"Dan, listen to your Alpha," Harper said, a look of repugnance filling her face at his betrayal, and my chest swelled with pride at her sticking with me in the face of certain death.

But instead of Dan confirming his challenge, he dove forward, his grey wolf tearing from his flesh as he leapt at Rosalie with widened fangs. I ran between them so fast, I wasn't even aware of making the decision, but maybe it wasn't even a choice. It was my nature, my duty to my mate. Dan collided

with me, his huge paws knocking me to the ground and crushing the wind from my lungs.

His teeth locked around my arm as I brought it up between us, but I got my hand against his face before he could tear it clean off, magic pouring from my body as I used a surge of energy to freeze every piece of him I touched. He yelped, trying to pull back, but I held on with a snarl of determination, his body turning solid as I gritted my teeth and turned the entirety of him to ice. A cloud of vapour escaped his lips as he tipped his head back in a silent, dying howl and I crawled out from beneath the frozen form of him, healing the bite mark on my arm.

“No one fucking imitates me. There’s only one Ethan Shadowbrook and I’m right here!” I thumped my fist against my chest.

Howls and wails of pain went up from my pack and I gazed at Rosalie for a moment, her lips parted at what I’d done. Because I’d killed one of my own for her, I’d made my choice clear between my mate or my pack. And it was her. How could it not be her?

Jenny ran forward with a yelp of anguish over Dan, splitting into her dark brown Wolf form and running at me while the rest of my pack surged closer behind her, two others diving forward to fight Rosalie and Harper.

I might have won that challenge for my position, but it was clear the pack saw my mating an Oscura as too much of a betrayal all the same.

Rosalie wrapped a vine around Jenny’s neck before she could make it to me, yanking it taut with a spark of magic that broke her neck. Another Wolf took her place and I saw red as more snarling, snapping teeth came at me. At Rosalie. But she was mine. My life, my soul. And I would kill every one of them who desired her death. There was no greater loyalty that lived in me than the one I harboured for her now.

I cut down another snarling beast as he tried to rip my throat out, freezing

his heart in his chest as I wielded my magic. But for every Wolf who fell at our hands, another took its place and my power quickly started to run low.

We were driven back against the barricaded doors and the roar of the Belorian out there reminded us about the other death waiting for us beyond them. The wood shuddered against my spine as I cast an ice wall before us to try and keep the pack away, but large claws tore through it like paper.

My limbs strained as I was forced to engage more and more of the Lunars, using my magic as sparingly as I could manage.

I was about to shift when the door exploded at my back and pincers wrapped around my waist, dragging me out into the hallway and sending me skidding across it. I hit the wall, adrenaline thundering through my veins as my head rattled from the impact.

“Rosalie!” I bellowed, shoving to my feet and running forward as the Belorian got hold of her too, twisting around and pushing her into my arms, proving it wasn’t the Belorian at all. Harper screamed, ducking as she got out the door and looking to me in fear.

“Run!” I commanded her in my Alpha tone and she turned tail and fled down the corridor. The Belorian swiped and slashed at the Lunar pack, forcing them to retreat before it swung towards us once more.

“Is it Sin?” Rosalie hissed as we started backing up, our hands raised as it stalked towards us.

“I’m eighty percent sure,” I said, but we kept retreating just in case.

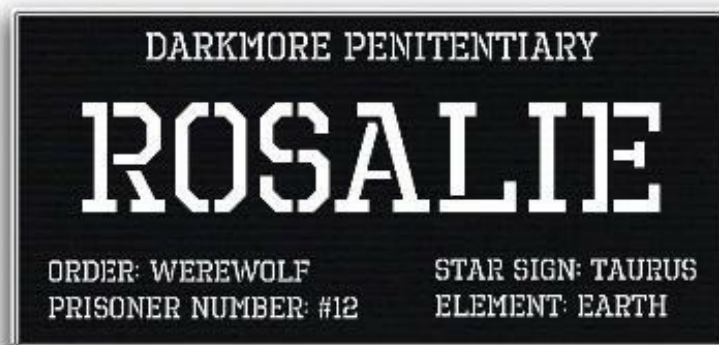
“It’s me,” the thing grunted then ran at us, gathering us up in its front set of arms and racing away down the corridor towards the stairs.

Howls sounded after us as the Lunar Brotherhood took chase and I turned to look at Rosalie and check she was okay.

Her mouth crashed against mine before I could ask and the mate mark behind my ear flared with heat.

I caught her hair in my grip, sinking my tongue between those perfect lips, tasting the bond between us and knowing in my soul that no matter how much I'd just lost, it couldn't come close to what I'd gained in finding her, that kiss becoming an eternal promise that I'd never stand against her again.

She was mine and I was hers and that was all I needed in the whole wide fucking world.



## **70 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...**

I clung to the scaly arms of Sin's shifted body as he raced down the stairs on his six enormous legs with the Lunars chasing after us, screaming for our deaths. My gut was tied in knots as I urged Sin faster and he roared in acknowledgement, putting on another burst of speed.

Ethan cursed as Sin leapt out of the stairwell on the sixth floor, throwing his body to the side and casting a wall of ice behind us as the baying Wolf pack raced closer.

Sin dropped us to our feet, but instead of heading on to the library which we'd have no chance of barricading for long, I took off running along the small side corridor which held the Correctional Centre and the rooms where the counselling and other classes took place.

I led the way to one of the doors while the sound of the Lunar Brotherhood Wolves trying to break through the ice echoed to us. I skidded to a halt before it, reaching out with my magic to inspect the locks in place on it.

They were fairly simple and I quickly constructed a key using my earth magic before wielding my power to break through the magical locks on the door too.

It burst open and we all scrambled into the meditation studio before I slammed the door behind us and locked it again with a breath of relief. Fuck, this day was seriously testing me. Mars had to be in my chart, because war was being waged on my star sign and giving me one helluva headache.

"Use your air magic to hide our scent," Ethan barked at Sin who was now fully naked in his Fae form again as he quickly cast a silencing bubble around us to mask our presence even further.

Sin did as Ethan had commanded, sending a whirlwind of air racing down the corridor outside to scatter our scent before placing a shield over the door to make sure they wouldn't be able to sniff us out in here either.

"Wow," Sin said, turning to look at the two of us as he cast a few flames into existence and sent them to hang in the corners of the room, casting the bronze coloured space in a warm glow. "Your pack really hates you now, don't they kitten?"

"Fuck off," Ethan snapped and I whimpered, my Wolf instincts urging me towards him to comfort him. His pack might have been a bunch of under bred mongrels in my opinion, but they'd still been his family in here. And he'd just been de-crowned and cast out in one fell swoop.

"It'll be okay," I promised him as the sound of his former pack hunting for us filled the corridor outside.

Ethan hung his head and I whimpered again, nuzzling against his neck and winding my arms around him.

"I know that I was leaving here anyway," he muttered. "And I know that a lot of them are really shitty Fae, but..."

"They were *your* really shitty Fae," I finished for him, and he nodded sadly.

I nuzzled into his neck again and Sin moved up behind him, winding his arms around him too.

"When I was a kid, I once had this raincoat that was pink and blue and really brought out my eyes," Sin murmured, resting his cheek against the side of Ethan's head sympathetically. "But the bitch who ran my foster home took it away and gave it to this pig ugly girl. It looked...fucking terrible on her." He sniffed dramatically. "But when I called for it, it didn't come back to me. So I know exactly how you feel."

I frowned up at him and Ethan's brow furrowed too as irritation worked through his body.

"How is that the fucking same?" he snapped. "That was my pack. My family. My world-"

"Yeah. They kept you warm and dry," Sin agreed. "They were good company. They always listened to you when you were feeling down."

"A raincoat can't fucking-"

Sin pushed forward and kissed Ethan hard enough to stop his words and my brows rose as I watched them, my heart pounding as my teeth sank into my bottom lip. I mean, he was kissing my mate and I definitely should have been pissed about that...but he was kissing my mate and it was really freaking hot, so...

Ethan returned the kiss for a long, lingering moment before jerking back and growling.

"Sex can't fix this," he snapped, his arm moving around me as he pulled me closer.

"I beg to disagree," Sin said with a shrug, dropping his mouth to Ethan's neck as he gave me a look which commanded me to agree with him. "You're an Alpha Wolf, you need to feel like one. So let me play Beta for you, big boy, and me and your sex pot mate can show you how much better this pack is than your old one."

I ran my fingers up into Ethan's hair as he moved his gaze to meet mine



and there was a hunger in his blue eyes which made my whole body prickle with energy. My mate needed me. He needed to know that this sacrifice was more than worth it. That he hadn't lost anything because his place was right here with me. With *us*.

I pushed up onto my tiptoes and kissed him slowly, memorising the feeling of his mouth against mine, inhaling the scent of him, drinking in the taste of him, owning him and letting him know he owned me too.

Neither of us had asked for this, but whenever we just gave into the pull of our bond like this, it couldn't have been clearer that we were fated. Me and him were written by the moon herself. And there was nothing in this world or the next that could tear us apart.

"Your place is right here, mate of mine," I breathed, my fingers moving to his jumpsuit as I began to unbutton it for him.

Sin's fingers joined mine as he helped and Ethan groaned as he found himself between us, both of us working to comfort him the way our kind needed. With the love and attention of the pack. Sin was always so in tune with what the Fae around him hungered for that he didn't even need any guidance, falling into the role of a Wolf as easily as if he'd been born for it.

His mouth moved down Ethan's throat as I took possession of his lips, and I could feel just how much my mate was enjoying that from the press of his erection driving into me. He longed for this. He had to know he still had a place. A pack. No matter how small that pack might be.

Sin shoved Ethan's jumpsuit down and I backed up, breaking our kiss as I kicked my boots off and continued to back away from the two of them, biting my lip as I watched Sin drag Ethan's tank top up and over his head. His chest was inked with the serrated half moon of the Lunar crest and I moved forward to score my thumb across it while Sin stepped aside to give me access.

“My Lunar,” I growled.

Ethan’s pupils dilated and a savage noise left his throat as he yanked me closer and I tracked my fingertips down his rock hard abs, tracing the perfect ridges of his muscles.

“My Oscura,” he purred, dark deeds swirling in his eyes. He was a ruthless king, tameable only by me, but I knew his power. I saw it every time I looked at him, and in the way other Fae bowed to him. When I stood before him like this, I felt certain I was the queen born for him, and together we could rule the whole damn world if we only cared to take it.

I stepped away again and watched as Ethan removed his boots and jumpsuit as Sin ran his fingers down my mate’s spine. Sin fistfisted his own dick, pumping it as his attention moved onto me with carnal intent.

"I can feel your lust," Sin growled, watching me as I stripped down to my underwear and kept backing away from them towards the centre of the room where a heap of copper coloured meditation cushions were piled together.

"What are you going to do about it then, stronzo?" I teased, my gaze straying from the perfection of Sin's enormous body to the sculpted muscles coating Ethan's.

"Just wait and see, wild girl."

Sin gave Ethan a little push towards me, and my mate growled low in his throat as he prowled closer in nothing but his boxers where the hard length of his cock was outlined straining against the material.

I backed up a little more until I was in the centre of the heaped cushions then paused, dipping into a defensive position as my instincts insisted I hold my ground.

“Are you going to fight me or fuck me, love?”

“I haven’t decided yet,” I taunted. “Why don’t you come over here and find out?”

The corner of Ethan's mouth hooked up at the challenge I presented him and in the next breath, he pounced.

I growled at him as he collided with me, taking me down onto the cushions and trying to force me beneath him as he used the advantage of his weight against me. But I was faster than him and I managed to roll us again, landing on top of him and grinding my hips over his as I leaned down to kiss him hard.

Ethan groaned as he sank his tongue into my mouth, his fingers gripping my ass tightly as he rocked my centre over his solid dick, proving just how much he needed this release.

I gave in to the command of his movements, grinding against him and moaning as the pressure built against my clit.

“Fuck me it is then,” he said in that cocky, self-assured way of his.

“Maybe I’ve changed my mind.” I grinned like a heathen, lurching up to bite him, but Ethan flipped us again so suddenly that I had hardly even realised I was on my back before my panties were being tugged off and he was tossing my legs over his shoulders.

"No chance, love. I'm gonna show you how good it feels to let me own you," he growled as he dragged his mouth up the inside of my thigh and I gasped as he dropped his lips against the centre of me without any fucking about.

A moan escaped me as my spine arched and I chased the movement of his tongue against my clit, pushing my fingers into my hair as my eyes fell closed and I drowned in the perfect actions of his mouth on my flesh.

Sin's lips found mine in the darkness behind my eyelids and I parted them for his tongue as he moved one hand behind my back and somehow removed my bra in the blink of an eye.

I moaned into his mouth as he began to toy with my nipple, tugging and

squeezing in the perfect rhythm to compliment Ethan's movements against my clit. It was a sin how good he was at this and hell if his name didn't make so much damn sense.

My entire body came alive with the feeling of their hands on my flesh and I almost lost myself to the sensation, but my instincts were warring beneath my skin, begging me to take command and stopping my release no matter how close they were driving me towards it.

"On your back, big boy, she can't let go like this," Sin snapped before I could say a word and suddenly Ethan wasn't between my thighs anymore.

I opened my eyes and found Sin shoving my mate down beside me while Ethan growled his own protests to the shift in position.

"Don't make us wait, kitten, take what you want from him or I'll give it to you myself," Sin commanded and I grinned as I pushed myself up onto my knees, positioning myself over Ethan's face so that his tongue could resume its progress with my clit while I leaned forward to take his cock into my mouth at the same time.

But as I ran my tongue up the length of Ethan's shaft, Sin leaned in too, tilting his head to one side as he joined me in licking him and Ethan's hips bucked beneath us. He growled against my pussy and I felt the deep tremor of that sound right to the depths of my core.

Ethan continued to feast on me while I fought to hold myself upright and concentrate on tasting him too, but as my tongue made it to the head of his cock, Sin pressed forward, kissing me hard and pushing me back until I was upright again.

My hips flexed as Ethan gripped my ass, guiding my movements as his tongue built me into a frenzy which I knew I wasn't going to be able to hold off on for much longer.

Sin dropped his mouth to my neck, moving lower until he was sucking my

nipple between his lips and making me moan louder. While he continued to torture my tits with his mouth, he dropped a hand to Ethan's dick and began working it for him, making a growl of warning and longing rumble through my chest.

Ethan was my mate, and I didn't want anyone's hands on him but me...but at the same time my gaze was fixed on Sin's fist as it pumped his cock, loving the way his big hand moved over the smooth perfection of his length.

Ethan groaned beneath me, his hips beginning to move in time with the firm strokes of Sin's fingers around his shaft and he sucked down hard on my clit, taking me by surprise and finishing me without warning.

I came with a cry of pleasure, arching my back as Sin sucked my nipple harder too and my gaze remained fixed on the sight of him jerking Ethan off. It was so fucking hot, my whole body was coming alive with it, watching these two Alphas together and feeling the press of their bodies surrounding me.

I shifted off of Ethan, allowing him to sit up and he tugged me around to kiss me, his hands roaming down my body while Sin moved in closer on his other side. Ethan groaned as Sin continued to work his cock, moving his hand between my thighs and pushing two fingers deep inside me as he kissed me hard, claiming my pleasure while taking his own from another.

I could see some of that pain leaving his gaze as he felt the attention of this new pack we were forming all focused on him and my inner beast purred in satisfaction at the sight of him accepting his rightful place at last. He wasn't fighting this anymore. There were no more secrets, no more lies. He'd claimed me in front of everyone and now it was time for us to build on that, make our own rules and form our own pack. And there was something so right about Sin being a part of that that I couldn't help but love seeing the way he was bringing Ethan even more pleasure with his touch.

As if he could tell just how much I was enjoying the show, Sin grinned at me, licking his lips slowly and making my heart pound faster as he shifted closer to Ethan's other side.

Sin lowered his mouth to Ethan's cock and my pussy clamped tight around my mate's fingers as I watched the incubus licking and caressing him before taking him in deep. Ethan groaned as Sin's mouth moved up and down his length, his eyes on me while his fingers continued to work magic between my thighs.

My heart pounded unevenly as I watched them, my own pleasure only mounting as Ethan's free hand fell to the back of Sin's head. He began to guide his motions, pushing him down harder as he thrust his hips to drive his cock in deeper. He was in his favourite position, dominating, controlling, being the centre of the world. He wore a new crown now, one which marked him as a deity, no longer just a king among rats. With us, he had true power, we all did. I could feel it every time I was with them. And I knew that included Roary and Mason as well, though I knew I'd never be able to bring them all together like this.

Sin's hand snaked onto my thigh as he tugged me nearer to him, his fingers biting into my ass until I was half straddling Ethan again and his stubble scraped against my thigh while his head bobbed in Ethan's lap.

Ethan pushed his fingers deeper inside me and I moaned as Sin moved his own fingers to my ass, sinking them in and testing the tightness while making me pant and come damn close to begging. Between the two of them working me over and the sight of Ethan's cock thrusting into Sin's mouth, I fell apart with a howl as my body gave in to their demands and I came hard for them both.

With a sudden growl, Ethan's hands locked around my waist and he yanked me fully onto his lap with my back to his chest as Sin pulled back to

make room for me.

The feeling of Sin's saliva coating Ethan's cock mixed with my own wetness as he pressed his thick shaft against my opening and with a sharp thrust, he drove into me all the way up to the hilt.

I cursed as Ethan began to fuck me with deep, rough thrusts that filled me entirely, his fingers biting into my hips as he fought to take control even though I was the one on top.

I reached for Sin as I caught him watching us and he got to his feet with a smirk that was so sexual, my whole body shuddered in anticipation.

He moved in front of me and I opened my mouth for his cock, gripping his thighs to support myself as I teased his piercings with my tongue and tasted the desire coating his tip.

I slid my mouth over the head of his thick shaft and swallowed him all the way to the back of my throat, loving the way he groaned for me as I did so.

Ethan growled in that Wolfish way that had my hackles rising at the challenge he was laying out and he started thrusting into me harder, deeper, guiding my movements on Sin's cock as he moved a hand to fist the back of my hair.

Sin's hands shifted between caressing the two of us as we fucked beneath him, and he watched us with a deep and unending need in his eyes like he was a god of sex who we were here solely to please.

The pleasure in my body built up and up and I moaned around Sin's cock as my pussy clamped hard around Ethan's length until the three of us were finishing together and their cum was filling me up in the best fucking way.

Sin drew back and I cursed in Faetalian as I collapsed against Ethan's chest and we fell onto the cushions, my chest rising and falling heavily as I panted on top of him.

But of course our sex god wasn't done with us yet, his cock not losing any

of its hardness despite the cum he'd just shot down my throat.

Sin flipped me over so that I was straddling Ethan before driving his cock into my pussy and shoving his weight down onto me so that I was sandwiched between them.

I swore and moaned, my fingers biting into Ethan's chest as I fought to meet Sin's punishing thrusts with my own movements while he battled to keep me beneath him.

Ethan reared up, kissing me hard and swallowing my cries of pleasure before breaking our kiss and meeting Sin's mouth over my shoulder as he fucked me harder and harder, using Ethan's body to hold me exactly where he wanted me.

Sin reared back suddenly and Ethan kissed me again just as his hand cracked down on my ass and he slammed in so hard that I had no choice but to come for him. My pussy gripped him tight, and he came too with a roar of pleasure that made my flesh tingle and my own orgasm go on and on.

We fell into a messy heap of limbs, the two of them pressing in close either side of me as we lay there panting and trying to recover from that embodiment of the Incubus's nature.

"You feel better now, shadow man?" Sin asked Ethan, grinning widely at him as the two of them brushed their fingers across my naked flesh and I just preened like the cat who'd gotten the cream.

"Yeah," Ethan admitted with a smirk. "I think I do."

We lay there for a while longer until the sounds of Ethan's pack hunting us faded away into the distance as they moved their search somewhere else.

When it was clear that they were gone, I untangled myself from between the two hot bodies of the men I'd claimed for myself and moved to retrieve our clothes.

"I think we should just shift and run up to commissary," I said, looking



back over at the two of them as they very unhelpfully checked out my ass and gave me the sex eyes again. But we didn't have any more time for that shit.

"Do you just wanna ride me, Sin, or do you have a form in your catalogue which can keep up with us?"

"Sadly my Vampires can only thrust at super speed," he said with a pout. "Apparently running about really fast isn't that much of a turn on for many Fae. I have a Pegasus form with a mega cock, but I'm not sure how great that would do on the stairs. My Harpy can probably keep up, but I'm not that great at turning corners with wings..." He rubbed his chin thoughtfully and I laughed as I tossed him Ethan's clothes to borrow.

"Looks like you're riding me then," I said.

"No. You can ride me," Ethan said, pushing himself to stand. "I'm stronger anyway."

"Oh you think so?" I challenged, a growl rumbling in my throat at that blatant lie.

"Come on, love. You know it's true. I'm the bigger Wolf." He flexed his muscles like a stronzo, but okay I looked because fuck me with all of Jupiter's moons, he was hot.

"Lies!" I hissed. "Sin - you can be the judge. I've only ever met one Wolf who was bigger than me and that was Seth Capella. This stronzo needs to know he's kidding himself."

Sin chuckled as Ethan scoffed and I flipped him off before shifting into my silver Werewolf form in the blink of an eye.

Four huge paws hit the cushions in the centre of the room and I raised my chin in challenge as Ethan followed my lead and shifted into his black Wolf form too.

We moved towards each other, tails high and noses bumping as the two of us growled and Sin started whistling as he strode over to judge the difference

between us.

He took his sweet time, making us move to stand side by side, comparing the length of our tails and tugging on our ears before he finally hopped up onto my back.

"It's a draw," he announced. "But I'm gonna say Rosalie wins because I figure I'll get my cock sucked again later for it."

Ethan barked angrily and Sin laughed as he got himself comfortable between my shoulder blades.

"What's that? You'll suck my cock too? Well okay then, I guess I'll have to be the judge of that as well. What a chore," Sin sighed and Ethan growled angrily in a clear refusal, but if he was happy for Sin to go down on him then I would very much be encouraging reciprocation even if the only reason was so that I could beat him at that too.

I knocked my flank against his as I headed for the door and the scent of burning filled the air as Sin cast a fireball in his hand.

"Shit, you guys fucked me good," he said with a little groan of pleasure. "I'm so full of magic that I could burst. I just hope I don't accidentally use it all up and have to fuck you again to refill too soon."

I barked at him to tell him off, but he just laughed before blasting the door to shit and allowing us to escape the room.

I slammed into Ethan, knocking him aside as I ducked low to fit through the door then took off at full speed towards the stairs.

Ethan snarled as he took chase, bounding after me and snapping at my heels as I made it to the stairs and started racing up them as fast as my legs could carry me.

Sin whooped and laughed on my back and I made sure to get in Ethan's way as much as possible to be sure he couldn't get by.

There were a few convicts on the stairs as we passed them, but most were

still celebrating and rioting deeper into the prison on the various levels. None of them paid much attention to us which I hoped meant the Lunars weren't close by either.

We made it to level one and I leapt out into the corridor with my teeth bared, ready to take on anyone who might be looking for a fight up here, but thankfully the place was abandoned. Maybe the stars were turning in my favour at last.

I moved to stand before the commissary which was still locked up tight and Sin hopped off of my back so I could shift into my Fae form.

Ethan remained as an enormous Wolf at our backs and I jogged forward to knock on the door to the commissary.

"Hastings?" I called, knocking again when no answer came. "Jack? It's me - Rosalie. I came to help get you out of here, ragazzo del coro. Cain sent me..."

There was no answer and I looked to Sin for some help. But he was more interested in staring at my naked ass than paying attention to what I wanted, so I gave him a solid thump to the arm before snatching my clothes from him and tugging them on.

I banged on the door a couple more times then asked Sin to do the honours of opening it for us.

He threw his palm against the wood and the whole thing exploded with the impact of his fire magic, making me shield my face from the splinters of wood before we stepped inside.

The space was small and it didn't take long to figure out that Hastings was no longer here, a curse escaping me as I wondered what that would mean for our deal with Cain. If he kept refusing to cooperate, we were going to have to decide how hard we were willing to push him for his help. And by we I meant *me* because I knew the others wouldn't have any kind of issue with

torturing the information out of him if that was what it took.

I swore again as my fist slammed into the remains of the door, my gut twisting guiltily over not finding Hastings. I'd been manipulating him for his help with my plans while I'd been locked up in here, but I hadn't ever intended for him to get hurt on account of me. He might have been a bit wet behind the ears, but he was a generally decent guy and I only hoped that he'd found his way to safety somehow and hadn't come across any of the less than savoury Fae in here who may have wanted to do him harm.

Sin grabbed a bag from inside the commissary room and quickly started filling it with all the best things that were on offer to buy there - mostly the sweets and chocolate - and I turned back to Ethan with a sigh of frustration.

This whole excursion had been nothing more than a solid waste of time. And with the clock counting down, we couldn't afford for that to keep happening. So from here on out, I was going to have to be a whole lot less generous with my decisions.



## **69 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...**

I didn't have to look at the monitors unless I turned my head, but as I'd been watching the chaos unfold in the prison and looking out for Hastings - who'd run out of the commissary and disappeared into a blind spot in the prison - I unfortunately hadn't missed Rosalie fucking Sin and Ethan where they'd been hiding from the Lunar pack. At least they'd been trying to find Hastings before they'd started fucking, but it wasn't exactly a comfort that they hadn't found him. Or that they'd fucked like animals right in front of a damn camera.

Sixty-Nine had stolen glances at the screen too and I'd glared at the Lion asshole as lust filled his eyes and rage spewed through my veins. He'd shifted back into his Fae form after bumping into everything in the room a hundred times and me cursing him out for slapping my damn face with his Lion balls. He'd done that shit on purpose, I knew it.

I didn't know what was more torturous though, him shifting back and giving me a view of the screen that showed Rosalie fucking Eighty-Eight and One together or dealing with his Lion balls pressed to my cheek. It was a sad fucking day in Darkmore when those two scenarios had become my reality.

They'd finally stopped fucking at least, but the curse was clawing at the inside of my skin as anger mixed with the bitter jealousy that was trickling deep into my blood. My body was too hot, my fangs prickling as they sharpened. To top it all off, I was thirsty. And my gaze kept shifting to the Lion's neck whenever he pushed some of that long ass mane of his away from it. I'd drain him dry if I got my teeth into him. Just keep drinking and drinking until he stopped kicking. I bet he tasted damn good too.

I held onto that little fantasy as I hunted for any sign of Hastings again, but it looked like he was staying put for a while. The guy didn't deserve to die in this place. He was better than that. Better than Darkmore. He should never have taken this job. The guards here were monsters in their own ways too, but he was the type of Fae suited for lighter work. The kind of work that didn't scar you on the inside or out. Darkmore was hell embodied, brought to life by the rulers of old to make criminals suffer. Which made each and every guard in this place a demon duty bound to fulfil that role.

At least, that was how I saw it. The lowlifes in here didn't deserve an easy ride. Murderers, rapists, monsters. If I had my way, I'd line up the worst of them and file them into a torture room where they could face the sins of those they'd wronged. *An eye for an eye. Take what you have delivered.*

"Every minute you keep me captive is another year on your sentence, Sixty-Nine," I taunted and his jaw flexed as he looked at me.

"This isn't about me, Cain, never was," he said, his eyes full of fire and passion and the kind of stupid emotions that got people killed.

"Let me guess," I said coldly. "You're doing it for the girl who just fucked two other men right in front of you?"

"Watch your tone," he said in a Lion's growl, but I wasn't afraid of him. Or anything for that matter.

"I fell for it too," I admitted, trying to soften the harshness of my tone.

“She lured me in, I almost believed she wasn’t like the rest of the inmates. But that’s her game. She’s played all of you to get her right here. Now she’s got a pack of powerful idiots surrounding her, willing to sacrifice themselves to get her out of this place. But if you really think she won’t drop you like dead weight the second it suits her then-”

“Shut your fucking mouth,” he snarled, taking a threatening stance as he glared down at me on the chair Rosalie had bound me to. “You don’t know anything about me and her. I’ve known her since she was a kid. We grew up together. So don’t you dare act like you know her better than I do because you’re dead wrong.”

Maybe he was right. Maybe he did know the real her, and I was the only fool who’d been a pawn in her game. I guessed it didn’t matter either way. It all amounted to the same thing for me, and this asshole was clearly not going to be swayed to my cause.

I shrugged at him, running my tongue over my fangs as my gaze moved to a vein in his neck again.

“I bet you’re starved,” he said as he noticed where my attention had strayed to, a taunting smirk pulling at his lips. “That’s how we all feel in here, you know? So damn hungry.”

“You got your ass landed in here, all you had to do was obey the law,” I said dismissively. “You can commit the crime but you can’t take the consequences. Everyone in this place is bitter like it’s the world who wronged them, but you’re the ones who wronged the world.”

“And what about your crimes?” he tossed at me, and the truth swirled in his eyes. Rosalie had told him about the illegal hunts I liked to take part in, she’d told him about the way I liked to hunt her too, and the evidence of that was clearer than ever in his expression now. “What makes you so different from me?”

It was a question I'd asked myself plenty of times over the years working here. The only thing that separated me from most of the prisoners in this place was the uniform I wore and that I'd never gotten caught. Would I fight tooth and nail to get out of Darkmore if I was imprisoned and the opportunity arose? Maybe. But it wasn't that I was so noble that I cared to try and stop these morons from attempting to escape, what really cut me deep was that I'd been used by the only girl I'd ever really...

I buried that thought before it went too far. When I looked at it logically, I was a fucking fool for falling for her lies. She'd used her words and her body against me. She was a honey trap and I was an animal who'd been without food for far too long. Of course I took a taste. Of course I went back for more. I'd just been so caught up in how good it felt to sate my hunger that I hadn't tasted the poison lacing the honey.

The door opened and Rosalie stepped into the room, seeming to suck all the air out of the space. If I'd hungered for the Lion, it was nothing compared to how much I wanted to drive my fangs into this girl's neck. Her blood called to me like it was designed for me. But if I fed from her again, it wouldn't be to drain her magic, it would be to take everything, to sate my need for revenge and have her weak and begging in my arms. I wanted her to feel as small and as disposable as she'd made me feel. But as I pictured snapping her slender neck once I was done, the curse burst through my veins like liquid fire and a pang of utter regret filled me over even imagining it.

I gritted my teeth through the pain, but had to squeeze my eyes shut as I battled the raging agony of the curse as it crept deeper and deeper into my body.

*I'm a dead man.*

*She did this. She used me and now my life is on a timer, counting down to my final heartbeats. It's a pity I never really lived. I've spent years in this*



*place as if I was an inmate, not a free man.*

Deep in my gut, I knew why I'd rarely left this prison. I was punishing myself for my failures, for the friend I'd let down when I was younger. I didn't deserve to live out all the dreams he'd had to travel the kingdom because my heart was black and I didn't crave the purity in the world like he had. I craved the dark, the depraved, the wrong.

Maybe I was the boy who'd deserved his fate, and I'd sought out penance between these dreary walls, feeding my inner monster in the illegal hunts I attended during my time off. I saw in me what Benjamin Acrux had wanted me to become. So I'd taken this job partly because I wanted to be the one who made sure Fae like him suffered at the hands of justice, to prove I wasn't bad through and through. But now look where I'd ended up? Bound and at the mercy of the very beasts I'd been trying to contain.

"I wanna talk to him alone, Roar," she said and Sixty-Nine nodded, brushing his fingers over her arm for a moment before leaving the room. Sin poked his head in, but the Lion yanked him away and pushed the door shut to leave us alone together. "So are you gonna talk?"

"You failed the one thing I asked of you," I said dismissively.

"I tried," she said in a growl. "We had to run from the Lunars and hide while-"

"You came all over two men's cocks? Yeah, I witnessed that, sweetheart. You locked me in here in front of all those security feeds, remember?" I said dryly, the knot of jealousy in my chest not easing up even a little.

Her cheeks pinked slightly as she glanced over at the monitors with a Faetalian curse falling from her lips.

"We had some time to kill." She shrugged, recomposing herself fast as she looked back at me. "And what do you care anyway, Mason? You didn't have to watch. You could have looked anywhere else."

“I wasn’t watching,” I muttered, but I was fairly sure we both knew that wasn’t true.

“Come on, I tried to find him. Doesn’t that count for something?” she pushed, moving closer to me.

I considered that, deciding it didn’t, mostly because I was so fucking angry at her that I could barely control the fog of rage in my head. I wanted to say that was because of her betrayal, but it was more than that now. Seeing her fuck those other Fae like they meant everything to her only drove home the point that I meant nothing.

“I’ll die before I tell you anything,” I said icily, figuring it was best she knew that now before she decided to waste her time torturing me.

She gazed down at me with a frown on her face and continued moving closer, each step she took captivating me, every movement of hers a seduction of its own. Was that just how she was naturally? Was it a show put on for me? I didn’t know and that was half the fucking problem.

She pulled another chair up and placed it in front of me before sitting on it and a flick of her finger tightened the vines binding my hands together. I ground my jaw, the curse still scorching my veins, but the mark on my arm throbbed as she got even closer to me, leaning in until our faces were just a few inches apart, though I kept my gaze on the wall to her right.

“Look at me, Mason,” she growled in a firm tone and I let my eyes slide onto her, my expression full of disdain for this manipulative bitch. Damn the stars, she was beautiful. Her face had to be a gift from the heavens put there to torture me, just another way to make me ache for her.

“There’s no way out, Twelve,” I said in a deadly low whisper. “You can crack open my head like a tin can if you like and scoop out whatever secrets you think are hiding in there. But nothing I know will get you out. There isn’t a way. It’s impossible.”

She lifted a hand, her fingers brushing over the stubble on my jaw and I jerked my head back, releasing a snarl.

“Don’t,” I hissed and her eyes glimmered with emotion. Probably a fake one.

“Do you want to know why I came to Darkmore?” she whispered, her breath fluttering against my mouth. Fuck, I was thirsty. So star damned thirsty I would have given anything to feed from her veins. To make her hurt while I took something valuable from her. Those thoughts made the curse throb angrily and I fought a flinch at the pain.

“That sounds like you made the choice to come here,” I said with a tsk.

“Maybe I did,” she said seriously, sitting back in her seat and I said nothing, though I couldn’t help my curiosity piquing. “This is a job, Mason. I was asked to come here to break out Sin Wilder. I’ll be paid a lot of money if I pull it off. But that’s not why I took the job. I took it because of Roary.”

“What makes you think I’ll ever believe another word that comes out of your lying mouth?” I growled and a flicker of hurt crossed her features. All an act. She was good at this, an expert. I wondered if she even knew where her fake personality ended and the real Rosalie began.

“I know I haven’t given you any reason to believe me. I know I’ve told you stories, played games. But it wasn’t all a game. And this is my truth, Mason. I came here to rescue Roary Night because ten years ago, he ended up in Darkmore because of me.”

I studied her expression, hunting for the lie, but I clearly wasn’t the best judge of her honesty.

She went on, “Roary was pulling a job at Lionel Acrux’s manor. I was with him that night, he needed me for part of the job.”

The name Acrux made my skin prickle and dark memories crawled up from the recesses of my mind. I’d been at the mercy of an Acrux once; I

knew their brand of cruelty, I knew how they liked to inflict pain and make the world bow to their whims. And I knew this about Roary Night too. That he'd stolen from the Dragon ruler, and honestly it hadn't surprised me that he'd been caught. No one went against Lionel Acrux and got away with it. That was something the whole of Solaria knew. But I hadn't known that Rosalie had been there – if it was even true at all.

“I was just a kid,” she said, her voice full of regret. “We were running away across the roof of the manor, Lionel was chasing us and the FIB were there. I got blasted off the roof, thrown into a swimming pool down into a courtyard. I didn't have my magic yet because I was only fourteen. I was gonna be caught, that was it. I knew I was done for. But then Roary came back for me. He could have left. He had time to escape. He didn't need to-” She shook her head, her eyes welling with emotion, but she wiped the tears away before they could fall.

I stared at her, unsure if this was just another lie she was painting for me. How could I ever know for sure? She had proved time and again that she was capable of weaving stories, of turning on the waterworks whenever it suited her. Was this just another attempt to manipulate me? Another way to try and burrow beneath my flesh and tether puppet strings to my heart?

“He saved me, knowing he'd be caught. And he's already lost ten years of his life in here,” she breathed. “I'm not going to let him lose any more time than he already has. So please, Mason. Help us.”

She gazed at me in desperation and I soaked up the need in her eyes, the fear, the panic that was setting in. The FIB were coming, her plan had gone to shit, and now all I had to do was sit pretty until they arrived. But so help me, that look still found a way into my chest and tugged on something vital.

“Damn you and your lies,” I said through my teeth. “I'm sick of them. You really think I'm going to help you? Allow you to use me like you did

before? Why don't you just let your other puppets in here to cut out the secrets you think I'm harbouring. I'd prefer it to this. At least there's honesty in brutality."

"I may have lied to you with my tongue, but I didn't with my body, Mason. What's between us is real. I know you feel it. Do you think I wanted to feel this way about you? At first you were meant to be a pawn, that's true, but then things changed. You were never meant to make me feel like this." She moved into my personal space again and I couldn't escape as her mouth brushed mine.

The smallest taste of her lips was enough to send me into a frenzy of bloodlust and carnal need.

She placed a soft, hesitant kiss against my mouth, her eyes on mine as she assessed my reaction. Blood rushed thick and fast to my cock, betraying my desire for her. I wanted to turn my head, but as her lips touched to mine again, I reared forward and bit her. My fangs split open her lower lip and as her sweet, intoxicating blood washed over my tastebuds, I lost all sense of myself.

She gasped as if she liked it and I started kissing her back between bites, hurting her, wanting her, despising myself for this weakness in me, and hating her for unveiling it.

"More," she begged against my tongue and I fucking hated that I wanted to give it to her.

But I couldn't. This was another game, another way to wrap me around her little finger.

I yanked my head back, turning my cheek as I swore in anger at myself. Her blood sent a buzz of energy through my veins and I realised the pain of the curse had receded. What did that mean? That it liked me kissing her? It made no damn sense.

Her fingers knotted in my t-shirt, her mouth moving to my ear, her breath hot and enticing on my flesh.

“Stop,” I commanded, though my heart pleaded for her to come closer, to let me fall for this girl’s lies and swallow every one of them once more so I could fucking drown in the sweetness of them. I wished it was real, all of it. Because the sad reality was that I’d never been happier than when I’d believed Rosalie Oscura wanted me.

“Only if you admit you feel this too. How could I fake this, Mason? Tell me. Because you’re like the pull of the moon to me. Do you think I wanted to fall for a guard? For a man who locked me away in the dark for months? This wasn’t how this was supposed to go, but it did. And I never meant to hurt you, but I made a promise a long time ago to rescue Roary and nothing on this earth will stop me from keeping it.”

I turned my head halfway back towards her, the curse seeming to thrum in time with my pulse as I fought the power of her enchantment. I saw her clearly for what she was now. A witch with the face of a temptress. And I would never be lured into her trap again, no matter how eager my body was to fall into it.

“You really want to get out of here?” I asked, keeping my voice low and soft like I was giving in to her charm. She turned to me, hope sparking in her eyes and I took a sick satisfaction in knowing I held that hope in my grip. “Well there’s only one way to do that, Rosalie.”

She leaned in closer, her fingers knotting tighter in my shirt, her eyes unblinking as she balanced her plans on my next words.

“All you have to do is go to the main elevator shaft, break your way through several feet of steel, get past the deadly traps awaiting you on the way up the shaft, then face the countless guards at the top. Somewhere along that journey, you’ll die and you’ll fly right out of here as a ghost.”

She lurched back from me with a snarl and I glowered at her.

“You think I won’t make it up there?” she scoffed.

“I know you won’t,” I said firmly, not liking that fire in her eyes as concern inched into my bones. *She won’t do it. She’s bluffing.*

She tossed her ebony hair over her shoulder and all pretence of caring about me vanished from her face. *Ah, there’s the true Rosalie. The one who holds nothing but disdain for me in her heart.*

“Don’t underestimate me, Officer. How well has that gone for you in the past?” She arched a single eyebrow.

“Don’t be a fool,” I bit out, not because I cared though because fuck her.

She stood upright, moving to lean against the wall and folded her arms. “Every daring Fae in history was called a fool before they pulled off the impossible. You don’t become great without first being discredited. It’s a right of passage. So spare me the health and safety talk and start telling me about the traps in that shaft.”

“I’m not telling you shit.”

“You’re gonna let me climb up there blind then?” she asked, hurt lacing her voice. “You really don’t care if I die?”

I stared at her, hating that idea more than I could I put into words. As furious as I was with her, I still couldn’t truly bear the thought of her losing her life in this stupid attempt.

“Don’t do this,” I rasped, though it came out as a plea more than an order. I was such a pitiful dumbass.

A crease formed between her eyes and she chewed on her thumb for a moment before she let out a sigh. “Just start talking, Mason. I need to know what I’m facing.”

Silence pooled between us as I kept my lips sealed, trying to figure out a way to stop her from attempting this madness. But the decision in her eyes

was like an unbreakable wall. Her mind was made up, but so was mine. I wasn't going to tell her a single thing that she could try and use to leave this place. Because if she needed the information I had, then I'd be sure to keep it locked up tight in my head until it was too late to be of any use to her at all.





The Daring Anacondas were in a dilemma.

“Flash bang! The Anacondas are in trouble. Flash bang! Better make it double. Flash bang! The angry Vampy’s gone mute. Flash bang! Doesn’t matter that he’s cute,” I sang our theme tune under my breath and Roary cut me a sideways look that said I was annoying him. But irritation was akin to sexiness on him. It made his dark brows dip low and his eyes go all grumpy brown. Brooding, that’s what it was, and I bet it looked good while he reared over someone and put them in their place with his danger dagger. Damn good. I’d let him brood all over me if that was what he wanted.

He’d been angry ever since we got back and I had to wonder if it was because he’d seen me fucking my wild girl and her mate on the CCTV feed. He’d mentioned that and he’d looked all kinds of pissed about it too, but I could also taste the lust on him which said if he’d been there we’d have had another cock in our cocktail. And I was down for that. Double down.

Ethan on the other hand, was in a far better mood and the lust that kept trickling from him told me exactly what he was thinking about. It gave me all the warm fuzzies because I knew I’d fulfilled the needs of my kind in pleasing him. But our problems didn’t have anything to do with Mr Moody O’Lion or Mr Dick Wasucked...no, it had a lot more to do with Mr Cain Myasshard and Miss Wolfup Mycock. Because the angry lust pouring from

those two right now told me everything I needed to know about how well Rosalie's interrogation was going.

She was crushing on fang boy so hard that I was half tempted to slip into that room, pull his pants down and force my girl's pussy onto his cock just to break the sexual tension between them. Maybe then we could all have a friendly orgy and put our issues aside. I mean sure, I wasn't a fan of Officer Cain, but I liked the look of his baton. Those guard's pants did wonders for outlining big cocks and his always looked like a treat waiting to be unzipped. And the grey sweatpants he was currently wearing might as well have been Saran wrap. *Mm. Damn. Rosalie really has good taste in men.*

"Flash bang!" I sang louder to get the other guys' attention. "There's a roadblock in our fate. Flash bang! The angry Vampy's full of hate. Flash b-"

"Stop," Roary cut over me, pressing his fingers into his eyes. "For the love of the sun, stop."

I jerked my thumb at him while pulling a face at Ethan. *This guy, amiright?*

"What's up, Sin?" Ethan asked, frowning at me and I hurried forward to form a hug circle with the two of them as I cast a silencing bubble around us. Roary resisted it, but I locked my arm tighter around him as I pulled them closer.

"Listen, kittens," I growled. "I can taste the lust on those two in that room so bad, my boner is gonna sprout legs and head off on a life of its own soon."

"By the stars," Roary muttered, trying to pull away again but I held on tight.

"Point being, Rosalie can't do what needs to be done because of how her pussy pitter patters around him. So we need to deal with it for her. You catch my drift?" I wiggled my eyebrows. "Is my coconut bobbing your way? Is my raft sailing up your river? Is my cockerel crowing at your window? Is my

spider crawling up your drainpi-”

“We get it,” Roary snarled. “But what do you expect us to do? She’s not going to let us interrogate him.”

“Thing about me is, Lion puff, no one *lets* me do anything. I’m Sin Wilder. Besides, she already gave me the go ahead,” I said knowingly.

“What do you mean?” Ethan frowned.

“She and I have a secret language,” I said smugly. “She wants this done, see? She told me in no uncertain terms that she needs that information from Cain, and that she needs a big strong boy or two to break into that melon balanced on his neck and spill out all its fruity insides.”

“She told you that?” Roary asked suspiciously.

“Yeah, in the secret language,” I confirmed.

“Bullshit,” Ethan said dismissively, pushing his fingers into his thick blonde hair.

“You can believe what you like, but the fact is we’ve got less than three days to crack our way out of Darkmore and even less time than that before the guards get access back to the prison from topside. So, my little devilish shrews, are we going to wait around for Cain to spill his beans, or are we going to spill them for him and save ourselves a lot of wasted time?”

Roary swallowed hard, glancing at Ethan who had worry written into his features.

“If we do nothing, Rosalie won’t get out of here. None of us will,” I said seriously, the thought of that more awful than dying in this place. My wild girl wanted out, and I wanted to follow her to the out. I wanted to taste good food again, I wanted to swim with tiger sharks and ride a killer whale. I wanted to visit that bird sanctuary set up by a Vega princess - before all the dooms and glooms fell on Solaria - and make friends with a talking crow. I had dreams, man, *dreams*. And Rosalie had dreams too, ones which I wanted

to fulfil more than I wanted to fulfil my own.

Just like a Fae bomb dropping on my head and exploding my brain into a million pieces, it hit me that I loved her. I was *in* love with her. The L word I'd never had any use for was now stamped to the inside of my skull with her name scrawled beneath it beside a picture of a tiny dick with a smiley face and a wavy hand. It was my happy place. Rosalie now dominated it over the tiny dick smiler I usually turned to when I needed to raise my spirits. But I didn't need that friendly dick anymore, I had something much, much better than him. I had love.

*Stars on a ballsack, I'm getting shivers.*

"We have to move. Now." I shoved away from them, about to stalk into that room and cut Cain to shreds when Ethan caught my arm and dragged me back.

"No. We can't hurt him. If what you said is true, she won't forgive us for torturing him," he said firmly, going all Alpha on me. I liked that, but this wasn't the time for it. I took a quick dick peek at his crotch though because I was an Incubus after all.

Roary seemed to be struggling with the mental nugget that Rosalie was hot for yet another guy and I had to wonder if that was to do with the fact that he hadn't stuck his rocket in her moon yet, or if it was just that it happened to be Officer Cain who held her attention right now. But we all knew how the phrase went, one is fun, two is bamboo, three woowee, four on the door.

And our girl wanted on the door. I wasn't sure why the door was so great, but I wanted on the door too. It just made sense.

"Stop pouting." I pointed at Roary and his broody sexiness. "You want her? Then lay your claim. Are you a Lion or a lampshade?" I demanded and his eyes widened at me calling him out like that. But I didn't beat around bushes - well not unless you counted beating my cock in a bush while I fed

on the lust of Rosalie fucking Ethan in the Order Yard that time. Then I supposed I did beat around bushes. But there was no time to jerk off in a bush right now. I had to focus.

Ethan released a low growl and Roary answered it with one of his own. There were pack dynamics here and Order instincts raging too. Lions and Wolves weren't so different in their polyamorous ways, but Wolf mates didn't usually do the sharing thing once they found each other, and Lions usually took on a pride of females not males. So it was all a bit complicated when it came to their fluffy Order ways. It was so much easier being me. My cock pointed due north (AKA to Rosalie) and swung south, west and east whenever she liked it to. I'd fuck all these guys for her pleasure and for mine too. It was pretty simple to me. We just needed to be her flock of horny geese.

"Let's just make a plan, yeah?" Roary snipped, clearly not wanting to talk about this with us. But it seemed like we were the best people to talk to about it. My cock had been so deep inside the girl he wanted, I could give him pointers about where to strike her pussy for maximum results. But would he take my help? Nope. He was planning to navigate her pussy alone, or at least I guessed he was. Maybe he was a virgin. Or a eunuch.

"Is your dick...intact?" I asked and he lunged at me with a snarl.

Ethan got between us, pushing him back and I smirked. *Oh Lion puff, you are gonna be so fun in the bedroom.*

"This isn't helping," Ethan hissed. "If we're going to do something, then we need to make a plan and do it now."

"Fine," Roary backed down and I stuck my tongue out at him which made him snarl at me again. "So how are we going to interrogate him without using force?"

"We need a Cyclops, duh," I said, rubbing my jaw. "Maybe I could pop

Gustard's eye out of his head, shove it on a popsicle stick then we could use it to-

"No. Gustard's gone to ground and you can't use a Cyclops eye once it's out of their damn head," Ethan said, folding his inked arms.

"Are you sure? Could be worth a shot?" I suggested.

"How about Quentin?" Roary suggested. "He's probably holed up in Interrogation. And we can just feed him a memory eraser potion from his supplies once we're done."

"That dude gives me the heebies. And the jeebies," I said with a shudder.

"He's an easy target now we have magic," Ethan said decisively and I nodded with a pout.

*Dammit, I wanted to pop out Gustard's eye and make it into a lollipop. Not for licking, obviously. Well...maybe just a little lick.*

"Alright, you stay here, kitten," I commanded Roary. "Cover for us if Rosalie comes out of that room." I clapped him on the cheek then grabbed Ethan's hand and towed him off down the corridor with a bounce in my step, not giving the Lion a chance to argue.

Ethan pulled his hand free of mine as we started running downstairs and I gave him a sideways grin.

"So I can suck your cock but not hold your hand?" I asked.

"Shut up," he bit at me.

"Hey now, don't be touchy. I just need to figure out your boundaries. No hand holding, but cock sucking is a go. Noted."

He huffed but didn't disagree.

"Shall we do a quick green light list just so I'm fully prepared the next time we're hard?" I asked casually, but he didn't answer so I went on.

"Alright, I'll start with my green light list. You can fuck me any way you like but if you're gonna knock on my back door, then sometimes I can get a bit

aggro. As in, you might have to beat me down to do it. It's my Alpha instincts. I like it once I'm down though. But I don't go down easy. I kinda turn into a savage animal. One guy lost a leg. Actually...I don't remember the last time someone got me down. I think it was that Bear Shifter who had me shift into a four titted leprechaun. Or it might have been the Cerberus who had me shift all my orifices into vaginas. All of them, shadow man. *All* of them." I pointed at my ear as Ethan's upper lip peeled back.

"And you liked that?"

"Well...it wasn't really about *me* liking it. It was about them. I had to fuck for cash sometimes because my pockets were full of broke dust bunnies and sometimes it was the only way to get a roof over my head for the night too, so..." I shrugged and Ethan's brows lowered.

"That's awful, man," he said and I shrugged again.

"There are worse things for an Incubus to be doing."

"Not if you didn't wanna fuck those Fae," he pointed out and my face twisted in a frown.

I supposed he was right about that. But that was the thing about my body, it was a sex toy ready to shift into anyone's wildest wet dream so I could feed on their lust and recharge my magic. It was how I was built. And maybe they'd been using me, but I'd been using them right back. So did it really matter?

We reached level nine and I stuck my head around the corner to check for enemies. The corridor was clear, so I led the way along it towards the interrogation room and slowed as I reached the door. I brushed my fingers over the handle, sensing the magical locks in place on it from the other side. But I was Sin Wilder. A street rat turned handsomely paid handsome assassin. I knew how to break through any lock, sneak into any house, and my targets never faired well once I was inside.

The thrill of using my magic for one of my old favourite games sent a buzz of energy into my limbs as I flicked my fingers and worked on the locks holding it closed. With a bit of magical skill and plenty of finger wiggling, they dissolved under the intensity of my power and I glanced back at Ethan with a smirk before turning the handle and swinging the door wide.

I leapt into the room without a second's hesitation, hands raised and air magic already catapulting from my body in a storm that flipped the tiny little cretin of a torturer upside down so his white lab coat fell over his face and he screamed as I started spinning him in a furious tornado.

"Yes, yes, yes!" I cried excitedly as his shoes went flying in opposite directions and he made a noise like a dolphin with a blocked blowhole.

"Flipper's not coming to save you, creepy man," I laughed.

"Enough," Ethan barked, shoving my hand down which was raised for casting.

I dropped Quentin on his head and he tried to scramble past us towards the door, his hand raised to cast magic back at us, but his dizziness made him clumsy.

Ethan froze his hands solid and we closed ranks around him, penning him in between us. We were violent monsters in that moment, the kind that fed on weaker prey, and this evil little weasel of a man had spent far too long above us in the food chain when he had no right to be there. With our magic intact, he was nothing. The pecking order was finally restored and I personally was in the mood to peck his eyes out.

"Ca-cor!" I cried like an eagle, karate chopping his neck.

"Ow," he snapped and I pouted when he didn't immediately pass out like people did in the movies.

His sharpened teeth and red eyes were nothing but some freaky magical attempt to try and make himself more intimidating. But what had really



scared me anytime I'd ended up at his mercy in here was him crawling through my mind like a scarab beetle looking for a feast on my brain.

I'd been pretty good at hiding what needed to be hidden from him, but he always got his grubby mitts on a juicy memory or two from my past. Like me lying in a gutter as a kid after a couple of Minotaur teenagers had robbed me and stabbed me with their horns.

Jerome had found me and taken me back to the foster home to be healed. It had been a close call. I still remembered the cold pavement against my back and the garbage can next to me, wondering if that can looked like the one my mother had dumped me in as a baby. I'd thought about whether she was out there somewhere, anywhere, sparing a single thought for the child she'd tossed away like an old cabbage. Quentin had replayed that memory to me, the thoughts I'd had then too, the ones that had haunted me for years. That I was trash, disposable and unwanted. That my own mother had taken one look at me and seen nothing worth keeping.

I felt those old memories creeping in and snarled, bitching slapping Quentin and gripping the collar of his lab coat. "Let's go play with our new toy," I hissed at Ethan.

"What's gotten into you?" he muttered, but I didn't answer, my muscles bunching as I hauled Quentin towards the exit and did a mental dance with my fury, back and forth, back and forth, trying to dance it to its doom. But it wouldn't quit jiggling.

"What do you want!?" Quentin shrieked and I bashed his head against the doorway as I guided him through it.

"Oh sorry little fella, did I hit your noggin?" I asked sweetly as Ethan chuckled.

"Get your hands off of me," he demanded as I swung him to the other side of the doorway so he hit that too.

“Oopsie daisy,” I cooed.

“Come on.” Ethan jogged ahead of us and I scooped up our little angry man and tossed him over my shoulder. His sharp teeth immediately sliced into my ass and I roared in anger, letting go of his ankles so he hit the floor on his head.

“You bite my ass, you’d better be prepared to get yours bitten back.” I strode after him as he started scrambling away, struggling to get up as the ice over his hands made him slip and slide.

His ass was raised in the air and I lunged forward with a snarl, sinking my teeth in deep and making him yelp like a wounded animal.

“Remember the time you broke my back in three places?” I asked him coolly, standing up and spitting to get the taste of him out of my mouth. Ergh, he was like a cockroach flavoured dildo.

“It’s just my job!” he wailed as I scooped him up again and stole the air from his lungs so he couldn’t talk anymore. Ethan sealed his lips with some ice and I threw him over my shoulder once more, quickening my pace.

Ethan’s hand dropped to my ass as I reached his side and I arched a brow at him as my lips hooked up at the corner. “Hey honey pie, you getting hot for me again?”

Ethan rolled his eyes as a flash of his healing magic worked wonders on the bite mark on my butt cheek. “You wish, man.”

We hurried back to the stairwell and Ethan’s head snapped around at the sound of a distant howl. “Hurry up,” Ethan urged and we started running downstairs.

Unfortunately, I had to let Quentin breathe again before he passed out on me.

We made it back to the CCTV surveillance room and Roary jogged over to us, looking so impressed with me that I wouldn’t have been surprised if he

was about to offer up a winner's BJ. I could tell that from his single raised brow, but sadly I didn't have time for a broody blowy and he seemed to have realised that too as he went on. "You need to hide him before she comes out, idiot. And one of us needs to cause a distraction."

Ethan acted faster than me, yanking Quentin from my shoulders, throwing him to the ground and casting a throne of ice over him. He sat on it with a cocky smile on his lips and I grinned, grabbing hold of Roary and throwing my fist into his face.

"What the fuck?" he stumbled back a step and I gripped his jumpsuit, tearing it down the chest to reveal his fuck hot abs. "You need to look like you were attacked."

"Why?" he growled.

"Because you're our distraction." I threw him down the corridor with a huge gust of air and he cursed me with every bounce of his body on the floor.

I trussed him up good with my air magic and shut off his grumblings by stealing the air away from his throat, sending him flying along ahead of me on a furious breeze. He thrashed like a wild thing and I chuckled as I ran after him, checking the security cameras and making sure we were moving along in the blind spots.

I found the next level up empty and I wondered if it would stay like that as I ripped some vines off of the wall which must have been cast there by some earth Elemental and started tying up my little Lion puff as I placed him on his feet.

I let him breathe as I yanked his arms behind his back and my cock jerked to attention as I dragged him firmly against me, biting his ear.

"What the hell are you doing?" he snarled.

"Just testing the waters, sugar. Are you ramrod straight or is there a little bend in you?"

“What are you talking about?” He dropped his head to pull his ear away from me and I laughed.

“You’ll figure it out, kitten.” I hooked a vine off the wall that was still attached to the ceiling and tethered it to his hands before shoving him forward to where the camera could see him.

“See you later, baked potato.” I ran away with a manic laugh, sprinting downstairs and getting back just as Rosalie stepped out of the surveillance room with worry in her eyes.

“Someone caught Roary,” I panted dramatically and Rosalie growled ferociously.

“I know, I just saw him on the camera feed. Stay here and guard Mason,” she commanded in a fierce tone and me and Ethan nodded as she ran down the corridor.

*That was easy peasy, lemon squeezy.* Speaking of which, I tugged a lemon from my pocket and gave it a little squeeze. *Nice.*

We didn’t have long, so we needed to get a skip on.

Ethan melted the ice throne and pulled a shivering Quentin to his feet as we hurried into the room.

Cain looked up from his chair, his eyes sharpening on Quentin and his upper lip peeling back to expose his fangs as he realised what we were going to do. And we were going to do all the things. The stuff too. The bad kind of all the things and all the stuff. Oh-ho yes.

“I need to get in his head, Quentin. If you show me everything he knows about the security in Darkmore, especially the elevator shaft, then you’ll live. If not, I’ll feed you to the Belorian,” I said simply and he nodded, a murmur of terror escaping him.

I guided him over to Cain as Quentin’s two eyes slid into one big bug eye that was creepalicious, revealing his Cyclops Order as he prepared to do my

bidding.

Cain gritted his jaw, glaring at me with unwavering nerve in his gaze. He was one tough nut to crack, but I'd crack him alright. Because I was going to wrap his nut in my fist and squeeze – not his literal nut, but come to think of it, I wouldn't have minded having a little squeeze of those. But if I did that, he'd definitely get an angry boner. And I bet he was the kind of guy who took hate fucking to a whole new level. A level I wouldn't have minded Mario Karting my way to and parking up to let him put his Luigi in my Peach. So long as my Rosalie was there to watch.

“Pretty, pretty fang boy. If only you'd made this easy on yourself,” I sighed as I took hold of Quentin's arm so I could go with him on this adventure into Cain's brain.

Honestly, I was kinda excited to get a glimpse into the inner workings of this angry Vampy's head. I had a semi over it already.

Cain's muscles bunched against his restraints, but it did no good as Quentin laid a hand on his forehead and the pull of his Cyclops power dragged me away into his mind. I felt Ethan's presence too as he joined the brain party and I let out a light giggle that seemed to echo around us.

The first thing I felt was a solid wall, like dark, impenetrable bricks had been built in our way to stop us from going further. Cain's mental barriers were strong and that was annoying as hell because we were already losing valuable seconds.

Quentin worked to break through the wall and I forced my own mental power against them too to try and help him. Ever so slowly, light started cracking through the wall and I was yanked towards some of it, sliding through the gap like I was water until a memory washed over me in a wave, seeing it through Cain's eyes like it was my own.

*“Fight or die!” the middle-aged blonde man boomed in my face so loudly*

*that I stumbled back a step. “Only the strong deserve a place in my family.”*

*The other young boys and girls were gathered around in a circle with the eldest boy in the middle of them. Ian Belor was sixteen, his Harpy Order already Emerged and his dark brown wings were out, flexing as blood glinted on them. Decon was on the concrete floor beneath him, groans of pain leaving his lips as he was left to suffer there with his arm twisted at an awkward angle.*

*I needed this. Benjamin had taken me in last week, given me food when I was on the verge of starvation from living on the streets. He’d been kind, or at least kinder than anyone else I’d known. I couldn’t survive alone anymore. Not without magic or even my Order. But I thought all I’d had to do to deserve my place here was pickpocket the odd rich guy to keep Benjamin happy.*

*The other boys had spoken about the fight nights, I just hadn’t thought it would be like this. No one had stepped in when Ian had brought Decon to the floor, Benjamin hadn’t called time on the fight even when Ian had kicked and beat him well beyond what was necessary. I’d watched as blood spilled from Decon’s lips and I’d just stood there, watching him suffer and hating myself for not trying to help. But this was a Fae on Fae fight. I knew better than to get between two of my kind. That wasn’t how things worked. And yet...it felt so wrong.*

*Benjamin’s hand slid around the back of my neck, drawing me closer, his touch cold. He was huge, a Dragon Shifter with a streak of wildness in him that made him unpredictable.*

*“Are you too afraid, Mason?” he asked, smoke pluming from his nostrils as his eyes turned to reptilian slits. “Because fear doesn’t belong in my house.”*

*I was afraid. Terrified. But I didn’t want to die. And there was something*

*about Benjamin that made me want to prove myself worthy of being here.*

*“No,” I forced out, saying it loud and clear for the whole room to hear. It was a lie, but the least I could do was try and sell it.*

*“Then get in the ring and show me how Fae you are.” He shoved me forward and the crowd of kids parted to let me through.*

*Ian flexed his bloody fingers, a smirk pulling at his mouth. He was four years older than me and a lot bigger, but standing before him made him seem as large as a mountain.*

*A couple of boys dragged Decon out of the ring and his wails called back to me as he was carried into the sleeping room. It was just an old lounge piled with blankets and rickety chairs where we all slept, but it beat curling up in a cold doorway at night.*

*Ian flexed his wings, peacocking as he puffed up his chest and pushed his damp fingers through his ruddy hair, wetting it with the blood of the boy he'd just destroyed.*

*Benjamin moved to sit on his large wooden chair up on a couple of pallets so he could watch, sipping some vile orange liquor before he called out for the fight to start.*

*Ian's first punch shattered something in my jaw, his next floored me and as hard as I tried to get up and fight, I couldn't win against his superior strength. I was a mouse crushed beneath the foot of an elephant and no matter what I did, I simply wasn't strong enough to save myself.*

*My head spun as I was forced out of the vision, hitting the dark wall again and I heard Cain roaring in my head. “No!”*

*Quentin tugged me towards another crack of light in the wall while others closed up as Cain worked to keep us out. But we slipped into it before he could stop us while my gut twisted over what I'd just seen.*

*I stood tall over my latest victim, the boy bloody at my feet as my breaths*

came in furious rags.

“Good boy,” Benjamin called from his seat. “My fine, fine warrior. Your strength shines brighter every day.”

I raised my chin as the boy I'd beaten was dragged away and my chest heaved and fell. I'd spent years working to achieve this position, to never be beaten in a fight again. Benjamin promised glory to the strongest and when they were old enough for their magic to Awaken, he took them away in the night to somewhere they didn't return from. It was a secret. Bliss he called it. But the rumour was that he used the money we brought him to set up homes for his best fighters. And I only had a couple of years left until my eighteenth birthday then I could follow in Ian's footsteps. If I could get set up somewhere with some money once I was Awakened, I could buy my way into one of the magic academies and learn how to hone my power, really make something of myself.

My eyes found my friend Merrick among the crowd watching me as he grinned. He wasn't as big as me, but I helped him train for the fights so he got by. He'd been half my size when he'd arrived here last year, but he'd put on a decent amount of muscle since. He was the only one of the others I'd found a real bond with despite him being younger than me.

Merrick wanted more from life than I'd ever had the imagination to think up. He dreamed of faraway places, foreign foods, and mysterious kingdoms. He was just an orphan like me, but he had the mind of a king, someone who could own the whole world if only he could grasp it. I listened to him talk about all the adventures he planned for hours at night, laying side by side on the old couch cushions we'd pushed together in one corner of the lounge. He was the reason I fought every day to gain Benjamin's favour, the reason I pushed him to catch his eye too. Because one day we'd be chosen by him and sent to Bliss. We'd get riches and glory and we'd get to go on every



adventure he could think up.

I helped my latest victim to his feet, but he shoved me away, a sneer on his lips. Being the favourite meant I was hated by most of the other kids in this place. But I could bear their hatred so long as I had Merrick and our dreams of a future. I didn't need anyone but him.

I moved to step out of the ring, but Benjamin called out, "Wait."

There was a heavy aura about him today, it made my skin prickle with fear. Sometimes he got in such a rage that he'd drag kids into the ring himself and beat them, using his earth magic to hold them down while he got them good and bloody. I'd been at the receiving end of his fists plenty of times, but I knew now that it made me stronger. That Benjamin was just trying to forge us into the Fae we needed to be to face the world beyond these walls. And one day he'd reward us for that strength. But if we were weak, we were out.

Kids went missing from this house in the night all the time and Benjamin would gather us all the next morning and tell us how he kicked them back onto the streets for letting our family down. I didn't plan on being one of them. There couldn't be anything worse than returning to the life I'd come from, where no one cared whether you lived or died.

"Merrick," Benjamin barked, pointing him into the ring. "You against Mason."

My throat tightened as I looked to my friend. We'd fought before so it wasn't like we couldn't manage this. That was the way of this place, though I didn't enjoy making him bleed.

Benjamin smiled cruelly as Merrick moved to face me. I'd win this fight. I always did. We'd rehearsed it a hundred times. He'd end up on the ground with a bloody nose, but nothing worse than that.

We shared a secret smirk before the fight began and started landing

punches on each other, hard enough to satisfy Benjamin, but not enough to do any real damage. By the time we'd played out the fight, Merrick was on his back, cupping his nose and groaning as he rocked from side to side.

I glanced over at Benjamin, finding him watching Merrick closely as he ran his fingers through the stubble on his square jaw. His eyes were demonic, full of hellfire and my heart stammered as I found myself stepping firmly in front of Merrick as if to shield him from the venom pouring from our Dragon ruler.

Benjamin said nothing, but as I helped Merrick to his feet and drew him away through the crowd of kids, the hairs on the back of my neck stood on end and I couldn't shake the feeling that Benjamin was angry.

We slid out of the memory and fell straight into another one that seemed to run on from the last.

It was one of the colder nights, the fire in the grate not nearly enough to warm us through as I shivered beside Merrick on the couch cushions, the thin blanket covering me not doing anything to keep out the icy air.

Every time my eyes cracked open, they instinctively went to the dark shadow of Benjamin in his chair in prime position by the fire. I always preferred to know where he was, because when I didn't it usually meant something bad was happening. Like he was teaching one of the kids a lesson for stealing from the rations. I'd heard the screams coming from downstairs before and I knew I'd hear them again. But at least tonight he seemed to be staying put.

Merrick rolled towards me with a low groan.

"F-fucking freezing," he said through chattering teeth. "I h-hate the cold. We should move to the south and try to get into one of the academies there when our magic is Awakened."

"Good plan," I agreed, bringing my fingers to my mouth and blowing air

on them to try and warm them up.

*“I heard there’s a nudist beach there that’s ten miles long and full of the hottest chicks in Solaria,” he said with a chuckle.*

*“What are you gonna do when you get there? Whip out your micro dick to impress them?” I taunted, my breath causing a puff of vapour to rise between us.*

*He laughed. “Shut it, you’ve seen my mega dick. I’m gonna Emerge as something big for sure.”*

*“Nah, you’re a Sphinx if ever I saw one. All you ever do is read those shitty old travel books in the den. They’re so old those places are probably in ruins by now,” I teased and he snorted.*

*“Where should we go first?” he asked, though we’d had this conversation hundreds of times before.*

*“I like the sound of the Polar Capital,” I said.*

*“The one place that’s colder than this room?” he scoffed and I smirked.*

*“It just sounds...I dunno... quiet.”*

*“Is this place too loud for you?” Merrick asked.*

*“Everywhere’s too loud for me,” I admitted.*

*I liked way less company than I was forced to keep at Benjamin’s house. I had to carve out spaces for me to breathe. Merrick was the only one I liked the constant companionship of and I was pretty sure that was because he was my Nebula Ally – my friend chosen for me by the stars. Before him, there hadn’t been anyone I’d cared to spend much time with. And I couldn’t really imagine there being anyone but him either. He was the opposite of me, speaking to fill the silence when I didn’t feel like talking, always making friends with the other kids. I never envied the way everyone loved him. That was just who he was, and I didn’t like the spotlight being on me. He drew the light away and I needed that as much as he needed the attention on him.*

*“Alright, as soon as we get sent to Bliss, we’ll go to the Polar Capital, ride a polar bear and eat a snow cone. At least you’re an Aries, when your fire magic Awakens you’ll be able to keep us toastie all the time.”*

*I grinned. “Deal.”*

*We both reached out, locking hands like we were making a star vow, even though we couldn’t make a real one without magic. Somehow, I felt warmer as my eyes closed again and I dreamed of the snow falling against my cheeks as I rode a giant polar bear, chasing Merrick on his own up ahead of me. The white was endless in every direction, the silence perfect, the dream so happy I didn’t want to wake from it.*

*But a thump made me jolt out of it. It was still dark, the cold clinging to me, drilling bone deep into my body. My eyes flashed to the chair beside the dying fire and my heart flinched as I found the seat empty.*

*“Merrick,” I hissed, reaching out to the dark lump in front of me. My fingers clamped around his scrunched up blanket, but no warm body. I pushed upright, squinting against the dark and finding his bed empty.*

*Another thump sounded from somewhere downstairs and I pushed to my feet, my pulse hitting an uneven beat. I padded across the room, stepping over sleeping bodies as I made it to the door and slipped into the stairway.*

*Another thump made me pause, but I forced myself on, wanting to find Merrick. He’d probably just gone for a piss. It was no big deal. But as Benjamin was missing too, I just needed to check. I needed to be sure.*

*Another thump sent my heart into overdrive as I made it downstairs and moved through the kitchen toward the wooden door that led to the alley where the trash was dumped. I pushed it open, tripping on a pair of Benjamin’s boots by the door and stepping out into the frigid air. Snowflakes were dancing in the breeze and my gaze locked on Benjamin standing up in the bed of his truck, the low glow of the brake lights illuminating the space in*

red.

*He had something in his arms and with a sickening twist of my gut, I realised it was a small boy, one of the new kids. His mouth was agape, his throat slit and blood still oozing from the wound as Benjamin tossed him onto a few other bodies laying in the truck bed with a thump that made me still. Fear coiled like a snake in my stomach and I couldn't make my legs move as I watched.*

*Benjamin didn't spot me as he climbed down from the truck, his clothes gleaming wetly. And as he moved around the vehicle, he paused in front of a dark mound on the concrete at his feet.*

*Benjamin pressed a foot to the side of the body and as it rolled, all I could see was blood for a second before my eyes sharpened on the pale face of my best friend.*

*My lungs ceased to work and my mind rejected the truth before me. But I couldn't deny it. The truth was right there, glaring me in the eye and demanding I accept it.*

*Merrick was dead, stone cold dead in this dingy alley with a gaping wound in his chest and vines coiling out of his gaping mouth. He hadn't just been killed, he'd been butchered, tormented before he was ripped from this world and as Benjamin heaved him into his arms and tossed into the truck bed with the other dead kids, some crucial part of me snapped.*

*The stars started whispering in my head, hissing and spitting like they felt the rage and hurt that I felt over this. I heard words I didn't understand, in a language I couldn't speak. Then some fiery beast awoke within my chest, spilling heat into every piece of my veins. And with the roar of that fire spilling through my body, I somehow found magic rising in me like a tide. In the next second, my canines extended and a hunger unlike anything I'd ever experienced reared up inside me and begged to be sated. Somehow, I'd*

*Awakened. The stars had gifted me my magic and with it my Order had Emerged too. I was a Vampire. A predator. And I was starving for revenge as keenly as I starved for blood.*

*I ran with a burst of speed that rattled my brain, moving so fast I seemed to become one with the wind. I collided with Benjamin with a roar of anger, my fangs finding his throat instinctually and latching onto a vein. He bellowed in surprise, but the moment I had my teeth in him, his magic locked down and started flowing into me in huge waves of power that made my head spin.*

*“No – no!” he threw his fists at me, fighting, battling with all he had to try and stop me. But with my teeth in his neck, he was no stronger than a mortal, and I seemed to possess the strength of ten gods.*

*I couldn't stop. I wouldn't. I didn't know why he'd done this, but I needed his death in payment for it. I needed this pain in my heart to stop. But most of all, I needed Merrick to get up. To offer me one of his playful smiles and tell me about the life we were going to lead one day.*

*“ENOUGH!” Cain's voice split through my head and I found myself falling, hitting the floor on my ass as Quentin and Ethan fell down too.*

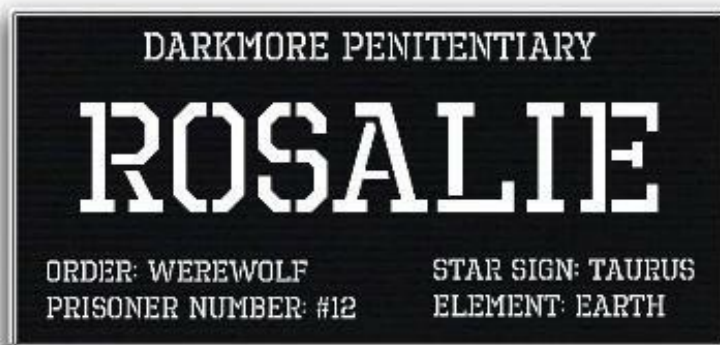
*I stared up at Cain as I blinked back into my own reality, his memories still swimming in my mind with so many questions on my tongue, I didn't know where to begin. Cain's teeth were bared and pain was flashing hot and furiously in his eyes as he glared at me, his horror clear at what we'd all stolen from him. And for the first time in my life, I was sorry for hating him. Because all I could see now was the broken boy who'd lost the only person he'd ever loved to a monster. And I had known the desperation of poverty too, I'd known what it was like to have one person in the world who I could rely on. And losing Jerome back then would have destroyed me. Like losing Merrick had clearly destroyed Cain.*

Quentin shoved past me, making a run for the door and I snarled, throwing out a hand and sending a blast of flames over him in my rage at what I'd experienced. I knew it wasn't Quentin's fault, but he was to blame for plenty of other atrocities and my angries were out in full force, unable to be caged.

He screamed as he died, my fire consuming him before he hit the floor and I extinguished the flames. Ethan stared at me in surprise, then looked to Cain with something akin to sympathy in his gaze, at a loss for what to say.

I panted as the power of the Cyclops interrogation continued to ebb away from my body and stared at the Vampire who I now knew better than I imagined most people really knew him.

"No wonder you hate the world, kitten," I breathed. "The world's been a big, bad beastie to you."



## **68 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...**

I reached up and quickly used my magic to untether Roary from the knotted vines he was trapped in, letting him fall to the floor with a grunt of irritation before I punched him in the arm.

"You nearly gave me a damn heart attack, stronzo," I snarled, swinging for him again but he caught my fist as he made it back to his feet and yanked me closer with it.

"Don't blame me," he growled. "This is on your dumbass mate and that fucking Incubus."

"What?" I asked in confusion. "Why would they tie you up like this and leave you here to..."

I sucked in a sharp breath of realisation and turned my back on Roary as I took off running again, my heart lurching with fear for Cain.

They wouldn't hurt him. Surely they wouldn't. I'd made it more than clear that they weren't to touch a hair on his head without my say so.

That said, I'd also made it more than clear on several occasions that I didn't want the fucking Belorian released from its cage, but Sin Wilder seemed to believe we had some secret code language where my words should actually be interpreted with the opposite meaning.



*Fuck, fuck, fuck.*

"Wait, Rosa, it's okay." Roary grabbed my arm and whirled me back around to face him, pinning me against the wall beside us as I snarled at him furiously.

"Were you in on this?" I demanded.

"I didn't agree to them tying me up as bait for you," he hedged, swiping a hand over his face. "But...yeah I did agree with the plan to force the information we need from Cain."

I shoved him hard enough to knock him back a step, making a move to pass him and head downstairs but he caught me again, caging me in against the wall and making my anger grow as I glared up at him.

"I'm warning you, Roary-"

"Look, they're not going to hurt him. They just went to Interrogation and broke in there to get hold of Quentin. They're going to make him use his Cyclops powers on Cain to get the answers we need. That's all."

"Oh okay, so you're sure that's all then, are you? You're certain that Sin won't think there's some secret plan going on down there that only he is privy to and randomly decide that the best course of action is to choke Cain to death with a fucking lemon or something equally ridiculous?" I challenged.

Roary's brow furrowed as he thought about that and I nodded.

"Yeah. So let's get back down there before he does something we can't undo. I may love that Incubus's brand of crazy, but I don't for one second trust him when it comes to following through on a plan. The voices in his head have too much sway over him for that."

"Shit," Roary muttered and this time when I shoved him aside, he let me, falling in behind me as I broke into a sprint and started running for the CCTV surveillance room where Cain was no doubt already falling prey to the power of a Cyclops trained in torture.

The screams and partying of the inmates echoed off the walls as we ran back down the stairs, but I didn't waste any time trying to figure out what they were all up to. So long as it didn't involve me I wasn't concerned about it - though I was starting to wonder where the fuck Pudding had gotten to with the transmitters. I needed to make contact with Dante ASAP and let him know what had gone wrong.

Aunt Bianca would be having kittens. My whole pack would be freaking out. But I couldn't worry about that. I'd make this work. I'd figure it out. No fucking way was I ending up stuck in this hell after all the work I'd done to get Roary out. We would be free by the end of these three days and I refused to even consider any other outcome. There was no room for fear, doubts or a loss of hope now. I was all in and I'd just keep going until I succeeded.

I was Rosalie Oscura and nobody got to tell me no. *A morte e ritorno.*

We made it back down to the CCTV surveillance room and I ripped the door open with a ferocious snarl.

Sin whipped around to face me, his brows going up as he spotted me and he quickly lunged to my right, trying to block my view of the very clearly dead body of Quentin which was sprawled on the floor to the side of Cain.

He threw a hand out towards the corpse and a bang sounded as he directed his fire magic into the body and Quentin exploded into a billion pieces. Blood and guts splattered the walls, coating the CCTV monitors and getting Ethan and Cain utterly covered with gore as they both cursed loudly.

I flinched back, luckily escaping the worst of it as Sin's bulk blocked me from it, but Roary swore as he caught a face full of entrails.

"Phew, he's gone," Sin muttered, offering me a wide smile like he'd only just noticed me. "Oh hey, kitten. I see you saved the Lion puff. Good job."

"What. The. Fuck-"

"We were just having a little chat with Cain here in case he felt like being

a bit more open now for no reason at all," Sin carried on, moving aside so that I could get a look at Cain who was completely smothered in parts of Quentin's body, his face filled with a mixture of fury and disgust.

"You're actually insane, aren't you?" Roary accused as he threw the door closed behind us and wiped the worst of the blood from his face. "You should be locked up in Psych. You just exploded a fucking body-"

"Body?" Sin asked innocently. "What body?"

Ethan broke a laugh and I didn't know whether to scream, cry or just fucking join in. There were blood and guts everywhere and Sin was acting so innocent I swear I almost bought his act.

"You do realise that I just witnessed you killing a member of staff, don't you?" Cain growled, drawing everyone's attention to him.

"Yeah and Quentin was a fucked up psycho who tortured me on more than one occasion," Ethan pointed out, the mirth falling from his expression as he closed in on Cain. "And he deserved worse than that. But if you wanna make a fuss about it, I'm sure the four of us can think up more than a few reasons that we might have to want you dead too - not least the fact that you threw Rosalie in the fucking hole for months."

"Well I think we all know you're planning on killing me anyway, so why delay the inevitable?" Cain challenged as he jerked against the vines which were restraining him, glaring at Ethan like he really did want him to just end this.

"Stop it," I commanded, moving past Sin and taking my place in the centre of the room. "Ethan, can you please spare a bit of water magic to clean the star damned guts off of us?"

"My pleasure," Ethan dipped into a mocking bow and I smirked at him as he directed a current of water to whip around the room and remove the last pieces of Quentin from all of us before depositing them in the trash can

where Sin promptly set them all alight again.

When the scent of burning Cyclops had been swept from the room with a gust of Sin's air magic, I sighed and relaxed back against the desk that sat in front of all the monitors. This was okay. Not great, but okay. Quentin was one hundred percent a psycho who had deserved what Sin had clearly given him and more. Plus there were no CCTV cameras in here so chances were no one outside of here knew what had happened to him and with a bit of luck maybe they hadn't seen Sin and Ethan drag him in here either. Chances of that were fairly slim but if we escaped it wouldn't matter anyway so I was just going to move on from that and focus on the fact that Cain seemed to be in just as good health as he'd been when I'd left and Sin didn't look inclined to kill him any time soon. Small victories.

"Seeing as it's too late for me to stop this hairbrained scheme now, does anyone want to enlighten me as to what you managed to find out then?" I asked, glancing between Sin and Ethan while Cain bristled on the floor in front of me.

"Nothing useful," Ethan muttered, running a hand over the back of his neck and looking at Cain for a moment before dropping his gaze to the floor like he wasn't very proud of what they'd just done.

"No," Sin agreed. "We just got to take a look at the place where Cain grew up with all the bad men and the creep who bossed him and a bunch of other kids about and how baby Cain used to cry himself to sleep because no one ever loved him and all that jazz. Totally boring and no use at all."

My brows pulled together as I looked to Cain who looked absolutely murderous over that invasion of his privacy and the recap of what sounded like a bunch of pretty messed up shit. Sin glanced at him again though with what I could have sworn was understanding in his eyes and Cain didn't seem to like that at all. So it seemed like all they'd done was piss him off even

more and make him even more determined not to help us one bit. Peachy.

"Well we certainly don't have time to sit around talking about which one of us had the most messed up childhood, that's for sure," I muttered, choosing to leave that particular bit of information alone for now rather than poke at it with the rest of the guys here. Cain was obviously unhappy with the fact that they'd seen it at all, and it seemed best to let him calm down before asking him anything about it.

"So are you saying that you didn't even get anything out of him after all that?" Roary asked irritably, shooting a scowl Sin's way.

"Nope," Ethan agreed, looking at Cain like he was a puzzle that needed solving. "He had everything useful in there locked up tighter than a Tiberian Rat's asshole."

"All assholes can be stretched out with the right motivation," Sin said matter of fact. "And a healthy dose of lube."

"Shut the fuck up, Eighty-Eight," Cain snapped.

"He has a valid point," I said with a shrug. "But that still doesn't help us much with our current problem."

I observed Cain for several long seconds while he scowled right back at me until I sighed.

"You're not going to help us, are you?" I asked him.

"Not for all the gold a Dragon could dream of," Cain replied furiously and I shot Ethan and Sin dark looks because this was their fucking faults. Roary too actually because he'd been in on the Quentin plan. Cain was loosening up before that. He'd been close to cracking, I was sure of it. He might have told me something useful. But now he was all butt hurt over whatever childhood trauma they'd just stolen a look at and I had about as much chance of getting help out of him as I did of teaching a clam to do a pirouette.

"Right then, fanculo," I announced, turning to look up at the CCTV

monitors again. "I say we just go for bust. There's one way in and out of this place and with our magic unlocked and a bit of brain power, I'm willing to take a chance on us making it out of here."

"You want to take the main elevator?" Roary asked, catching on fast and moving to stand behind me as he looked up at the monitors too. He placed his hands down on the desk either side of my hips and stopped with his body so close to mine that I could feel the heat of his flesh behind me.

"Isn't that full of all kinds of traps and shit for exactly this type of situation?" Ethan questioned, moving up on my right.

"Yeah. But I researched all of that before I came in here, so I have a pretty good handle on a lot of it. If there are some other nasty surprises waiting for us then I'm hoping that between our brains and our magic we'll be able to figure out a way past them too because Officer Cain clearly isn't going to give us the heads up now."

"Then all you have to do is make it past the army of guards waiting for you up at surface level," Cain said from behind us with a soft scoff.

"Yeah," I agreed. "Shame we don't have an army of our own to help us take them on..."

Roary chuckled as he moved closer behind me, brushing his lips over the side of my neck as his crotch pressed to my ass and his hands tightened around my waist.

"Good thing we have the queen of the Oscuras on our side, isn't it?" he murmured, moving his mouth to the spot behind my ear and kissing me in a way that made me arch my back like a cat. "How many members are there in your family's gang outside of here again?"

"Hmm," I said, pretending to think about it while Ethan growled a low warning from beside us, his gaze fixed on the way Roary's mouth was moving down the side of my neck like he wasn't happy about it. "I think it

was over four hundred at the last count - not including the outer circle of course."

"You can't seriously be planning to use the force of your gang to bust you out of here?" Cain sneered like he thought I was insane. "The FIB will-"

"Have a lot of footage of a lot of Wolves in their shifted forms with varying and unidentifiable features. I somehow doubt they'll be able to make any charges stick," I finished for him. "So now all we have to worry about is breaking down the door that blocks off the elevator to the surface from the main prison..."

"How about we pull a Quentin on it?" Sin suggested, a dark grin on his face as he drew closer to me and Roary. "Make it all go boom."

"An explosion?" Ethan asked as he moved closer to us too and threaded his fingers through mine while Roary drew back to watch the monitors again. I could feel the tension growing between the two of them, but for now they were managing to hold it in check. I wasn't going to get involved though - I'd made it clear that I wanted them both, so if they needed to figure out the pack pecking order here then that was down to them. "I like the sound of that."

"What could we use as an explosive though?" Roary asked.

"Am I not good enough now?" Sin demanded, lighting a fire in his fist to demonstrate his power.

"Not to bust through that door with your strength alone. But if we could blow something up, maybe combine our power to do it, then I think this really could work," I said, grinning as I remembered something I'd seen down on the maintenance level while Cain was chasing me about down there. "There's a few big tanks of Faesine in maintenance for use in some of the machines. I'd say that'll do the job."

Sin whooped with excitement and Ethan howled along with him while Roary's arms tightened around my waist.

"You're fucking insane," Cain complained, trying to take a dump on our parade.

"Well if you have any better ideas then I'm all ears," I said, turning to look at him and cocking my head expectantly. He just scowled at me like an angry hornet with its wings plucked off and a cork on its sting. "No? Okay then, I think we should all go down there, which means this stronzo is coming too. But seeing as pretty much everyone in this prison wants you dead, I think you'll need a little disguise."

I stepped out of Roary's arms, using my earth magic to yank on the vines that were containing Cain and making him stand before me as I began to cast an illusion. I worked quickly, making his clothes appear as a prison jumpsuit and covering his features with the look of my uncle Carlo so that no one would recognise him.

Cain scowled the whole time and Sin moved to lean over my shoulder, adding to my magic by painting a wide smile on the false face Cain now wore in place of his frown.

"Perfetta," I announced, standing back to admire my work while Cain simmered in a rage. But that seemed like more of a him problem than a me issue, so I left him to it and headed for the door.

Roary and Ethan moved to flank Cain, taking hold of his vines and guiding him along with us as we headed out into the corridor.

Cain wasn't dumb enough to make a scene as we started jogging along and we made good speed as we reached the stairwell and began our descent towards the maintenance level. In fact, Cain seemed positively content to be heading down there and I narrowed my eyes in suspicion at him as he kept pace with us without complaint. He was up to something. I could tell. And there was no way I was going to be letting him get away with whatever it was.



It was pretty quiet down on the lower levels of the prison, and we hardly passed any inmates as we kept heading down towards level nine and the isolation unit.

We hurried up to the door which led into the hole and Cain didn't even try to fight us as we made him unlock the door with his magical signature.

Roary exchanged a look with me which said he'd noticed how cooperative Cain had suddenly become too and I nodded at him in a silent communication which said we'd both be on alert for him looking to fuck us over somehow.

The door swung open, but just as we stepped over the threshold, a guttural roar sounded from the stairwell at our backs, making adrenaline spike through me as I whirled around to look in the direction it had come from.

Roary punched Sin, cursing him for letting the Belorian out of its cage for the millionth time while Sin giggled like having his lip busted open was the best fun ever.

"I'm gonna get you to punch me like that the next time Rosalie lets me between her thighs," Sin said. "I've always had a bit of a thing for being punished for fucking someone else's girl and this is even better because I know she's mine too. It'll be great, you can get some rage out, we'll all get our rocks off-"

Roary punched him even harder that time but another roar from the stairwell stopped any more of their fighting.

"That fucking thing," I cursed, glancing at the isolation unit door as I considered our options. We could easily just close it behind us - but the idea of potentially trapping ourselves down there did not appeal to me one bit.

"I'm on it, kitten. I might even let the poor beastie have his wicked way with me this time - I feel bad being such a cock tease all the damn time," Sin said, rolling his shoulders back as he prepared to shift again.

"You have got to be joking," Ethan said, looking half horrified as Sin

started tugging his clothes off.

"Yeah," Sin agreed. "Of course. I can only get hard for Rosalie these days anyway - she's my cock conjurer and I can't dick a single thing without her."

I couldn't help but laugh at that assessment of me and Sin pressed a swift kiss to my lips before shoving his clothes into Ethan's arms and shifting into a Belorian yet again.

"Thank fuck he can do that," I muttered as he raced out of sight to lead the monster away from us and the rest of us headed down into the dark to find the Faesine.

I was at least eighty percent sure that this plan was terrible. But that twenty percent was all the odds I needed in our favour. I'd learned a long time ago how to make my own luck and I was certain that with enough determination, we were going to be able to do this. So now the only thing we needed to do was set up that explosion then let Dante know we were on our way.



The Belorian was having a lover's tiff with me. That big beastie kept slashing his swipers at me and I'd already taken a bad hit.

I roared in his face then shoved my weight against him, driving him back. I could only see in heat signatures in this form which meant everything was a sort of blurry heat haze, so I didn't know how much Big Bel could appreciate it when I shook my sexy ass at him. I turned around, giving it a whirl, serving me with a bite to the ass.

"Why are you so angry at me, baby!?" I shouted, except it came out as a series of grunts.

I'd managed to draw him a little further away from the others, but the guy was acting like he hadn't had a meal in years. He'd definitely eaten a bunch of inmates though, so I didn't know what his problem was.

"Calm down, honey pot," I tried in a series of clicks and grunts that made Big Bel pause. He crooned suddenly, nuzzling my face and I curled a pincer around him.

*There, there, lonely buddy. Sin's here.*

Something wet pressed to my stomach and I looked down, my heat vision picking up some seriously high temperatures. Through the blur of my heat sight, I saw a peen. A giant, red rocket of a peen.

*Nope on a cantaloupe.*

Safe to say, I wasn't looking to get mounted by Big Bel, no matter how sorry I felt for the guy.

I released a flirtatious giggle – or a Belorian's version of it – then yanked myself out of his pincery arms. He started advancing and I realised the fighting we'd just been doing might have been some kind of mating ritual.

*Oh hell no, I'm not getting railed by the Belorian unless Rosalie is here actively encouraging it for her pleasure.*

"I'm a taken Belorian!" I roared, turning tail and running for my life as the fucker took chase.

My ass felt all too exposed and I tried to cover it with one of my pincers, but this body didn't have much flexibility in it. I missed my old body. I had the flexibility of a cat and the nimbleness of a goat in my Fae form. A goat could climb a tree right now, but me? I was stuck lumbering along like a wide open vagina on stilts.

I almost fell down the stairs as I fled and Big Bel's hot breath rushed over my back as he drew closer to his prize.

*I don't wanna be his princess anymore!*

"Rosaaaa!" I roared as I ran faster, finding these bug legs went pretty damn quick when you pushed them. But Big Bel had the same advantage and I had the feeling we were about to find out what happened when Beauty turned into a ten foot monster and stuck her magic mirror in the Beast.

"Rosaaaaa!"

The Belorian nipped at my ass and as he had a tank full of teeth in that mouth, it hurt like a bitch. I growled, swiping a pincer back at him and slashing it across his face. That only spurred him on and I was starting to think I didn't sympathise so much with him anymore. I mean, sure, I was his perfect fantasy, but that didn't give him the green light to pin me down and have his way with me. *Have you never heard of consent, dude?*

Yeah, I'd toyed with him. Flirted, made it seem like I was interested. But my metaphorical panties had stayed firmly in place and I'd never invited him to my bed. Or nest. Or whatever the hell Belorians slept in.

Suddenly, there was a familiar tingling along my spine and panic made me gasp just before the shift took hold of me. I hit the stairs in my Fae form as the Order suppressant flooded my naked body and I started tumbling down them, hitting every – star - damned – one.

“Ow!” I barked in anger, throwing out a palm and casting air to catch myself on a cushion of wind.

My head spun from dizziness as I shoved myself upright and turned to look up at the Belorian still tearing down the stairs after me.

I threw out a hand, casting a huge barricade of air and the Belorian slammed into it full force, immediately starting to rip and claw at it. He gazed at me with a look of betrayal. I mean, okay, he didn't have conventional eyes or any particularly distinguishing features that could give away the betrayal he was feeling. But I knew soul deep that that was how he felt. And now he was mad. Rip me to pieces and eat my cock for dinner mad.

“Now, listen,” I said softly. “This doesn't mean I don't like you. I just don't like you like *that*.”

Big Bel roared furiously and I had to flood the air wall with magic to keep him from breaking through it. My butt cheeks clenched as I forced all of my power into holding the beastie back and my chest started to hollow out as my power began to wane.

Big Bel kept slashing at the wall, his giant dick still standing tall between his legs, looking me right in the eye. If he was still horny for me, I was in trouble. Because it was one thing being raped by that beastie in a form that was big enough for it, but like this, he'd split me in two. I could just hear the celebrant at my funeral now... “*He was dicked to death by a giant cock. May*

*the stars welcome what's left of him into their divine embrace."*

Nah, no one would hold me an official funeral. Rosalie might shed a tear or two and Jerome would mourn me for a while, but the rest of the world wouldn't even know what a badass I'd been. How I'd taken on a Belorian and nearly broken out of the world's most deadly prison. Almost didn't cut it. Sin Wilder would just be a cool name that some punk ass kid would eventually think up and claim as his own. But it was *my* name, motherfucker. And I wanted it to be remembered.

My magic failed me in that second, blinking out like I was just a naked mortal with clenched butt cheeks.

*Damn, I really should have been running rather than standing here that whole time.*

The Belorian stumbled forward through the place my wall had been holding him back and I could only do one thing. Fucking run.



*Praise the stars in the sky and the moon up above.*

*Praise the heavens and fate and the turn of the wheel.*

*Praise destiny and the toss of the dice.*

*Praise the light up above and all those who stand in it.*

*Praise life.*

The prayers my mother had offered up at the Temple of Eternal Hope throughout my childhood kept floating around and around inside my brain as I closed my eyes and kept shuffling along on the thick water pipes which ran along the roof above the gym.

It was dark up here. Dark and damp and there were a lot of spiders. I hadn't quite realised how much I disliked spiders up until this very moment, but here it was. There were currently eight hairy legs crawling across my cheek while I was frozen in place because the Lunar Brotherhood pack had all just poured into the room beneath me and I didn't dare move.

I was shrouded in some basic illusion spells and hidden within a silencing bubble, but I didn't have enough magic left to do any more than that. Soon I wouldn't even be able to keep this up.

Fucked. I was fucked.

The spider just kept creeping across my cheek as I clung onto the pipes,

my whole body trembling with a mixture of terror and adrenaline.

I couldn't let the inmates find me. They were monsters. Monsters unlike I'd ever really allowed myself to appreciate before now.

Cain had warned me. He'd said it time and again that the Fae down here were animals. That they'd lost all semblance of decency long before they'd been banished to this hell beneath the ground. But I hadn't wanted to listen. I hadn't wanted to see it. Not when some of them seemed so nice. So normal.

Like Bert. Number sixty-two. He'd been making a joke with me last week about the way the oatmeal in here tasted like an idiot's brains. I'd laughed. He'd laughed. It had been this funny little joke. Except it wasn't. Because I'd just seen Bert while I was hiding in a vent above the Mess Hall and he'd been using the same spoon he ate oatmeal with to eat Officer Kato's actual brains. Straight from the skull.

I'd seen such things.

Such.

Things.

I'd watched a Griffin who had been playing wall ball out in the Magic Compound a few weeks ago like a carefree dudebro tie another inmate to a table and choke him with handfuls of turd. His own turd. I'd been there to smell it.

That smell would never completely leave me in all my days left on this cruel earth. I knew that in my soul. Even if I lived to be two hundred, I'd never ever forget that smell. It lived in me now.

"They have to be with the Oscuras!" one of the Wolves beneath me cried as I tried to ignore the progress of the spider with all my might.

"I want that bitch's head on a spike for what she's done," another yelled.

"We should cut her open and spell her name out on the ground with her entrails."



"Isn't that gonna take a lot of entrails?" someone else interrupted. "Rosalie Oscura is a pretty long name-"

My gut lurched with panic at the mention of Rosalie as I realised who they were hunting for. Was that what this riot had been about? The Lunar Brotherhood and The Oscura Clan going head to head against one another to fight it out for the top spot amongst the Wolf packs? If that was the case, then I really hoped the Oscura Clan came out on top even though I knew I shouldn't have been hoping for any such thing. But I couldn't bear the idea of anything happening to her. Rosalie wasn't like the rest of them in here. She was sweet and innocent despite her criminal inclinations. She didn't deserve to die down here.

"Does she have a middle name?" a guy asked. "That would make it even longer."

"I say we just stab and stab and stab her until the whole room is covered with her blood."

"I don't care how the bitch dies so long as she's dead."

"I'm gonna cut off her hands and stuff them up my ass!" another Wolf yelled loudly and everyone in the room stopped their baying for blood as they all turned to stare at him. "That'll teach her," he added, not seeming the least bit embarrassed by what he wanted to do to the beautiful leader of the Oscuras.

The spider suddenly took off at speed across my face and a cry of alarm escaped me which was thankfully concealed within my silencing bubble. But as I jerked my head, the spider was sent flying and I sucked in a breath as I watched it tumble all the way down until it fell into one of the Wolves' hair.

I froze as she squealed, batting her hair and looking up at the roof where I was hiding as she started yelling about something falling on her head and bunch of the surrounding Wolves looked up too.

*Oh fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck-*

"Someone said they think they saw the Oscura bitch up on level two!" a guy roared from outside and the Wolves all took off howling for blood as they tore from the room, leaving me behind with my heart thrashing and my pants somehow miraculously dry because I'd thought for sure I was going to piss myself then.

I'd always thought of myself as a brave man. I'd trained to take on these criminals and had grown into my role in this place. But I hadn't been prepared for this. There was no preparing for this.

I had to get out of here. I had to make it back to the guards' quarters. But there was a long, long way to go between here and there and this entire prison was filled with Fae just waiting to kill me if they could.



Eighty-Eight appeared as we stood together on the maintenance level with the Faesine Roaslie's two adoring men had gathered for her, butt fucking naked as he ran in the door and slammed it shut behind him.

"Phew," he sighed. "That was clo-"

The door burst off its hinges behind him as the Belorian broke through it, sending him flying through the air like a damn frisbee with a cock and he slammed into one of the large pipes that led up to the ceiling.

"Sin!" Rosalie cried in panic as he hit the ground and she sprinted away to heal him.

Ethan charged forward to intercept the Belorian, casting a huge wall of ice in front of us and I jerked against my restraints as I was left beside Sixty-Nine who had no access to his magic.

"Release me," I commanded him, but the Lion just ignored me, standing his ground as he looked from Ethan to Rosalie and Sin with a curse.

The Belorian fought to rip through Ethan's wall of ice and the Wolf started freezing its limbs instead, trying to slow it down, but it just kept coming and coming.

Rosalie pulled Sin to his feet before she turned and ran to assist her mate in fighting the monster. She used vines to catch hold of the Belorian's pincers

as they sliced through part of the ice wall, trying to trap it as Ethan worked to freeze her binds, but the beast just became more and more frantic, tearing apart every piece of magic they cast its way.

“Let me go!” I barked at Sixty-Nine, but he continued to stand there with balled fists, as useless as a turd baking in the sun.

Sin ran over to us, pulling on the pants he’d left with us earlier and yanking two lengths of piping off the nearest machine. He tossed one to Roary who nodded and charged forward with him, leaving me there as I growled low in my throat. The two of them started whacking any pincer that broke through Rosalie’s earth magic and I snarled as I fought to break the vines binding my own hands.

With a horrid shriek, the Belorian burst through the ice wall, knocking all of them down in one go and one of its sharp pincers tore up Rosalie’s arm.

“No!” I roared as the air was sucked clean from my lungs.

I ran forward as panic cleaved my chest open, kicking the beast’s head just before its teeth could sink into her chest, giving her half a second to get her hand up and cast a wooden blade in it. She stabbed the creature’s face and it reared away with a pitchy scream that made my eardrums almost burst.

Ethan got to his feet, shoving me aside and helping Rosalie up before casting the two of them within a solid block of ice as the Belorian came at us once more. With their heat signature missing, the monster twisted sideways and snapped its jaws at me. It had a huge fucking erection and I balked at that. What the fuck? I always thought that thing was a girl.

I stumbled back just as Roary swung his piece of piping into its face and drew its attention to him instead.

The monster knocked him down in seconds and Sin Wilder dove onto its back, hitting its head repeatedly and saying a word with every strike. “I. Thought. You. Were. My. Best. Friend.”

The Belorian shook its head, throwing Sin away from him and he skidded across the floor before slamming into a machine, leaving him dazed.

Rosalie ran out of the ice shelter with Ethan, casting two thick vines around the Belorian's neck, using her uninjured arm to cast as she gritted her teeth and yanked its head away from Roary.

Ethan hurried to her, raising his palm and working to freeze the beast once more.

The Belorian reared up onto its back legs, slicing through the vines Rosalie had cast and knocking Ethan to the ground in a swipe of its pincers. I saw blood as he rolled and Rosalie screamed as she dove at the Belorian with murder in her eyes.

The Belorian knocked her away before she could cast and she slammed into me, throwing us both to the ground and tumbling across it. She landed on top of me, trying to get up, but wincing at the pain in her arm.

"Release me," I commanded.

She rolled aside as she healed herself, staring at my expression and looking torn.

Ethan was back on his feet again, clearly healed as he worked to keep the Belorian back. But this couldn't go on forever.

"Rosalie!" I barked.

She stared at me with mistrust in her eyes and maybe she was right to look at me like that.

The curse was screaming, raking up my neck and scoring across my chest as I clenched my jaw against the agony.

"Rosalie, I need you!" Ethan cried.

"Fuck it," she gasped, flicking her fingers and the binds holding my hands evaporated.

She shoved herself upright, running back to join Ethan as Sin and Roary

started beating the Belorian's legs again with the pipes.

My gaze flicked to the place where the secret hatch was concealed in the roof as fire magic sizzled against my palms.

Rosalie cast a huge net around the Belorian and Ethan froze it tight, bringing the beast to its knees. I realised the fight was almost won and I was free, having only seconds to act.

I ran for the hatch, wishing I had access to the speed of my Order as the curse burned like liquid hellfire on the inside of my flesh. My vision darkened from the pain but I didn't stop running, making it to the console beneath the hatch and flipping open a fake button to reveal a magical signature reader.

I slammed my palm against it and the hatch opened above me, the ladder sliding smoothly down to the floor. I started climbing it, rushing up onto the platform within the ceiling and leaning down to retract the ladder.

My gaze cut to the fight as the Belorian wrestled within the confines of the frozen net and Sin and Roary stood on top of the beast, whacking it with the pipes as hard as they physically could. The monster bellowed and shrieked and suddenly it forced itself upright, its spines ripping through the net.

Sin and Roary tumbled off it and Ethan's magic stuttered out as he tried to freeze it once more. The Belorian swiped him away with its front leg and he smashed into a nearby tank, not moving again as Rosalie screamed as if she felt that pain too.

The beast advanced on her and every vine she cast was broken by its pincers and teeth as it closed the distance between them. The curse made my skull fill with acid and I tasted blood rising in my throat as I started to shake, fighting the urge to go back. To help. To save the girl who'd used me. But why would I do something as stupid as that?

The Belorian knocked her down and no more magic came from her palms

as it reared over her, ready to finish this. Roary and Sin worked desperately to try and stop it biting her by grabbing hold of its neck and pulling with all their might, but without magic, they were going to fail.

The curse flared so fiercely within me that I was sure I was going to succumb to it right now. Blood dripped from my lips and rose in my eyes until all I could see was red. It was over. She'd done this. She'd ruined me. So why shouldn't I watch her die before I had to die too?

*Because it'll destroy me.*

I started moving, making the decision as I raced back down the ladder as fast as I could move without my Order gifts. Then I ran towards the Belorian with my palms raised and a fiery tornado building in them as I roared, "Get back!" at the assholes who were trying to take it on without magic.

Rosalie was still pinned beneath the creature, one of its pincers pressed to her stomach and with a yank of terror in my chest, I saw blood pouring from that wound.

Roary and Sin darted aside as I released the fireball from my body with so much power behind the blast that the Belorian was thrown away from Rosalie, shrieking as it was momentarily consumed by the flames.

I grabbed Rosalie's hand as I fell to my knees, pressing my palm to the wound on her stomach and sending healing magic into her in waves. She stared up at me, pale-faced and trembling as her fingers came up to touch my face.

"I thought you left," she forced out in a pained voice.

"I'm just working on a more dramatic goodbye, sweetheart," I muttered.

The Belorian was recovering fast, the fire I'd cast at it sending it into a wild frenzy. Its skin was as tough as nails, but I'd clearly hurt it with that blast, so brute force might just kill it if I used everything I had. It ran at us with a shriek, its flesh blistered by my power, its eyes hungry for vengeance.

There was no way I could see this girl die, that was clear to me now. Even if I hated her, she didn't deserve death. So I'd be damned if I was going to let this beast have her.

I poured power into the final blast, knowing it was go big or go home with this monster as my magic reserves were low. It may have been built to survive Fae attacks, but surely it couldn't withstand this much heat burning out of me, my fire full of how much I loved and hated Rosalie Oscura. There was no power on earth which could rival the ferocity of that.

The fireball exploded from me with so much force that a heatwave blasted over us, knocking us flat to the floor and I had to shield my eyes from the tremendous glare as the ball collided with the Belorian, sending it flying backwards into a tank of sleep gas and the gathered tanks of Faesine.

"Oh fuck," I gasped as the tanks exploded and I threw myself over Rosalie as an enormous explosion ripped through the room.

I roared as I threw my hands up, using every scrap of my waning power to take control of that fire and direct it in every direction but at us, shielding Rosalie and the three assholes with everything I had. Bits of metal and dead Belorian flew everywhere and I was powerless to do anything about that as my remaining magic ran too low to try and melt the shrapnel before it impacted with someone. So the only thing left for me to protect her with was my own body.

I pressed her down, expecting the slice of something sharp to finish me at any moment and I cried out as a lump of something hot and sharp slammed into my side, sending agony pouring through my flesh.

Then, as suddenly as it had happened, silence fell, punctured only by the hiss of the sleep gas pouring into the air. Darkness pushed into my mind and my forehead fell against Rosalie's.

"Stay awake," I growled, knowing sleeping in this prison was a death



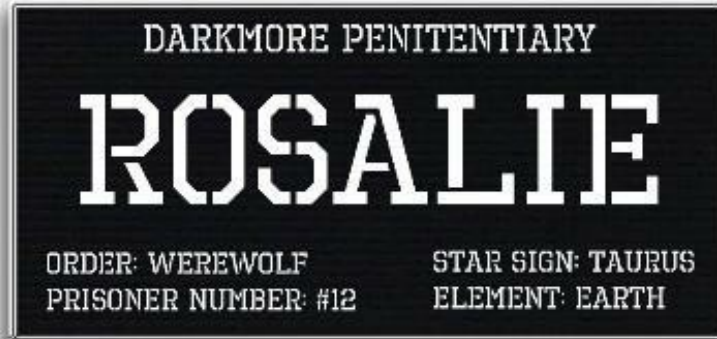
sentence. Someone would come. Someone would find us. Find her.

“Stay awake, Rosalie,” I begged but her eyelids were fluttering closed and I knew it was no good.

“Mason,” she murmured, the sound of my name on her sweet lips twisting the jagged knife in my heart which her betrayal had put there. Her manipulation.

The gas was sweeping through the whole room, too much of it too fast. We couldn't get out. My limbs were like lead weights as I fell over her, flattening her to the floor and hoping that if someone came here, my body would hide her from view.

As darkness claimed me, I realised the curse no longer plagued me with its insufferable claws. And somehow, despite knowing I was most likely a dead man now, I felt like I was exactly where I was meant to be.



## 56 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...

*Holy fucking ow.*

I groaned as I came to, my ears ringing and head pounding with a wound I could feel throbbing against my temple.

My head hurt. No, fuck that, my entire body hurt like a sonofabitch and I hissed a curse between my teeth as I tried to push myself upright and pain daggered through my right shoulder harsh enough to blind me.

There was a weight pinning me down, crushing me beneath it and the heat of it was scalding against my skin.

I gritted my teeth against the whimper which tried to escape me, knowing he'd only make it worse if I showed my pain. I'd had broken bones and dislocated sockets before. I could lock down that feeling of agony, isolate it away from myself and ignore it almost entirely. And that was what I had to do if there was any hope of him healing me again any time soon.

*"Sometimes I'm ashamed of my pack mates seeing you at all," my Father snarled, his disgusted tone saying he'd seen me flinch when I'd first registered the pain. "What must they think of me when they see how weak my offspring is? Of course, you and I know you get your weakness from that waste of space mother of yours, but I guess that's what I get for fucking a*

*weakling pack whore like her. In hindsight, her pussy really wasn't worth the bother it's cost me now, was it?"*

"Just tell me what you need me to do, Papa," I said, my voice weak as my head spun from the pain of my wounds and I fought to make sense of anything. My eyes were still clamped firmly shut and I knew I needed to open them. But if I did that, I'd have to see his face. Drink in the cruelty in his eyes. Know all too certainly that there wasn't going to be anyone here to help me today. "Please," my voice cracked and I knew I'd lost the battle against showing my pain as a small whimper escaped me. "I'll do better next time."

"Holy fuck, you're alive," a rough, masculine voice which had no business trespassing in my memories growled as his hands gripped the front of my clothes, the weight on top of me shifting and I couldn't help but flinch in anticipation of the next blow.

"I'll do better," I insisted, recoiling as my muscles tensed and I fought against the fear which was building in my chest. I'd already failed. I knew it. So now I just had to face my punishment.

"Rosalie," Cain barked and I was jolted out of my memories, out of the hell that I'd grown up in and the darkness which lingered in my soul because of the stronzo who had sired me.

My eyes snapped open and I found him there. The man who had sworn he hated me. The one who had left me to suffer in the dark. The one bound to me by moon magic and a curse I couldn't help but bestow.

"Mason?" I breathed and something in his gaze shattered at my use of that name, a wall crumbling down between us before his mouth was on mine and his hands slid around my waist.

I moaned into his kiss, tasting his own hurt there alongside mine, his own demons and monsters from his past. As well as his own desperate need to find a place where he belonged and someone he belonged there with. He was

so empty inside. So fragile and alone and I just wanted to crawl inside his skin and take away that feeling. I wanted to fill him with light and banish his shadows just as clearly as he was working to banish mine.

Magic flared across my skin as he worked to heal me and the damage to my shoulder and skull were mended between the press of his lips against mine and the pressure of his tongue pushing into my mouth. I kissed him like I wanted to devour him, my fingers sliding into his short hair and my spine arching against the hard floor beneath me as I fought to claim more contact between his body and mine.

A feral growl pierced the air and suddenly Cain was thrown off of me, my eyes snapping open as I gasped in shock, shoving up onto my elbows as I found him and Ethan rolling across the floor with fists flying and blood spilling.

"You keep your filthy fucking hands off of her!" Ethan roared. "I'm going to rip your head from your shoulders and crush it between my fists."

"Stop it," I demanded, shoving myself to my feet as Cain snarled ferociously and lunged towards Ethan's throat with his teeth bared - but there wasn't a fang in sight. And as he hesitated for a moment, seeming to realise that, Ethan managed to get a solid punch to his jaw which sent him tumbling off of him.

I ran forward, placing myself between the two of them as I snarled in warning, my gaze flitting back and forth between them while I took note of everything that had happened.

"I can't reach my Wolf," I said, glaring at Ethan as he made a move to try and get past me from his position on the floor, though he just cursed as he fell back onto his ass as he tried to stand.

"Me either," he snapped.

"The Order suppressant tank must have rebooted. And I haven't taken

another antidote shot because I was supposed to be having a few days off," Cain said, running his tongue over his teeth as if to double check and I cursed as I looked across the huge room we were in, recognising the distant hum of the fucking ipump running again.

"How the fuck did that happen?" Ethan demanded.

"I rebooted it after I found Nixon dead down here," Cain spat, looking caught between being smug and realising that he had now fucked himself over as thoroughly as the rest of us.

"I don't know why you're glaring at me for that," Ethan said in a deadly tone. "Your little pal Nixon had my mate down here at his mercy when me and Sin showed up. He was beating her up and clearly planned on doing a lot worse before we managed to use our Orders to overwhelm his magic and kill his sorry ass."

"Is that true?" Cain demanded, his gaze snapping to me fearfully and I shrugged a single shoulder.

"It's not the worst thing I've survived, stronzo, so don't start giving me the puppy eyes over it now. We have more important things to worry about - like where the hell are Roary and Sin?" I turned away from him and scoured the half destroyed room surrounding us, hoping to see them somewhere close by but finding nothing.

Ethan's eyes widened as he looked around the space too, only just seeming to realise that we were down two members of our team.

I fought away the urge to panic as I looked around the ruined remains of the machinery that had been ripped apart in the explosion, but unless their bodies had been destroyed without a trace, there wasn't any sign that they'd been killed in the blast. Which meant they were missing.

"They probably came to their senses over this hopeless plan of yours and decided to save their own asses when they recovered," Cain said bitterly as he

pushed himself to his feet.

I turned a scowl on him, striding forward with a growl rumbling in the back of my throat as I forced him to meet my gaze. "Roary gave his life to protect me ten years ago. I don't for one single second believe that he would just abandon me down here for the monsters in this place to find. And Sin is no coward either. So stop spouting your prejudiced bullshit and try to come up with something that is actually helpful to us or keep your fucking mouth shut about things you know nothing about."

Cain glared at me but I didn't give a fuck about hurting his feelings, though as I turned to walk away from him, I noticed his hand hovering over his stomach in a protective way.

"Are you hurt?" I demanded, stalking towards him.

"It's fine," he replied, dropping his hand and backing up, but he winced a little as he did so and I moved forward, snatching the hem of his shirt and yanking it up.

I gasped as I found a lump of shrapnel from the explosion jutting out of his side with blood running steadily down his skin beside it. It looked like the lump of metal was keeping him from bleeding too much, but that thing couldn't stay there forever.

"Why haven't you healed this?" I demanded.

"Because I'm tapped out," he grunted in return, cutting his eyes away from me and yanking his shirt back down.

"What do you mean? You literally just healed me, so-"

"Well I wasn't tapped out until I did that. I came too and you were there, having a nightmare or a flashback or whatever and I'd healed you before I even noticed I was bleeding too," Cain muttered, moving away from me again and I cursed as I let him go, turning to look at Ethan who was still sitting on his ass while glowering Cain's way.

"Why are you still down there on the floor?" I demanded but as Ethan shifted uncomfortably, the bite of pain in my right leg gave me my answer as the mate bond showed me exactly what was wrong with him. "How bad is it?"

"Well I'll have trouble walking on it, but I'll figure it out," he said, dropping his gaze like the injury was pissing him off. But I could tell already that there was no fucking way he'd be putting any weight on that thing until the break was fixed.

I tried to draw in a calming breath and find that emotionless zone I knew I needed if I was going to figure out a way to deal with this, but it was too much. As if my entire well laid plan going to absolute shit wasn't enough for me to be dealing with, I now had no fucking idea where Roary and Sin were, and both Cain and Ethan were injured as well as none of us being able to shift into our Order forms anymore. This literally couldn't have gone any worse than it had, and I was one second away from losing my shit completely and-

"We've been out of it for almost twelve hours," Cain said. "The explosion knocked the sleep gas out too and we've been unconscious this whole time - looks like your insane escape plans just got more urgent."

I threw my head back to the ceiling and screamed.

I screamed and screamed like a banshee, letting all of my rage and frustration and absolute fucking fury over the injustice of this situation out until my throat was ripped raw and I was left panting on my knees.

Ethan managed to hobble himself over to my side, a Wolfish whimper escaping him as he tugged me against him and knotted his hand in the back of my jumpsuit.

"It'll be okay," he said seriously. "You've got this, Rosalie. I've never met anyone as capable as you in my entire life. We're trusting you to get us out of here because we all know you've got it in the bag. So just tell us what you

need us to do, love. Lay it out piece by piece and I know that we'll be up there breathing fresh air before the FIB even get close to this place."

I took a deep breath, closing my eyes for several bliss filled seconds as I drank in the comfort of being so close to my mate, then nodded as I pushed myself back up to my feet.

"Alright. Let's just concentrate on dealing with this situation one thing at a time," I said, looking between Ethan and Cain who moved to lean against the wall.

"We need to go and find Roary and Sin which I'm guessing is going to require us getting back into the CCTV room. And seeing as the two of you are all kinds of fucked up and we have no fucking magic, we need to get into medical and get you patched up too."

"If I could bite someone I wouldn't have to worry about that," Cain said in a waspish tone that suggested he was blaming me for all of his problems, even though he'd been the one to jump me and use up every drop of his magic healing me instead of saving some for himself and the big lump of metal he had jammed in his freaking side. *Idiota*. Though I had to admit that his concern for me was actually one of the few good things that had happened to me today so I couldn't bring myself to be too annoyed over it.

Besides, I just had to focus. Ethan was right. I could do this. I *would* do this.

I strode away from Ethan, looking around between the lumps of broken machinery until I found a flat piece of metal and some broken cables. I returned to Ethan's side and quickly strapped his leg for him before taking his arm and heaving him to his feet.

Ethan leaned on me heavily, but he gritted his jaw and refused to make a single sound to reflect his pain. I could feel it reflected in my own leg though so I knew it hurt like a sonofabitch.



"Are you coming?" I barked at Cain who seemed in no hurry to follow us as I turned towards the exit.

He looked away from me for a moment, his gaze cutting to the far corner of the room like he was searching for something before he looked me in the eyes again.

"If I go up there without any magic concealing me, I'm probably signing my own death warrant," he said.

"Well if you stay down here to bleed out with that thing stuck in you then you'll probably die anyway," I said, trying to shrug like I didn't care even though I did. But I really didn't have time for his theatrics right now. We needed to get the two of them fixed up and I needed to figure out where the hell Roary and Sin were. My mind was whirling over all the possibilities of where they could be, but I just had to focus on the fact that the three of us had been left alone. We'd been vulnerable while we were out of it down here, so if someone else had come with the intention of causing any of us harm then they wouldn't have left us this way. So I was just hoping that meant they'd woken up before us and had gone for help or something because right now I couldn't let my mind wander down the path of anything bad having happened to them.

I started walking for the door with Ethan's arm wrapped firmly around my shoulders as I helped to support his weight.

Just as we made it to the foot of the stairs, Cain appeared, his expression tight as he moved to Ethan's other side and took some more of his weight.

"I don't need help from a guard," Ethan snarled, trying to jerk away from him and almost knocking us all to the ground.

"And I don't want to spend my time helping out scum like you, but it seems like I'm going to have to if I wanna get this wound fixed up so we're stuck with each other," Cain snapped back.

"Just stop bitching, both of you," I warned. "We've got a lot to do and now we have even less time to do it. So I suggest you both just focus on putting one foot in front of the other and we get ourselves up to Medical."

The two of them somehow found it within themselves to do as I'd suggested and we all concentrated on getting up the stairs as fast as we could. I still had the knife I'd conjured with my earth magic in my pocket and now it was the only weapon I had at my disposal aside from my fists.

I wasn't too worried about any of the stronzos waiting for us up in the prison, but I would admit that I didn't really like our chances if we came up against Ethan's former pack any time soon.

We crept through the isolation unit, ignoring the yells of the prisoners locked inside those cells. I was guessing they were starting to get pretty hungry, but there wasn't much I could do about that for them right now. In fact, my own stomach was starting to protest the lack of food I'd offered it recently and I would probably have to try and get hold of some food at some point after we got this done and found the others.

I pressed a finger to my lips and released my hold on Ethan as we reached the stairs, leaving Cain to support him while I moved to look up into the space above us. Medical was on the next floor, so at least we didn't have far to go, but I could hear a commotion taking place which didn't bode well for us.

I beckoned for the others to follow and slipped up the stairs ahead of them, straining my ears to listen and hearing a cheer going up from the corridor above us.

I kept going, reaching the eighth floor and peering around the corner, a curse escaping me as I spotted the door to medical hanging open on busted hinges and the sound of cheering came from within it again.

"I'm going to take a hit of rainbow juice through my eye!" a dude yelled

excitedly and the cheers followed again.

I glanced back at Cain and Ethan as they caught up to me, motioning for them to stay put out of harm's way before taking off down the corridor towards the open door.

The group inside the room were chanting, "In the eye! In the eye! In the eye!" repeatedly and as I moved to peek inside I spotted a bare chested guy covered in brightly coloured tattoos standing on one of the hospital beds.

Sparkle and a bunch of her Pegasus cronies were all egging him on and laughing as he lifted a vial of rainbow juice up and tipped it over his eye.

"That concoction is for medical appropriation only, you great ninnernanny!" a voice called from the far side of the room and I tipped my head to get a look at Mother Brenda who was laying on a bed there, her hands seemingly stuck to her sides, though I couldn't tell how she was restrained.

Beyond her, my annoying as fuck counsellor Barbara Gambol was trembling on her own bed with her eyes closed while shaking her head and murmuring, "This is baaad," over and over again.

"Merde," I muttered to myself, knowing there was no way Sparkle would be feeling generous about sharing the medical supplies they were currently using to get high on.

I did a quick head count. Nine. Not the worst odds I'd ever faced, but not exactly spectacular odds either.

My gaze flicked to Mother Brenda as she continued to yell at the Pegasus Herd in outrage. "You cantankerous colts! Floundering fillies! Pill popping ponies!"

She looked all kinds of pissed off about the turn of events here and I couldn't help but wonder if she might want an ally. Her arms were most definitely bound which meant she had to still have magic running in her veins. Maybe she'd feel grateful enough to me for helping her out that she

might use some of that magic to heal Cain and Ethan. That would be a hell of a lot better than me just patching them up with the potions and supplies I might be able to find stocked in here.

"Give me a hit of that!" Sparkle demanded, shoving her way forward and hunting for more of the rainbow juice which gave me the perfect opportunity to dart into the room while the whole group began pushing and shoving between themselves.

I ducked low and hurried to the left of the room, dropping to my hands and knees and crawling beneath a bed there before scrambling across the floor beyond it towards Mother Brenda.

"You hag of a horse!" she shouted, thrashing against the bed just as an acrid stench caught in the back of my throat.

I crept out from beneath the bed beside the one she was on and froze as I spotted another inmate standing at the foot of her bed, grinning maniacally as he looked down at her.

"Shut your fat mouth or I'll shit that shut too!" he said, bellowing a laugh while Barbara started murmuring about how baaad everything was again.

For a moment I wondered what the hell he'd meant by that, but then I caught sight of what was locking Mother Brenda's hand to the side of her bed and bile rose in my throat.

Griffin shit. A big old heap of fucking Griffin shit was entirely containing her hand and melding it to the bed frame. The stench was foul and I knew that the highly irritable nature of the faeces would be burning her skin like mad too.

"You turd headed turnip!" Mother Brenda bellowed. "You won't be looking so dandy once I'm free of this dump city. I'll teach you a thing or two about potty training and give you a hard lesson in wiping while I'm at it."

"This is so baaaad," Barbara added sheepishly.

I looked around for something to help me, spotting a heavy metal bed pan and snagging it from a shelf beside the bed before easing my way out from my hiding place.

The Griffin spotted me, his eyes widening and a shriek of warning escaping his lips just as I threw my knife at him with all my strength.

The blade embedded itself deeply in his thigh and his screams turned murderous as the herd of Pegasuses all whirled around and spotted me.

"Get the Oscura bitch!" Sparkle yelled excitedly, pointing at me and starting a stampede as her group of followers all jumped to her command at once.

I turned away from them though, hoping this plan would work out as I hefted the bedpan over my head and slammed it down on the solidified Griffin shit which encased Mother Brenda's right hand.

It took three hits to release her and she jerked upright the moment she could snatch her hand free, casting a blast of magic over my head with a battle cry.

Sparkle and the other Pegasuses all screamed and whinnied in alarm as her magic slammed into them and they were all sent flying across the room.

I dove over the bed, landing in Mother Brenda's lap while she continued to blast them and smacking the bedpan down against the shit containing her other hand to free that too.

The moment it broke, she was up, knocking me aside as she leapt up onto the bed with an operatic warble and casting a tornado of air magic around the room which picked up Sparkle and her herd and tossed them to and fro.

They all screamed and cried out for help but she just increased the pressure of her magic, knocking their heads against the walls and ceiling as they tumbled over and over like they were in a washing machine.

"Be gone, foul wretches!" Mother Brenda cried, throwing her hands

towards the door and storming after them as she sent them all cascading away into the hall. "And never darken my doorway again."

I hurried after her, my eyes widening as I watched her sweep the entire herd and their gross Griffin friend right out into the stairwell while the satisfying sounds of them all begging for mercy filled the air.

"Well shit," I muttered as she finally released her hold on the magic and turned her gaze on me.

"Quite," she agreed. "So, out with it then. To what aim do I owe your assistance?"

"Can't I just have wanted to help you from the goodness of my own heart?" I asked innocently, glancing out into the corridor and finding Ethan and Cain emerging from where they'd been taking cover behind the door.

"In this place? Highly unlikely. But I do appreciate your help, so ask away young pup." Mother Brenda turned her back on me and bustled across the room to help Barbara out of her Griffin shit restraints too.

"Well, now that you mention it, I was kinda hoping you could help out with a bit of healing magic."

Brenda whipped around, gasping as she spotted Cain's bloody shirt and Ethan's fucked up leg.

"Officer Cain! How glad I am to see you soldiering on. Of course, I would be more than happy to assist you with your booboo."

"Oh dear," Barbara murmured as Brenda beckoned the two of them into the room and they passed me by the doorway. "That looks baaad."

I rolled my eyes at her and grabbed the door instead, yanking it closed in spite of its busted hinge and finding both Cain and Ethan laid out on beds when I turned back to face the room.

Mother Brenda was washing her hands vigorously, muttering about ghastly Griffins as she scrubbed the lingering shit from beneath her

fingernails before slathering her hands in lotion to help with the reaction she'd had to the irritant in the turd.

When she was satisfied with that, she moved to where Cain was laying on the bed and lifted his shirt to examine his wound.

"Well slap my fanny with a kanoodling kipper, you are in a dandy of a doody, aren't you?" she asked, prodding the piece of metal and making Cain hiss from the pain of it.

"I just need to feed and I'll be fine," Cain grumbled.

"Well wants and wishes are only good for the dishes," Mother Brenda sighed and I glanced at Ethan, wondering if he had any idea what she was going on about but he looked just as confused as me.

"Can you heal him?" I asked as she continued to bustle about.

"Yes, yes. Come here, girl, and help hold this fellow down," Brenda called, beckoning me to her as she stood over Cain and cracked her knuckles in anticipation.

He gave me a dark look as I moved to stand at his side and I smiled back, taking his hand just before Mother Brenda yanked the chunk of shrapnel straight out of his side with no warning.

"Holy mother of a Harpy's asshole," Cain snapped, damn near breaking my fingers as he squeezed them tight in his fist.

"Ow, bastardo, watch it," I said, squeezing him back just as hard.

He opened his mouth to say something, but Mother Brenda slapped her hand down on his wound and all he managed to do was curse out the stars while she set about healing him.

The moment she was done, he relaxed against the sheets with a soft groan and the vice he held my fingers in slackened.

"Better?" I asked as Mother Brenda shoved a lollypop into his mouth and he grunted something pissy around the sugary treat.

“Much,” he said as Mother Brenda bustled away to toss the lump of shrapnel in the trash.

I reached out to brush my fingers over the newly healed skin, my gaze flicking from it back up to meet his eyes and his grip on my hand shifted a little.

“I’m glad,” I murmured.

Cain wetted his lips as he drew the lollypop from between them, his gaze filling with something that made my heart beat a little faster, but before he could voice it, my stupid councillor shoved her face between us so that she could peer down at the bloody patch of Cain’s skin too.

“Oh yes, that looks much betterrr,” she bleated, using a little bit of water magic to clean the blood away.

Cain jerked his hand out of my grip and I stepped back, feeling like he’d just dumped a bucket of cold water over my head as his gaze shuttered again and he scowled at me.

I turned my back on Officer Stronzo and moved across the room to join Ethan as Mother Brenda rolled his jumpsuit up to the knee and set about fixing his leg too.

My own leg tingled as I felt his pain being healed away and I smiled down at him as some of the tension in his powerful body slipped away.

Ethan reached for me with a low growl and I leaned down and kissed him, his fingers knotting in my hair as he took ownership of my mouth.

“Mine,” he growled against my lips as I drew back a little.

“Yours,” I agreed, meeting his blue eyes and losing myself in the feeling of our mate bond as it hummed between us. I knew he was still pissed over Cain kissing me and the look in his eyes said the instincts of his inner Wolf were still driving him to do something about it. We were possessive creatures and it wasn’t in our instincts to let others touch what belonged to us, but I



couldn't help what I felt towards the other men who surrounded me, and the chance for Ethan to claim me as his one and only had passed him by while he was still denying what we were to one another. If there had ever been a chance of that at all. Because when I thought about Roary, I knew my love for him had never dwindled even when I'd been trying not to feel it. And Sin and Cain...well I guessed it was complicated. But whatever way you looked at it, Ethan and I were mates which meant his claim on me was true. I was his. It was just the case that I wasn't *only* his.

"There, as good as a coconut on holibobs," Mother Brenda announced, slapping Ethan's leg a few times as she finished up and taking one of the worries off of my shoulders as I let myself focus on our next problem. Where the hell were Sin and Roary?

"Have I not been good enough for a lollypop, Brenda?" Ethan asked in that flirtatious way of his.

"Oh slap my gooseberry and call it a wet willy, you're always so good Ethan. You're my favourite patient." She chuckled at him as he smirked, grabbing a lollypop from the drawer and he opened wide for it. I rolled my eyes as he sucked on it and gave me a filthy look that was really not appropriate right now. Cain ripped the end of his own lollypop off the stick and crushed it loudly between his teeth as he glared at Ethan who crunched through his own in response. It was like they were trying to out-crunch each other, it was ridiculous.

"You should hole up here," Mother Brenda offered as Ethan pushed himself upright and I passed him another lollypop from her collection, pushing it between his lips and smirking as he took it like a good boy. One side glance at Cain said he didn't like that, and Ethan flexed his muscles like a prime asshole. "We can hunker down until the cavalry arrive. It won't be long now."

"Thanks, but no thanks," I said quickly, turning my attention from the heated look in Ethan's eye back to her. "We have people out there who need our help."

"Yeah, we really need to get going," Ethan agreed, taking my hand and tugging me towards the door as he got up. "But thanks for fixing me up, love." He tossed a flirtatious wink at Mother Brenda and I had to fight a growl as she blushed and giggled girlishly. I guessed we were both a bit possessive when it came to our mate bond.

"Well you keep that tooshy safe out there," she called.

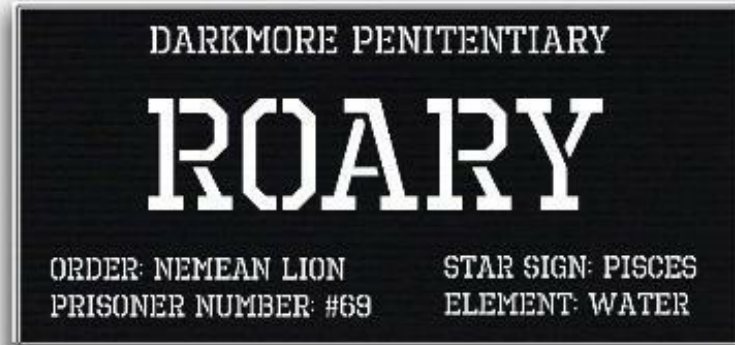
We stepped out into the hall and I paused as I realised that Cain hadn't followed, glancing back into the room and frowning at him as I wondered if this was it. I couldn't exactly do much to force him to stay with us now and it made a whole lot more sense for him to stay here with other members of staff than it did for him to risk coming with us. But if he didn't come then we weren't going to be able to get back into the CCTV surveillance room and that would make finding the others a whole lot harder.

"Are you coming?" I asked him, a touch of vulnerability colouring my voice as I waited on his answer. I didn't want him to stay here for more reasons than just needing his help, but I also couldn't do anything to force him while Mother Brenda and Barbara still had magic to use against me.

Cain hesitated for a moment, his gaze moving between me and Ethan who looked more inclined to leave him behind than beg him to come and I swallowed thickly.

"I'm coming," he agreed and the relief I felt at those words surprised me. Hadn't I hated him not so long ago? Hadn't I gladly cursed him with the power of the moon? I didn't really know what to make of my attachment to Mason Cain, but I also didn't have the time to analyse it too closely right now.

So as he tossed his lollypop stick in the trash and followed us out into the corridor, I buried my smile and set my focus on our destination. We needed to find Roary and Sin. And then we seriously needed to focus on getting the fuck out of here - however the hell we were going to manage that now.



I felt fingers in my hair and leaned into them, thinking of Rosalie, of us lying on a beach together somewhere as the waves lapped against the shore. I was curled up with her under the palm trees and we were free, so far away from Darkmore that it was nothing but a distant memory that faded with each passing day. *We did it, little pup.*

The fingers dug in deeper accompanied by a snip, snip, snip sound as the effects of the sleep gas started to lift from my body. My eyelids were heavy and my limbs even heavier as I emerged from the dark slumber I'd been a slave to.

I was disorientated as I came around and as I called on my Lion, I found it raising its head beneath my flesh. *What...where the hell am I?*

My eyes cracked open at last and I found myself looking into the soft blue eyes of a blonde chick who was sitting in my lap.

"Who the fuck are you?" I slurred and her eyebrows arched.

"I'm Mindy," she said with a weird ass fucking smile on her face. "I found you and now I'm keeping you."

"Get off of me," I snarled, about to shift when I realised my arms were bound behind my back. I'd break them clean off if I shifted into my Order now. *Shit.*

The snipping noise sounded once more and a long piece of my hair sailed

down to land on the girl's thigh. It took me three long, excruciating seconds of staring at that lock of gorgeous, silken perfection to realise what this girl was doing to me.

"No!" I cried in anguish, bucking my hips to try and get her off, but she wrapped her thighs tighter around me and her upper lip peeled back.

"Stay still," she growled, snipping the scissors in front of my nose. "You're going to take your punishment like a good little cub, aren't you Roary?" She gripped my face, squeezing my lips and talking for me in a stupid growly voice. "Yes, I am, Mindy. You're such a beautiful Lioness queen."

"Not my hair, not my fucking hair," I said in distress, yanking my face out of her grip. Who the hell was she and why was she doing this?

"Whastappening?" Sin's voice sounded to my left and I jerked my head around to look over at him.

"It's all going to be just fine," another girl's voice sounded in the space and as Mindy got up from my lap and a dark haired girl came into view, I realised we were in an elevator that didn't seem to be moving.

"Hurry up and finish it, Telisha," Mindy demanded of the other girl and she grabbed the piece of hair that had fallen to the floor and I realised she had a whole bundle of it in her grip. It was all gone. All of my fucking hair. Every last perfect dark lock. Every piece of my Lionhood, right there in her grip. I wanted to throw up, no I wanted to kill. I wanted to rip heads from bodies and paint the world red.

"My fucking hair!" I yelled as Telisha added the last piece of it to the hair in her grip. She had a shower cap attached to it all and as she glued the final piece onto it, I realised she'd made some sort of creepy ass wig with my mane.

Mindy took it from her, pulling it onto her head like it was a crown and

my mane fell around her face, caressing her cheeks. I couldn't blink, couldn't breathe, I just growled and glared and broke inside.

"Dude," Sin whispered to me. "I think she took your hair."

"Why?" I demanded of Mindy, horrified to my core.

"Tell them why, Telisha," Mindy commanded and Telisha pointed at me.

"Because the Nights owe Queen Mindy a debt," she said loftily, lifting her chin and gazing at Mindy with a manic kind of devotion in her eyes.

"You." Mindy rounded on Sin, pointing at him with her scissors. "Shift into his brother, Leon Night."

It suddenly clicked in my head that Leon had called the girls he'd used his Charisma on Mindy's. They'd been like his groupies when he'd been studying at Aurora Academy, all of them waiting on him hand and foot. Had this girl been one of them?

"You know my brother?" I rasped, still staring at my hair on Mindy's head and wanting to tear that same head off to get it back.

"Of course I know Leon! I broke a leg for your brother!" Mindy cried. "I fell out of a window trying to answer his call. But did he even give me so much as a thank you for my efforts?" she spat.

"Look, Mandy, I dunno who you are or what brand of bug has crawled up your butt-" Sin started.

"I'm *Mindy*," she hissed. "And if you interrupt me again, I'll snip your dick off. Now use your Incubus power to sense my greatest desire. *Now*." She jabbed the scissors at him and Sin gaped at her.

"I don't want to," he pouted.

I glanced around the space again, noticing the vents in the ceiling of the elevator and suddenly realised why I could access my Lion Order again. This was one of the elevators that led up to the Order Yard and the antidote to the suppressant was currently filling the air around us.

“Look, Mindy,” I snarled, rage pounding through my blood. “I’m not my brother. I don’t even fucking know you. But I know this. You are now my number one enemy, above any other motherfucker I have ever met. Because you took my hair. And no one – *no one* – touches my fucking hair and gets away with it. So you’re dead. So dead that the stars are laying out the welcome mat for you right now. So I suggest you start running because the second I get free, you’re going to rue the day you were born.”

Mindy scowled at me, tossing her hair – my hair – and pointing the scissors at me. “Big words for a little Lion cub on the floor. NOW SHIFT INTO MY FANTASY OR THE NEXT THING I CUT OFF WILL BE AN INCUBUS’S COCK!” she roared at Sin and just like that he shifted into my brother.

Long, golden hair fell around his shoulders and his tanned chest was on display, his muscles bulky and his eyes deepest gold like mine. Despite knowing that it wasn’t really him, a tug of longing filled my heart and I wished he really was here to destroy these bitches with me.

“Good, good,” Mindy purred, like really purred, which made me think she was a Nemean Lioness. She looked to me with her eyes narrowing. “You do know me, Roary Night,” she growled. “I’m the Lioness you rejected when I first got here. I propositioned you, I promised you the world and you know what you said to me?” She stepped closer with deadly intent and a vague memory stirred in my mind of this girl as my nose wrinkled.

“Were you that chick that cut off that guy’s dick and presented it to me in a box after I told him his whistling pissed me off?” I gasped.

“So you do remember me!” she said with a glimmer of pride in her eyes.

“Who the fuck gives someone a dick in a box? Even I’m not that depraved,” Sin muttered.

“The perfect Lioness, that’s who,” Telisha said, smiling at Mindy. “We

carved it off together, didn't we, Erica?"

"What did you call me?" the blonde growled and Telisha gasped as she realised she'd used the girl's real name. "Nothing. I meant to say: We carved it off together, didn't we, *Mindy*?" She batted her lashes.

"We sure did." Mindy's eyes snapped back onto me. "You and your idiotic brother can't see that I'm the best woman you'd ever have and now I'm done waiting to be your servant, I'm going to claim a position of royalty all by myself."

"And what are you doing here?" Sin demanded of Telisha who was sucking on a lock of my hair which she'd kept for herself.

"I just like eating hair," she said with a bright smile. "Tasty, tasty hair." She started chomping down on my beautiful locks and I could have wept.

"Tell them what else you like to eat, Telisha," Mindy said with a smirk.

"People," Telisha said with a monster's smile as she eyed up me and Sin. "Tasty, tasty toeses and tasty, tasty noses." She took a step toward Sin, but Mindy pushed her back.

"Not yet," she hissed. "Not until I've got my revenge." She approached Sin. "I would have made the best Lioness, Leon. But you had to go and shack up with a pride who aren't even of our kind!"

"Um...I'm sorry?" Sin tried with a shrug.

Mindy slapped him around the face. "Sorrays aren't good enough! Sorrays don't bring back the years of my life wasted serving you, feeding you, being there at all hours of the day the moment you sent out a distress call. I was everything for you and how did you repay me?" Tears rolled down her cheeks and Telisha patted her back while swallowing down my hair.

*Why my hair, stars? Why?*

"I mean...don't take offence, okay?" Sin started and I shot him a look that told him to stop talking, but of course he went on. "But like, that relationship



sounds pretty one sided, kitten. Maybe you should just get yourself a Lion shaped vibrator and move on with your life?”

Mindy lunged at him, grabbing his hair and starting to cut it off with the scissors. But the moment the locks fell, they vanished into the air, the illusion fading away. That didn't stop her though.

Telisha started drifting closer to me, licking her lips and I shifted against the wall of the elevator, trying to break the restraints on my hands. If I could get free and access my Order, then I'd tear into them to pieces with my teeth.

“Clearly you're upset,” Sin said as Mindy stepped back, panting furiously as a lock of my hair tumbled from the shower cap she wore and Telisha snatched it up, starting to feast on it.

*Fuck my life.*

“Of course I'm upset,” Mindy snapped.

“Look, how about we make you feel better?” Sin suggested as his hair grew long again, recreating the vision of my brother, apparently feeding on Mindy's fantasies once more.

“How?” Mindy narrowed her eyes.

“Well... I know what your desires are, it's my gift. So I know what you *really* want,” Sin said, arching an eyebrow. It was too fucking weird seeing my brother's face moving in the way Sin's did.

“You do?” Mindy whispered, clearly tempted by his words.

“Yeah,” Sin whispered. “It's fucked up, depraved, but all the best fantasies are, right kitten?”

Mindy nodded slowly, glancing at me and Sin's head turned my way too.

“Why are you looking at me like that?” I snarled.

“Mindy's feeling lustful,” Sin said, putting a little emphasis on the last word and my heart drummed harder as I realised what he was saying. He was feeding on her lust, filling up his magic reserves. So if we just played

along...

Sin shuffled closer and I shrank back as he puckered up to kiss me.

“Ergh!” I shouted, jerking away as much as possible. “You’re my brother!”

“Hush now, sex pot, it’s just me wearing his skin,” Sin purred.

“And that’s supposed to make me feel better?” I hissed.

“Kiss,” Mindy demanded. “Kiss for me to show me how sorry you are.”

“No,” I balked, trying to kick Sin back, but he was fucking agile and was somehow moving on top of me despite his hands being tied behind his back.

“Stop it.” I tried to headbutt him, but his mouth collided with mine instead and Mindy moaned loudly.

“Mmm, my brother,” Sin said for her benefit and I started gagging, trying to turn my head away as he began licking my face instead.

I was going to kill him. He’d be so fucking dead that not even the stars could find his soul when I was finished with him.

“Now let me get in the middle,” Mindy demanded, dropping to her knees and crawling between us. Sin let her in as she lay down on me on her back and I spluttered as I breathed in some of my own hair on her shower cap.

“By the fucking sun,” I growled, leaning my head back as far as possible to try and get away from her.

Telisha chewed faster on my hair as she watched the show intently and Sin leaned forward, his mouth hovering above hers. “I can’t touch you with my hands bound, kitten.”

“Call me Mindy,” she begged.

“Alright, Mandy.”

“MINDY!” she shrieked.

“Shut up, Mindy!” Sin barked and the girl shivered like she liked that.

“Tell me what to do,” she half sobbed. “I’ve missed you telling me what to

do, Leon.” She pawed at Sin’s chest and I bristled, still trying to get my face out of the nest of my hair on this bitch’s head.

“Untie me, Mindy. And let me show you how a Lion claims their mate,” Sin growled, showing how well he could fit the role of people’s desires. It was pretty impressive considering our fucking circumstances.

“Alright,” she panted, reaching around to free him and my gut twisted in anticipation. But as she leaned around him, she also started sucking on his neck and mewling like a cat in heat. Sin grimaced at me over her head, but the second she released his bound hands, he stole her scissors away with a flick of his fingers, sending them flying across the elevator and slamming straight between Telisha’s eyes.

The cannibal hair eater slumped to the ground dead and Mindy screamed as she thrashed between us. *Nice shot.*

Sin stood up, shoving Mindy off of me and helping me up, another flick of his fingers tearing apart the rope binding my hands in place.

I dropped my jumpsuit in a flash and shifted, almost filling the entire elevator as I knocked Mindy down beneath my paws. She screamed and slammed her fist against the emergency button on the wall, making the elevator doors slide open. I clamped her whole body between my teeth, throwing her out into the hallway and bounding after her like a cat playing with a mouse, a roar exploding from my throat.

“I am the queen!” she wailed, trying to get up, but I knocked her down again with one huge paw and clamped my teeth over her head. One sharp twist yanked her head clean off and I flung it down the hall, the shower cap wig flying off and slapping into a wall. I licked the blood from my lips as my rage cooled a little, but nothing could bring back my hair. Even in my Lion form, my mane was cropped short. Ruined.

I was no king of beasts now. I was just a cat with its claws pulled out. And

it broke my heart.

Rosalie appeared at the end of the corridor running along and slamming into me, hugging me tight as she wrapped her arms around my neck. “Where the hell were you, Roar? I’ve been so freaking worried!”

I tucked my chin down to draw her closer then snarled as I realised Cain was walking beside Ethan with his hands completely unbound.

“It’s alright.” Rosa stepped back, glancing over at Cain and realising what had me on edge. “He saved us.”

That wasn’t really good enough for me, but it was clear Rosa had decided to trust him, so I guessed I had to too.

Sin came bounding up to her in his own form and planted a hard kiss on her mouth which made my hackles raise again. “I missed you, sugar nut.”

“I missed you too, Sin.” She smiled, lingering in his arms for a moment before looking to the dead girl’s head on the floor.

“Holy shit, is that Erica Collins?” Cain muttered.

“Who?” Ethan asked.

“Some fucking loon who went on a killing spree a couple of years back,” Cain said. “She only targeted Lions and took their dicks as trophies.”

“Fuck,” Ethan said with a look of disgust. “Did she hurt you, man?” He looked to me and I shifted back into my Fae form, causing a gasp to leave Rosa’s lips as she spotted the devastation of what had happened to my hair.

I turned away from her, ashamed and wanting to hide so she didn’t have to see me like this. De-Lioned. Who even was I without my mane? I’d once had a great uncle Larry who had started balding at eighty-seven and his whole family had had to disown him for the shame of it. But this was so much worse than that – my hair had been *cut*. It was unthinkable, unimaginable, sacrilegious. I was almost glad my family had already disowned me because this would kill my mothers and likely cause my father to self-combust.

Sin passed me my jumpsuit and I pulled it on, walking over to the shower cap on the floor and picking it up, running my fingers through my butchered hair.

“At least she didn’t kill you, right?” Sin said cheerily. “Or cut off your cock. You’ve got such a nice, big cock and our wild girl would have been so sad to lose it.”

“It’s worse than that,” I muttered. “So much fucking worse...”

“I dunno, man. Imagine having to just sit there and watch me fuck her for you because you had no D. That would be sad. You wouldn’t even be able to jerk off over it. I mean, I could probably shift into you for her so she wouldn’t have to miss out on having you with a dick. But for you that wouldn’t help. Not one bit,” Sin kept going on and on about how awful my dickless life could have been and I just turned and walked away from him, trying to claim a little space even though there wasn’t any here.

“Roary,” Rosa said gently, moving to my side and laying a hand on my arm.

I turned away again, wanting to disappear, but she pulled me back, moving into my chest and pressing herself against me with a low whine in her throat.

“It’ll grow back,” she said, but I shook my head.

“It’ll never be the same,” I choked out. I’d never had my hair cut in my lifetime. That mane included the hair I’d been born with. It was luscious and magnificent and a point of pride for all Lions. There was no growing that back even if my hair ended up just as long as it had once been. I couldn’t undo this. Not ever.

“It will,” she swore, reaching up and pushing her fingers into what was left of my hair. Which wasn’t a whole lot. “It actually kinda suits you.”

“Don’t,” I snarled in warning, pressing her back against the wall, the

shower cap bunched up in my fist. “Don’t you downplay this, Rosalie Oscura. My hair is my Lionhood. It’s the mark of a true king. A worthy Lion. It was the last piece of my old life I still had.”

“It’s just hair, Roar,” she tried and my fist collided with the wall beside her head, making her jump.

“Hey,” Ethan barked, appearing at my side in a flash and trying to pull me back, but I wasn’t going anywhere.

He looked ready to rip me to pieces for losing my shit so close to his mate and I turned to him eagerly, knocking my chest against his and growling darkly in anticipation of a good fight.

But before we could do more than face off and snarl at each other, a howl cut through the air, joined by several more a second later and Ethan swore as he looked over his shoulder.

“That’s the Lunars,” he hissed. “We need to move.”

I stepped back from Rosa and she took my hand, threading her fingers between mine and squeezing. The rage fell from me to be replaced by a desperate kind of hopelessness and I hung my head as we walked, pulling my hand from hers, not feeling worthy of it being there. I was just a shaved house cat with no pride in its heart. Father was probably shuddering with the feel of me falling even further from grace right now.

My hair stayed clamped in my fist with the shower cap, finding I was unable to let go of it as we moved along the corridor and I dragged my heels.

“We’re literally gonna die if you don’t hurry up, dude,” Rosa said and I nodded sullenly.

“Where the hell can we go? There’s no way out up here,” Ethan said anxiously, glancing around the corridor.

“There’s an exit hatch in the elevators,” Cain said as the howls drew closer. “I can access it.”

“Well aren’t you just Helpy Helperson now,” Sin taunted and Cain snarled at him.

“I just don’t want to be ripped apart by angry Wolves, Eighty-Eight,” he snapped. “I hardly care if you remain down here. In fact, I’d prefer it.”

“You can drop the little number nicknames, buddy,” Sin said with a grin. “You’re on our team now.”

“Fat fucking chance of that,” Cain growled, stepping into the elevator over Telisha’s body and reaching up to a concealed magical signature reader on the ceiling.

“By the stars,” he muttered, like the blood coating the floor irritated him.

“That’s what happens to people who send dicks in boxes. The stars will always find a way to get revenge,” Sin said in mysterious voice like he thought he was speaking for the heavens themselves.

Cain pressed his palm to it and a hatch slid open in the top of it. Rosa jogged to his side, looking up into the space above and Cain grabbed hold of her, lifting her up without asking.

She pressed a foot to his shoulder, climbing out of sight as more howls came this way. The Wolves had to be in their Fae forms since the Order suppressant was back on, but that didn’t mean they couldn’t still rip us apart considering the sheer amount of them headed towards us.

Cain climbed up next and Sin followed, heaving himself inside before Ethan went after him. I trailed into the elevator, staring down at the hair in my hand and wondering if it was even worth living another moment now.

“Come on, hot stuff.” Sin hung upside down through the hatch, plucking the hair from my hand and disappearing up into it again.

“Give that back,” I snarled, leaping up and catching hold of the edge of the hatch as his giggles carried to me.

I pulled myself up with a murderous rage bleeding through me and Cain

closed the hatch as I made it inside.

Sin was already halfway up the ladder that ran up the shaft toward the Order Yard and I raced after him, gaining on him fast and swatting his ankles as he continued to laugh. When he put the shower cap on his head, I lost it, fury filling me to the brim.

“You motherfucker!” I yelled as he made it to the top of the shaft and disappeared into a crawl space.

I made it there a beat later and climbed into the narrow space with a growl.

I crawled after him as fast as I could, catching hold of his ankle and yanking him backwards. I pushed him down beneath me and snatched the hair from his head, then threw my fist into his face.

He laughed through the pain and I scowled at this piece of shit.

“Don’t touch my hair,” I warned.

He reached out and wiggled his fingers through the hair stuck to the shower cap, singing *do-daloo-daloo*.

My hand closed around his throat. “You fucking-”

“Get out of the way, I need to open the next hatch,” Cain barked behind us then shoved his hand against my back when I didn’t immediately move.

I was squashed down on top of Sin as Cain crawled over us and I jammed my elbow up into his gut in payment before he made it to the other side and opened the next hatch.

Moonlight poured in and Rosa and Ethan howled at the exact same moment. Suddenly I was crushed again, my face driven down into Sin’s chest as the two Wolves fought to get out to the moon, barking like pups as they made it past us and tearing their clothes off as they reached the hatch. They disappeared outside with whoops which quickly turned to the deep tenor of fully shifted Werewolf howls.

“Fucking animals,” Cain muttered like a moody asshole and I clambered



over Sin who was still laughing and followed Cain out of the hatch into the Order Yard.

We emerged from a boulder which concealed the hidden entrance and I gazed around at the trees and the moonlight filtering through them with a breath of relief. It was only an illusion of true nature created with magic, but it was close enough to reality that it gave some reprieve from the endless monotony of the prison. Out here, the enchantments made freedom seem that much closer. It made me remember why we were doing this. Why my hair was a sacrifice I'd have to accept making in the quest to get out of here. To get Rosa out of here.

Still, I pushed my mane into my pocket, not ready to part with it yet as a low, sad growl left me.

Sin clapped a hand to my shoulder as he made it outside, beaming widely. "Ah, what a perfect night for an orgy." Then he ran off into the trees with another wild laugh and I was left staring angrily after them all, only to find someone else doing the very same thing beside me.

I glanced at Cain, opening my mouth to warn him about screwing us over and how I'd peel his damn ribcage apart if he even thought about hurting Rosa, when he shot forward in a burst of speed and collided with me.

I hit the ground with an oomph, bringing up my fist to punch him, sure he was about to kill me. His fangs drove into my neck and I cursed, punching harder, thrashing and fighting and clawing, but he had me in his grasp. I was fucking done for.

"Ros-!" I roared, but Cain's hand slammed over my mouth to shut me up as he fed, drinking and groaning and delighting in my fucking death.

His weight was like a solid force I couldn't battle against as he used the strength of his Vampire Order to keep me there while his venom locked down my ability to shift.

He kept taking and taking and I waited for him to rip my entire throat out as I fought to get up, but then he withdrew his fangs and released a sigh of satisfaction.

“Dammit, you taste like a fucking meadow, Sixty-Nine.” He shoved himself to his feet then shot off into the trees with the speed of his Order, surprising me by letting me live.

*So we’re just letting the asshole Vampire guard run around alone now, are we?*

Not that we could do much about it with his Order unleashed, but still. I didn’t trust that asshole one bit. I didn’t understand how Rosa could feel anything for him. He hated us, and he’d never shown Rosa much decency as far as I saw it.

He fed on her because it suited him and any kindness he’d paid her was to simply secure himself another feed. I didn’t have anything against Vampires, but this one seemed like the embodiment of a parasite. The way he looked at Rosa was like he wanted to possess her. Like she was his fucking Source or something. But guards didn’t get to lay a claim on anyone in this prison, so if he wanted a regular feeding bucket then he should have made one of his friends outside of this place into his Source. Though judging by his personality, making friends probably wasn’t one of his strong suits. Still... he’d just had a chance to kill me and hadn’t taken it. But that probably had more to do with what Rosa would have thought of it if he’d gone through with it than him actually giving a damn about me.

I sighed, my mind going to my hair again. And with my spirits down in the dirt, I headed deeper into the trees, glad at least that the dark was here to hide my ruined mane.

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I sat at the edge of a large pond where the Moose and Bear Shifters usually hung out, throwing rocks into the water. The reeds stirred in a magical breeze that swept through the dome from time to time and I descended into a dark mood as I stared at the shower cap in my hand with my mutilated mane attached to it.

I'd tried putting it on, but honestly it only made me feel worse. Especially when I'd caught sight of my reflection in the water. The only hope I had now was getting out of this place and making myself a hair regrowth potion. But even then...a true Lion's mane was meant to be grown over years, looked after and nourished daily. Bottle grown hair wouldn't have the lustre of my old mane because it wouldn't be imbued with a lifetime of love and tending to by my mothers. And maybe that was the hardest part about it all, knowing I'd lost the piece of myself which my family had helped gift me. On my fourth birthday, my mother Safira had given me my first hairbrush, and my mother Marie and Latisha had given me a gift basket full of hair products. My father had nearly shed a tear of pride when he'd given me a jar of the infamous Night hair serum, the recipe of which had been passed down to him from my great, great grandmother Clawdrey. He'd said that serum was imbued with the power of all the Nights who had come before me. And my hair had held that power too. Now it was dead. Cut off and severing me from the last remaining link to my family.

I didn't even feel like a Night anymore. My father didn't acknowledge my existence, my mothers wept at the mention of me, so I may as well have been a ghost, dead the moment I walked through the doors of Darkmore, my brother the only one who wanted to visit my grave.

I sighed then threw the shower cap of hair out into the pond, hoping for a dramatic splash before it sank away, but no. It just sat there, spinning in a

lazy circle like a dead jellyfish.

“Roar?” Rosa’s voice reached me, but I didn’t turn around, just wanting to be alone right now. “Hey, um...are you okay?”

I said nothing and she appeared beside me, lowering down to join me on the flat rock I was sitting on. She spotted my hair out in the water and a snort of amusement escaped her. My head snapped around, a snarl rolling from my throat, but then I realised she was fucking naked and my pulse started to thunder.

Her knees were hugged to her chest but the delicious curve of her spine and the gleam of her olive toned flesh was like a Siren’s song to me and my cock. But I wasn’t going to be distracted from my mood, not after what had happened to my precious mane.

“If you came here to laugh at me, then leave,” I demanded, my temper rising fast. Nights were renowned for being chilled out, but when they lost their shit, they could rival the fury of a hurricane. And I was currently in dangerous territory.

Rosa’s smile fell into an angry frown. “Don’t be like that. I know you’re upset, but it’ll grow back, Roary. As soon as we’re out of here, I’ll buy you a hair growth potion and then-”

“It’s not the same.” I shoved to my feet. “You don’t get it.”

She stood too, following me as I stalked along the edge of the pond away from her and determinedly ignored her naked body. My cock wasn’t so easily distracted though as it grew solid for her, throbbing with a need it had wanted to fulfil for so damn long.

She caught my hand, tugging me back to look at her and my jaw tightened as I stared at her face, finding her looking more like the innocent little pup I’d once known than the fierce warrior who she’d grown up to be.

“You look hot without it,” she said and I snapped, losing it completely.

“Well thanks for letting me know my mane was so repulsive to you,” I barked.

Her lips popped open and ferocity filled those big brown eyes of hers, no sign of that young pup anywhere suddenly. And I was glad of that, because I didn't want to see her as some kid anymore, I wanted her as a woman who knew her own mind, whose body was old enough to crave mine, even if it was still wrong. *Fuck, Dante will kill me.*

“I didn't say that! I'm just trying to make you feel better,” she said in exasperation.

“Well don't bother,” I snapped. “I'm tired of you trying to make anything better when it comes to me.”

“What the fuck is that supposed to mean?” she demanded, folding her arms as her eyes spat hellfire at me.

“You know what it means,” I growled, stepping closer and leaning down so I was nose to nose with her. “You came here for me. You're trying to fix what happened ten years ago because you feel guilty. But I'm not your burden to bear, Rosa. I never was. I made my choice that day and it landed me here. It had nothing to do with you.”

A growl ripped from her throat. “It had everything to do with me,” she hissed, rising up on her tiptoes to get her face close to mine. “You came back for me. If you'd just left me behind then-”

“I'd never leave you behind!” I bellowed. “And that's on me. Not you. You've fucked up your whole life by coming here, and now what? Do you really think we're getting out of here, huh? Are you that star damned blind? Look around, Rosalie,” I full named her, scolding her like a pup because I needed to stop looking at her like she was mine. I needed to stop pretending that me loving her made any difference to the reality of our circumstances. She wasn't for me. She was mated to another Fae and since I'd told her I

loved her, she hadn't spoken a word about it. Sure, we were in a bit of a fucking predicament and there wasn't that many opportunities for a chat about our feelings, but she had time to go off fucking Ethan and Sin, didn't she? So I was pretty sure I had my answer when it came to what she really wanted.

Rosa glared at me, not looking anywhere else but straight at me, the Alpha in her rearing up to challenge the Alpha in me. "I know exactly where we are, and we're a helluva lot closer to getting out than we were before I got here, Roary."

"You're delusional," I snarled. "I'm trying to go along with it, I'm doing everything you ask. But I'm starting to see that there really is no getting out of here. The prison is full of inmates hunting for us and the outside is full of guards waiting to contain us. And do you think they're gonna just round us up nicely and put us back in our cages?" I caught hold of both sides of her face, holding tight as I stared at her unblinkingly, fear tangling with my gut at the thought of what might happen to her. "They could execute us for this. There'll be new charges brought against us, they'll study the CCTV and if they deem some of us too much of a threat, they'll get rid of us quietly and efficiently while they lock down their prison again. Or maybe they'll just kill us on sight the second they come down here because who's gonna question it? At the very least we'll end up in the hole for months if not years. We're worth less than rats in this place. There won't be inquiries until we're dead and then they'll simply say we died in the riots."

"That won't happen because we're going to get out," she said, her lips pushing out stubbornly as she refused to accept any other reality.

"I will not see you die, Rosalie Oscura," I said in a growl, my eyes falling to her mouth and I couldn't resist the urge to drag my thumb across her bottom lip, making her take in a small breath of air.

“What are you saying, that you’re done fighting for this? That you’re not gonna try and make it out?” she asked in horror. “Because I didn’t come all this way to leave you behind, so I’ll drag you out by your tail if I have to.”

I released her, shaking my head and backing up as my heart warred in my chest. “I’m saying you never should have come. I’m saying you should have let me rot here, because this fate is so much fucking worse than being a prisoner. The one thing that kept me sane in here was knowing you were out there, free, living your life. And now you’re stuck right here in the dirt with me and it’s torture! Why couldn’t you just stay home like an obedient pup? Why couldn’t you be a good girl for once? Why do you have to be so fucking stubborn?”

“Because I love you, Roary Night,” she growled and those words rushed through me in a flood of burning, tantalising heat. “I made a promise to myself a long time ago that one day I’d get you out of here. And I don’t plan on letting myself down on that, because that’s what makes me an Alpha of the Oscuras. If I can’t rely on my own abilities then I can’t rely on my pack, so if I say I’ll do something, every Wolf under my rule will know I’m not lying. So when I tell you I’ll get you out of here, Roary, you’d better fucking believe it.”

Silence hummed between us, the air so tense it felt like the weight of the stars were pressing down on my shoulders. I stared at this beautiful, powerful creature before me and realised this obsession she had with saving me had held her back her whole life. I’d tried to free her from the guilt by not letting her visit me, by cutting myself off from her as much as possible so that she could move on, but instead I’d bound her to me even tighter. And she had to let go.

“Look, I know I was your childhood crush,” I said and she winced at those words, her cheeks touching with colour the way only I could make them do.

It sent another rush of blood to my cock seeing her flustered like that for me, reminding me of the Lion I'd once been, a king who could have had any woman he wanted, who made girls blush and stumble over their words. But she saw me through the tint of the past, not who I was right here in front of her. "You can't let go of me because you've spent the last ten years feeling guilty believing you landed me here. But ten years is a long damn time, and whatever idea of me you were once in love with is long fucking gone. I might hold some power in this prison, but if we really get out of here, I'll be nothing out there, little pup."

"Don't call me that," she snarled. "I'm not a little pup." She shoved me in the chest and I growled, my Lion instincts prickling as I caught her wrists in a vice like hold.

"You are," I growled. "You're the girl who stared at me at every Oscura event I ever attended. You were the one who wore a pretty dress at Dante's twentieth birthday party to get my attention."

"That wasn't for you," she hissed, the lie obvious by the way her cheeks flushed even further.

"You think I didn't see all of it?" I mocked coldly, wanting to taunt and hurt and make her see why I was no good for her. "I saw how Dante's little wild cousin hungered for the wildness she saw in me, but I assumed you'd grow out of it."

"You said you love me," she spat. "You admitted it."

"I know," I said, my grip tightening on her wrists as she tried to tug them free, but I kept her in my trap, my hunger for her growing. I was two men in that moment. The one who craved her with every atom in my body and the one who had to walk away before I got in so deep with her that I never got out. And honestly, I had no fucking idea who would win between them. "But my love isn't pure, Rosa. It's not the flowers and teddy bears kind, it's tainted



and wicked and wants to eat you alive.”

“I can handle it,” she growled. “You still see me as weaker, but I can match you in any game, Roary.”

“This isn’t a game you want to play,” I warned. “I’m not the man you fell for, I’m the monster he became. I don’t play nice with my prey and you’re the best hunt of my life. If I get my claws into you, I won’t let go, and I’ll leave my mark for everyone to see.”

“Prove it,” she ordered, leaning toward me rather than trying to run like she should have. “I dare you.”

Our old game became something far more serious in an instant. She was asking for the moon and I was really tempted to pluck it from the sky this time. Because Rosalie Oscura was my darkest, most forbidden desire. And I’d be lying if I said I hadn’t thought about what I’d do with her if I ever let myself give in to this carnal appetite I had for her.

“Or do you forfeit?” she taunted, a cruel smile filling her full lips.

She tugged her hands free of my grip as I held myself in check, my cock as hard as iron as she arched a brow at me and backed up a step. My fists clenched and a dangerous growl rolled up my throat as she retreated another step and shrugged at me. My gaze dipped to her body and my throat clogged up as I took in her pert, shapely tits, her nipped waist and round hips. Her thighs clenched together as my gaze wandered to her pussy and I knew I was a fucking goner then, tasting my lips as I imagined what it would be like to spread those tanned thighs apart and taste her instead.

“For such a big, scary beastie, you’re kinda tame, Roary,” she said lightly, then turned her back on me, insulting me with that single move and making my resolve crumble to dust. The Fae in me roared alongside my Lion and every barrier in my head that held me back from her fell down at once.

She strode away from me toward the trees and I lunged after her, locking

the crook of my arm around her throat and yanking her back against my chest.

“This what you want?” I growled in her ear.

She wriggled in my grasp and I held her tighter, sliding my free hand lower and dragging my fingers up the tattoo on her side where her scars were hidden.

“Every single one of these scars conjured a bloodthirsty animal in me who has never been fed. They make me want to find anyone who has hurt you and kill for you so fucking brutally that no jury on earth would pardon me of my crimes. So maybe I was always a condemned man when it came to you, Rosa. I would have ended up behind bars one way or another, it just would have been for murder instead of grand larceny.”

“You really think you’d kill for me, Roar?” she asked breathily and I slid my hand onto her breast, finding her nipple hard and peaked for me.

Her skin was so soft against my rough fingers and as I scored my thumb over her sensitive flesh, she arched back against me with a gasp. This body had ached for mine since she was old enough to know she wanted me. How many times had she made herself come while thinking about me? And how close had she come to imagining the truth of the animal I was becoming for her?

“I’d kill for this throat-” I bit into the flesh of her neck. “-and this mouth-” I bit her lower lip as she turned her head to look at me, toying with her nipple again to make her pant. “And this flesh.” I pulled my hand from her breast, carving it down the centre of her and cupping my fingers between her thighs, the damp, needy heat of her pussy wetting my hand. “I’d kill an entire army for this.” I tugged her ear between my teeth and her ass ground back against my hard cock, making a low groan escape me. “But it’s your soul I’d kill the most for. I’d destroy the world so long as your soul was kept untarnished. I’d

die by my own hand for that too.”

“I don’t want you to die for me, Roary, I want you to fuck me,” she panted, a lilt of amusement in her tone, but I turned her laugh into a moan as I drove two fingers into her tight pussy. I circled them slowly, enjoying the feel of her as my palm grew slick from how much she wanted this. She bucked her hips to try and take more from me and I gave it to her as I pumped my hand, pushing another finger inside her, getting her somehow even hotter and wetter.

Her head tipped back as she leaned her weight on me, letting me take control as I tortured her nipple with one hand while driving my fingers in and out of her at a slowly increasing pace. When her pussy started tightening and her moans built to a needy crescendo, I tugged my hand free from the cage of her thighs and pushed down on her spine, making her bend over in front of me.

“No way,” she growled immediately, jerking upright and dancing away from me with her upper lip curled.

I stalked after her, the thrum of some deep and demanding energy in the air making me into nothing but a beast. I felt like I’d shifted into my Lion, only my body was still Fae as my animal instincts took over my flesh. I needed her beneath me, pinned down by my weight and submitting to my every demand. If I didn’t get that from her, I’d die. And if she wanted to put up a challenge then I would be glad to rise to it.

“I’m going on top,” she insisted.

“Like hell you are,” I growled, rushing forward to grab her by the hips.

I tossed her down onto the dirt and she scrambled to get up as I fell over her. Her teeth sank into my arm as I caught her thighs, parting them for me, before she swung her head up and cracked it against my forehead with a wild laugh. I reared back with a curse as she twisted onto her knees and crawled

out from beneath me. But before she could jump up, I dove on her, crushing her to the ground and rocking the hard length of my erection against her ass, spanking the side of her thigh as I forced my knees between her legs.

“I’m not in the mood to be dommed, Roary,” she growled, but I could hear the game in her voice as she threw a wild grin back over her shoulder at me.

While I got stuck staring stupidly at that look on her face, she threw an arm back, locking it over my neck and throwing her weight sideways so we rolled. I hit the ground on my back and she rolled over on top of me, grabbing my hands and pinning them in the grass beside my head.

I barked a laugh at her attempt to subdue me, one fierce jerk of my arms freeing me from her grip, but then she flicked her hands and vines locked around my wrists, yanking them above my head. She circled her hips, riding her wet pussy over my cock and leaving a damp mark on my jumpsuit. I forgot to fight for a second as I watched that perfect display, leaning up to suck one of her nipples into my mouth and make her breathe, “Yes.”

But this war wasn’t won yet. I let her enjoy grinding her clit over my cock until her breaths came heavier and she reached down to try and free me from my jumpsuit. But in her moment of distraction, I ripped my arms free of her vines, holding onto the pieces of them and snatching her wrists. I tugged them behind her back, binding her hands together before she could even think about stopping me and disabling her magic.

“Stronzo,” she spat out and I smirked at her, taking a fistful of her hair into my grasp and tugging her head backwards to expose her throat.

“Looks like I caught myself a little sub,” I taunted, biting her neck to show her I was the beast who could rip it out, the one who owned her completely now.

She yanked at her hands, making her tits push together and I squeezed one in my large palm, watching her as she tried to get free.

“I’m no sub,” she growled.

“I think you like being at my mercy,” I said with a Lion’s grin and she cursed me in Faetalian, but her eyes were glittering with wicked thoughts.

“Well what are you gonna do now you have me, Roar?” she asked mockingly. “I’m not sure you’re Fae enough to handle me now I’m in your trap.”

I snarled at those words, pushing her off of me, standing up and throwing her over my shoulder. She squealed in surprise as I spanked her ass and carried her to the nearest tree, planting her down on her feet and shoving her up against it face first.

I pressed my palm to her spine and kicked her feet apart, unbuttoning my jumpsuit and freeing my throbbing cock. I slicked it between her thighs, feeling her soaking heat and teasing her as I circled it around her entrance.

“Roary,” she moaned in a way that almost sounded like a plea.

A tingle ran down my spine and I rolled my neck as the Lion in me begged for more. More of her beneath me, more of her submitting and becoming mine. My Lioness. She needed to bow to me and it wasn’t just a desire anymore it was a fucking *need*. A burning, raging instinct. I could feel the power of some higher force latching onto my soul, urging me on and begging me to claim her this way. In the way my Order needed to claim a mate.

I drove my cock into her in one unforgiving thrust that made her cry out and I dug my fingers into her hips as a deep groan left me. I’d wanted her for so long and fuck did she not disappoint. Her pussy was so hot and tight, wrapped around my thick length like it was made for me and only me.

“I claim you, Rosalie Oscura,” I growled in her ear, letting her adjust to every inch of me buried inside her. “You’re mine and fuck what the world thinks because of it. I’m done holding back.”

“So get on with it,” she snarled and I laughed as I started fucking her

mercilessly, holding her exactly where I wanted her as I took and took from her body while she drove her ass back into me to meet every one of my furious thrusts.

From the sounds she was making, it was clear she liked it rough which made her even more perfect for me. I spanked her hard enough to leave a mark and she panted my name like she wanted more. Her pussy squeezed my cock and suddenly I felt her coming, her body convulsing and a howl leaving her lips which stroked my ego and got me even harder. But as her body came close to finishing me too, I pulled out of her and shoved her onto the ground.

Her cheek hit the dirt as she landed on her knees, her ass raised and her pink pussy waiting for me to claim it once more. She struggled to get up as I moved onto my knees behind her and palmed the reddened handprint on her ass as I watched her fight her binds. But they were too tight so she was all mine for as long as I wanted her.

I ran my fist up and down my cock as I enjoyed the sight of her on the ground for me, the moisture from her pussy making my hand glide smoothly along my length.

“Such a tame girl,” I taunted and she growled.

“I’m not tame, I’m wild,” she hissed, her muscles tightening as she tried to snap her binds.

“I’ll tame you, Rosa,” I said darkly, sliding my fingers between her thighs, coating them in her arousal before seeking out her clit and stroking my thumb over it.

“Ah, fuck,” she gasped.

My instincts were burning again and I needed more of her submission, needed her pressed beneath me while I fucked her like the beast I was and found my release deep inside her. She was mine to do what I pleased with and I was going to enjoy every second of having her like this.

I took my hand away from her needy clit and lowered my head down to taste her, running the pad of my tongue up the centre of her. She gasped, her hips rocking, trying to get me where she wanted me, but I took my time tasting her sweet flavour and sinking my tongue into her pulsing pussy. I brought my fingers up again to toy with her clit and she moaned my name into the dirt as another climax rose within her.

Just as she was on the verge of falling into ecstasy, I pulled back and slammed my cock into her, making her scream my name as she came all over it and I held her still as I thrust into her, chasing down my own happy ending as her body became completely mine. My balls tightened just before I came, giving her every drop of cum I had as I tipped my head back and roared my victory over her, pleasure ripping down the centre of me and making my head spin with how much blood had headed to my cock.

My world remained unsteady as I looked back down at her and found her body glowing with the light of the moon. I pulled out of her, untying the binds on her hands and rolling her over beneath me as her back arched and she reached for me as the halo of light around her seemed to glow.

“What’s happening?” I asked as my breaths came heavily.

“Roary,” she panted and I fell over her, my mouth colliding with hers as her legs tangled around me.

Her magic seemed to flow into me, but it wasn’t like any magic I’d ever felt it. It was the cool wash of moonlight beneath my flesh and I kissed her harder, needing more of it as she wrapped herself around me and my fingers tangled in her hair.

“Does this usually happen when you come?” I asked against her lips as she writhed beneath me and I looked down to find that same hazy white light engulfing me too.

“No,” she half laughed, half moaned as she pulled me closer once more.

The power of the moon seemed to reach into the depths of my flesh, shifting something inside me and aligning it entirely with Rosalie Oscura. I purred in acceptance of this feeling, the rightness of it, how natural it was to breathe it into my body and let it take over me. She became my one and only in that second, somehow more firmly than she had been before. She was the reason I'd breathe from this day forward, my purpose for living, my everything.

The cool light started to die away but it continued to shine around my left wrist as well as hers. I lifted my arm to find a mark of the full moon branded on my flesh and as Rosalie turned her arm over, I saw the very same mark upon her own wrist.

"The moon mated us," she gasped, her eyes wide and silvery as the power of the celestial being still hummed within her body.

"You're mine?" I asked, hardly able to believe I was that lucky. I'd been doing my best to make it so by mating her the Lion way, but I'd known in my soul that she was already claimed by another and I hadn't truly believed it would work.

"Yes," she laughed. "And you're mine."

"But Ethan..." I shook my head in complete shock as a new, confusing sensation ran through my body.

There was something different in the way I felt about him, something in this new bond that bound me to him too. Any animosity I'd felt towards him seemed to fall away. It was like he was...family. Linked to me deeply, profoundly. Though not in the way Rosa was. It was a headfuck and I didn't know how to deal with all the new raging emotions settling within me, but what I did know was that this girl was all mine, moon chosen just for me. And if that wasn't a reason to praise every star in the sky for creating such a fortune for me, then I didn't know what was.



“I love you, mate of mine,” I said against her lips, stealing a slow kiss from her and knowing that I’d belong to this girl for the rest of time. “And I think fate is turning in our favour.”



I'd managed to use the pipes to cross the gym, but the Lunar Brotherhood had returned before I could make any attempt to climb down and exit through the room. I'd stayed suspended there for as long as I could, but when some of them started sleeping and the rest descended into various orgies, I'd had to admit defeat.

There was something about watching a Wolf sex party that got me very on edge. They were so loud and virile, so free with their attentions moving from one pack member to the next. It gave me the wet willies. What was wrong with dim lighting and a single, sweet girl becoming the entire focus of your world?

And when I watched one dude move from deep throating a guy to sticking his Rodger rocket in another girl's back door, I decided I needed to move. I couldn't die here in this place. What would my mother think if she heard I was beaten to death during a sex party?

*No.*

*No, no, no.*

I'd decided to take my chances on the floor above and had moved on as swiftly as I could manage without drawing the pack's attention to me up on the pipes.

There was a little access space where the pipes met the roof and I pushed myself up and into it with much wriggling and cursing. My shirt tore down the back as it snagged on the brickwork and I damn near cut my tongue off as I had to bite down on it to stop myself from coughing at the dust.

I made it into the maintenance space up on level four and began army crawling alongside the pipes in the confined space.

It was dark in here, the press of the bricks crushing me from all sides as I focused on moving forward inch by inch and tried to drive out any thoughts to do with claustrophobia or mental images of me getting trapped here and dying all alone in the dark.

There was a hint of light up ahead and I kept going towards it, my entire focus on that little ray of freedom, twinkling before me.

As I got closer, the sound of a voice came to me, the lilt of it following a song though I couldn't make out the words.

I shuffled closer in the dark space and suddenly I could hear them more clearly.

"Don't be afraid of the dark. It's nice and warm in there," Plunger cooed and I shuddered at the thought of being found by that particular inmate. He'd tricked me into giving him far too many cavity searches during my time here and I just knew he'd be so much worse to deal with without restraints keeping him in check.

I dragged myself closer to the light source, spotting a metal grille up ahead just as I heard the sound of running water.

"Oh-ho you like it wet do you, you little pickle? I bet you do," Plunger purred and despite my better instincts, I pulled myself closer to the grille and peered out from within it.

I was level with the floor of the shower units and I could see Plunger standing butt naked before the sinks as he leaned back and shook his ass from

side to side.

"Just gonna limber up for you," he said and I strained my neck to see who he was talking to, but there didn't appear to be anyone else in the room with him.

As I looked back at him, I found him holding onto the sink as he dropped down into a squat while humming a tune.

I frowned, wanting to look away from the sight of his parted ass cheeks while somehow frozen in place as curiosity fought a battle with my disgust.

He got lower and lower, closing in on the tiled floor and I suddenly noticed something sitting there, right beneath his ass.

*Is that...a potato?*

I barely had a moment to decided that yes, it was a potato, before Plunger's ass dropped down over the lumpy brown vegetable and he squealed like an excited little kid.

"That's it, Gerty, get in deep with your brothers. It is my meth-od," Plunger said, scooting his ass back and forward before standing up straight again with a grunt of discomfort. "My, my, you are a big fella."

I looked back to the floor beneath him and my frown deepened. *Where's the potato?*

Plunger started humming as he did a weird half waddle towards the exit and my eyes almost bugged out of my face as I watched him go.

*Where.*

*Is.*

*The.*

*Potato???*

My heart thrashed with a mixture of fear for my life and sympathy for a root vegetable as I tried not to let my thoughts linger on its location for too long. What horrors it had seen. What a destiny for an innocent carb.

I hesitated there for several long moments. On the one hand, I was safe in here, no one knew where I was and no one had any reason to hunt for me either. On the other, I was trapped in a confined space and couldn't stay here indefinitely. I had to move. Had to.

With a pounding heart, I reached out for the metal grille and slammed my hands against it, panic sweeping through me for a moment as it popped out of position and clattered onto the tiles.

But no one appeared. There were no cries of Fae hungering for my death. So I scrambled out like a fish finding land and flopped onto the damp tiles right where Plunger had been standing a moment ago, my cheek slapping down hard on the spot where the potato had met with its cruel fate.

I swore as I shoved myself upright, my pulse racing as I glanced at the mirror.

My eyes were haunted with the sights of what I'd witnessed while hiding in this hell from the monsters who occupied it and my blonde hair was sticking to my forehead as well as stained by the dust from the crawl space I'd just escaped.

My black shirt was torn to shit from the pipes and I tugged the remnants off of me quickly, deciding that a guard's uniform was no good thing in here anyway.

My gaze fell on an orange jumpsuit which had been tossed across the sinks and I snatched it, yanking it on over my trousers and shoving my arms into the sleeves. It was too small to fasten over my broad chest, but as I looked back into the mirror again, I was pleased to see that between that and the state of my hair, I looked nothing like my former self.

I made a move towards the exit then paused as I noticed something sticking to my cheek in the reflection.

I gagged as I focused on the curly grey hair, knowing in my soul that it

had come from Plunger while he ass bagged that potato.

I slapped it from my face and set the taps flowing, scrubbing water over the skin too as I scrambled around in the hunt for some soap.

The doors banged open behind me and I froze as the sound of inmates moving into the space filled the room.

"Do you think it's true?" a girl whispered.

"Our Alpha and Shadowbrook?" another replied. "Can't be...can it?"

I didn't know what they were talking about but I did know that I couldn't stand here pretending to wash my face for however long it took them to have that conversation, so I began to side step towards the door.

Their whispered conversation continued as they thankfully paid me no attention and I hurried towards the door with my head lowered, breathing a sigh of relief as I managed to make it out into the corridor without them looking my way.

I glanced towards the stairwell at the far end of the corridor, but a booming voice from the cell block closest to my position drew my attention before I could make a run for it.

"Your so-called Alpha has betrayed our trust!" a girl shouted, her voice familiar to me as I crept closer to the door, curiosity getting the better of me. "She's been sleeping with the enemy - fucking Ethan Shadowbrook of all people! And now, when we've risen up and taken control of this place, she's nowhere to be seen! I say she's no Alpha at all."

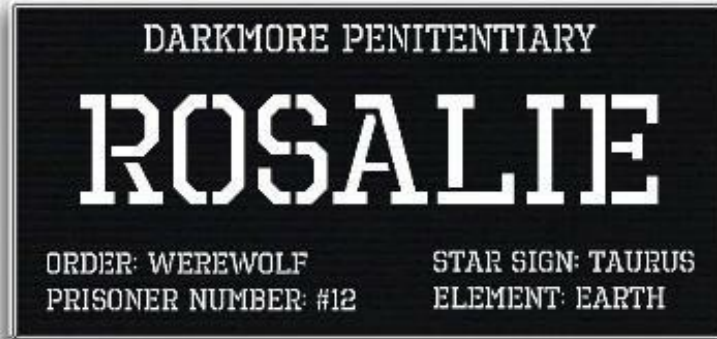
A round of boos and jeers sounded and as I peered into the cell block, I spotted Amira standing on something in the centre of the Oscura pack, her teeth bared in fury as she went on with her speech.

"I'm telling you plainly that she betrayed you - if you don't like it then come at me. Any of you who thinks you can take me out are more than welcome to try. But if you can't then I'm reasserting my position at the head

of this pack. And if you can't beat me, then you're going to have to join me!"

More than a few Wolves surged forward to take her up on that challenge and I took that as my cue to run. Run, run and fucking run.

I needed to get the hell out of here. I needed to get to those stairs and race right the way down to Maintenance where my safety lay. If I could just get up into that secret access tunnel then I'd be safe. Or at least, safer than I was now. Back with the rest of the guards. Back in my room. Far, far away from this horror show filled with psychos. And then I was going to give some serious thought to my life choices because I really wasn't sure this was the right job for me.



## 51 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...

I woke up in my Wolf form, snuggled against a big ass Nemean Lion shifter who had his paws resting over my stomach.

I yawned, stretching my spine out as I tried to wriggle out of Roary's hold on me, but he was one huge fucking golden Lion and it was damn hard to do.

I even tried barking at him, but he just rolled even closer to me and crushed me some more.

I gave up on being polite and shifted, falling against his fluffy chest in my Fae form before launching a tickle attack on his exposed belly.

He let out a roar as he woke suddenly, flipping us over so that I fell on my back on the dirt between his paws and found myself looking up into his snarling Lion face.

Roary growled at me, blinking sleepily as I got a good close up look at those teeth which were big enough to snap me in two with one bite.

I reached up and booped him on the end of his nose and he shifted back into his Fae form, growling with a little less intensity as he landed on top of me.

"We can't nap," I said with a pout, wishing I could steal a little more time with him, but we needed to regroup, form a decent plan to deal with this shit



show and figure out how we were going to escape this place before it was too late.

We'd given ourselves a bit of a workout running around in our Order forms after our mating so I could replenish my magic, but we couldn't just hide out in this moment of bliss.

"I know," he replied with a sigh, leaning down to press a kiss to my lips which was sweet and tender and said so many things I'd always dreamed he might say to me.

Roary pulled back before we could get carried away again and he headed off to grab his clothes, tugging them back on while I sat up and watched him.

Ugh, he was so freaking gorgeous I just couldn't get enough of looking at him. And though he clearly didn't want to hear it, he looked hot with his hair short just like he had with it long.

I ran my fingers over the new mate mark on my wrist and bit down on my bottom lip as I smirked at him, my instincts humming happily at the knowledge that I'd finally claimed him for my own. That the moon had wanted him to be mine, just like she'd wanted Ethan to be. These moon marks were a gift just for us, linked to my Moon Wolf Order in some mystical way I wished I knew more about.

Roary Night had been my best kept fantasy for so long that I couldn't remember a time when I hadn't ached for him and now, I'd finally fulfilled the promise that my soul had always believed in. We were made for each other him and me. And now the stars had proved me right in that belief.

"I'll fetch your clothes," he said, taking off without a word and I smiled to myself as I waited for him to return. Roary Night. The guy I'd been in love with forever. My moon bound mate. *Squee*.

Roary returned with my clothes and handed them to me, noticing me staring at him. He ducked his head a little as he turned away again, scraping a

hand over his roughly chopped hair like he wished he could hide it from me.

I pursed my lips, hating the pain that I saw reflected in his gaze in that brief moment. His incarceration here had stolen so much from him and the way he viewed himself as a Lion. His father and moms had turned their backs on him because of the supposed shame that him being caught had placed on the family. Ten years of his life had been stolen away to Darkmore Penitentiary. And now his mane had been hacked away by some deranged bitch and her psycho friend. Hadn't he suffered enough? Were the stars really so merciless that they'd take so much from him?

I shoved myself to my feet, moving to stand before him and reaching up to push my fingers into the uneven strands of his hair.

A low growl escaped him as he forced himself to remain still and I brushed my fingers back and forth against his scalp.

"Do you want me to cut it more evenly for you?" I asked gently. "Just until we can make you a potion to regrow it?"

Roary closed his eyes like the thought of that pained him and his hands moved to clasp my wrists as he drew them back out of his butchered hair.

"I don't know if I can bear to have it cut any more than it already-"

"I'm the man for the job!" Sin's voice called to us excitedly and I turned to find him striding out of the bushes as he shifted into Edward freaking Scissorhands. "I've got a fantasy for all occasions locked away in this body of mine - and this one even has a scissorcock."

"Fuck no," Roary blanched, backed away from Sin who started snipping his scissor hands together aggressively.

"Don't worry, kitten. I'm a pro - just watch." Sin moved towards a little bush which had grown beneath the canopy of a large tree and began to prune it with flailing movements of his hands which sent leaves and branches flying everywhere.

I backed up, bumping against Roary and making him back away further too while Sin butchered the poor plant.

"Oh...maybe I need a little more practice," Sin said finally when the bush had been reduced to one brown stump.

"No. Fuck no. Keep the hell away from me with those things," Roary warned as he caught my hand and tugged me further away like he feared for the safety of my hair too.

"Oh come on, sex pot, just a little off the sides?" Sin offered with a pout, but I was firmly on team Roary with this.

"I said no," Roary barked. "And what were you doing lurking in the bushes anyway?"

Sin shifted back into his own form and grinned filthily at us. "Watching you two fuck of course. The lust was to die for might I add, and my magic reserves are as pumped up as my cock was at your little performance."

Roary snarled angrily but I slapped a palm against his chest to hold him back when he tried to advance.

"I can create some scissors with my earth magic," I said firmly. "And while I'm cutting your hair we can make a new plan."

Neither Sin nor Roary seemed to have any objections to that idea so I tipped my head back to the clouds and howled loudly to call Ethan to us before starting up a rocky incline to get a better view.

Roary took hold of my hand as we went and Sin strode forward to grab my other hand too. It was kinda silly, but it also felt all kinds of right, so I just kept hold of them as we walked.

"So..." Sin said as we walked, giving me a pointed look.

"What?" I asked.

"Are you going to tell me all about how Roary's magic cock fucked you so good you decided to make him your second fancy little moon mate?" Sin's

grip on my fingers tightened painfully and I jerked them free.

“I didn’t choose it, Sin, the moon did,” I explained. “But yeah, me and Roary are mated now. Is there anything else you wanted to know about that?”

“Nope. Nothing. Nada,” he replied, looking away like he was pissed and I exchanged a look with Roary who only shrugged, clearly not caring.

“So you’re okay with it?” I pushed, feeling very much like he wasn’t.

“Who, me?” Sin asked dramatically. “Oh yeah, I’m peachy, dandy, happy as a goose flying upwind from a T-rex fart.”

I sighed, knowing that was bullshit but also not having any time for his nonsense right now.

“Okay, well, if you want to talk about it with me at some point then just let me know,” I offered.

“Don’t mind me, I’m just the Ringo of this band.”

I decided to leave that alone and let him process whatever way he was feeling about me and Roary being mated because he clearly wasn’t in the mood to talk about it rationally at the moment.

We made it up to a rocky outcrop with a view which stretched across most of the Order yard and Roary took a seat on the edge with his legs hanging over the side.

I used my magic to create a little seat out of a wooden stump behind him then created a pair of scissors as I sat down.

Roary tensed as I began to comb my fingers through the uneven strands of his dark hair, but I spoke to him in a low voice, reciting a little poem on fate in Faetalian which my aunt Bianca used to whisper to me when she tucked me into bed after she'd rescued me from my papa.

Roary relaxed a little as he listened to me and I continued to caress his hair until his shoulders dropped and I could feel his trust in me humming between us. The mark on my wrist for him hummed with contented energy and I

reached down to take hold of his hand, raising it to my lips so that I could kiss it before I began.

Roary sighed, closing his eyes and kissing my mate mark in return, this one undeniably perfect thing calming the pain in him as he prepared for me to cut his hair.

I raised the scissors slowly, gently lifting a lock of his hair and cutting it to a length more even with the shorter strands. He flinched minutely as I did it and I took my time, working to retain as much of his rich brown hair as I could while making it presentable.

Sin sat a little way from us, watching quietly for once while Roary wrapped his arms around the backs of my calves and let his fingers trail back and forth over my ankles while I worked.

A soft growl escaped him as I continued to fix his hair and I could feel the mate bond that connected us pulling tight like a cord that physically bound us.

We all remained silent while I did it, Sin and I understanding how hard this was and allowing Roary to process it in his own time.

As I finished cutting the last dark strands, Ethan bounded up onto the bluff in his black Wolf form. He shifted back, dropping the clothes that had been bundled in his mouth and tugging them on before coming to take a seat beside us.

I finished Roary's hair and pressed a kiss to his cheek, stroking my fingers down his spine as he thanked me in an empty tone.

I moved to sit between him and Ethan, nuzzling against my Wolf in greeting as he reached out to take my arm and turned it over to reveal my new mate mark for Roary like he'd already known it was there. He hadn't put his shirt back on and I chewed on my lip as my hungry gaze roamed over his bare chest and the ink that dripped over his arms.

"I can feel it too," Ethan said in a low voice, his gaze moving from my mark to Roary who was looking right back at him. "This connection between us. You're the centre of it, love, but it's more than just us and you. There's something between me and Roary now too."

"Yeah," Roary agreed in a low tone, his fingers reaching up to tuck a strand of hair behind my ear before caressing the mate mark I had for Ethan there. "I feel it too."

I bit down on a smile at those words as the two of them regarded each other with a new, keener kind of interest. They'd never seemed particularly fond of each other before now but the open, curiosity in their gazes as they looked at each other gave me hope for something I was afraid to voice. Because if my hopes were proved right then this was the start of something so much more than my mate bonds with the two of them. It was the start of our pack. A family all of our own. And the idea of that was just as terrifying as it was enrapturing.

I loved the Oscuras and I adored my pack mates, but the thought of forming a new pack of our own, one built on this kind of love with bonds as powerful as those I felt for these men was exhilarating. I guess I'd never really given much thought for claiming such a thing for myself because I'd always been so caught up on my unrequited love for Roary that I'd never even dreamed of another man capturing my heart in the same way. Let alone actually claiming the object of my obsession as my own too.

The clouds shifted overhead and I sighed as the light of the moon spilled over us, calling out to the celestial being which guided me in all things and asking her for some wisdom. Because shit, I was really in need of some wisdom right now.

We were up shit creek without a paddle and I was struggling to maintain my hope over us pulling this off. We'd lost almost an entire day of our three

days leeway with the FIB and we were no closer to actually getting out of here. If I wanted any hope of this new pack becoming something so much bigger for all of us, then what we needed more than anything was to get the hell out of here.

As I looked off into the distance, the moonlight highlighted some movement beyond the glowing blue dome and my skin prickled with awareness as I looked towards the guard tower at the main entrance to the prison.

I raised a hand and quickly cast an enhancement spell so that I could see them better and I sucked in a sharp breath as I took in the huge group of guards who were gathered there, listening to Warden Pike who stood on a raised platform before them. There was no way for me to amplify the sound of her voice through the barrier of the dome, but I could tell from the way she was gesturing and how the guards were cheering enthusiastically that she was rallying the troops.

"I did try to warn you," Cain's voice came from behind us and I turned to find him standing there, his muscular arms folded across his broad chest as he looked out towards the assembled guards too. I'd been wondering if we'd even see him again after he reclaimed his Vampire gifts, but I guessed he wasn't done with us yet.

"How long did you say we had before the guards would attempt to come down and subdue us?" I asked him.

"Forty-eight hours. Give or take. Which by my count means you've got about a day before hell descends on your little party down here and the whole thing goes to shit for you."

Roary snarled at Cain who just shrugged like he gave no fucks.

"I'm only telling you the truth. How do you expect to hold out against fifty guards with their magic flowing freely through their limbs and their Orders

ready to pounce? There might be a hell of a lot of you down here, but between almost all of the prisoners not having access to their magic or Order forms and the fact that they're all down there right now partying and wasting energy on their little riot, it's obvious who will be victorious in that stand off."

I cursed as I looked away from him, my gaze sweeping over the assembled guards again as a prickle of doubt started making its way down my spine. But I couldn't give in to that feeling. I couldn't allow it to take root, because if it did then I was going to have serious trouble pulling this thing off. And I had to pull it off.

"We still need an explosive to get us into that elevator shaft," I said firmly. The Faesine might have been destroyed in our fight with the Belorian but that didn't make my plan any less viable so long as we could use something else in its place.

"You still want to go that route despite all of those fucking guards waiting up there, love?" Ethan asked curiously, not seeming afraid but there was definitely a touch of doubt in his words.

"Yeah, I do," I replied firmly. Aside from anything else, there wasn't any other way out that I could think of now. Not with those fucking worm things waiting in the soil surrounding the prison to devour us and the forcefield Cain had mentioned was at the surface. "So we need a new explosive. The Faesine would have been great, but it's not the only explosive in this prison that we could use to blow shit up."

"The maintenance level was practically destroyed," Cain drawled behind me. "There's nothing left down there."

"I'm not talking about anything in maintenance. I'm talking about the lerinon gas which I know the prison has been taking regular deliveries of. I spent enough time running about on the maintenance level with you to know



it wasn't down there. So are you going to tell me what they've been doing with it?" I turned to look at Cain again and he pursed his lips, a scowl moving over the men sitting either side of me as he looked inclined to try and push them over the precipice we sat on.

Eventually, my surly guard shrugged. "All I know is that it goes to Psych. And as that place is locked down even tighter than the elevator shaft which leads to the surface, it seems like you're going to need another plan."

I refused to balk at that, letting my mind drink the information in as the clouds parted completely overhead and we were all bathed in the pure silver rays of the moonlight.

I moaned slightly at the kiss of my favourite celestial being against my skin and tipped my head back, trying to think of a way to make this work.

The last time I'd been in Psych, I'd been gifted more than enough reasons to want to stay as far away from that fucking place as physically possible for the rest of time. Hell, I'd only managed to escape from there at all because the moon had decided to offer out one of its gifts to me and allowed me to become invisible somehow.

I closed my eyes as I remembered how it had felt to wield that strange power, the gifts of my rare Order flowing through my veins like the sweetest taste of bliss. Like moonlight given life beneath my skin.

I'd felt it there and I'd called out to it, begging it to save me, hide me.

"Holy shit on a rice cake," Sin gasped. "Where'd she go?"

"Rosa?" Roary asked in concern, jerking up straight as he looked all around for me, his gaze passing right through me.

I looked down at my body and found it absent, just like it had been that time in Psych.

"Per la luce della luna," I murmured, making Sin leap up as he looked all around us.

"I heard her. Maybe she fell down a hole?" he suggested frantically, starting to hunt for holes I might have fit down.

I laughed as I asked the moon to release me from my gifts before materialising between Roary and Ethan again.

"How the hell did you do that?" Ethan asked, reaching out to clasp my face in his big hand like he was worried I might disappear on him again.

"It's a gift from the moon," I replied, grinning at him as I used the power again and his eyes widened as I disappeared from view while his hold on my face hardened.

"You're still there. But you're not there either," he murmured in disbelief as Roary managed to find my hand and take hold of it too.

I released my grasp on the gift and turned back to look at Cain again.

"I'm going to find a way to get that gas from Psych," I said to him firmly. "And I think you can help me."

"How do you figure that?" he asked dryly.

"Because you knew all about the secret way to get up here," I pointed out. "Which means there must be more secret routes around this place which I'm willing to bet you know all about too."

"Let's say I do," Cain replied in a measured tone, his gaze moving over the others again. "Why would I help you exactly?"

I pushed to my feet and moved towards him with the power of the moon humming through my veins. I could feel my gifts more clearly than I ever had before. And though I still didn't understand them, I felt more in touch with them than ever. I could feel the curse which bound me to Cain buzzing inside my flesh like a rope which tied us together. It was like flexing my power over the gifts beneath the light of the moon had awakened some deeper connection to them within me. Or maybe I was just paying more attention to them now than I ever had before. But whatever it was, with the light of the moon on my

flesh and the power I could draw from it, everything around me suddenly seemed so much clearer.

"Maledetto dalla luna," I purred, stepping right up to him and reaching out to brush my fingers over his arm as I pushed power into that magic which bound us to one another.

The rose vine which crept up his arm began to glow silver against his skin, brightening as I skimmed my fingers over it and drawing a low growl from Cain's lips as his other hand reached out to brush against my waist for the briefest of moments like he was desperate to feel more of my touch.

"I can feel this connection between us," I said slowly, moving my fingertips over his skin and watching as his pupils dilated with the tension that crackled between us. "I can feel it...and I think if I worked on that feeling, I might be able to figure out how to sever it. How to break the curse."

Cain's brow dipped at my words and I could see the mistrust in his eyes. But as he glanced over my shoulder towards the others again, his jaw ticked and a darkness seemed to shift within him too.

"Make a star bond with me," Cain growled, reaching out to take my hand in his. "Promise you'll try to figure out how to break this curse if I help you."

I tilted my head, regarding him for a long moment. He wanted me to try and figure it out and I could promise that. It wasn't like he was binding me into an agreement to actually fix it, because I had zero clues on how to do that even if I wanted to.

"Okay," I agreed. "I promise to try and figure it out if you help me."

Magic flared between our hands and Cain glanced beyond me again before speaking. "I can get a pass to Psych from the Warden's office," he said slowly.

"You can get up to the guards' quarters?" I asked in surprise and he jerked a nod.

"I'll take you up there if you can use that moon mumbo jumbo to stay invisible. But only you. I'm not trusting the safety of the other guards to anyone else." His gaze flicked to the others as a sneer touched his features.

"No fucking way," Roary cut in as Ethan leapt to his feet with a snarl on his lips.

"We're not trusting you to look after her," Sin said firmly but I just scowled at them.

"This isn't a dick measuring contest, stronzos. We need to get into Psych and I'm the only one who can turn invisible. Besides, I'll just curse Cain even harder if he tries to fuck me over. Okay?" I grinned widely, though none of them seemed inclined to smile back.

They were still grumbling like it wasn't okay at all, but Cain had clearly had enough of waiting around.

"You heard her. So just wait here like good psychos and try not to die while we're gone." Cain shot towards me, yanking me off of my feet and making me squeal in surprise as we raced away at Vampire speed towards the hidden exit.

I'd barely even blinked before I found us back on the top floor of the prison with the dead bodies of the girls who had taken Roary's hair sprawled out beneath us and Cain stumbled to a halt.

"Fucking suppressant gas," he cursed, setting me down on my feet as the connection to my Wolf was stolen away from me again. "Remind me to take an antidote shot while we're back in the guards' quarters."

"Oh, good plan," I agreed. "I'll get one for all of us."

Cain scowled at me, clearly not having wanted that and I just gave him my biggest smile before taking off down the stairs.

He moved up close behind me as we jogged down flight after flight, listening to the sounds of the other inmates still rioting and causing mayhem

throughout the prison, but we managed to avoid seeing many of them.

Cain still wore the orange jumpsuit and whenever we did pass another inmate, he just dropped his gaze to the ground, keeping close behind me and luckily none of them gave him a close enough look to recognise him.

We somehow made it all the way down to the maintenance level without anyone bothering us and Cain dragged me through the wreckage we'd caused and past lumps of the Belorian's corpse before jerking me to a halt.

"Promise me you won't hurt any of the guards up there," he growled, looking me dead in the eyes and waiting on my answer like he planned on breaking our deal if he wasn't satisfied by it.

"I just want to be free, Mason," I said to him honestly. "I didn't come here to hurt anybody. All I want is to get out of here. I promise I'm not looking to attack any of the guards."

He stared into my eyes before releasing a slow breath and nodding.

"Come on then."

I followed him to a corner of the room, watching as he revealed a hidden magical sensor before using it to unlock a hatch in the ceiling. I chewed on my bottom lip as a ladder descended for us and Cain beckoned me forward to climb up behind him.

I did as instructed, keeping close as we headed up into the dark space above us and started climbing up another ladder.

We headed higher and higher, the sound of the hatch beneath us closing again echoing loudly through the confined space as dim blue lighting guided us further.

Once we'd climbed a few levels, Cain stepped off of the ladder and into a crawl space, leading the way on again.

My heart pounded as I followed him, wondering if I was losing my mind to be trusting the stronzo who had locked me up in the hole for months after

I'd saved his freaking life. But I was fresh out of ideas and luck was clearly partying with someone else tonight, so I had no choice but to keep moving. Because if this plan didn't come together, I wasn't sure I had another one up my sleeve.

At the end of the crawl space, Cain opened another hatch that led out into an elevator shaft which I guessed was the one the guards used inside the prison.

We started climbing again. Up and up and up until my arms were burning with the strain of it and my muscles were trembling. I sent a little healing magic into my limbs to help me out and we finally made it to the top where Cain took my hand and pulled me up onto a narrow walkway.

He lingered there for a moment, his hand on mine, our chests almost touching and a question in his eyes which he clearly decided against asking before he turned and strode away into the dim space once more.

I kept close to him as we walked down the narrow space, and it felt like we must have walked across the entire breadth of the prison by the time we stopped at yet another ladder.

"This is it," Cain murmured, glancing up at the ladder before looking to me again. "I'm going to try and remain undetected up there too so that I don't have to answer too many questions about what's going on in the prison or justify myself for heading back down there again."

"You're coming back down?" I asked him, surprise filling me as he gave me an unreadable look. I'd figured his version of helping me to satisfy our deal would be ending after this, but it seemed like he hadn't intended for us to go our separate ways yet.

"Yeah...well I have to make sure you don't die before you break this curse. Now do your invisible thing so we can get on with this."

I nodded obediently. "Yes, boss man."

Cain's eyes flared with pleasure at the submissive lilt to my voice and I smirked at him as I called on my gifts and felt them washing over me, hiding me and filling me with the peaceful energy of the moon.

The moment he was satisfied that he couldn't see me anymore, Cain started climbing, leading the way up to the final hatch before pushing it wide and climbing out at the top.

I scrambled out behind him, moving close to him and brushing my fingers along his arm to let him know I was out before he closed the hatch again.

We'd emerged in Warden Pike's office and I looked around it curiously as Cain strolled straight towards a large cabinet which stood beside the wall and began rummaging through it for a pass to Psych.

I crept towards the door while he looked, peeking out through the glass and flinching as I spotted Officer Lyle striding past quickly like he had a fire up his ass.

"Got it," Cain hissed, drawing my attention back to him as he shoved the pass into his pocket.

"Let's go get some antidote for the Order suppressant then," I said, pushing the door open before he could think about stopping me and he cursed as he hurried out behind me.

I remembered where the dispenser was thanks to me and Roary coming up here to steal some before and I was glad to find the corridor that held it empty as I jogged across the dark carpet and jammed my thumb down on the button to release one.

A shot of antidote rattled down the shoot and I quickly hit the button again and again, grabbing a handful of the shots and dropping them in my pocket just as Cain caught up to me.

He grabbed me roughly, finding my back first and quickly locating my arm as he took hold of my invisible body.

"For fuck's sake, Twelve," he growled.

"Oh, I missed you calling me by my number," I purred, teasing him as he quickly hit the button on the dispenser and grabbed an antidote for himself. He promptly flipped the cap off and stuck the needle into his thigh through his jumpsuit and I smirked at him even though he couldn't see me. "Do you miss being the big bad guard who was breaking the rules with me?"

"Shut up," he hissed, glancing around in concern before dragging me back towards the Warden's office. "We've got what we came for so we should just-

"

A guard's voice carried from the corridor ahead of us and the sound of footsteps sounded our way too.

Cain cursed, grabbing me and slinging me over his shoulder as he shot away from the approaching man, darting down corridors so fast that I couldn't keep track of where we were until he was slamming a door closed behind me and dropping me down onto my feet again.

Cain locked the door, throwing a silencing bubble up around us for good measure and I looked around at the room he'd brought me to with interest.

"Oh shit, did you just bring me into your room, Mason?" I asked, taking in the bed at the far side of the space and the perfectly organised shelves surrounding it.

"We just need to stay in here until the guards out there are gone," he said, staying by the door while I moved deeper into his bedroom.

I dropped down onto his bed, leaning back on my elbows and moaning as I released my hold on my gifts so that I became visible again.

"What the fuck are you doing?" Cain demanded as his gaze fell on me and I grinned as I dropped to my back, the mattress like the best hug I'd ever gotten.

"Do you know how long it's been since I laid on a real bed?" I asked,



kicking my boots off and wriggling backwards to enjoy this better.

"You have a bed in your cell."

"Not like this and you know it," I replied firmly.

The sound of someone shouting beyond the door drew both of our attention to it as we listened in.

"We need to come up with a solid plan," Lyle called out. "Because there is a jellybean thief amongst us and if we don't stick to fair distribution of the food then this entire lockdown could become a whole lot more serious!"

A bunch more guards started calling back to him angrily and Cain cursed them as he moved away from the door.

"They're holding a fucking meeting in the rec room right opposite here," he explained. "We'll have to stay put until they fuck off again."

I shrugged, glancing around the sparsely decorated space before noticing the remote for the cuff keys sitting on his nightstand.

"There's no point in you looking at that thing like you might use it in your hairbrained schemes," Cain warned as he moved to stand over me.

"Oh?" I asked innocently.

"It will only work in response to my magical signature, and there's no fucking way I'm returning magic to any of the other psychopaths down there."

I pouted at him in disappointment, but it seemed clear there was no point in me pushing that right now.

He snatched my wrist suddenly, holding it under his nose as he spotted the full moon mark on it that bound me to Roary.

"What's this?" he demanded, a growl to his voice as I yanked my hand back.

"The moon mated me to Roary."

"No," he said in refusal of those words.

“Yes,” I shot back.

“Two mates?” he snarled and if I wasn’t totally delusional, jealousy gleamed in his eyes.

“What’s the matter? You wanna trade in that curse for one of these?” I waved the moon mark at him teasingly and his fangs snapped out in anger.

“Never,” he said coolly.

“Then what’s the problem?”

“There isn’t one,” he muttered and silence fell between us once more.

After a while, I got to my feet, standing right in front of him and stealing all of his attention.

"What's going on in that angry mind of yours?" I asked him curiously, tipping my head to one side.

"I'm just figuring out how best to deal with this situation," he lied, his gaze roaming all over me before landing on my neck for a little too long.

"Mmm. Well I guess you could just open that door, drag me out there, show the guards how you caught yourself one of the most powerful prisoners in the whole of Darkmore... but you're not doing that. You're hiding me in your room like a dirty little secret."

"Don't flatter yourself, Twelve. I'm only helping you because I don't want to die from this curse you've placed on me," he said firmly, his throat bobbing as he eyed my neck again.

"So you think if you get me out, the curse might break?" I asked curiously.

Cain held his tongue for several seconds before grabbing me suddenly and pushing me back against the wall beside his bed.

"I can get you out of here," he said in a low voice, his eyes bouncing between mine as he tried to read something in my expression which I wasn't sure was there. "In two days, the FIB will break in here and return the prison to order again. They'll rescue all of the guards who are still down here, take

us back up to the surface. You could just come with me. Use this invisibility power or whatever the fuck it is and stay by my side. No one will ever even know. They'll just assume you died in the riot and-

"But that won't get the others out," I said, catching onto what he was getting at and balking against it as I tried to push him back, my hands landing flat against his chest.

"Just forget about them," Cain growled. "They're criminals who deserve this fate. But you...maybe if I help you get out of here the curse will break and-

"Is that the only reason you even want me to be free?" I asked, arching a brow at him as he refused to move out of my personal space. "Because you think it might break the curse?"

Cain flinched the barest amount at the acid in my tone but he set his gaze firmly as he nodded. "Of course it is. What other reason would I have for wanting to help a criminal escape this place?"

Rage flared inside me as hurt carved through my chest at his words and Cain swore as he stumbled away from me, clutching his arm where I could feel the power of the curse mark throbbing with power.

I made a move to push past him but he caught my arm, grunting against the pain of the curse and looking at me like he was trying to figure me out.

"I shouldn't have locked you in the hole," he said roughly and I paused, my heart pounding as I waited to hear this. "It was...selfish of me. You saved my life and all I could focus on were the lies you'd told me, the betrayal."

"So what's changed?" I asked.

"I...nothing. But I understand you better now I think. I heard what you said about getting yourself locked up in here to save the Lion and the more I think on it the more it makes sense. An Oscura getting locked up for a bank job always seemed suspicious to me. Your gang is infamous and wealthy,

you didn't need that money and there was evidence that at least one other Fae escaped using stardust. But not you. You were left behind to be caught and thrown down here."

"So you accept that I came here for Roary. What difference does that make?" I asked, raising my chin.

Cain frowned at me, his hand moving to my throat as his thumb skimmed down my neck over the flickering point of my pulse and he growled softly.

"It means I can see that there is some good in you. That I can understand why you manipulated me...even if I still don't forgive you for it."

Silence fell between us and I licked my lips slowly, letting him look at me as he just stared into my eyes.

"Tell me what Sin and Ethan saw when they stole a look at your memories," I urged, moving my hand to his wrist and squeezing so that the grip he held on my neck tightened. "Is what they saw the reason why you find it so hard to trust anybody?"

"What they saw was none of their damn business," he warned, his eyes flashing angrily.

"Well you didn't much care about that when you looked up my history," I pointed out. "When you read about all the things my papa used to do to me in some file and stole a look at all the scars he left me with."

Cain's throat bobbed as his gaze drifted down the left side of my body like he could see those scars through my clothes, like he could feel the echoes of the pain they held.

"When I was growing up, I had nothing," he murmured. "Nothing and no one. Until one day I was *rescued* by a man who I suspect had a lot in common with your father."

"He beat you?" I guessed.

Cain shook his head slowly. "He did. But not often. Because I was one of

his favoured – he tended to reserve that treatment for the weaker kids. What he did to me was different...he honed me into a violent creature, one without care or affection for others and a desire to spill blood for no reason beyond my own victories over them. He wanted me strong, it was his mantra, he had some obsession with raising fearless Fae who could rise to the top of the pecking order.”

“That’s why you’re all alone?” I breathed, my skin tingling as he shifted his grip on me to my jaw and ran his thumb over my bottom lip.

“I’m a Vampire, we’re meant to be alone,” he muttered.

“I don’t believe that,” I said softly.

“Oh really? So who should I be with then? Because the only woman who has ever tempted me into desiring her for more than her blood and her body turned out to be a lying whore who was only ever looking to use me.”

“That’s what you think of me?” I demanded, feeling like he’d just struck me with those words.

“It’s the truth, isn’t it?”

A snarl tore from my lips and I shoved past him, heading for the door and intending to leave his ass behind but he shot after me, slamming into me with his Vampire strength and shoving me back against the door as I turned to glare up at him.

"Don't go," he demanded.

"Why not?" I snarled.

Cain stared at me for an eternity, the turmoil twisting in his gaze enough to make my skin prickle as he stood caught in indecision.

With a growl of frustration, he gripped my face between his hands and slammed his mouth down against mine.

My heart leapt at the feeling of his lips on mine, the rough bite of his stubble grazing my flesh in the most tempting way as the tight grip of his

hands set my skin blazing. But I yanked myself back before I could fall too far into his trap.

"You only want me when you know you can't have me," I growled at him and he shook his head as I broke away from him and started to back away.

"I want you all the fucking time," he replied angrily as I kept moving away and he stalked after me, the hunter in him rising to the bait as I presented myself as a target to the beast beneath his skin. "I think about you every moment of every day. I get lost in the memory of your flesh against mine and I lose my mind trying to figure out the truth behind the lies you spin. I watch you whenever you're near and I obsess over you when you're not. The whole time you were in the isolation unit, I was burning up inside from the pain of your betrayal and the knowledge that no matter how much I punished you, it wouldn't come close to erasing the ache in me for you. You're a thorn which has worked its way beneath my skin, Twelve, and I've found that I enjoy the feel of you there too much to even try and pull you out."

"So what am I supposed to take from that?" I asked, skirting the bed as he continued to prowl after me, my pulse racing faster with every moment that I evaded him.

"Nothing," he replied darkly. "It doesn't matter anyway because it's too late for me to stop this. You came here with temptation tattooed into your soul and I lost the battle to resist you the moment I first got my fangs in you. At this point, the two of us are just prey to my obsession."

"There's only one problem with that," I said, stopping abruptly and smirking as I stepped up onto the bed that divided us. "I'm not anyone's prey."

I launched myself at him but he shot aside before I could collide with him, catching my waist and throwing me back down onto the bed with a snarl.

Cain advanced on me, his fangs bared as I wriggled backwards and I

raised my chin as I caught his eye.

"No biting," I commanded, making him pause.

"What? Why not?"

"I'm going to make you work for it, stronzo," I purred, sitting up so that I could push my jumpsuit down my arms. "You need to learn a lesson in delayed gratification."

"Or I could just pin you down and take what I want from you," Cain replied, kicking his boots off and tugging his tank top over his head before tossing it aside.

"You could try," I taunted, my gaze running over his muscular chest hungrily. I'd never really gotten the chance to just look at him like that. His stupido guard uniform was always in the way and when we had hooked up before it had been such a wild and furious thing that I hadn't had time to just drink in the sight of him. "Or you could play by my rules and find out how good it feels to please me."

Cain snarled, pouncing on me with refusal in his eyes and I barely had a chance to cast my magic before he was on top of me.

But as his weight settled between my thighs and his fangs closed in on my throat, a vine whipped towards him and secured itself around his neck, yanking him back so that he couldn't bite me.

Cain cursed but I ignored him, flipping us over so that I was on top of him and grinding down against the thick length of his cock through his jumpsuit.

He groaned as I rolled my hips and I forced my magic to bend to my command as more vines appeared, tugging on his jumpsuit as I lifted my hips and yanking the thing clean off of him.

Cain destroyed the vine around his neck with a flash of fire magic, but I tugged my shirt off before he could get any more ideas of biting me, grinding down on him again as he sat up beneath me.

He groaned as I pushed my hands through my hair, my tits bouncing in his face and forcing his attention away from my blood.

Cain's hands closed around my waist, his palms rough against the softness of my skin as he gripped me tightly and his mouth closed over my nipple.

I moaned loudly for him, praising his efforts in Faetalian as I continued to grind against his cock, my body clenching in anticipation of what I wanted from him.

He wasn't soft with me, but he slowed down, taking his time to run his hands up my sides while sucking on my nipple in the perfect way to have me panting for him.

His fingers brushed against one of the biggest scars which were hidden beneath my tattoo and I flinched minutely, unable to help feeling self-conscious of them even if I had learned to be proud of them too.

Cain continued to trace his thumb back and forth across my scars and the discomfort in me rose a notch until I gripped his hand and moved it away. I tried to push his hand between my thighs to cover for what I'd done, but he pulled back and growled at me as he refused the movement.

"Why did you do that?" he demanded and though I was tempted to lie, pretend I hadn't done anything and distract him with the feeling of my pussy on his cock, I found I couldn't force myself to take the cowardly route out of this.

"I made peace with my scars a long time ago," I said to him seriously, letting him see the truth of those words in my eyes as I held his gaze. "And I made something meaningful of them when I covered them in ink for my famiglia. But I know how uncommon scars are and I know that they're not exactly a turn on, so-"

Cain growled at me as he snatched his hand back out of my grip, grabbing my waist again and throwing me back down on the bed beneath him.



"Maybe I need to teach you something while I've got you at my mercy, Rosalie," he said and I swear the way he growled my name sent a shiver darting through me all the way to my core.

"What's that?" I asked breathily, watching him as he reared over me, his gaze roaming down my body, fixing on my left side with more intensity than I thought anyone had ever looked at me before.

"That all of your damage is what makes you so beautiful to me. It's not the face you show the world, it's the hurt you've overcome to claim your crown. I can see the pain of my own past in you and so much more besides. You're a warrior, a survivor and you're more beautiful for every mark upon your flesh."

He dropped his mouth to my shoulder, kissing the scar he found hidden in my tattoo there and making me suck in a sharp breath as he began to move lower. Licking and kissing every mark my father had left on my body and making them burn with the heat of his adoration.

I moaned and writhed beneath him as he worked his way lower, worshipping each of my scars and making it more than clear to me that he meant every word he'd spoken about them.

I lifted my hips for him as he dragged my jumpsuit down, taking my panties with it and leaving me bare beneath him as he continued to kiss and lick every one of my scars.

When he made it to the one that curved over my hip, he followed the line of my body until he was burying his face between my thighs and sucking my clit between his teeth.

I gasped as his fangs almost broke the skin but as I tried to jerk back, he just pushed forward, sinking two fingers into me and groaning as he continued to lick and suck me.

I bucked my hips into the movement of his tongue against my clit, pawing

at my breasts and tugging on my nipples to sharpen the pleasure he was gifting me until I was coming with a howl that made my back arch off of the bed.

Cain sat back so that he could watch me as he continued to drive his fingers in and out slowly, his gaze devouring me as he held me at his mercy.

"Togliti I pantaloni," I commanded, pushing myself up onto my elbows as I looked at him.

I was guessing the tone of my voice made my point because he withdrew with a smirk on his face and obediently removed the rest of his clothes.

I shifted forward, reaching for him, but he shot around me, landing on the bed behind me and kissing my neck as his solid cock drove into my ass cheek.

"You don't know how often I've thought of you while I was in this room," Cain growled. "You and your lying eyes and that tight, hot body. The things I've imagined doing to you would make you blush, inmate."

I moaned for him, tipping my head back against his shoulder as I looked up at him and smiled.

"I bet you thought about pinning me down and teaching me a lesson, didn't you Mason? Did you dream of using your cock to punish me for all the bad, bad things I've done?"

"Yeah, I did," he agreed, wrapping an arm around me and squeezing my breast in his palm almost hard enough to hurt. "I thought about getting you on your knees and driving my dick into that mouth of yours every time you tried to bullshit me. I think if I could have punished you the way you needed to be punished, I might have stood a chance at rehabilitating you for good."

I laughed, driving my ass back against his cock and feeling just how hard he was for me with a thrill of delight.

"That's the problem with silly little fantasies, Mason - they just can't

compare to the real deal." I twisted in his arms and kissed him hard, tasting my own lust on his lips as his fangs grazed my tongue.

While he was distracted, I shoved him down beneath me, sinking onto his cock before he could get anymore stupid ideas about trying to dominate me.

Cain groaned as my pussy gripped him tightly and I let out a sigh of satisfaction as his thick length filled me.

I began to ride him as our kiss deepened, my hips rocking back and forth and keeping his cock deep inside me so that I could feel every glorious inch of him.

Cain grasped my hips, reclaiming some control as his fingers bit into my ass and he began to guide my movements in sync with his thrusts which drove up into me hard enough to steal my breath.

As a deep moan escaped me, he flipped us again, bearing down on top of me and tossing my leg over his shoulder as he fucked me harder and kissed me deeper.

His mouth moved from mine until he was kissing my neck, his fangs scraping against my skin in the most delicious way, but I wasn't ready for him to take that yet.

I flicked my fingers and vines ripped him off of me, slamming him back against the wall with a snarl as I pushed up onto my feet and prowled towards him with the Wolf in me looking out from within my eyes.

"You're insufferable," Cain growled as he fought to burn the vines off of him, but every time one of them was burned away more took its place to contain him and I smirked as I slowly sank to my knees before him.

"No, stronzo, I'm just in charge. The sooner you get used to that, the easier this will be for you."

Cain started protesting but his words fell short as I took his cock between my lips and I started fucking him with my mouth. My hands landed on his

thighs, my nails digging into the thick muscles as I felt him tremble in response to my efforts to destroy him and I smiled around his shaft.

I sucked and licked him, taking him deep and loving the way his cock pulsed and strained in my mouth while he still struggled to free himself from my magic.

I pulled back as I felt him teetering on the edge, looking up at him as his muscles strained against my vines and giving him an innocent look. "If you can break free before I make you come for me, I'll let you put me in my place and bite me too," I challenged. "But you might want to hurry up, because I think I'm about to finish you."

Cain groaned as I wrapped my lips around his cock once more, his hips thrusting as he gave in to the motion for several seconds, letting me own him, feeling how good it was to fall beneath my command.

But then a wave of heat washed over me as a snarl escaped him and the next thing I knew I was on my feet again, my face pressed to the door as he used his speed to get me exactly where he wanted me.

His palm pressed to my bare back as I let him hold me there and I turned my face to smirk at him over my shoulder, taunting him to do his worst.

"I told you how often I've thought about teaching you a lesson in this room, Twelve," he growled, his eyes running down my body before his hand cracked down against my ass hard enough to leave a print. "And I think I know exactly what it might take to do that."

He shot away from me so fast that I barely had a moment to blink before he'd returned, a bottle of lube in his hand which he squirted liberally over my ass before tossing it aside.

I moaned for him as he slicked his fingers down between my cheeks and the next thing I knew he was driving his cock between them too.

"Come on then, boss man," I panted, pushing my ass back against him and

giving him free rein to try and punish me any way that he desired. "Show me how angry I make you."

Cain snarled in my ear as he drove his cock into my ass, his fangs grazing my neck and a throaty moan escaped me as I pushed back against him, wanting to feel all of this and show him I could take whatever punishments he wanted to try and dish out.

He started moving slowly at first, groaning in my ear and telling me how fucking tight I was before upping his pace, gripping my hip and fucking me harder.

My nipples rubbed against the wooden door in the best fucking way and I braced myself against it so that I could push back into his movements.

Cain shifted his hand from my hip, dropping it to my clit and making me cry out for him as he began teasing it in time with his brutal thrusts.

It was so much, so fucking much and his pace was merciless as he took ownership of my body and slammed into me over and over again.

"This is your fault," he snarled in my ear. "You made me do this, didn't you? You wanted to ruin me the first moment you laid eyes on me, didn't you?"

"Yes," I gasped as he drove in harder, punishing me like he wanted to while I loved every fucking second of it.

"You've been aching for my cock, haven't you Twelve?"

"Yes," I panted. "Almost as much as you've been aching for me."

He snarled as he slammed in harder, stealing my breath as I could feel his dick swelling within me, but he was holding off his release, dragging this out as long as he could manage.

"Come for me then, inmate. Show me how much you love taking my dick. Show me how good it feels to accept your punishment."

I tried to hold out on him, my muscles clenching as I fought to make him

come first, wanting to prove to him that I still owned him even now. But he seemed to know it and his pace increased, the pressure of his fingers on my clit creating the perfect rhythm with his cock and suddenly I was doing what he wanted, coming and screaming his name.

Cain's teeth sank into my neck as he came too, my pleasure somehow building as he drank deeply while thrusting in a few final times, fucking me into the door and making my legs give out from the pressure.

But he held me in place, his dick still inside me as he drank slowly, savouring every drop he claimed until he withdrew his fangs and pulled out of me too.

I turned to face him, panting and grinning while using the door to hold myself up.

"You were always going to ruin me, weren't you?" Cain breathed, resting his forearm against the door above my head as he leaned down to look into my eyes.

"Perhaps we were always meant to ruin each other," I suggested. "But either way, I don't seem to be able to stop it."

"Then don't," he replied, his eyes flashing with vulnerability for a moment before he locked the feeling down again and looked away from me.

I caught his chin in my grasp and made him meet my gaze.

"Maybe I won't," I breathed, tiptoeing up to press a kiss to his lips. "But I guess the only way you'll find out is by sticking with me."



## 48 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...

“Wow, look at this one,” Sin said, picking up another rock and showing it to me.

“Stop it,” I warned as he raised his hand and threw it at me as hard as he could. I dodged it just in time, but the last three had left damn bruises on me and Roary was sporting a few of his own too.

“What’s your problem?” Roary snarled.

“I’m just playing a game, you’re the one being a party pooper.” Sin picked up another rock. “Wow. This one’s pretty.” He pelted it at Roary and the Lion ducked it, lunging at Sin and grabbing his throat.

“Enough,” Roary snapped. “If you have a problem, say it. Don’t act like a damn cub.”

“I don’t have a problem,” Sin said through a twisted smile. “I’m just trying to have some fun.”

“Well have fun on your own then.” Roary shoved him back and stalked off into the trees.

As Sin started searching for another rock, I left him to it and jogged after Roary, wanting to talk to him about the change I’d felt when he’d mated with Rosalie. I may have been possessive of my girl, but a lifetime of living in a

pack had taught me how to share. It wasn't the normal way Wolves mated, but there was nothing normal about Rosalie Oscura, so why would she do anything the way everyone else did it? And if Roary was chosen for her too, then I wanted to know him, because fuck, I was gonna be stuck with him forever now. And I didn't exactly hate that idea. The moment their mate bond had sealed, I'd felt myself bonding to him in some way too. A way that urged me towards him and made me want to know him better, not just because I had to. Because I wanted to.

"Hey, wait up, man," I called and he glanced back over his shoulder, slowing to a halt.

He ran a hand over his short hair self-consciously and a whine left my throat, seeing the pain it was still causing him. I was surprised by how much I gave a shit as I hadn't really given a damn before now. But he was a part of my pack now, another Alpha to make room for and I needed to figure out how to make that work. Because making Rosalie happy was my priority, and it was his now too. So we needed to find a way to do that together.

"Do you feel it?" I asked, pressing my fingers to my chest where the new sensation was, this bond to him that was somehow threaded into us through Rosalie.

"Yeah," he admitted, taking a step toward me then stopping himself. "Actually...I need to do something, and you might not like it."

"What?" I frowned and he cleared his throat.

"You're a part of my pride now, so I need to use my Charisma on you. Try and make you serve me," he said, looking apologetic. "It's a Lion thing."

"Okay, you can do that, but only if you let me do something weird too." I ran a hand down the back of my neck.

"Deal," he said with a smirk. "What is it?"

I sighed. "I need to sniff you. Like, really sniff you. Then I need to scent



mark the hell out of you.”

“Are you gonna piss on me?” he asked in horror.

“No,” I laughed. “I just have to...rub on you a bit.”

“Alright,” he said stiffly. “Do you wanna do that first or...”

I shifted my weight from one foot to the other. “Nah, you do the Charisma thing first.”

“Okay. And, just so you know, it’s fine if you fall under the spell of it. My Charisma is strong and Alphas are susceptible to it too. It’s actually better if you do serve me a little. Just for right now. Then I’ll turn it off.”

“Right,” I said. Lions were weird, man. But I guessed every Order had its quirks.

“You ready?” he asked and I nodded, sure I’d be strong enough not to do a single thing he wanted. I had a will of iron, a backbone of sun steel. He’d never...*oh wow, he’s pretty though. And he looks like he could use a massage for those big shoulders of his. It must be hard carrying around those muscles all day long.*

“Can you feel it?” Roary asked as I walked closer to him.

“I don’t think so,” I said thoughtfully, moving around behind him and laying my hands on his shoulders. “Maybe you should sit down. You look tired.”

“I am pretty tired,” he admitted through a broad yawn and I walked him toward a boulder where he sat down in front of me. I started working out the kinks in his shoulders and he purred loudly, the sound making me grin.

“That better?” I asked as his head lolled sleepily.

“Purrrrrfect,” he said in a deep growl.

I worked my fingers along the muscles of his neck, a fucking pro at this. I’d looked after Alphas while climbing through the ranks of the Wolf packs I’d belonged to when I was younger. I’d never enjoyed serving an Alpha as

much as this though. It had always felt wrong before now, like I knew in my heart that I was meant to be the one being served. But this felt somehow equal, like doing this for him was like doing it for me and Rosalie too. We were a unit, one soul that needed equal nurturing and we had to look after each other to keep our pack health.

Roary purred so hard that I could feel the vibrations of it through my fingertips and a smirk pulled at my lips. “Cats are stupid,” I teased and he laughed.

“Cats can’t be trained or told what to do like dogs can,” he countered.

“Pfft, a real canine can’t be trained,” I said as I dug my fingers in deeper to a knot on his shoulder.

“Mmhmm,” he said disbelievingly and I rolled my eyes.

No one could train me. I was the scariest Alpha Werewolf from the streets of Alestria. You wouldn’t catch me waiting on someone day and night like a whipped mutt.

“By the stars, my feet are killing me,” Roary groaned.

*Oh no, poor baby.*

I immediately let go of his neck and moved around him, pulling his shoes and socks off as I knelt down and started working on his feet.

“You’ve had a rough day,” I said with a whimper and he nodded.

“It’s improved a lot though,” he replied with a grin, turning his hand over to admire the full moon mark on his wrist.

A gasp caught in my throat and I scrambled forward to catch hold of his arm and take a look at it. I was practically in his lap as I brought it close to my face and cocked my head to one side as I examined it.

“You can do your Wolf thing now if you want,” Roary said as a haze lifted from my mind and I blinked as I looked to him.

“Did you do your Charisma thing?” I asked.

“Yeah, did you feel it?” he asked.

“Nah, I guess I’m immune,” I said with a triumphant smirk and he nodded, smirking back.

*Ha, sucker.*

“Okay, this might get weird, but at least your kind are tactile too, right?” I asked.

“With our family we are,” he replied as he looked at me, the bond flaring a little sharper between us. “Which we are now, I suppose.”

I nodded and he gestured for me to go Wolf on him, so I let my instincts take over and ran my tongue across the moon on his wrist, absorbing the taste of him and the slightly metallic flavour of that mark. He grunted like he didn’t know what to make of that, but if he thought that was weird, shit was about to take an even weirder turn.

I twisted in his lap, leaning in and sniffing his chest, his neck, then nuzzling the side of his face as I tried to brand him with my scent instead of his own.

My heart beat harder and I definitely would have been wagging my tail if I was in my Order form as my instincts urged me on and I started licking his face and panting. He tasted good. Like sandalwood and new friends.

“Um-” he started but I barked excitedly, knocking him off the boulder onto his back and howling to the sky.

I rubbed my face against his, our stubble scraping together as he started laughing and shoving me back, but I was lost to my Wolf now and I couldn’t stop. I bit his ear, tugging on it like a pup teasing its brother.

“Ah, you asshole,” he shoved me back as he laughed and I wrestled him back down to the ground, taking his jumpsuit between my teeth and shaking my head furiously as I tugged on it. Then I ran my tongue right over his face and he spluttered, starting to wrestle with me. Which was exactly what I

wanted.

Someone cleared their throat and my head snapped up as I found Sin there, his arms folded and his eyes narrowed, but there was a sinister smile on his face that promised trouble too.

“Found more rocks,” he said brightly then started throwing them at us with force.

“Ow, you piece of shit,” I hissed as one of them hit me on the ass.

I shoved myself upright, tore my clothes off and shifted into my giant Wolf form, baring my teeth at Sin as he continued to throw rocks like a savage.

“Watch it,” Roary snapped then pulled his own clothes off and shifted into a giant Nemean Lion, his golden shoulder pressing to the black fur of mine. We both snarled down at Sin, but the Incubus just gathered more rocks from the floor and hurled them at us with wild laughter tearing from his throat.

I turned my back on him, kicking up my hind paws so dirt sprayed over him then I took off into the trees with a bark of encouragement at Roary to follow. He released a roar and started running behind me, swatting my tail with his claws. I barked a laugh and ran faster as he chased me like a cat after a mouse, trying to get hold of me but I was like the damn wind.

A rush of wings overhead made me look up and I found Sin there with white wings stretching out behind him as he threw stones at us with vengeance in his eyes. The crazy asshole had lost his mind completely apparently and I snarled as one of his rocks hit me on the nose, leaping up and snapping at his ankles. He flapped his wings to rise higher but clearly didn't have the best control over them as he smashed through a load of foliage and emerged from it with leaves in his hair and a branch in his hand brandished as a weapon.

“Die, devil dog!” he cried, plummeting out of the sky as he tucked his

wings and held his stick like a spear.

We ran out of the trees and my paws hit sand as we entered the desert part of the Order Yard and Sin collided with me so hard I stumbled, almost falling to the ground. A huge golden blur moved in my periphery, leaping over my back and knocking Sin off of me with a growl, pinning him to the sand beneath his paws and sending the sharp stick tumbling away from him.

I circled around them, baring my teeth at Sin who struggled under Roary's weight with the look of a savage man in his eyes. I noticed he had our clothes stuffed into the back of his pants and as he managed to get out of Roary's paws, he ran away, pulling them into his hands and waving them like a flag as he raced towards the spot where the desert gave way to rocky land and a waterfall beyond it.

"Uh oh!" he cried. "Looks like your clothes are about to go swimming! Splish-splash-splish, let's say hi to the fish!"

We tore after him with snarls on our lips, gaining on him fast and knocking him down into the sand between us. He cursed, trying to get up, only to be shoved down to the ground once more by our giant paws.

I shifted back into my Fae form, snatching my clothes from him and tugging them on with a curse.

"What's the matter with you?" I demanded, sweeping a hand through my hair to style it back in place. "Have you lost your final marble?"

"You two with your mate marks is what's the matter with me," he growled. "I'm gonna cut them off and bury them where you'll never find them." He lunged at me, slapping the mark behind my ear then trying to claw at it.

I shoved him back several steps as Roary shifted back into his Fae form, yanking on his jumpsuit as he glared at Sin. "You're insane."

"You've not seen me crazy yet, Lion puff," he spat. "You won't believe

the things I can do when I let my wild side come out to play. I once peeled a man's spine right out of his body while he was sleeping and I never even woke him up!"

"That's ridiculous," I scoffed.

He got to his feet, flexing the wings on his back as his face distorted and twisted into a monstrous creature with gnarled horns and red eyes. He was a Nymph from the neck up and his face was twisted with a savagery that spoke of the reason he was locked up tight in this prison.

"You can still share her with us if that's what's bothering you, asshole," I said coolly, glancing at Roary who didn't seem quite as sure about that, but he didn't contradict me right then. Possibly because Sin looked like he really was gonna follow through on his murder threats.

"Yeah, sure I can. I'm just the gang's man sized vibrator, right? Good for making you all come, but when you're satisfied, I'll get put back in the drawer while you two get to keep her company outside of our fuck fests."

"If she's meant for you too, the moon will mark you like it has us," I said but Roary growled, seeming unsure if he wanted that, making Sin's eyes dart to him and the Nymph mask fell away from his face.

Sin blew out a breath, his features twisting in a sneer. "No. People like me don't get shiny gifts from the moon, kitten. This one knows that. He sees what I am." He squared up to Roary and I growled, standing my ground beside my new brother.

"I'm too unhinged for your little pup, aren't I, friend?" Sin hissed at Roary. "I'm your unpredictable little problem and you don't like me."

"Because you put her at risk," Roary snarled in agreement. "You've nearly fucked up Rosa's plans fifty times since she got here, and I won't stand by and watch you destroy her chances at escaping because you can't take a simple order from her."

“Me and her have our own language. You wouldn’t understand, hot stuff,” Sin said dismissively.

“You don’t have a secret fucking language!” Roary bellowed. “It’s all in your crazy ass head. You shouldn’t even be in this prison, you should be in an asylum where you can keep company with the voices in your mind.”

Hurt flashed through Sin’s expression and a whine left me at seeing how much pain was shining in his eyes.

“I’m not crazy,” he hissed. “I’m built different.”

He looked vulnerable for a moment, like he’d been called crazy so many times in his life that it had worn him down to the bone. And I couldn’t help but feel sorry for him.

“Well being different puts Rosa in danger. And if you put her in danger again, I’ll kill you Sin Wilder. I will do anything to ensure she gets out of here, so remember that the next time she gives you an order and you even *think* about doing the opposite of that command. The only reason you’re still standing here now is because she needs to get you out of here too. But when it comes to crunch time, I don’t give a fuck about that. Rosa will leave this place even if you don’t, do you understand me?” Roary snarled and even though I knew he had a point, I could see that Sin had never meant to fuck up Rosalie’s plans. But hell, he really shouldn’t have let the Belorian out. Twice. It was insanity, but to Sin I guessed it made some kind of sense or he wouldn’t have done it.

Sin fell unnaturally quiet, looking from Roary to me then nodding as he took a step back.

“Sin,” I sighed, wanting to try and fix some of the rejection I saw in his eyes, but then a flash of light caught my gaze and we all looked up as one.

Far above the dome a Harpy was circling, gazing down at us, their guard uniform trousers in place and their dark brown wings outstretched.

“What’s he doing?” I hissed.

“I’ll go find out,” Sin muttered then took off into the sky, climbing fast towards the top of the dome.

Before he made it up there, the golden timer appeared in a magical glow above him, counting down from fifteen minutes.

“Holy shit,” I gasped. “We need to go.”

Sin slowed just beneath it, waving his hands and shouting something at the guard and a beat later, the timer dropped from fifteen minutes to five.

“By the stars,” Roary cursed as Sin flipped over and dropped toward us as at furious speed.

“Ruuuuun!” he cried just before he landed, dissolving his wings and we all started sprinting towards the exit.

“Why did he drop the timer?” I gasped.

“I have no idea. All I said was that he’s a wrinkly ballsack wart that no mother could ever love,” Sin said in dismay, like that wasn’t anything to do with why the guard had dropped the timer.

“I’m so fucking sick of your shit,” Roary snapped, shoulder barging Sin as we all ran as hard and as fast as we could towards the exit.

We raced into the trees and sprinted along together, desperate to get out.

It wasn’t long before we made it back to the boulder where the entrance to the shaft was concealed, the hatch still open and the others dropped to their knees as they went in.

I glanced up at the timer, my gut twisting as three minutes stared back at me and I hurried in after them, crawling along through the dark metal space towards the elevator shaft.

Roary was in the lead and as he swung out onto the ladder, Sin dove out after him, dropping several feet before using air magic to catch himself.

“Come on, fluffballs, I’ll get us down faster,” he promised, but when



Roary didn't let go of the ladder, Sin whipped him off of it by the legs, making him shout out in alarm as he swung him upside down in mid-air.

A strong wind coiled around me too and I was propelled out of the passage at speed by Sin's magic, a shout snagging in my throat as we all started falling at high speed.

"Sin!" I cried as adrenaline burst through my veins, my arms flailing as we tumbled towards the top of the elevator far, far below us.

As certain death loomed and I readied to cast water to try and soften the impact, I was pulled up short and planted on my ass on top of the elevator with a loud dong. Roary hit it harder and Sin barked a laugh before dancing his way over to the closed hatch.

"You asshole," Roary growled, getting up and rubbing his ass. I offered to heal it, but he slapped my hand away and ran over to Sin as he tried to open the hatch.

My blood ran cold as I realised it was locked and a doggish whine left my throat.

*Rosalie. Come back here, love. Come open that door.*

Sin looked up at me with dawning comprehension in his gaze. "Well this is a pickle," he muttered.

Roary dropped down beside the hatch, gripping the edge of it and yanking with all his strength, his muscles straining against his jumpsuit. I dropped down too, casting a length of ice in my hand and jamming it into the side of the hatch to try and lever it open, a grunt of effort escaping me as I worked.

"A pickle in a bun with nowhere to run," Sin murmured. "How will The Daring Anacondas get out of this one? Tune in on next week's episode when-"

Roary lunged up, gripping Sin's arm and yanking him down to the floor beside him. "Start helping."

Sin released a manic laugh as he nodded. “Alrighty, let’s see what this Anaconda is dealing with.”

He braced his hands against the hatch, trying to break it with a furious pressure of air which sent a gust swirling around us, but the metal didn’t give.

“Okie cokie,” he said, nodding and sitting back on his ass as Roary and I worked tirelessly to try and break through the metal.

“Stand back, I have a plan,” Sin announced grandly and we did as he said, watching as he shifted his hands into two huge buzzing pink vibrators and started punching the metal over and over.

“That’s your plan?!” Roary shouted, his features contorted in panic.

“I’m just getting warmed up, Lion puff. Keep your mane on – oh woops, looks like it’s too late for that.”

“You motherfu-”

I shot Roary a glare which told him to stop and he reluctantly bit his tongue, waiting for Sin to try something else.

We must have been down to mere seconds and I just prayed Sin had some Incubus form which could help us.

He shifted into a man with elephant legs, a huge elephant dick between his thighs and a long trunk swinging from his face which – ah hell, that was also a dick.

Sin started jumping on the hatch and it shuddered and groaned like it was actually working. So dammit, I had to cheer on the elephant dick man.

“Keep going!” I cried, still working to lever the side of it open with the ice bar I’d made.

Sin let out trump of frustration through his dick trunk and shifted back into his Fae form, blasting the hatch with fire magic that made it glow hot under the pressure of his flames, but it still didn’t break.

“Shit,” Sin gasped as his magic stuttered out. “My magic’s all gone – hold

on, I have another idea though.” He shifted into a giant squid, flapping between us with all of its tentacles bashing against the hatch. *Ergh, by the stars, they’re all dicks too.*

“What good is a squid to anyone?!” Roary yelled and I had to agree.

Sin flailed like that for a few more seconds before shifting into a massive green Dragon with glinting scales, knocking us both aside. He ripped and clawed at the hatch as bubbles streamed from his nose and as he swung his hips, the massive Dragon dick between his thighs slapped Roary in the face.

“For the love of the sun!” Roary cried then his words choked out in his throat as the air was suddenly sucked away from him.

I gasped, but no air came in and I tried to get between Sin’s legs to the hatch as my ears popped. *We’re out of time!*

Sin got a claw into the lock, pulling furiously and making it drag open a small amount. He swung his huge head around, bubbles blowing into my face and popping in my eyes.

“Ahhh!” I cried.

He knocked me toward the hatch and I fell through it but got stuck half way so I was hanging down into the elevator, my eyes burning from the bubbles. I gulped down a lungful of air as Sin started bashing his nose against my ass to try and force me through. I growled, trying to reach something to pull me forward as Sin’s Dragon face continued to smash into my ass and bubbles streamed through the seat of my jumpsuit and popped between my ass cheeks.

“Stop. Blowing. Bubbles. Up. My. Ass,” I gritted out as I worked to get through the hatch.

I finally fell through, hitting the floor and quickly gaining my feet as Sin shoved Roary into the hole who immediately got jammed too, the hatch still only halfway open. I leapt up, grabbing hold of him and pulling him down as

bubbles poured through after him and popped in my eyes again.

“Ahh!” I yelled, clamping my eyes shut as Sin continued to ram his face against Roary’s ass and he finally fell through, collapsing on top of me on the floor.

My heart jerked as Sin tried to push his Dragon head through the hatch, but he couldn’t hold it open. His eyes widened and Roary and I rushed to our feet, jumping up to try and hold it for him, but Sin shook his head, letting out a bellow of anguish. We couldn’t hold the hatch back, it was impossible. It snapped shut and we stared up at it in mute shock, my pulse thrashing in my ears as silence followed.

“Sin!” I cried, punching the magical signature reader as if that would do any good.

We both wrestled with the mechanism, trying everything we could to get through, but the minutes ticked by and panic started to grip me.

“Come on, come on. Just keep holding your breath, you crazy motherfucker.” Roary clawed at the edges of the hatch, trying to find purchase to wrench it open, but it was no good. We couldn’t do it. And there was no way he could have survived this long without oxygen.

I backed up to the wall, clawing my fingers through my hair as shock and sadness washed over me in waves.

“He saved us,” I croaked and Roary looked over his shoulder at me with a deep frown pulling at his features.

“Damn, he was an asshole, but he didn’t deserve that,” Roary muttered.

“Do you think he’s gonna cry?” a teeny, tiny voice spoke in my ear. “I think he’s gonna cry.”

“What the hell?” I snapped around, looking for the source of the sound and Roary suddenly pointed at my shoulder with widening eyes.

I looked down, finding a very small, very naked Sin standing there with

his hands on his hips.

“Hi, buddy!” He waved then leapt off of my shoulder in a swan dive, sailing toward the floor as I gaped at his tiny naked ass then he shifted and returned to a full sized man in front of us.

He whipped around, making his cock slap his thigh and I couldn’t help it as I lunged forward and hugged him.

“Did you just – were you a...?” Roary gave up trying to form that question as he gaped at the Incubus instead.

“I got through the lock,” Sin explained, hugging me tight before letting me go. “Do you need a tissue for the tears you shed over me, Lion puff?”

“I didn’t cry over you,” Roary growled, but one look his way said he was secretly relieved to find the Incubus alive. Maybe only because Rosalie would have lost her shit if he died though.

“Who the fuck has a sexy fantasy about a tiny person, man?” I asked with a laugh.

“Some chick named Tallulah,” Sin said with a shrug. “I’ve seen stuff in that form, kitten. All kinds of stuff. Harrowing stuff.” He shook his head, lost to some memory for a second before he slapped on one of his usual crazy smiles. “Anyway, now you’ve met G-spot Joe, would you like a whirl with him the next time we’re fucking Rosalie together?” He wagged his brows. “I know how much you like putting stuff up your butt. I’ll put on a tiny crash helmet and-”

“I do not like putting stuff up my butt,” I hissed and he winked like we were sharing a secret.

The day I let Sin Wilder crawl up my ass would be a cold day in hell.

“I’m gonna climb your dick like Mount Everest, buttercup,” he murmured in my ear as Roary led the way out of the elevator and I elbowed him in the ribs.

“You try that and G-spot Joe is gonna be dead G-spot Joe,” I warned but he just grinned wider and I couldn’t resist the urge to return it. Fuck, I was relieved he was okay. But dammit, why did I like this idiot so much?



I'd made it all the way down to level six when I'd met Sparkle and her gang coming up the stairs. Before they'd seen me, I'd turned and run like a comet was burning a hole in my ass and had somehow made it into the library.

But my luck had taken a worse turn when they'd headed this way too. So now I was laying on top of a large bookshelf while the whole of the Pegasus gang, The Twisted Horns, drank some guarine nectar they must have gotten from Medical. It was a seriously strong spirit that was used to stop Fae rot in its tracks, and its acrid smell was so intense that it stung my eyes even all the way up here.

"Let's play never have I ever!" cried a girl with a tattoo of a bleeding storm cloud on her neck and the others all whinnied in agreement.

"Alright," Sparkle said, running her fingers through her short rainbow hair. She grinned wickedly and everyone shared glances and nervous horsey snorts, but no one backed out. "I'll start..." Sparkle trotted around the group as one of the other Pegasuses made sure everyone had a drink.

It looked like they'd taken a bunch of the plastic cups from the kitchens and I had to wonder how order was ever going to be restored in this place and all of the equipment returned to its rightful places. I knew for sure I wouldn't be involved in it though. If I ever got out of this hell, I was going to hand in

my resignation immediately and find a new calling. I'd always liked animals. Maybe I could be a magical creatures breeder. I could run a little farm where kids could come and visit the Ignitious kittens and Soaris foals. Yeah, that sounded more up my street. Little baby animals with fluffy heads and big eyes. But nothing with sharp teeth who wanted to eat me.

"Never have I ever stabbed a man with my horn," Sparkle said proudly and I shit you not, every single one of those bastards drank.

"Never have I ever had the hots for one of the guards," said a girl with pink eyebrows and the words Suck My Glit tattooed along her jaw. She drank and so did a bunch of the others as they started snorting like ponies.

"Which one?" Sparkle demanded of her.

"Officer Cain," she said with a grin.

"Cain's a hardass, I like my asses soft," said a huge guy with colourful knuckle tats that said Suck Horn. "Like Officer Hastings."

I shuddered, falling stiller than before as I tucked myself in tight against the top of the bookshelf.

"If I ever got my hands on him, I'd show him how to ride a real stallion." He smirked and I squeezed my eyes shut. *No, no, no.*

The others laughed heartily and I cringed.

"I bet he feels like a rainbow inside," the guy continued. "I'd fill him with so much glitter he'd be shitting shiny turds for weeks."

"You're so bad, Cloudini," Sparkle grinned at him as she swigged her drink.

I glanced at the exit, wondering if I could make it there over the tops of the bookshelves without being seen. But the risk of being caught by Cloudini was too high. I didn't wanna be that huge rapey Pegasus's next victim.

I pictured my mother's face as she heard the news that I'd died in here and clung to the thought of seeing her again. *I'll get outa here, mamma. I'll be*



*alright*. She must have been freaking out right now, knowing I was stuck down here. It was probably all over the news. Darkmore on lockdown, prisoners rioting. It would be the most talked about story in Solaria.

I shut my eyes and tried to block out the sound of the Pegasuses chatting as they continued playing never have I ever, all of them using the game to brag about the most terrible crimes they'd committed outside of Darkmore, trying to outshine each other.

"Never have I ever chomped a guy's balls off like two juicy apples hanging from a tree."

"Never have I ever hooped an ex-boyfriend to death."

"Never have I ever farted glitter on the corpse of my enemy at their funeral."

"Never have I ever have skewered a grandma on my horn."

"Oh my stars, seriously Moonbeam?" Sparkled asked disapprovingly.

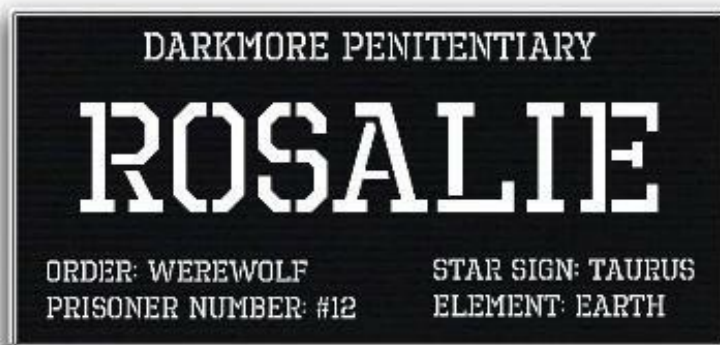
"That's wrong, dude."

"What?" Moonbeam said defensively. "Don't worry, it was *my* grandma. I'm not a savage."

*Stars, if you're listening, please help me.*

There was no answer, and I found myself playing along with the game in my own head.

*Never have I ever been so afraid in all my life.*



## **47 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...**

Cain and I snuck back down into the main prison without any of the guards ever even noticing we'd been upstairs at all. He hadn't said a lot about the reasons behind him sticking with me and after we'd put our clothes back on, he'd mostly retreated back into his own thoughts.

But he had been looking at me differently. Like us being together again had shifted his perspective or something, though I didn't know what on. Maybe it was just as simple as him realising that I had nothing to gain by fucking him now so far as manipulating him went. If that was the case, then he was going to have to accept that I hadn't whored myself out in hopes of getting anything from him. And I couldn't say I'd have any complaints about him finally coming to that conclusion.

I had no problem with the fact that I had manipulated him to help me towards my escape plans in here, but I never would have given out access to my body in hopes of gaining *anything*. Besides, anyone who knew how to Bedazzle someone knew that the trick to it was in withholding what they wanted from you. So if that had been my aim then I never would have fucked him. All of that had just been a mixture of lust and insanity. Though I wasn't sure how long I could keep using that excuse for. There was something more

between us. Something dangerous and alluring which I was afraid might burn me when I finally gave in to it.

"So what now?" Cain asked me as we moved quietly through the isolation unit. He was dressed in an orange jumpsuit again and had used magic to conceal his identity so that he'd be able to move about the prison without anyone recognising him and trying to kill him.

"Well, I really need to speak to my cousin," I said, thinking over my plans and cursing the time we'd already wasted. Dante had to be freaking out right about now which meant I really needed one of Pudding's transmitters. "I need to track down Pudding."

"What does One-Twenty-One have to do with anything?"

I eyed Cain for a moment then shrugged, deciding to keep that secret to myself. He didn't need to know everything about our plans. At the end of the day, if this all went to shit, he could easily inform the Warden of the ways we'd been able to circumvent the rules in this place and I wasn't going to take away Pudding's ability to contact the outside world.

"You don't need to know every detail," I said, smirking as Cain's eyes flashed with irritation. "For now, we just need to get back up to meet the others."

My pocket was burning with the vials of antidote to the Order suppressant as well as the remote I'd stolen from Cain's room right before we'd left. He might not have wanted to bring it down here, but Roary needed his damn cuffs off, so I'd decided that I wasn't going to give him a choice in the matter. Of course, he was probably going to go apeshit about that when he found out, but I'd cross that bridge when I came to it.

I'd already taken a hit of antidote myself and the Wolf in me was wide awake as we moved towards the stairwell that would lead us back up toward the Order Yard.

We started to jog, but before we'd even made it up a single floor, Ethan, Roary and Sin rounded the corner ahead of us and an excited bark escaped me.

I ran forward, jumping into Roary's arms and wrapping my legs around his waist while nuzzling my cheek against Ethan's as he wrapped his arms around me from behind.

"The Order Yard is off limits now," Roary sighed. "A guard spotted us and sucked the oxygen out." The two of them shared a look that said that had not gone smoothly, but they were all clearly okay so I just thanked my lucky stars and hugged them tighter.

My mate bonds hummed with happy energy at the three of us being reunited and I grinned as I gave myself a few seconds to be squeezed in their manwich.

"Oh shit, you totally fucked her!" Sin announced loudly and I glanced over to find him pointing at Cain in accusation. "I can feel your satiated lust mixed with your angry jealous lust in a whole cloud of grumpy confusion – it's filling my power back up again."

"I don't know what the fuck you're talking about," Cain growled, shooting me a glare that warned me not to confirm that and I rolled my eyes.

Roary placed me down and both he and Ethan got between me and Cain.

"You'd better not have laid a finger on her," Ethan warned. "Because I might be happy to build a pack around my mate, but dickhead guards are absolutely not invited to join us. And if I find you've been trying to put your cock anywhere near her then I might just have to cut it the fuck off."

"Stop it," I tried, catching his arm but Roary moved forward with a growl of his own as Cain held his ground, looking more than willing to murder everyone here if this conversation carried on.

"I have to agree with your mates, poppet. Fucking a guard is bad mojo,"

Sin said seriously. "But maybe it's for the best that you fucked him out of your system before we had to kill him."

"No one is killing anyone," I snapped, pushing my way into the centre of this man fest and forcing all of their attention onto me. "And the four of you need to stop posturing and trying to make claims on me. I don't and never will belong to any man - even if I might happen to be mated to some of you. So suck it up, stronzos, and get your heads in the game. We need to head to Psych and get hold of the explosives before the guards decide to come down here and try their luck at ending this riot."

"And why exactly are we trusting the guard to help us with this, love?" Ethan asked, his eyes narrowed on Cain.

"I'm with the Wolf, kitten. Guards can't be trusted. He's probably playing the inside game with you, waiting to fuck you over now he's fucked you, if you know what I mean," Sin agreed.

I growled at all of them, already over this conversation. And aside from that I couldn't easily put into words why I wasn't worried about Cain doing any of that, but my instincts had never guided me wrong before.

"We have less than two days to get the hell out of here before the FIB show up and it's game over," I said firmly. "Cain might be a guard, but right now that doesn't matter. He can't warn anyone about anything because there is no way for him to communicate with his colleagues. He's been up in the guards' quarters and made no attempt to even see any of the other guards let alone tell them anything about us, so I'm willing to have a little faith in him. At the end of the day, he has good reason to want to help me because he doesn't want to die by the moon's curse."

"Yes, I would prefer not to bleed to death from my eyes and asshole," Cain deadpanned and Sin laughed loudly.

"Oh I hope you do. And I'm gonna be there to watch it. There'll be so

much blood, it's gonna be great," Sin chuckled.

Cain bared his fangs at him and Sin bared his teeth right back.

I decided to ignore them in favour of cracking on with the plan. If the four of them wanted to stand around here all day arguing about it then that was up to them. I tugged three canisters of antidote to the Order suppressant out of my pocket and passed them to the others.

"Those will remain active in your blood for the rest of our time in here, so we don't have to worry about not being able to shift anymore," I explained as they each quickly gave themselves a shot.

Sin instantly shifted into me and started pulling his shirt down to reveal his tits, moaning loudly and making some nonsense noises which I figured were meant to be Faetalian while he tugged on his nipples.

The others all tried not to look at him, though Ethan didn't seem wholly against the show.

I shook my head and took off towards Psych, trusting them to catch up to me when it mattered.

Sure enough, four obedient sets of footsteps soon rang out behind me and we headed up the stairs to level eight before turning down the corridor and following it to the far end where the entrance to Psych lay.

I held my hand out for the pass Cain had taken from the Warden's office and he handed it over a little reluctantly, moving to stand at my side as I swiped it through the reader.

The door buzzed loudly as it swung open and I grinned to myself.

"Here we go, boys."

"Let's not linger down here too long," Cain said in a low voice as I led the way into the brightly lit white corridor. "After what you told me about the experiments they're doing down here, I don't feel inclined to hang out around them for too long."

"Don't worry, kitten, I'll keep you safe," Sin purred, throwing an arm around Cain's neck and squeezing him to his side.

Cain punched him in the kidney to make him let go and I exchanged a look with Roary as we started passing the glass windows which gave a view into the cells that had held the poor Fae they'd been experimenting on the last time I'd come here.

I glanced into each cell, tension building in my gut as I found one after another empty. What the hell was that about? Where had they all gone?

The corridor split and I took the opposite path to the one I'd chosen the last time I was here, knowing there was nothing that way other than the operating theatre where they carried out their gross surgeries on the inmates.

I walked on confidently, the feeling of my pack surrounding me filling me with a sense of safety even while a shiver of unease tracked down my spine. Obviously Ethan and Roary were included in that sentiment but somehow I felt like Sin and Cain were too. It was just natural to include them when I thought of us as a unit, and I couldn't help but wonder if the moon was done with finding me mates yet or not. Though unless I found a way to break Cain's curse there certainly wouldn't be much chance of a happy ending for us. And that was without considering the other obstacles we would face if we even wanted to try for one, like him being a guard and an asshole and an overbearing prick...

As we headed through a set of double doors, we found a row of closed doors, each with a number on them and no window to show us what was inside.

I strode up to the closest one, straining my ears for a moment to listen out for sounds of anyone down here, but it was still suspiciously quiet.

Roary tried to step forward ahead of me but I elbowed him aside, not needing anyone to take a hit for me.

I stepped into the room and a light came on automatically, revealing a desk covered in paperwork and a bookshelf stacked with binders. I glanced around curiously, noticing a rack of orange jumpsuits hanging on a rail to the side of the room.

I was about to turn away from them when I spotted my own number stitched into the lapel and I stepped forward to get a closer look.

Cain shot around the desk, rifling through paperwork as I frowned at the jumpsuit and as I reached out to touch it, I was suddenly knocked clean off of my feet.

I hit the floor hard, smacking into Roary's legs and cursing in surprise as I found Cain standing where I'd just been, his eyes wild with panic.

"What the fuck?" Ethan roared.

"Tell me you didn't touch that," he barked, ignoring the way the other three guys were moving towards him like they had every intention of killing him.

"Touch what?" I asked in confusion.

"The jumpsuit," Cain said, shooting forward and grabbing my hand to inspect it. "Tell me you didn't lay a hand on it."

The others paused, clearly as confused by his behaviour as I was.

"I didn't," I said, frowning as he continued to inspect my fingers and he blew out a breath as he dragged me into his arms for a moment before letting me go just as fast.

"You'd better tell me why you just threw my mate onto the fucking ground," Ethan snarled.

"It's the jumpsuits," Cain explained, picking up a piece of paper from the desk and holding it out as Sin moved forward to take it. "They're lacing them with rotweed - that stuff sends you batshit crazy in small doses. By the looks of this they're dosing the clothes with enough of it to break a Fae's mind



completely within a matter of weeks."

"That's why the inmates were suddenly going insane," I breathed in realisation, letting Roary haul me to my feet as I drank in that information.

"Yeah. And I saw a note with your name on it in the Warden's office the night of the riot," Cain added. "Between that and the instructions on that document, it's pretty safe to assume that you were their next target."

My gut twisted fearfully at that news and I swallowed thickly as I realised just how close I'd come to ending up down here and being carved up for their freaky experiments.

Sin broke the tension by balling the piece of paper up and swiftly eating it. "There," he said, half choking on the thing. "Now no one will remember that they were coming after you."

Roary snarled angrily, but something in my heart warmed at Sin's attempt to protect me from the possibility of this fate. There was a darkness in his eyes which spoke of his own fears over ending up in a facility like this one and I knew that he'd spent too much of his life fighting off the idea that he was insane. But I didn't believe he was. He just saw the world differently to the monotonous way we'd all been taught to, and I thought there was a lot of beauty in that.

I stepped forward and wrapped my arms around Sin's waist, hugging him tightly as I listened to the solid thump of his heart in his chest.

"Thank you," I whispered and Sin fell still, his arms slowly closing around me in return as he breathed out slowly.

"I won't let them take you, wild girl. You're my fantasy, not theirs."

"We should move on and find that gas," Cain grunted, leading the way back out of the room and I took Sin's hand in mine as we followed.

We checked out three more rooms before finally finding the one we'd been searching for, a medical supply closet with the tanks of lerinon gas lined up

neatly for whatever twisted use they wanted them for down here.

I kept watch as the others piled the bottles onto a metal cart, my skin prickling at the fact that we still hadn't seen any sign of the staff who must have been down here somewhere.

I was sorely tempted to track them down and make them suffer for the things they'd been doing in this place, but we were on the clock and I didn't need to add a manhunt to the agenda.

Roary and Ethan took charge of pushing the cart once it was loaded up, the two of them nudging each other and laughing at some little joke which they didn't seem to want to share with the rest of us. Cain gave them a look which suggested he thought laughter was for morons and Sin looked like he was trying to hold in a really big fart - or maybe like their behaviour was making him mad. Hard to be certain which.

I stepped back out into the corridor, turning towards the exit again, but a low thump drew my attention in the opposite direction.

Curiosity killed the cat but I was a Wolf, and I refused to be afraid of a bump in the night, so I cautiously made my way towards the sound.

I passed a couple more doors then fell still as I came to a window just like the ones in the first corridor and I spotted a man inside a padded cell, slamming his fist against the wall over and over and over again.

"Hey, that's Nigel," Sin said brightly as he appeared at my side. "I bet he wants to come out."

"I don't know if we should just-"

Sin slammed his hand against the glass with an explosion of air magic and the whole thing shattered with an enormous crash.

"Hey Nige!" he called excitedly, waving in at the Fae who looked utterly freaked out by what had just happened.

He was a big fucker and the crazed look in his eyes got a whole lot crazier

as he got over the cuts which now lined his flesh from the broken glass and realised he was free.

"They took it from me," he said in a deep, slow voice, not moving an inch while his knuckles still remained pressed to the padded wall. His face was pale and his eyes seemed empty of light, like his soul had been carved clean from his body.

"Oh nooo," Sin cooed. "You should kill 'em for that, Nige. Kill 'em up good."

"Yeah," Nigel said in a husky whisper. "I should kill 'em up real good."

He burst into motion so suddenly that I flinched, magic coiling in my hands as I braced myself for an attack, but the guy just took a running jump out of the broken window and took off screaming down the corridor we hadn't ventured into yet.

"By the stars," Cain muttered, but before any of us could give any more thought on what to do, Sin whooped excitedly and took off too.

"Shit," I cursed, sprinting after him and the others followed with curses of their own.

By the time we made it to the end of the hall, the screams had started and we rushed into a room where four Fae dressed in white lab coats were trying to ward off both Sin and Nigel.

Sin was shielding Nigel with air magic while the feral man raced across the lab with a scalpel in hand which he'd clearly snatched from the open supply closet to the side of the room.

The four doctors were screaming for help, each holding their own makeshift weapons which I had to guess meant their magic was all tapped out.

I fell still as I watched the massacre play out, not feeling a single ounce of remorse for the monsters in white as Nigel collided with the first of them and

started stabbing wildly with his scalpel.

I'd watched what they'd done to the Fae they brought down here. I'd seen them stealing that magical essence from within their souls and there wasn't a single piece of me that felt bad for them as their blood began to paint the walls.

Two of them made a break for the door, running away with terrified screams but Sin used his air shield to stop them from escaping, a deep laugh booming from his chest as the first of their colleagues fell dead at Nigel's feet.

The second woman died with a single stab to her chest which sent blood spurting up to paint the ceiling as Nigel ripped the blade free and ran at the final two.

Their screams rang in my ears as I watched them die and when they finally slumped to the floor before a panting, wild-eyed Nigel, a sense of satisfaction filled me.

"I can't live this life," Nigel breathed, looking to the five of us as we just stood there watching him. "Thank you for setting me free."

He slashed the blade across his throat in a savage swipe that made me suck in a sharp breath at the shock of it.

"Shit. We need to heal him," Ethan gasped, moving forward, but Sin threw an arm out with a growl of refusal as Nigel's blood poured from the gaping wound in his throat to cover the ground.

"Let him die with dignity," Sin warned, his eyes flashing dangerously around the rest of us like he was challenging any of us to try and step in. "No man should have to live if life has given up on him. He made his choice, he took his revenge. Let him join the stars and find peace."

Nigel fell still before us and some of the tension left my body as I took in the look of relief etched into his unmoving features.

Sin raised his hands and flames burst from them, reaching out to destroy everything in this fucked up place and take the stains of all the foul deeds that had taken place here with them.

I turned for the door, knowing this was for the best and my gaze fell on a plaque which hung above it. "Drav Enterprises."

That name stuck in my mind and niggled at me, but as Roary took my arm and guided me back out into the corridor, I let it go. I didn't have time to focus on the screwed up shit they were doing in this place. I needed to focus on escaping this hell and forgetting any of it even existed.



## **45 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...**

We made it to Cell Block D and Rosalie howled to a bunch of Oscura Wolves in greeting who were standing guard outside the entrance.

“Alpha!” Esme broke through the pack with her large tits bouncing and Brett and Sonny hurried up behind her. Rosalie hugged them in greeting then Esme caught her hand, drawing her close to speak in a whisper. “Amira has reasserted dominance in our pack. She says you betrayed us. She says-”

“I said that Ethan Shadowbrook is your mate,” Amira’s voice boomed across the space and low whines and yaps of discomfort sounded from the Wolves as she walked out of the cell block and raised her chin at Rosalie.

I raised my chin right back and slid a rock from my pocket, picking one from the collection I had in there. I launched it at Amira while her gaze was fixed on Rosalie and it smacked her in the forehead with a plap.

“Ow – what the fuck?” Her head snapped toward me and I pointed at Cain, batting my eyelashes innocently.

Cain pursed his lips, his eyes sliding to me with disdain but he said nothing, which meant we were officially teammates. Maybe old grumpsalot had a fun side after all. And maybe I wanted to tickle him a little to coax it out some more.

Rosalie took the opportunity to drop the concealment spells on Cain and he cursed, looking to her with a growl.

“Is that a guard?” Amira gasped. “Do the rest of you see this?”

The Oscura pack shifted closer, their heads cocking with interest though I didn’t see much violence brewing yet, mostly there was just a lot of adoration for my wild girl in their eyes.

“Yes and he’s under my protection. No one will harm him,” Rosalie’s voice cut the air to ribbons as more of her pack gathered in the entrance, looking excited by her return.

She was so fucking hot right now, authority pouring from her. It made me want to dom her down, make her mine in ways that only a few other Fae in this prison had the right to. Or maybe I’d let her dom me down this time, tie me up and ride me like a carousel.

“Is this what you’re going to accept of your Alpha?” Amira cried angrily. “She’s come here mated to *that* filthy Lunar and has befriended a guard who’s made our lives insufferable in here.”

“Pipe down, Forty-Two,” Cain said irritably and Amira bared her teeth.

“I am showing you his true face because I won’t deceive my loyal pack.” Rosalie side-stepped in front of Cain as plenty of the Wolves turned furious eyes on him, but Officer Grump didn’t look remotely fazed.

“She’s a traitor!” Amira cried. “She’s come here with a guard and her mate who’s the Lunar King!”

“Cain is my prisoner,” Rosalie snapped, stalking toward Amira, the crowd parting for her as she went. “And Ethan is my mate chosen by the moon. Are you saying the moon has chosen poorly? Are you doubting the divine being which rules our Order?” She held a hand to her chest, looking appalled and the rest of the Wolves all turned to Amira in horror.

My wild girl was a clever sausage with sauce on.

“She’s a moon doubter!” Sonny shouted, pretending to throw up a bit in his mouth. Or maybe he actually did.

I chuckled. Wolves were fun.

“Moon doubter, moon doubter, moon doubter!” I started chanting, jumping up and down and more and more of Rosalie’s pack picked up the chant.

“It’s not – that’s not what I-” Amira spluttered, and I grinned darkly as Rosalie advanced on her.

“I beat your ass and kicked you out of my pack once, moon doubter. The only traitor here is you,” Rosalie spat. “So are you sure you want to face that kind of humiliation a second time?” She got so close to her that they were nose to nose, only my wild girl was taller so Amira had to tilt her head right back to keep eye contact. Rosalie’s tits pressed to Amira’s as she growled and arched a brow at her rival, waiting for her to reply. It was a tit off. Survival of the tittest. And my girl had the best tits in town so it was obvious who would win. Even Esme’s grapefruits didn’t have a nipple on Rosalie’s mangoes.

Amira suddenly dropped her head with a whimper and tears glistened in her eyes as she shoved through the pack and ran off down the corridor with a furious howl. *Ha, tit shamed bitch.*

I took another rock from my pocket, tossing it up and down as I moved to Rosalie’s side. “Want me to catch her and push rocks down her throat until she can’t make any more peeps, sex pot?” I murmured and she shot me a smirk.

“Nah, I’m hungry. Let’s eat.” She led the way inside to a chorus of victorious howls and we were swept along within the Oscuras’ embrace. I leaned back as their arms brushed over me, touching and nuzzling and sniffing and I laughed loudly at their ticklish touches.



I glanced around, finding Cain being apprehended by Sonny and Brett, his arms pulled behind his back. He had magic, but I guessed even he knew that the sheer number of prisoners around him equalled his end if Rosalie ever stopped offering him her protection.

Roary hugged and greeted many of the Oscuras from his old cell block while Ethan kept close to his side, looking between all of his enemies with uncertainty in his eyes. They didn't touch him, but some were moving closer, baring teeth and sniffing the air like they wanted to close the gap but were uncomfortable crossing that line. Ethan snapped his teeth any time one of them glared at him too long and they ran away with their metaphorical tails between their legs.

I drank in the attention, feeling like a warrior coming home from war with his queen as the Wolves surrounded me, and as someone started singing Under Pressure by Queen and David Bowie, I began strutting and dancing to the beat, putting on a show for my new audience. I was usually avoided by everyone in Darkmore, so this was perfect. Instead of them wrinkling their noses at me or hurrying away when they made eye contact, they cheered and clapped as I put on a show for them. When a bunch of them lifted me into the air and I started crowd surfing across the sea of Wolves, I was pretty sure I'd just peaked in life.

"Rosalie!" I shouted. "Look, Rosalie, look at me!"

She turned her head, meeting my gaze in the crowd as she smiled before she was lifted up too, joining me on the sea of hands and I reached for her as they guided her my way. Laughter tumbled from her throat as her fingers interlinked with mine and I felt like the emperor of all the lands in Solaria.

"They like me," I said with a bright smile.

"They like anyone I tell them to," she said with a laugh and my smile stuttered out.

*Oh.*

“But I’m sure they like you anyway,” she backtracked. “I didn’t mean it like that.”

My fingers slid from hers and I let the tide of hands carry me away from her.

“Sin!” she cried, like I was Wilson and she was Tom Hanks in *Castaway*. I frowned back at her, my mood descending as I folded my arms and dropped my head backwards so I slid down to the floor through the throng of bodies, disappearing from sight.

I hit the ground awkwardly and remained there as the Wolves danced over me and headed away, a huff leaving me. I shoved myself upright, taking out my pocketful of rocks and starting to count them. Five and a piece of lint I’d named Clint. I lifted them to my mouth and whispered, “Do you only like me because she told you to as well?”

Silence.

“Well?!” I roared at the obnoxious rocks and that cocky piece of lint. Nothing. Even Clint didn’t have anything to say. “Fuck you!” I threw them all as hard as I could and took a big guy down who was hanging laundry up on his cell bars.

“Why?!” he wailed as he rubbed the places the rocks had hit him, but if he wanted answers he needed to take it up with Clint and his rock band.

I walked over to Cain who was being marched along at the back of the group and I tugged him from Brett and Sonny’s arms.

“I’ll watch him,” I muttered, taking hold of his hand and pulling him along.

“Are you sure?” Sonny asked, his gaze moving to Brett excitedly and I got slammed with a wave of lust from the two of them. No prizes for guessing what they’d be doing with their newly freed up time. The little happy grins on

their faces said I'd just done them a massive favour by freeing them of their duties.

"Yeah, yeah, I'm sure," I agreed and they hurried off with horny howls.

Cain tried to yank his fingers free with a snarl and when that didn't work, he sent a flash of heat into his palm that forced me to let go. I twisted around, fisting my hands in his jumpsuit and yanking him nose to nose with me as a wild smile spread across my face. "Don't fight it, fang boy. You and me are all there is now."

"What are you talking about?" he demanded.

Rosalie's light laughter carried back to me and I watched her as she was led to a long table which must have been taken from the Mess Hall. Ethan and Roary sat either side of her and the Wolves gave them some space as they ran off to fetch them food.

"Look." I took hold of Cain's face, angling it toward them. "Look at them."

"I'm looking," he snarled.

Ethan and Roary started whispering to Rosalie and brushing their hands over her and each other too, sharing smirks and jokes that Cain and I weren't a part of.

I elbowed Officer Grump in the side. "You see it now?"

"What?" he grunted dismissively, but his gaze hadn't left them either and I could see the glimmery green jewels of jealousy in his eyes.

"We're the outsiders. The *unmated*." I ground my teeth. "You know what that means, right?"

"No," he said flatly. "But I think you're going to tell me."

"We're the disposable ones." I yanked his face around to look at me. "We're like a bag of peanuts on an airplane."

"You're not talking sense, Eighty-Eight," he growled in frustration.

“It makes total sense,” I snapped. “We’re small, salty balls, floating in a bag. Once we’re torn into, we’ll fly everywhere, getting under the seats and lost between people’s shoes. And no one cares. No one’s gonna go searching for a peanut.” I shook Cain, trying to make him understand. “But Ethan and Roary are cashews. The premium nut. The kind of nut you go searching for, the kind you blow the fluff off of when you find it on the floor so you can still eat it. But we’re peanuts, fang boy, peanuts!”

“You’re fucking batshit. Let go of me.” He tried to pull away, but I wrapped my arms around him, sobbing into his shoulder.

“Once we get out of here, they’ll forget about us. But I don’t wanna be a peanut, Mason, I wanna be a cashew.”

“Do not call me Mason,” he snarled, trying to prise me off of him, but I had the grip of a limpet on a ship’s hull.

The scent of food wafted past me and my head snapped up as I spotted platefuls of mashed potatoes, cooked veggies and all kinds of fucking goodness heading past me to the table.

I released a manic laugh and chased after those potatoes with a skip in my step, sitting my ass down opposite Rosalie and snatching up a knife and fork. I pounded them up and down on the table, bouncing in my seat. “Feed me!”

Rosalie chuckled, smiling at me and I smiled back, burying my jealousy for now as hunger took priority. My stomach was so empty it felt a beehive with one bee in it, buzzing around and smacking into the walls as it begged for honey.

Cain was escorted over to us and Rosalie directed him to sit beside me. Plates were passed out as the rest of the Wolves joined us at the table and the feast was laid out for us to devour. I piled my plate high with scrumptious things, wolfing through every bite, starved from going so long without it.

“Dalle stelle,” Rosalie groaned almost sexually as she ate and my gaze

fixed on her, my own food instantly forgotten.

The bench I was on suddenly bounced beneath me and I looked to my left, finding Pudding had dropped down next to me, forcing a Wolf along to make room for him. He was so big and hairy, a big old hairy bear.

“Hello, hound,” he spoke to Rosalie.

“Pudding!” she gasped. “Finally. Where the hell did you get to?”

“I have been waiting for your arrival.”

Rosalie flicked her fingers to cast a silencing bubble around us. “We need those transmitters, I thought you were going to come back with them.”

“Come back where exactly? We made no arrangement to meet again, hound,” Pudding said in his slow, deep voice. I was always hanging on every word he said because it seemed like he was about to say something really, really important. He hadn’t yet, but it was coming. I just knew it.

“Oh right, well...have you got them?” she asked.

“I do,” he said with a long nod. “Here.” He slid a couple of stacked pudding cups across the table to her and she leapt to her feet.

“I’ll be right back,” she whispered.

“I’m coming.” I got up, stepping onto the table and walking straight over it before jumping down beside her.

She snorted a laugh then tugged me along by the sleeve, heading upstairs to a cell she told me was hers. Once we were inside, I looked around the space, taking in the photos on the wall beside her bed, including the one of her in the arms of the infamous Storm Dragon, Dante Oscura.

“Do you think your cousin will let me ride his ass?” I asked hopefully.

“Ew, Sin, what the fuck?” She turned to me.

“In his Dragon form,” I said with a smirk. “You told me he lets you ride him. I bet you get the best view sitting on his ass.”

“Oh,” she burst out laughing. “Of course he will. We can go together.”

“Promise?” I snarled like a beast, suddenly grabbing her arm as she went to make the call, forcing her to face me as my heart ticked like a time bomb in my chest. “Do you swear we’ll do things once we get out, you won’t just... leave?” A dangerous energy was rising in me that I’d only ever experienced when I was about to hunt and kill.

But this was different to that, more volatile, deadly to me as well as anyone close enough to feel it. If this was love, it wasn’t like the thing talked about in poems and romance novels. This feeling was as potent as poison and as unpredictable as the wind. If I’d been a monster before, it was nothing to what I could become because of this barbaric emotion. Killing had been simple before. Clean cut. I took a job and gutted the bad guys, making a show out of it for funsies. But there would be no morals when it came to killing for Rosalie. There were no depths I wouldn’t stoop to if her life was under threat. No, if I’d been a monster before then love would make me natural disaster, sweeping through the world without warning or care for who it destroyed. But I didn’t want to be evil. I just wasn’t sure I’d be able to draw a line if she was ever in trouble.

Rosalie’s brows stitched together and she searched my eyes for a moment before moving into my arms and placing a soft kiss on my lips. “I won’t leave you, Sin. Do you really think I would?”

“You’ve got your mates.” I shrugged stiffly. “And your family.”

“You can be a part of all that...if you want to?” she asked, her eyelashes fluttering a little. I reached out, gently brushing my fingers over each of those soft lashes and smiling at my wild girl. It was the sad kind of smile though, because I knew what this meant. I was never going to have her like her mates had her, and she’d never crave me like she craved them, but if she wanted me at all, even one percent of how much she wanted them, then I’d stay until that want of hers waned.

“If I’m doomed to love the sun from all the way down here on Earth, then at least give me wings so I can fly close enough to burn,” I murmured.

Her eyebrows arched. “My Aunt Bianca used to read me that story to help me sleep.”

“When I was in foster care, there was an old lady who used to stop by the home once a month and read us some books. The Wingless Harpy was one of my favourites,” I admitted then inched closer to her. “Can I tell you a secret?” I breathed and she nodded, her fingers moving to press to my chest and graze up to my neck. “I can’t read or write, kitten. No one ever taught me to. I’ve picked up a few things here and there to get by, but put a book under my nose and it’s all just swirls on the paper. I always liked the idea of leaving messages in blood on the walls once I killed though, so I get my victims to do it when it suits.” I pressed a finger to my lips before lowering my voice further. “The carers at my foster home were supposed to home school us, but they never tried that hard with the naughty kids and can you guess who was the naughtiest, honeycomb?”

“Sin,” she breathed, her fingers sliding up to my jaw and caressing my stubble.

“Well technically I was Whitney Northfield back then, but that’s another one of our secrets, right kitten?” I grinned through the sadness of my past but she didn’t smile.

“No one ever taught me to read when I was a kid either,” she said. “I taught myself after my Aunt Bianca took me in. I know what it’s like to be neglected, for no one to care what kind of life you’ll have without basic skills.”

“You have so many skills,” I said. “Your smile is a skill no one in this entire world could master but you. It’s a thousand riddles waiting to be solved, and sometimes you make me feel like I can find the answers.”

She kissed me, her lips sugary sweet and tempting, but as she tried to prise my mouth open with her tongue, I held back.

“Do you think I’m stupid because I never learned that stuff?” I whispered and she pulled away with a sharp frown.

“No, I think you’re *incredible*. You’re different and wild and you don’t think like anyone else. I fucking love that about you, Sin. Do you know how many people in this world are clones of each other? You’re smart in a way so many other Fae are dumb. Because most people see grey when they look at the world, but you see a rainbow, and you make me see it too.” Her thumb ran along the line of my cheekbone and I leaned into her fingers, not used to being touched like that.

“Fuck, you sure know how to make a violent murderer feel like a king, wild girl.” I grinned twistedly at her and she chuckled, stepping back and using one of the pudding cups to make a call. She kept a silencing bubble tight around us and I inched closer as she held the cup between us so we could both listen.

“Rosalie? Tell me it’s you,” my foster brother Jerome answered and my chest puffed up with air.

“Hey, Jeromeo,” I said, teasing him with the nickname I’d come up with for him when we were kids.

“Holy shit,” he laughed. “I’ve been losing my mind out here. Are you alright? How’s my little breakout artist doing?”

“I’m all good,” Rosalie said lightly. “I mean, apart from the fact that we’re still locked a mile underground surrounded by certain death that is.”

“You’ve got a plan though, right?” Jerome asked, an edge to his tone.

“She’s got a plan,” I answered for her. “She always has a plan.” I knocked my knuckles against her cheek.

“Well you’ve got less than two days to pull it off, that enough time for



you?” he asked anxiously.

“Yep, I might need a little help from my cousin though,” she said. “Just sit pretty topside and let me do the work.”

“Not much else I can do, is there sweetheart?” he chuckled.

“Thanks for sending this sex pot down here, brother. Did you pick her because she’s my perfect wet dream or was that just a coincidence?” I asked with a grin and Rosalie prodded me in the ribs with a smirk.

Jerome barked a laugh. “By the stars, of course you’re fucking her.”

“I’m the one doing the fucking, stronzo. Sin just goes along for the ride, don’t you baby?” Rosalie teased.

“The ride, the rodeo, the whole carnival,” I agreed.

“Well don’t get too distracted,” Jerome warned. “I’ll be waiting to greet you the second you’re out of there, brother. Prepare for your bones to be crushed when I hug you.”

I laughed. “Fuck, I missed you, bud.”

“Missed you too, Sin,” he said, releasing a heavy sigh. “I’ll see you soon.”

“See you soon, baboon,” I agreed and the call died.

Rosalie smiled hopefully at me and electric energy hummed through my veins as I got a boost from speaking to my foster brother. I’d be breathing fresh air with Jerome at my side soon while sipping on a pina colada with a little pink umbrella in it. I didn’t know where I’d end up after this and honestly, I wasn’t ready to let go of the current company, so if she’d have me, I planned on following her around like a stray cat outside of here.

Rosalie used another pudding cup to call her cousin and Dante’s voice sounded through it a beat later.

“Rosa?” he asked immediately.

“It’s me, Dante,” she said brightly.

“Grazie alle stelle,” he sighed in relief. “Are you alright?”

Rosalie gave him a quick rundown of everything that had been going on in here while Dante listened attentively. I took the time to have a thumb war with myself and Lefty won two rounds against the reigning champion Righty.

“So what’s the plan?” he asked when she was done and I zoned back in.

“We’re gonna attack the main elevator and fight our way out of here,” she said.

“Fuck yes we are,” I whooped, karate chopping the air. “It’s gonna be all pew, pew, pew, pow, pow, pow. Yippe – ki yay mother-” Rosalie pressed a hand to my mouth to stop me as she went on.

“Are you sure that’s the best way?” Dante asked in concern. “That sounds like a fight you might not win.”

“We can win it,” she growled determinedly.

“Rosa...” Dante said in concern.

“You trust me, right Dante?” she asked, a plea in her voice and he sighed.

“Yes, I trust you. But that doesn’t stop me worrying about you, piccola alfa.”

“I can pull this off. I just need you and the family to be there when we get out.”

“Alright,” he conceded. “But it’ll have to be at night. I can’t conceal my approach in the day. I’ll be ready in my Order form. I’ll bring the pack and be ready for a fight.”

“Stay out of sight until I call to tell you I’m there. We don’t want the guards to catch onto us and call the FIB in.”

“Don’t worry, Rosa, I’m a professional at this kind of thing,” Dante teased.

“By the moon,” I whispered. “The Storm Dragon is gonna fight with us.”

Rosalie elbowed me with a smirk, finishing up the call with her cousin before crushing the pudding pot in her fist. “That’s it then. We’ve gotta wait

until the middle of the night so we may as well get some rest.”

“And by rest you mean have an orgy in this cell, right?” I guessed and she laughed.

“Aren’t you exhausted?” she asked.

“I’m an Incubus, muffin, I can literally fuck for days,” I said, prowling toward her, but she yawned and I could see she was dead on her feet. “But you are a sleepasaurus rex. So get on the bed and let me spoon you. Or you can spoon me if you’re feeling your big spoon energy today.”

She shook her head, but yawned and I walked her back towards her bed, pushing her down onto it. “Sleep.”

“But the others,” she complained.

“I’ll handle the others.”

“Cain will have to be locked up somewhere. I don’t want the other Wolves able to reach him while I’m sleeping.” She tried to get up again, but I pushed her back down.

“I’ll deal with it, cherry drop. Just shut your fluttery eyes and sleep,” I commanded, tugging the covers over her.

“I need to see he’s safe.” She got up like a stubborn little moth and I sighed, tugging her out the door by her hand and whistling sharply.

“Wolves, bring Officer Cain up to your queen!” I cried and a chorus of baying Oscuras replied. It only took half a minute for them to appear with him and Rosalie directed him into the cell beside hers and stationed Brett, Sonny and Esme there to guard it.

“Follow me,” Rosalie said, directing me, Ethan and Roary after her into the cell with Cain. She hung a sheet and cast a silencing bubble, giving us four some privacy – wait, no there was five of us. Six if you counted my cock. *Which obviously you did, you dirty fucker.*

*Who am I talking to? Oh the people in my head. Shh, I need to pay*

*attention.*

Rosalie slipped something out of her pocket and Cain snarled as his eyes locked on the remote for the magic blocking cuffs.

“Oooh,” I cooed, stepping closer as the shiny object called to my inner magpie. I swiped for it but Rosalie held it out of reach, only making me hunger for it more. *That’s gonna be my shiny thing.*

“You need to release Roary’s magic,” she told Cain and Roary took a step forward, his desire for that clear in his golden eyes.

“Hell yes,” Roary purred.

“Fuck no,” Cain snapped predictably. Did he ever say yes to things? I said yes to all the things. He should try that sometime. I reckoned it would cheer him up a bit.

“We should give all of the prisoners their magic back,” I said excitedly and everyone turned to me with horrified expressions.

“What? That’s a terrible fucking idea,” Ethan balked.

“Name one thing that’s terrible about it.” I folded my arms and arched an eyebrow.

“Every psychotic motherfucker in here would suddenly have the power to do whatever the hell they liked to us or anyone else,” Ethan growled.

“And they could put our whole plan in jeopardy,” Rosalie added.

“The body count would be unimaginable,” Cain hissed.

“It’s the stupidest thing you’ve ever said, and that’s saying something,” Roary snapped and I bristled at the word stupid, dropping my arms to my sides as anger rolled freely through me and my spine prickled with deadly intent.

“Don’t. Call. Me. Stupid,” I warned and Rosalie stepped toward me, cupping my cheek.

“You’re not stupid, but that idea is. So listen very closely when I say that

under no circumstances will we let any other inmate's magic free apart from Roary's. Repeat it back to me."

There was a sparkle in her eye, the kind that spoke of our secret language and my mood picked up as I nodded, a mischievous grin pulling at my lips.

"Under no circumstances will we let any other inmate's magic free," I said, winking at her and she frowned.

"Why did you wink?" she hissed.

"I didn't." I winked again.

"Stop it," she snarled. "You'd better listen to me this time, Sin. I swear to the moon, if you fuck up our plan by doing something as reckless as letting the Belorian out again, I will never forgive you."

"Alright, candy cane," I promised and as she turned away, I winked at her, causing Roary to snarl.

"I'll kill you if you do anything to ruin this," he warned in a hiss.

But he didn't know anything about mine and Rosalie's secret language. It was all done through eyebrow twitches and lip movements that his little mind could never comprehend.

"I'm the only one who can use the remote," Cain said as he glared coolly at me. "So I'll be sure to keep it out of his hands. Just give it back to me." He held out his palm and Rosalie twirled it between her fingers.

"I'll give it back once you release Roary," she bargained and Cain's jaw ticked as he looked to the Lion puff.

"No," he said simply.

"If you don't, I'll have the guys hold you down and tickle you until you use enough magic to get a reading on it," Rosalie said, arching a brow at him and Cain glowered. "Does that sound like something you'd prefer?"

"Can we do it naked?" I asked and Rosalie laughed.

"Yeah, I think we will, Sin. All of us can oil up too," she said and Cain

growled furiously.

“Fine. Give me it,” he demanded and Rosalie tugged Roary close to Cain as she held the remote out to him, but kept a tight hold on it.

Cain scowled his way through the process, but a second later the light on Roary’s cuffs went out before they unlocked and fell to the ground. He released a heavy breath and cast a ball of ice in his palm. Rosalie flicked a finger and a bush started growing at his feet, bigger and bigger until strawberries started sprouting on it and she plucked some off, squeezing the fruit all over his ball of ice until it was red. He took a savage bite out of it and I leapt forward with a hungry snarl, taking a bite of it myself before falling on the strawberry bush.

“Hey, leave some for everyone,” Ethan said as he dropped down, trying to fight me for the strawberries I already had bundled in my lap. I started pushing them into my mouth, filling it up to the maximum so he couldn’t get his hands on them, leaves and all.

“Mine,” I said around the succulent fruit and Rosalie laughed, growing a few more so Ethan could have them too.

“I’ll leave the bush for you to munch on, Mason,” she told Cain before handing him the magical remote as promised then leading the rest of us to the exit.

“I’m good,” he muttered, though his eyes drifted to those strawberries with a thirst I knew he was going to sate the second we were gone.

Cain glared out between the bars as Rosalie yanked the sheet down to cover him and he was left like a lonely turnip in his own cell.

I kinda pitied him, but I was also too excited for the spoon party about to go down as I dragged Rosalie back into her cell. Before I could get her on the bed and take up prime spooning position, a knife and fork walked in with intention in their eyes.

Rosalie pulled out of my grip, going to them as I knelt on the bed alone. She hugged Ethan while Roary kissed her neck and she shivered between them. I sank back onto my heels, waiting for them to pay me attention, but they just kept cuddling and nuzzling each other.

I slid off the bed, shrinking into the shadows and pressing my back to the wall as they caressed each other's mate marks and my heart crushed like broken glass in my chest.

They moved to the bed, snuggling down together in a dog pile with Rosalie curled up in the middle of them so the entire single bed was full to its limit.

A mournful howl pitched through the room and I realised it was coming from me before I strode out of the cell and shoved past the Wolves on guard outside Cain's cell, heading back into it.

Cain looked up from where he was perched on the bed and I fell down beside him, wrapping my arms around him.

"Hold me," I said against his neck, but he shoved me off with a snarl.

I curled up on his bed, looking over my shoulder at him. "Spoon me. Or fork me if you prefer. I just need to be cutleried."

"What's the matter with you? Get out of here," he snapped.

Rosalie appeared with a whine in her throat and I rolled over, stuffing my head under Cain's pillow.

"Sin, come back to my cell," Rosalie said, taking my hand and trying to pull me up.

I went dead weight, shutting my eyes and pretending I was asleep already. She cursed as she heaved my whole body off the bed and I never broke character, hitting the floor hard and letting out a soft snore.

"For the love of the sun." Cain grabbed hold of me too and they heaved me out the door and around into Rosalie's cell. I remained convincingly

asleep before I was lifted up and dumped on the single bed on top of Roary and Ethan.

“By the stars,” Roary cursed, shoving me as I spread out like a starfish and continued to feign sleep.

I cracked an eye, peeking on Rosalie as she pulled Cain closer and brushed her lips against his cheek. “I’ll see you in a few hours. You can’t stay here.”

He grunted in answer and she led him back to his cell while Ethan elbowed me and tried to get comfier.

“This bed is too fucking small for all of us,” Roary complained, shoving me too.

“Bet you want me to turn into G-spot Joe right now, don’t you Ethan?” I murmured in my sleep.

“Yeah, so I can crush you in my fist,” Ethan growled.

“Around your cock,” I added and he punched me in the head.

Rosalie returned and I opened my eyes with a loud yawn. “Oh, how did I get here?”

She planted her hands on her hips. “This isn’t gonna work.” She marched outside, barking orders at her Wolves and a minute later she reappeared followed by a bunch of her pack mates carrying several mattresses, pillows and blankets from the other cells. They arranged them all on the floor then ushered us out of the bed and carried the frame away before placing Rosalie’s bedding in its place, adding it to the big nest they’d made.

I whooped, diving into the middle of it and rolling across it as the Wolves hung a sheet over the bars to give us some privacy then left us to it. Not before they shot Ethan a few anxious looks and a couple of growls echoed in their wake, but they clearly weren’t going to undermine Rosalie’s command over the Lunar King. Which was sexy as fuck.

“Move over. Rosa goes in the middle,” Roary insisted, kicking me in the



side as I dominated the whole bed.

“She can go in the middle. But I’m also in the middle, so she’ll have to lay right here.” I patted my chest with a smirk.

Rosalie stripped down to her underwear, walking across the bedding and laying down beside me while we all stared at her sexy ass body.

Ethan and Roary dove forward to try and claim the space on her other side, falling into a wrestle that both Rosalie and I watched with intrigue as their muscles flexed and they nipped and savaged each other. Safe to say, between Rosalie’s perfect flesh on show beside me and those two putting on a show worthy of the infamous Black Hole fetish club in Alestria, my cock was as hard as a mast on a ship. I just need to tie a little sail to it and all I’d need is a strong breeze to send me sailing off into the sunset.

The two of them were so evenly matched that every time one of them made it into the spot beside Rosalie, the other one managed to drag them away and get into it instead.

“Enough,” she said at last, slamming her hand against Ethan’s chest as he fell down beside her once more. She bared her teeth at Roary who had his fingers knotted in Ethan’s hair and Roary sighed as he let go.

Ethan smirked triumphantly, unbuttoning his jumpsuit and stripping it off, tossing it away with his shoes and socks. Roary did the same next, falling down beside Ethan with a huff as he gave in to Rosalie’s demands.

I pulled my own jumpsuit and shoes off and Roary’s eyes widened as they landed on my boner.

“Don’t look so surprised, Lion puff, it’s more of an event when I’m not hard. This is my reality ninety nine percent of the time. I once saw a pussy-shaped leaf that got me going, and honestly all I need is for my boxers to chafe my cock the right way and I’m raring to go.” I shrugged as I dropped back down beside Rosalie and finally took up prime spoon position.

I tugged her against me as Ethan rolled forward and caught her hips, yanking her back towards him. I tightened my grip and Ethan growled at me, his fingers locking around her even firmer.

“Guys, I’m not a chew toy. I need to breathe,” Rosalie warned and I reluctantly loosened my grip but still kept my arm around her waist.

Roary cupped his head with his hands as he lay on his back beside Ethan and stared moodily at the ceiling.

“You win some, you lose some, Lion puff,” I said.

“I’m her mate,” he gritted out and his words struck me like a slap.

“Sin’s a part of this too,” Rosalie insisted but Roary remained silent and my grip on her eased a little more. I didn’t have any real claim on her. I only had tiny little claws in her which could be broken off anytime she fancied.

“I miss that big bad Vamp who killed all those guys in the Magic Compound that time. He wasn’t like this,” I said, releasing Rosalie and rolling onto my back. “He always included me in stuff.”

“The Vampire in isolation?” Ethan asked in confusion.

“Yeah, me and him had a bond. We had jokes. I used to call him names and he’d swear at me and threaten to drink all my blood while choking me out with my own intestines.” I chuckled. “Good times.”

“He literally ripped a guard’s face off and ate it,” Ethan said with a grimace.

“Yeah, and then he ate his own face,” I said with a smile. “I think he regrows it then re-eats it actually. That’s probably how he’ll survive down there. No one’s feeding the isolation prisoners.”

“He eats his own face?” Roary deadpanned. “That’s ridiculous.”

“Not when you’re hungry,” I pointed out. “He told me all about how he’s so desperate for blood that he’s gonna eat everyone when he gets out one day. Especially Gustard since he was one of the reasons he got put in the hole.”

“I thought the guy just flipped after he failed some appeal?” Ethan said.

I nodded. “Yeah, buddy, and Gustard had a guy on the outside who was supposed to help get the appeal to go through after my Vamp friend paid him a butt ton of money. But Gustard never even had a guy. So no wonder he felt face rippy after the appeal got rejected.”

“Can we stop talking about some face eating Vampire?” Rosalie asked, looking disgusted.

“Sure, pickle. You wanna talk about a face eating llama instead? Or a face eating goat? I once knew a goat called Simon who-”

She reared up and kissed me, her hand sliding down onto my cock and making me groan hard into her mouth.

“Fuck, mentioning Simon doesn’t usually get people this hot. I’ll have to write him a letter to thank-” She kissed me again, pressing her tongue into my mouth and swinging her leg over me as she pinned me down beneath her. I took hold of her hips, grinding her over my cock and smirking at her. “Is it just goats that turn you on or is it all kinds of hoofed creatures? I’ve got a Sheep Shifter in my collection if you’d like to see?”

“Oh my stars, shut up,” she growled, kissing me again and I wrapped my hands around her waist, losing myself to her soft flesh as my hands slid up her spine.

“I’m getting mixed messages,” I said against her lips. “Do you like hooves or are you anti-hoof?”

Ethan thumped me in the arm, grabbing Rosalie from my lap and pulling her onto his instead.

“Ignore the idiot, love,” he said through an arrogant grin, pushing his hand down the back of her panties and reaching all the way around to her pussy. Her head fell back as she moaned and his fingers worked within her panties as I fed on all of their lust, watching the show as Rosalie rocked her hips to

the rhythm of Ethan's hand.

"So how are we doing this?" I asked as Roary watched Rosalie with a burning intensity that he was clearly about to act on. But they'd just go all animal on her and we'd played that game before. I could make this far more fun. "I count nine holes and three cocks, so some holes are gonna get left out, though I can bring out my dick squid if everyone wants their holes filling?" I offered.

"No one wants your dick squid," Roary growled, shifting closer and pushing Rosalie's bra up over her tits, squeezing and biting them. She gasped, her hips moving faster as she tried to take more from Ethan whilst gripping onto the back of Roary's head to keep him against her chest. Hot but *booooooring*.

"Tell that to a man called Bert Lug," I said with a shudder. That was a night I'd never forget. I'd even tried to take a memory potion to erase it, but there were some memories that not even magic could erase.

Rosalie moaned louder as her two mates brought her towards her ruin and I shifted closer, a predator awakening in me as I hooked onto their lust and started reading between the lines of their desires. Alright, they didn't want me to shift. I could do plenty of other fancy things with my Order gifts that they would like though.

I reached out to Ethan's back and ran my thumb down the length of his spine as it started to vibrate, my skin coming alive with electric energy.

"Fuck," he groaned, pausing what he was doing to Rosalie as he looked over at me with lust in his gaze which I could feel pouring into me in waves.

"I call it the Devil's touch," I said with a smirk. "I told you I was a man-sized vibrator."

"It's more than vibrations," Ethan growled as I dragged my fingers up the length of his back again.

“Yup,” I agreed. “It gifts pleasure wherever I touch. So if I touch somewhere good...” I pushed my hand into Rosalie’s panties alongside Ethan’s and circled my fingers over her clit. She gasped, her head falling back and heavy moans leaving her that made my dick twitch with need.

“Holy fuck,” she groaned. “Don’t stop.”

She fell into a string of Faetalian curses as my fingers vibrated harder and my touch gifted her so much pleasure she could hardly take it.

Roary tried to draw his head away from the nipple he was sucking but she clamped her hand down on the back of his head with a growl and Ethan’s hand pumped harder beneath mine as she fell apart for all three of us.

Lust curled around me like a warm hug and I sighed as I drank in every drop of it, withdrawing my hand from Rosalie’s panties and pushing her off of Ethan onto her back on the nest of blankets. She was all floppy post orgasm and I smirked at her as I gripped her panties and tugged them off of her as Roary caught hold of her bra and dragged that over her head. His shoulder butted against mine and he released a growl of warning which turned to a groan as my skin offered him a rush of pleasure.

“By the stars,” he cursed, pulling back and touching his shoulder as he stared at me with a frown fixed onto his face.

“You like that, Lion puff?” I taunted.

“No,” he said instantly, but his throat bobbed with the lie.

“Let him touch you, Roar,” Rosalie encouraged and we both looked down at her as she bit her lip, glancing between us hopefully.

I wiggled my brows at Roary enticingly and his jaw ground as he fought between wanting to please his mate and not wanting anything to do with me.

“He can’t handle it, wild girl,” I said with a smirk. “Ethan can though. Come here, shadow man.”

Ethan shifted in my periphery but Roary spat a curse, grabbing my hand

and laying it on his chest, clearly not wanting to be outdone by Rosalie's other mate. His muscles rippled beneath my palm as pleasure spiked from my flesh into his and a low groan rumbled through his throat. His gaze moved to Rosalie as I wrapped my hand around the back of his neck then pushed him down towards our girl.

He kissed her filthily, laying his claim and I ran my hand down the hard plane of his shoulders, making goosebumps rise over his flesh as he groaned once more. He kissed his way down Rosalie's body and shoved her thighs apart as he ran his tongue over her clit and started feasting on her like the beast he was.

Rosalie's eyes found mine and I caught hold of Ethan beside me, putting on a show for our sex pot as I turned my head towards his and drove my tongue into his mouth. He tried to dominant that kiss and I let him as my hands roamed over his abs and fed pleasure into his body, making his cock harden even further as it pressed into my hip.

"Yes," Rosalie panted as she watched and her hand came up between us, stroking my cock before moving to Ethan's, back and forth between us until my dick was desperate for her. Well, it was always desperate for her. But now it was double desperate with a hat on.

Rosalie's hand caught mine and she guided it to Ethan's cock, her fingers grasping my hand as pleasure skittered from my body, making her moan even louder as Roary continued to torment her pussy with his tongue.

I shoved my hand into Ethan's boxers, taking Rosalie's hand with me and together we wrapped our fingers around his huge length, making him groan into my mouth. I broke our kiss and looked down at Rosalie once more, drinking in her lust as she watched our fists rolling up and down Ethan's cock in a fluid motion that made him swear under his breath. My palm buzzed with vibrations and I lowered it down onto his balls as Rosalie continued to work

his shaft, making him hold onto my shoulder for support, his nails tearing into my skin as he enjoyed every second of our combined touch.

“Stop,” he panted when he was close to finishing, pushing our hands off of him just as Rosalie howled through her second climax and Roary lifted his head with a satisfied grin, wiping his glistening lips with the back of his hand before dropping over her like he was about to fuck her.

I caught hold of his hips before he could get carried away with that idea, shoving him onto his back beside her, able to get that advantage over him as my fingers poured pleasure into his body and caught him off guard.

“Hey,” he snarled, but I grabbed Rosalie next, throwing her on top of him clumsily and Roary’s hand wrapped around her to caress her tits as she wriggled her ass over his cock. I spread her legs, moving between them before gripping Roary’s boxers and tearing them off of him, making him get all angry again as he cursed me out. But I was too enraptured with the creature between us to care as I took hold of his cock and drove it inside her for him.

“Motherfucker,” he snapped, but it came out all breathy and suddenly he was distracted by fucking her, driving into her pussy with firm strokes that made her back arch against him.

I leaned down and lapped at her clit with teasing strokes of my tongue then let her see why the Devil’s touch was fucking amazing as my tongue vibrated against her sensitive flesh.

“Oh fuck,” she moaned loudly. “Sin...Roary.” She reached for Ethan too and pumped his cock as he watched the perfect display of her body bucking and writhing as Roary pounded into her and I chased every one of his movements with my tongue on her clit.

She started coming again and I laughed as I counted three orgasms already, knowing we were far from done and that I was aiming for her pussy

to be pushed to its limits this time.

I lifted my head and licked her sweet taste from my lips before gripping the base of Roary's cock and yanking it out of her.

"Sin!" he barked, but I just lifted Rosalie's hips and lined him up with her ass instead, using the natural lubricant of her body to ease him into her there instead.

"Fuck. You," Roary gritted out as Rosalie gripped Ethan for support, her hips rising then falling as Roary gave in to my demands and pushed himself slowly inside her.

"I'd be quaking in my little cowboy boots if you weren't enjoying yourself so much, Lion puff," I teased and Rosalie laughed breathily, earning her a spank on the thigh from Roary. The lust washing from her said she liked that anyway, so it was another point to me and her. *Sucker.*

I grabbed hold of Ethan next, swapping places with him and smirking as they all did as I wanted, my pleasure filled touch making them putty in my hands.

Ethan knew what to do without me saying a word, guiding the tip of his throbbing cock to her pussy and meeting her gaze as she nodded her encouragement. He slid inside her with a torturously slow thrust as he and Roary started finding a rhythm between the two of them, driving into her at the same languid pace.

I stood up to watch the show, fisting my cock as I growled my approval of this perfection before me and Rosalie watched me with need in her eyes.

"You're so fucking greedy," I said with a twisted grin and she nodded, heavy moans falling from her lips as Roary and Ethan worked together to destroy her.

They didn't need any of my help with that, the two of them were so in sync it was like they were one being working to claim her, and maybe that



was what it was like to be her mates. Which made me fiercely fucking jealous.

I knotted my hand in Ethan's perfect hair as I acted on that jealousy, wanting to steal myself a piece of their bond as I stepped closer and pressed the tip of my cock to his lips. Even that was feeding him pleasure and he couldn't resist more of it as he gave in to what I wanted and took my length into his mouth, his hot tongue flicking over the tip and drawing a low groan from my lips.

My gaze found Rosalie's again, sensing her lust rising further as she watched. Ethan's hips bucked faster as he fucked her more ferociously and Roary growled as he rose to meet that challenge too. Rosalie's cries filled the air as I fucked the mouth of the Lunar King and I loved how I was making this mighty Alpha Wolf mine, and not just him, but all of them. I was in control here whether they knew it or not and it was my new favourite place to be. I felt like I belonged here among them, like they were something more, something special. But I couldn't quite put a name to it.

I drew my cock from Ethan's lips as I felt them all heading towards a crescendo I really wanted to witness and I stood back as I jerked myself harder and harder, watching as Roary's cock thrust into her from beneath while Ethan fucked her from above. Rosalie clawed at Ethan's shoulders, moaning all of our names as she gave them orgasm number four and Roary finished with a Lion's roar half a second before Ethan stilled inside her with a howl.

"Fucking animals," I laughed as they panted, their limbs tangled in a sweaty mess as Rosalie grinned like a savage.

I didn't give any of them long to enjoy their afterglow as I caught hold of Ethan's hips and threw him off of Rosalie before catching hold of her waist and yanking her off of Roary too. I carried her to the wall, shoving her up

against it and wrapped her tired legs around me as I slammed my cock into her without so much as a how-do-you-do.

“Sin,” she groaned like she couldn’t take any more but then my cock started vibrating and everywhere my skin touched hers fed her pleasure. She said my name again with much more reverence and I enjoyed the sound of that. “*Sin.*”

“I’m all seven of the deadly ones,” I said with a taunting smile, fucking her with a primal desire as I gifted her all the pleasure my body had to offer.

My pubic piercing ground against her clit and the vibrations of my cock juddered through it too, making her buck and moan and claw at me like the wild thing she was. Her pussy was soaked from Ethan’s cum and her endless arousal for us all and my thick cock slid in and out of her with ease.

Our mouths collided in a sloppy, filthy kiss as she groaned and begged for more, her body alive with this living, writhing pleasure that was all building to the most powerful orgasm she’d ever experienced. I knew it, she knew it, and my cock knew it as her pussy clamped down on it in a tight squeeze that made me come with her, her muscles convulsing around my length and milking every drop of my cum from my body as I finished inside her.

I bit her lower lip, chewing on it as I enjoyed the pleasure rolling through me, but I enjoyed her pleasure even more than that. The way she was continuing to claw at my back as her climax went on and on and her fingernails tore into the back of my neck was the best thing I’d ever experienced. Her body finally went limp and her head knocked back against the wall as she blew a lock of hair from her hooded eyes.

“That was wild,” she laughed throatily.

“Sin always makes it Wilder.” I winked and she didn’t deny that.

My cock stopped vibrating as I let my Order gifts withdraw and I carried her back to the nest where Ethan and Roary were laid out waiting for us,

looking exhausted and hungry for sleep.

I placed Rosalie down between them and they immediately curled around her, the three of them snuggling together as I dropped down behind Ethan and he used his water magic to clean us all up. I was nearly asleep before he'd finished, a fat grin slapped onto my face as I drifted into rest with my magic reserves practically overflowing.

Hell to the yes, I was literally the god of sex. The king of the orgasm, the mayor of cocktown and pussyville. And I realised there was nothing more satisfying to me than pleasing this group of Fae who I'd somehow been lucky enough to find. Especially Rosalie. She was our queen and so long as she let me stick around, I'd be sure to make her fall asleep this satisfied again and again and again.

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I woke as Ethan's elbow drove into my gut in his sleep and he rearranged himself around Rosalie, holding her against him while resting his chin protectively over her head, a snarl on his lips in sleep. Roary held her from the other side, their foreheads touching as they surrounded her. *Moony little furbags.*

I yawned as I pushed myself upright, watching them for a while and turning my wrist over, wondering what it would be like to have their mate mark. I shifted into Roary so I could see that mark on my skin, my head cocking as I examined it.

*Maybe I should kill off Roary and stay like this, tell them Sin ran away.*

I could do it, wrap my palm over his mouth and snap his neck before any of them woke. Then I'd just have to figure out how to get rid of the body. I could shift into the Belorian and eat him? But as I stared at his peaceful

expression, I found I didn't want him to be chomped up in my jaws.

I liked Roary even though he didn't seem very fond of me. And he made Rosalie happy in a way I'd never be able to mimic. Sure, I could try and come up with some childhood stories from when him and her were kids together, but she'd probably catch on when I spouted something that had never happened. Of course, I could use my dick to distract her any time the conversation went that way. But nah, the plan was falling apart. My dick was too fantastic to be mistaken for another man's dick, no matter how nice Roary's was. Nothing came close to mine. And I'd never be able to use its fancy dick powers again. That would be the biggest tragedy of all.

I sighed, getting to my feet, longing to offload some of the heavies and the sads in my chest. There was only one person who could really get it, but he wouldn't talk to me. Well...not when I looked like this anyway. A slow smile crept across my face and I shifted into Rosalie, appreciating my own tits for a moment before hooking up her jumpsuit and pulling it on. Then I crept out of the cell, nodding to her pack mates who were sitting around guarding the place before slipping into Cain's cell, dropping the sheet down behind me.

I cast a silencing bubble around us as I approached his sleeping form on the bed, his brow drawn as something in his mind tortured him.

I perched on the edge of his bed, sliding my fingers between his and he woke with a jolt, his fangs snapping out on instinct.

"Hey," I said softly and he frowned as he found Rosalie here, not Sin. But Sin was here. Sin was hiding.

"Is everything alright?" he asked, his voice rough from sleep.

"You tell me. You were the one twitching in your sleep."

His brow descended further, his eyes shadowed and darkness brimming in his gaze.

"The past was a little closer tonight, that's all," he muttered, reaching out

to brush a lock of hair behind my ear.

I found I liked his touch and if I'd been a Lion like Roary, I was sure I would have started purring. He wasn't so big and bad when he was looking at Rosalie. In fact, he seemed kind of alluring like this, and I could see what she saw in him outside of his constant grumps.

I moved toward him and he shifted back against the wall to let me lie down and I snuck into his strong arms as he wrapped them around me, holding me like I was something precious to him. Yup, I could definitely see it now. This broken man was healing because of her, it was what he needed. But I wasn't sure he deserved that.

"Tell me what you dreamed about," I asked, resting my head on his pillow as he laid his head down too and his gaze roamed over my face.

I knew this feeling well, wearing the skin of another, becoming what they desperately wanted me to be. Cain's perfect desire was Rosalie, just like Roary and Ethan's desire was, and I played the role well, my body built for pretending.

He drew in a long breath like he was deciding whether or not to say, but eventually he did.

"I was dreaming about the moment I had my teeth in Benjamin Acrux's neck," he admitted. "His blood washing down my throat, his lifeforce in my hands."

"The night he killed your friend?" I asked and his eyes narrowed.

"I didn't tell you about that."

"Oh um...Sin told me," I said, batting my lashes and he nodded, his jaw pulsing and pain swirling in his gaze.

I wrapped my arms around his neck, caressing the skin beneath his hair in soft circles and he sighed like he needed that. I wondered if anyone had ever touched him like that. He'd had no parents to soothe him and I knew what

that was like. It was something only an orphan could really understand, the craving for the touch of a parent, your skin constantly starved for it until it messed you up inside.

“My Vampire was freshly Emerged and though I drank him to the brink of death, unfortunately I didn’t finish the job,” he said bitterly.

“He got away?” I asked in surprised and he nodded.

“I left him there with his throat half ripped out, figuring the job was done. And I ran as far away from that place as I could, never to look back. But word of his survival reached me eventually and I’ve regretted that ever since,” he said.

I brushed my fingers over his shoulders as I gave him a sad look.

“Couldn’t you go back and get the blood you were owed?”

“It was too late,” he said with a shake of his head. “I was at school when I found out. My life had taken a fortunate turn at last and I didn’t want to fuck it up. I moved to Applefield after I left Benjamin and eventually took a chance at joining Perseus High School there. The principal took pity on me, I think. I turned up outside his door in a creased suit I’d stolen off of some guy’s washing line, but my sneakers were a dead giveaway, worn through and grubby. He could see what I was. Just a thief making it by on the streets of his town. But the one thing Benjamin had gifted me was strength, and I’d managed to harness my magic in the time I’d had it better than Principal Sunfall expected for someone who’d been Awakened by the stars. It’s very rare to be gifted magic like that, and I think he sensed something bad had happened to me for the stars to offer it out early.” He shrugged and my heart squeezed like a tiny bear was crushing it in my chest.

“What made you even wanna go to school?” I asked curiously.

I’d never even attempted to get into education. I’d gotten my magic Awakened at the annual Offering Ceremony in Iperia. Every decent sized

town held one of those for the poor assholes and rogues who didn't get to have their magic Awakened at school. It was government run and kinda nice seeing as they gave out free cake and stuff, but there'd been a general air of 'poor little street people' about the place as we walked into their fancy town hall.

After that, I'd taught myself how to use my magic, then I'd met in with a murderer called Plunt who'd mentored me for a while. He'd been ruthless, cutthroat and in the end, I'd had to kill him because he was an even bigger monster than me. But he'd been a pretty good teacher before I cut his head off and kicked it in a river.

"I was on the verge of becoming the worst version of myself. I was hungry and alone and the only way I could have survived was by becoming a heartless creature just like Benjamin. So I tried for a different life and when I got my chance at one, I worked tirelessly to make the most of it," he said.

"But the darkness in you drew you here," I said mysteriously.

"Something like that, I guess," he grunted.

"I like the darkness in you, Mason," I whispered. "I'm glad you didn't cast it all out."

"If it draws you to me, then maybe I'm glad of it too," he said, leaning closer and my eyebrows arched as I realised he was about to kiss me.

*Well, in for a penny in for a pound.*

I curved into his body and took his tongue between my lips, meeting it with my own as I drew him closer. He growled hungrily and his hard cock drove into me in a demand. A laugh snagged in my throat as I stole a dirty kiss from this mouth that belonged to Rosalie, knowing she would have loved to watch the whole thing. Shame he was so uptight really.

When he pulled back, I realised I'd released my hold on my Incubus powers and his eyes widened in horror as he realised who he'd just planted a

wet smackeroo on.

“Hey, fang boy,” I purred and he threw me out of the bed with the strength of his Order.

I slammed into the wall across the room, laughing wildly as he shot forward and smashed a punch to my face that made blood rise in my mouth.

“You’re a dark, dark thing,” I laughed harder and he swung at me again, but I ducked that one, running for the door. I made it outside and as he came after me, the Wolves closed ranks, shoving him back. He glared at me over their shoulders, pointing at me with his fangs bared.

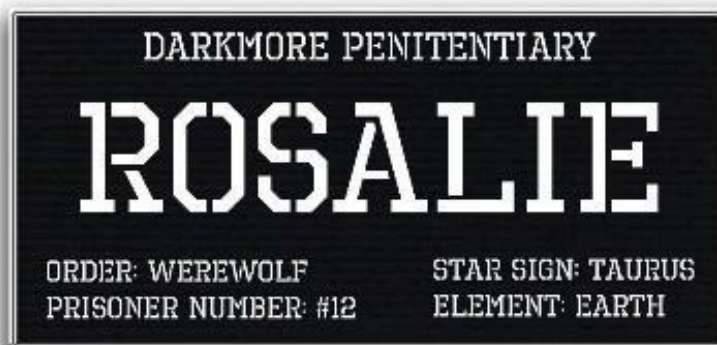
“Stay the fuck away from me, Eighty-Eight,” he snapped. “You do that to me again and I’ll kill you.”

“Calm down, it was just a little tongue in the mouth, Masey. It wasn’t like I stuck it up your butt,” I taunted and the Wolves looked to me in surprise.

“I’ll rip your tongue off and strangle you with it,” Cain growled, trying to get out again but the Wolves forced him back and he gave in to their demands, still glaring at me like he really did want me dead.

I wiggled my fingers at him in a mocking goodbye then headed back into Rosalie’s cell, sure I’d just made some progress with fang boy even if he did seem ultra angry. Maybe I was just fooling myself, but deep, deep, deep down, I had a feeling Mason Cain liked me. And I had a feeling I might just be starting to like him back.





## **32 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...**

I cupped my hands around my mouth and howled loudly, drawing the attention of all the Wolves in the cell block as I stood on the top level outside my cell.

"I need to do something down on level eight. Who wants to have some fun making sure the Lunar Brotherhood fleabags stay out of my fucking way while I'm at it?" I called.

My entire pack tipped their heads back and howled in excitement, my blood pumping faster at the sound of over a hundred voices raised in support of me. Damn I loved the feeling that gave me, the sense of power and the knowledge of my famiglia having my back.

I kinda wished I could bust them all out of here for their loyalty to me, but then I remembered the terrible crimes most of them had committed and thought better of it. They might have been loyal to me but that came down to power, position and their Wolf instincts. Nobody was dumb enough to want to be a lone Wolf in here, especially when the Lunars were always seeking out any signs of a weak link. Better to be loyal than dead even if you were a scumbag.

I tipped my head back again, cupping my hands around my mouth and

howling as the cacophony grew to a din, The Wolves took to their feet and suddenly the entire pack was racing for the exit, ready to do as I'd asked and distract the Lunars for me. In fact, I hoped they found those bastardos and gave them a damn good kicking in thanks for what they'd done to Ethan.

My Wolf mate moved to my side as if he'd felt me thinking about him and I turned towards him on instinct, my lips pressing to his in a hungry kiss which I hoped helped to soothe the sting of losing his pack in here. He looked so good with the sleeves of his jumpsuit rolled up to reveal his inked forearms and his blonde hair was quaffed in a way only he could somehow keep up while we were all in the midst of an ongoing shitstorm.

"I'm fine," Ethan said in a low tone, his gaze moving to the exit where the last of my Wolves were still racing out the doors. "My pack weren't loyal to me the way yours were which means they weren't a true pack. But this bond I feel with you, and what I'm starting to grow with Roary - that's real. It's unbreakable and cast in iron, love. There's nothing that could compare to that and I'm just sorry I took so long to accept it."

"That's okay," I said, biting his ear playfully before pulling back. "You can just spend the next few years trying to make it up to me and I'm sure that one day I'll forgive you for being a cowardly stronzo."

Ethan growled irritably, but I could tell his frustrations were directed at himself more than me.

"We should get moving," I said, looking around for the others and realising Sin was missing.

"I'll go find him," Ethan offered. "He needs to learn to stay with the pack if he's going to be joining us anyway."

I arched a brow at that prediction, wondering if he might be right about it. Sin certainly held an allure to him which drew me in like a moth to a flame. But he was so unpredictable, so wild, it was hard to imagine him sticking

around long term once freedom called his name outside of this place. But the thought of him saying goodbye made my gut knot with tension as I even considered it and I felt a whimper of distress building in my throat.

"Don't do this," Cain urged, appearing at my side and leaning in close to me as he took hold of my arm. "I know you think you're unstoppable, damn near immortal and able to overcome anything that strays into your path, but you're not, Rosalie. You're as mortal as the rest of us and I..."

"What?" I questioned, wanting to hear it, needing him to say his piece even if I already knew it wasn't going to do a single thing to change my mind.

"I don't want you to die," he gritted out, looking like the words physically hurt him on the way out.

I smiled softly, reaching up to brush my fingers along his jaw in a gentle touch.

"That's the thing about mortality though, Mason," I breathed, leaning into him so that our words remained for us alone. "It only counts for anything if you don't let it hold you back. I was raised by a man who thrived on my fear, and I suffered worse than most Fae will ever have to in their lifetimes. It could have broken me. Maybe it should have broken me. But I had a choice to make when I was rescued from his knife and given a chance at life all over again. And I chose not to let fear rule me. I chose to tell it no. So yes, I still feel fear and yes, I know that I may well be risking my life in this endeavour. But the thing about life is that it has to be worth living. And mine wasn't while I was out there and I knew Roary was trapped in here because of me. I haven't had a moment of peace in ten long years. Not one. But now, here, I have a chance to make it right. And I won't let fear or anything else stand in the way of that. Not even love."

I turned away from him while he was still digesting my words and I smiled at Roary and Ethan as I spotted them trying to wrangle Sin down from

the edge of a walkway where he was doing pull ups over the fatal drop into the Evernight vapour.

I jogged down the stairs quickly, pulling my hair up and knotting it on the back of my head as I steeled myself to get this thing done.

"Are you stronzos ready?" I taunted and they grinned at me in anticipation as Sin finally climbed back up from the danger.

"Fuck yeah I am," Sin said enthusiastically, grabbing me in his arms and whirling me around like I weighed less than nothing.

Pudding, Sonny, Brett and Esme joined us as we headed for the exit and as we stepped into the corridor, Cain shot to my side.

"You're coming with us?" I asked in surprise, sure he'd been planning on heading back to the guards' quarters after his insistence that this was too dangerous to attempt. Maybe that meant I should have been saying goodbye to him, but I hadn't wanted to say anything that final.

"Well I'm hardly going to let you walk straight into your death without me," he growled like that should have been obvious.

I smirked to myself as I put a little extra swagger into my step and my men closed ranks around me. My adrenaline was pumping and I could feel the call of the moon urging me on as my magic tingled in my palms.

This was it. It had to be it. We were getting out of here and we were going to fly to safety on the back of a Storm Dragon.

"A morte e ritorno," I growled ferociously and the others all echoed it without hesitation. Even Ethan joined in, much to my surprise and as I looked at him with a raised brow, he smiled back at me.

"Your family is my family now, love. I guess it's time I start getting used to that."

My smile widened and I broke into a jog, tipping my head back and howling as we started down the stairs, heading towards the scent of freedom

which I could almost taste in the air.

I upped my pace, racing down to the huge metal doors which locked us inside this eternal hell and Roary lifted the concealment spell he'd placed over the lerinon gas canisters we'd left there.

We all started grabbing some of them and I used my earth magic to bind them to the door around the lock and hinges, my pulse thumping harder and harder as I felt every second ticking by like it was a death toll.

My smile was wide as we finally stepped back, all of us backing right away from the door before Sin moved forward and raised his hands.

Ethan and Roary cast a wall of ice in front of us, leaving only a small hole for Sin to cast his fire magic through. I moved to his side, placing my hand against Sin's bare arm as he prepared to cast the blaze.

"What are you doing, kitten?" he asked, glancing down at me as I pressed my magic up to the surface of my skin and felt his dancing just out of reach beyond it.

"I thought we could power share to give you a little more fire power," I suggested, biting my lip as I looked up into his dark eyes.

"You really trust me enough to do that?" Sin asked in surprise.

"Only one way to find out." I pushed my magic up against the barrier of his skin again and his smile turned into something dangerous as he focused on peeling back the protection around his own power and letting it merge with mine.

A groan of pleasure escaped me as his power rushed through my blood like an oncoming storm. I could feel the heat of his fire magic and the rush of his air, all of it tangling with the earth magic in me until it felt like it was creating a beautiful song entirely of its own design.

"Shit," Sin gasped, moving closer to me and placing his hand against my cheek so that there were more points of contact between our bodies, more

places for us to connect and more bridges for the magic to use to cross between us. "I really like the way you feel inside me, wild girl. Maybe you should try pegging me one time?"

I breathed a laugh but it was hard to even reply, it was such a rush and the strength of his power had me clinging onto his arm like I might fall if I let go.

He was so powerful, this raw, frantic ball of energy which crackled excitedly and hungered for an outlet. I'd known he had to be strong to have control over two Elements, but I hadn't been prepared for this. How had a boy who'd grown up with nothing been harbouring so much power? Double Elementals were usually only born to the most powerful of Fae and yet here he was, brimming with power with no explanation for how he came to possess it.

"Do you need me to do you a countdown or what?" Ethan asked, breaking the spell that was passing between me and Sin as we lost ourselves in the feeling of our magic combining.

"Keep your hair on, kitten. I got this," Sin said confidently as he turned away from me and looked to Roary. "Uh-oh, looks like you didn't hold on tight enough to yours, Lion puff."

"Fuck off," Roary growled, his golden eyes flashing murderously.

"Stop fighting." I kept hold of Sin's arm so that he could continue to channel my power and I held my breath as he lined up his shot with the door at the far end of the corridor.

There was a sharp tug on my magic and I gasped as it poured from me and into Sin, merging into his and bursting alight as he shot a cannonball of fire magic right at the gas cannisters coating the door a second before Roary froze over the hole he'd use to fire it.

The sound of the explosion tore through the air as the wave of heat from the combination of the magic Sin had cast and the burning gas crashed into

the ice wall Ethan and Roary had created with enough force to send spiderwebs of cracks forming all over it.

The ground shook so violently that I was almost knocked on my ass and only Cain catching my arm saved me from falling.

My heart pounded to a violent, furious tune and a laugh tore from my lips as the guys allowed the wall of ice to melt away. The dust began to settle and I spied a chunk of twisted, broken metal ahead of us through it just as Sin used a gust of air magic to clear the dust.

I howled in excitement as I spotted the hole where that enormous door used to be, my grin so big I was afraid my face might crack in two.

Sonny, Esme and Brett were all jumping up and down behind me and even Pudding released a boom of a laugh at the sight of the carnage we'd created.

I strode forward with more than a little swagger in my step as the smile on my face grew and grew. This was it. It had to be. Freedom awaited us at the top of this shaft and we were going to get the hell out of here at last.

I climbed through the mangled remains of the main doors, vaulting over chunks of destroyed metal and feeling all kinds of smug as I found the locked doors beyond it destroyed by the blast too.

I directed Pudding and my Wolves to keep an eye out for signs of any of the other prisoners sneaking up on us, hoping that the silencing bubbles we'd cast had been enough to cover the sound of the explosion. The last thing we needed was for all of them to figure out what we were doing and try to come down here and hijack our escape plan.

"If I'd known busting out of here would be this easy, I'd have done it weeks ago," I joked as I moved beyond the rubble from the explosion and came to a halt before the huge elevator which led back up to the surface.

"This isn't a game," Cain hissed. "There's traps in there, things I don't even know the extent of. I just know it's fucking bad, and if you don't turn

back now, this could be it.”

“I know.” I swallowed thickly as I looked at the closed doors, wondering what fresh hell might await us in that shaft. But I wasn’t turning back. Not now or ever.

“Please, Rosalie,” Cain said quietly and I gave him a look that told him my decision was made.

I'd done all the research I could before I got myself locked up in here and I knew there were magical trip wires and a bunch of sensors which would set off various traps in that shaft, but I hadn't been able to get much more detail than that on what we would be facing.

But we had an advantage that the Fae designing this place hadn't expected - we had use of our magic and our Orders. We'd bypassed several of the biggest obstacles in our path in one hard hit and now it was time for the real work to begin.

I strode up to the elevator doors with magic crackling in my fingertips and blew out a slow breath as I placed my palms flat against the doors.

I reached out with my magic, searching for anything in the metal that might be set to trap me if I exerted my influence over it, but there wasn't anything that I could detect.

The others moved up close behind me, tension hanging between us as silence fell and I exhaled slowly before pushing my magic into the doors.

Unlike the heavy steel we'd just had to blast our way through, the elevator doors weren't designed as much of a barrier in their own right which meant they weren't too thick or too carefully crafted.

I pushed my influence into the metal, feeling the resistance in the material as I tried to take control over it. Metal was always the hardest substance to command with my earth magic. It was slow and heavy, not growing the way plants and wood did and it was resistant to movement because of that.



But it was still subject to the sway of my magic with enough force included in the directions, and as I gritted my teeth and flexed my hold over my power, I managed to take control of it.

The elevator doors began to vibrate as I threw my magic into the mechanism that controlled them and they suddenly gave way with a loud ping, sliding apart and revealing the empty elevator shaft inside.

I made a move to step inside but Cain snatched my arm, growling as I looked back at him.

"I don't know everything that they've got in here," he said, his gaze roaming over what we could see of the shaft. "But I do know that you shouldn't just step inside that thing without tripping the first trap."

I frowned at him, opening my mouth to demand a better explanation than that, but he shot away before I could.

"I say we ignore the guard," Sin scoffed, stepping forward to move into the shaft but a warning tingle ran down my spine as my moon instincts screamed at me to stop him.

I lurched forward, slamming into him and knocking him aside just as his foot swung into the shaft and an explosion of fire flared behind us as we hit the ground, hot enough to scald my cheeks as I looked around at the raging flames.

"Oh my stars, you saved my life," Sin said in a teasing tone from beneath me. "Why don't we have a quick survivors fuck to celebrate us still being alive?"

I slapped his chest playfully and took Roary's hand so that he could heave me to my feet.

Cain shot back to my side and I turned to find him holding a lump of metal from the door we'd destroyed which he promptly tossed into the elevator shaft.

The fire exploded around it again, burning on and on this time instead of guttering out the way it had a moment ago and I took a step back to shield myself from the heat of it while I watched.

By the time it burned out, the hunk of metal had been reduced to a molten lump on the ground and I had no doubt that any Fae who'd been standing in there would have been little more than a pile of bones. *Well shit.*

"Any more helpful little hints you wanna give out?" Roary asked, stepping forward and clapping a hand down on Cain's shoulder as he encouraged him to walk towards the open doorway. "Or better yet, why don't you take the lead and we can all follow you? No doubt you'll remember all the things we need to be looking out for with that kind of motivation."

"I have no interest in dying for the sake of your freedom," Cain snapped, shrugging him off.

I slipped around the two of them as they entered into a glare off, moving to stand with my toes on the edge of the open doorway as I looked up into the dark elevator shaft. But as I called my magic to my fingertips and prepared to try and detect whatever else lay in wait for us in there, my gaze caught on something high above us. Something that made my heart race and my palms grow slick as I stared up at it.

"Please tell me you don't see that," I breathed as Ethan moved to stand at my side, his head tipped back to look too.

Sin stepped forward, raising a hand and sending a single spark shooting up into the dark shaft so that it illuminated the space in a red glow as it rose, and my fears were instantly proved true.

The elevator at the top of the shaft was descending towards us. And that could only mean one thing.

The guards were on their way down to try and subdue the inmates and secure the prison.

And we had about one minute to prepare ourselves to stand against them, otherwise everything we were hoping to achieve here was going to come crashing to a sudden and unchangeable end.



“Ruuuuun!” Sin cried, turning and grabbing Rosalie, throwing her over his shoulder like he planned on carrying her away to safety as if she were some kind of damsel in distress.

“Sin, let me down!” she yelled in an Alpha tone and he immediately did as she said.

She moved back to the edge of the doors, pointing up the elevator shaft with a growl in her throat. “Sin, use your air magic to hold that elevator up there. Right now.”

“Yes, ma’am.” He saluted her, hurrying forward like an obedient soldier and did as she asked. “Ethan, suck my dick to keep my magic reserves up,” he commanded seriously.

“Hell no,” Ethan snapped.

“Come on, be a hero,” Sin commanded, unbuttoning his jumpsuit at the crotch. “Don’t ever stop sucking or we’re all dead.”

Ethan punched him in the arm with a snarl and I looked over at Rosalie with panic warring in my chest. This was it. They were all going to fucking die if they were caught here by the guards and didn’t immediately surrender. I just knew how stubborn Rosalie was, and that fucking terrified me. She’d

never bow. She'd fight to the death if she had to, and I couldn't let that happen. But I didn't know how to stop it.

"Ethan, Roary, freeze the pulleys!" Rosalie commanded and they did as she asked, standing shoulder to shoulder with Sin as they worked to immobilise the cables that were bringing that elevator closer and closer to us. She cast a thick web of vines in the shaft to try and block the guards from getting all the way down, but that elevator was made for shit like this. My colleagues could activate a forcefield inside it which would tear through any magic in its way and if that failed, they could open the exit hatch at the bottom and start casting themselves.

I clawed a hand over my hair, my gaze fixed on Rosalie, then I shot to her side with my heart thrashing frantically.

"Listen," I commanded. "You've got to surrender. They're going to get down here, and they're not going to be merciful to anyone attacking them. They're authorised to kill in situations like this."

"Shut up, stronzo," Rosalie barked, but I pulled her back from the shaft and darted in front of her, making her look at me.

"Please," I rasped. "Don't do this." *I can't watch you die.*

The curse seemed to agree with my inner thoughts because it hummed and purred and begged me to save her.

Fire suddenly shot up from the trap at the bottom of the shaft again, rearing up like a giant snake and burning through the vines Rosalie had cast.

"If you wanna help me, then how about extinguishing that fire before it spreads out here," she suggested with a savage glint in her eyes.

"You're not listening!" I boomed as Sin cursed, his back bowing a little as a splintering noise sounded up in the shaft.

"They're getting through," Roary hissed.

"We can't hold them, love," Ethan called, his brow creased with tension as

a boom rang out and he hissed between his teeth, his usually styled hair falling forward into his eyes.

I moved to the edge of the doors and looked up, finding the forcefield glowing around the elevator and shattering the ice magic which froze the pulleys in place.

“Ethan!” Sin bellowed. “I’m gonna have to fuck you in the ass. It’s the only way.”

“Would you shut up?” Ethan barked.

“Maybe he’s got a point,” Rosalie growled as she fought to keep casting vines across the bottom of the elevator to try and keep it from descending, but they snapped again and again.

“I swear to the moon, if someone doesn’t get me off right now, we’re doomed,” Sin said through his teeth.

I snarled, hooking my arm around Rosalie’s waist and pressing my mouth to her ear. “I can’t protect you from them. It’s over if you stay here.”

She shoved my hands off of her, turning a furious glare on me. “Help me or get away from me, Mason.”

Her magic started succumbing to the fire again and Sin pushed one hand into his boxers, jerking himself off as he kept his other hand raised, keeping his magic reserves filling.

“By the sun,” I cursed, throwing out a palm and extinguishing the flames working to eat away Rosalie’s earth magic. I hadn’t been planning on helping them, but standing here and watching her kill herself felt like a worse fate than any other I could imagine.

“I need both hands,” Sin groaned. “Ethaaan, you’re our only hope.”

“Fuck it. Fine. But don’t any of you bring this up, ever again,” Ethan snapped then dropped to his knees in front of Sin. But before he could start sucking him off, Rosalie threw a hand to her throat, her voice amplified and

stretching away from us across the prison, far and wide.

“The guards are coming down in the main elevator! If we don’t rally together, they’ll take the prison back!” she cried, her voice echoing into every deep, dark corner of Darkmore and I stared at her in complete horror. “Get your asses down here and help us fight to keep control of this place!”

“No,” I gasped, but she just gave me a look that said she was willing to do anything to ensure she escaped with these assholes.

A stampede of footsteps headed our way down the corridor and Sin whipped out his dick, accidentally jabbing Ethan in the eye with it.

“Motherfucker!” Ethan leapt to his feet, shoving Sin in the chest. “Forget it,” he snapped and Sin offered his cock to me instead, the piercings catching the light as I couldn’t help but stare at the thing for a moment.

“Not in any lifetime, inmate,” I snarled.

“*Sure.*” He winked at me and I growled, turning my back on him and raising my hands in preparation to defend myself from the oncoming storm of prisoners.

But before any of them appeared, I felt magic trickling over me as Rosalie ran to my side and her illusion rushed up to cover my features as she squeezed my arm.

“I don’t want anything to happen to you either, boss man,” she breathed.

I found myself dropping my hands as I got lost in the deep pool of bronze in her eyes and the silver flecks striking through them. And, fool that I was, I also found myself relieved that the prisoners were coming, because there wouldn’t be as much of a target on her head once the guards got down here if she was just one among the masses.

“The guards are almost here – move!” Roary barked, grabbing Rosalie’s hand and tugging her further away from the elevator shaft.

The rest of us ran after them as the elevator tore through the last of their

magic and dropped smoothly into place in front of the entrance to the shaft, but the doors didn't immediately open.

A wave of Oscuras rushed around us followed by a swarm of endless inmates looking to help, a tide of orange jumpsuits swallowing us whole. The Shades were there, looking to Roary for direction and he barked at them to get them into order alongside the Oscuras. The strength of his Charisma was washing out around him and I couldn't help but appreciate his strong jaw and the general aura about him that lured me in. *Maybe I could just go over there and see if he needs anythi- NO! What the fuck am I thinking?*

Rosalie cast a platform of earth beneath her feet, rising up and her voice boomed over them all. "The second that door opens, we're going to shield you from their power while you push them back inside. Do not aim to kill them. Alright?"

A roar of agreement went up, though I didn't have any faith in them listening. At least the guards had magic and these ruthless animals didn't, but they still had sheer numbers on their side. I didn't even know who to fucking root for because I couldn't bear for Rosalie to get hurt in this fight.

Sin bounced up and down beside me as he waited for the battle to begin and Rosalie leapt off the platform of earth, casting it away in an instant before standing to the side of the elevator with Roary and Ethan.

Silence fell as everyone waited for the doors to open and my gut knotted as I looked around the snarling faces of the inmates, just happy they couldn't recognise me because I was sure I'd already be dead if they could.

Fire sizzled in my palms and while everyone stared at those elevator doors, I stared at Rosalie Oscura, knowing with absolute certainty that the magic in my veins would be used here to protect her and nothing else. The curse hummed within me at that thought, seeming to coil around my heart like a warm cat instead of the destructive beast it usually was.



If it came down to a choice between her or the guards, my allegiance was clear now. I just didn't know what the fuck that meant, because I couldn't want that girl. She was the kind of trouble that could get me locked up in here myself. But the time for making smart decisions seemed long gone, because the more time I spent with her, the more I fell under her enchantment. Maybe I was a fool being danced on her strings for her benefit, but right now I knew that fool would die for her. And I knew he'd throw away every ounce of freedom he possessed to keep her.

The doors slid open and a tumult of deadly magic poured out of the elevator in a furious wave. It battered against Sin's air shield as he directed it up and over the heads of the inmates and allowed them to sneak beneath it.

They shoved the guards to try and keep them back, but a huge blast of air magic crashed through them and suddenly the guards were spilling out into the crowd and chaos was descending so fast, I lost sight of Rosalie in an instant.

I pushed through the inmates, trying to get to her as a growl built in my throat and the need to find her tugged on a cord tethered to my soul.

"Rosalie!" I barked, but no answer came in reply.

Magic clashed in the air above me and inmates were thrown dead to the floor. Bodies mounting. Blood spilling.

I was knocked down by a gust of air magic and a huge guy fell on me, keeping me pinned there.

"Pardon my buttocks," the inmate said, slowly rising to his feet while I drew in a lungful of air and I realised it was One-Twenty-One – the guy everyone called Pudding. His hands wrapped around me and he pulled me to my feet with such strength that my boots came off the ground for a moment. "There we are."

He lumbered away, heading back into the carnage and I fought my way

forward again, using my Vampire strength to shove inmates aside and get to the place where I'd last seen Rosalie. But she wasn't there.

Ethan Shadowbrook was though and as a huge fireball whooshed towards him, I flicked my fingers and extinguished the flames a heartbeat before they collided with his head.

He glanced over to find his saviour, but I was already marching back into the crowd, not examining why I'd done that.

One glance around told me how fast this fight was going in the guards' favour. The inmates might have had the numbers, but without magic they couldn't win this battle. People were dying, screaming, running. And it was all going to end brutally for the girl who'd cursed me the moment this fight was won.

"Rosalie!" I called frantically and as two tall, tattooed guys parted in front of me, I saw her pinned to the wall by a guard called Peris. Her eyes locked with mine over his shoulder and she screamed my name just as Peris slammed a silver blade into her gut.

"NO!" I bellowed, shooting forward with the speed of my Order, knocking everyone down beneath me as I caught hold of Peris in a vice like grip.

I threw him away from her so hard that he hit the wall further down the corridor and I grabbed hold of Rosalie before she could fall to the ground.

I supported her against the wall, pressing my hand to the bleeding wound in her stomach and healing her with a rush of energy that left me in wave after wave.

"It's alright," I swore as she stared up at me, her lashes fluttering and adoration burning in her gaze. "Kiss me," she begged. "I need you to, Mason."

"Right now?" I asked in confusion, still letting magic pour from me as I healed that wound.

She nodded, and I couldn't refuse her in that second, so I pressed my lips to hers, her tongue immediately meeting mine as she kissed me with a ferocity that had my cock hardening for her.

"This is really not the fucking time." I drew back, and found her lips twisted in a weird smile that didn't look right on her.

"Thanks for giving me your magical signature, hot stuff," she said, holding up the remote that could unlock the prisoners' magic.

The bottom dropped out of my stomach as I stared at it, realising she must have taken it from my fucking pocket. The screen was green, my magical signature clearly recorded on it and the yells of joy behind me told me exactly what she'd done even before I read the words flashing on the device. *All prisoners released.*

*No. Fuck, no, no, no!*

Her face changed before my eyes and suddenly I was pressing up against a very muscular, very smug Sin with my hard on driving into his own rigid cock. *No – not again!*

"Are you insane?!" I bellowed as magic blasted out behind me and inmates whooped as they were all unleashed, set fucking free to do as they pleased.

"No, baby cakes. I'm Sin Wilder." He winked at me. "Thanks for the kiss. And the *broner* moment." He ducked out of my hold, racing off into the crowd with a wild laugh and I stared after him as utter mayhem descended before my eyes.

*I really hate that fucking Incubus.*



I was crammed into a cupboard in the back of the kitchens, somehow finding myself all the way back where I'd started this damn mess and no closer to escaping up into the guards' quarters than I'd been earlier.

I'd been spotted by Sparkle and her gang of drunken Pegasuses downstairs and had been left with no choice but to run for my life back up to the higher levels. Luckily for me, they'd been shit faced and had fallen behind quickly. The few other inmates I'd passed hadn't recognised me in my stolen orange jumpsuit and as Rosalie Oscura's voice rang out calling everyone downstairs to help her fight off the guards, I'd managed to lose them.

I'd made it in here while the prisoners all rushed downstairs and had thrown myself into the closest cupboard the moment I'd made it inside the kitchen.

This was it. The end was coming. The guards would take back control and I'd be rescued. Then I was going to head up to the surface, strip off this fucking jumpsuit, hand in my letter of resignation and run for the horizon, never to be seen again.

This life wasn't for me. And the death I now knew awaited me at the hands of the monsters they kept locked up down here definitely wasn't either.

The sound of heavy footsteps heading this way made me freeze in my

tracks and I held my breath as the kitchen door swung open and an inmate strode into the room. I could just see out into the brightly lit space through the crack at the side of the cupboard door and I tilted my head to get a better look, spotting Gustard there as he came to a halt and turned back towards the door with his arms folded across his chest.

“This had better be good, mutt, or you will find out what happens to my playthings when I grow bored of them,” Gustard drawled and I had to crane my neck to get a look at the inmate he was talking to.

“We have a common enemy. I’m not looking for anything else from you than that. Rosalie Oscura usurped my place at the head of my pack and I refuse to let that bitch ruin everything for me like that. So I figure the enemy of my enemy is my friend and that you might be interested in something I saw downstairs before the guards arrived,” Amira said, raising her chin as she looked at Gustard and my pulse began to race for a whole new reason.

I didn’t like the hungry look that psycho had in his eyes while he mulled that over and as he gave a curt nod, my chest tightened in fear for the sweet Wolf girl they were plotting against.

“She was down on eight before the guards showed up,” Amira said conspiratorially. “And the steel doors they use to keep us locked up down here had been blasted to shit. I think she’s trying to escape, which means that all of her bullshit claims about wanting to lead my pack are just that, because she sure as hell wasn’t bringing all of them with her.”

Gustard’s jaw ticked and I swear I saw so much death in his eyes that it made my asshole clench with nerves and I flinched back away from the door, not wanting to see any more of it, causing a dull thump with my movement.

*Oh balls.*

“What was that?” Amira growled, whipping around towards my cupboard and I realised with a flare of panic that she’d heard me move. And as she

strode towards my hiding place and I tried to dredge up any last sliver of magic in my veins, I knew it was over. I was done for. Finished. Kaput. Dead.

The door was ripped wide and Amira stared in at me in surprise. She took in my orange jumpsuit first and for one single moment I thought she was going to just dismiss me, but then her eyes met mine and recognition filled them which I knew could only equal my end.

“Holy shit - I just found us a rat,” she crowed. “How long have you been hiding in-”

Her words were cut off by a gurgled sputter and my eyes widened as I spotted a wooden blade protruding from her chest, blood coating it and quickly staining her orange jumpsuit red.

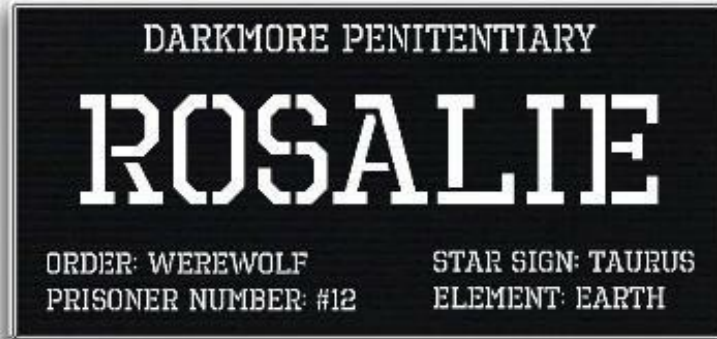
I sucked in a sharp breath as the cuffs restraining her magic suddenly fell from her wrists and hit the floor between us. Gustard’s free hand snaked around her throat and with a jolt of horror, I realised his cuffs were absent too. And if their cuffs were missing then that meant every inmate’s cuffs were missing and the guards who I had been so certain were here to rescue me would be facing a prison full of psychotic Fae with full access to their magic instead of the unarmed mob they’d expected to find.

Gustard grinned at me over her shoulder as Amira scrambled to stay on her feet, magic flaring in her palms as she attempted to fight back. But Gustard was faster, vines snapping out to encircle her hands before he wrenched the blade free and stabbed her again. And again. Over and over until her wide eyes turned vacant and her attempts to struggle fell still while her blood stained everything red.

Gustard dropped her to the floor, giving her a shove to make sure that none of her blood stained his spotless jumpsuit before he leaned in close to me with a wicked grin, his blade dripping red droplets all over the floor

between us.

“Well look what I just found,” he purred, letting me see my death in his eyes and making it more than clear to me that Amira had just gotten away with that easily. “A new toy to come play with me.”



I hit my back hard on the ground and cursed as I was almost trampled by the feet of all the inmates who swarmed around me, desperate to take their chance to sate their rage on the guards after years of being at their mercy in this place.

I rolled aside as a huge motherfucker almost crushed me and shoved myself upright again, casting a pillar of dirt beneath my feet to propel myself high enough to take note of what was going on around me and to hunt for my men in the crowd.

The roar of noise from the furious prisoners and the determined reply from the mass of guards made it hard to think, but the divide between the black uniforms and orange jumpsuits at least made it easy to tell the two sides of this thing apart.

I tipped my head back and howled in encouragement as I watched the sheer might of the prisoners turning the tide in our favour as our numbers forced the guards to start backing up.

My fingers crackled with expectant magic and I threw a hand out, casting a wall of dirt against the guards closest to us and gritting my teeth as I began to exert pressure on it, forcing them back.

They fought against my power with curses and their own magic flaring, but I set the ground at their feet vibrating to keep them off balance until a few



of them fell.

With a whoop of triumph, I shoved the dirt wall forward, panting with the effort as I scooped the guards right back into the elevator.

The moment their line broke, the other guards lost the advantage they'd been clinging to and with a roar of fury, the inmates advanced, magic flaring violently as they forced the guards to back up.

"Don't kill them!" I commanded, knowing any of my Wolves who could hear me would listen. I refused to let this thing become a blood bath. I had no interest in hurting the guards for doing their jobs even if a lot of them were bastards who abused their positions of power over us.

Sin ran past me, hurling lemons at the guards at full strength and I laughed as one of them managed to breach their defences and hit one of the guards square in the face.

"Ahh the juice is in my eyes!" he yelled while Sin giggled like a kid and dove back into the crowd.

How the hell did he always have lemons to hand so star damned easily?

The guards fell even further back as the prisoners surged forward and with a roar of victory from the inmates, they were all forced to retreat into the elevator again.

The guards at the front of their group were gritting their teeth, battling to hold an air shield in place before them to hold the prisoners back. I watched as the guards behind started constructing a huge magical barrier in front of the elevator doors to keep them out.

They all continued to pour more and more magic into it, the wall glowing bronze as the combination of all their Elements formed an enormous barricade to keep us from entering the shaft.

My heart sank as I realised what they were doing. We might have forced them to retreat, but they were making absolutely certain that we wouldn't be

able to follow. They were blocking off the elevator shaft with every drop of magic they possessed, and no doubt were going to continue to put blockades in our path in the rest of the shaft too.

“Fuck,” I swore, dropping my hands as I lost sight of the guards behind their wall of magic and the rest of the prisoners began to celebrate enthusiastically like the only thing they dreamed of was owning the halls of this hell and ruling it for themselves.

But I had bigger dreams than that. Freer dreams. Dreams which were currently being crushed as I stared at the barrier blocking me off from them.

I tried not to let the fear that hit me then cripple me because that had been it, my very last chance to get us out of here. There were no other ways out. Nothing else that I could possibly pull off in the thirty-two hours we had left before the FIB busted their way in here and detained the lot of us.

And then my time really would be up. There was no way for me to cover up the evidence of everything I’d done in an attempt to get us out of here. They’d find the tunnels, the destroyed doors, all of it. And their interrogators were a lot more powerful than Quentin who’d they’d used to try and crack into our minds down here. They’d break through our mental shields and figure out exactly what I’d done and that would be it for me. I’d be locked away in the hole or worse and I’d be lucky if I ever saw the light of day again.

I was so caught up in the total desolation I felt at my failure that I didn’t even notice the blast of fire magic headed for me until it hit me in the side and sent me crashing down from my pillar of dirt to the floor with a cry of pain.

A snarl tore from my lips and I had to fight against the urge to shift as the scent of burning fabric from my jumpsuit mixed with the pain of burning flesh along my side and I clapped my hand down over the wound to heal it

quickly.

More magic was aimed my way as I took a moment to recover, sharpened sticks and vines with hooked ends shooting out of the ground at my feet and making a snarl fall from my lips as I fought back against it.

The earth magic being used against me was clever and vicious, but I was more of a fan of brutal and unstoppable so with a flash of my power, I threw my will out into the plants that had been formed to attack me and took command of them.

The second the magic fell into my grasp, I closed my eyes and sent my awareness into it, feeling for the location of the Fae who had sent them after me and locking down their magical signature near the destroyed doors which led down here.

I propelled myself up into the air on a column of earth and the moment my gaze fixed on my attacker, I knew the entire prison was about to descend into chaos.

Gustard smirked as he spotted me and fury pounded through my limbs as I noticed The Watchers pouring into the space at his command, attacking my Wolves and turning the fight we'd just been waging against the guards into a civil war. Not that there had ever been anything particularly civil about the animosity between the different gangs who ruled this place. But for a while there we'd been united as one.

My muscles bunched as I hefted my arm back, a metal tipped spear forming in my grasp just before I hurled it forward with all my strength, aiming it right for the spot between Gustard's mocking eyes.

A crash resounded around the corridor as my spear struck an air shield which four of his unFae followers were holding in place surrounding him and I cursed him loudly for all the prison to hear.

“Fight me like a Fae, you cowardly bastardo! Stop hiding behind others

and come at me yourself,” I challenged.

Gustard’s smile only grew and as he called back to me, his words were amplified so that each and every Fae surrounding us could hear them.

“Rosalie Oscura is a manipulative bitch and a liar. She has tricked everyone in this prison for far too long. How do you think the doors here were destroyed? Who do you think enraged the guards and made them come down here to attack us? She’s trying to escape. Her and her little posse of pussy whipped followers. She wasn’t going to offer the chance of freedom to any of us...not even her own loyal Wolf pack. She was just planning to use the distraction of the riot to break out of here and run away into the night.”

Silence rang out for an endless beat as countless eyes turned my way and when I didn’t say a word to deny it, it was broken by a mournful howl from Banjo who was looking at me like I’d just ripped his heart clean from his chest.

My mind whirled with some way I could explain this, some reason I could give which would stop the looks of hurt and betrayal I was getting from my pack. But I couldn’t come up with one. I couldn’t lie and pretend I’d been intending to take them all with me. That would be insanity, not to mention the fact that a lot of them very much deserved this fate.

And as the adoring gazes of my pack surrounding me turned murderous, a lump of solid lead seemed to fall into my gut. I may not have been a perfect leader, but I’d always aimed to do the best by my pack. I’d always wanted them to have as much as possible. But in here the rules weren’t the same as they were outside. I couldn’t be a selfless leader. I wouldn’t have survived if I was. And there were some things which were worth making those kinds of sacrifices for.

I braced for an attack, my muscles tensing as I sensed it coming, but before anyone could strike at me, a solid weight collided with my chest and I

was heaved off of my feet in the blink of an eye.

I was thrown over a broad shoulder and before I could fully comprehend what was happening, we were shooting out of the corridor so fast that everything around us became a blur.

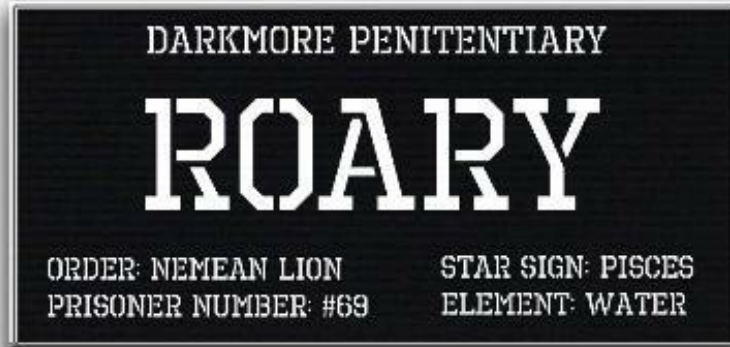
“What the hell are you doing, stronzo?” I snarled as Cain gripped me tightly, racing away from the fight and heading deeper into the prison.

“Saving your damn life,” he growled in reply. “Unless being ripped apart by an angry mob was a part of your escape plans?”

“No!” I screamed, fighting against his hold as my heart tugged me back into that corridor. My mates were there, Sin was there. I couldn’t just leave them behind to face the wrath of the entire prison alone. “Let me go back,” I roared. “Let me go back to them!”

But Cain ignored me, tearing further from the danger, further from my men and further from the desperate call of my heart.

I cursed him out, punching him in the kidney to try and force him to release me but he just grunted and kept running, ignoring my opinion on the matter and saving my damn life whether I liked it or not.



The Watchers swarmed around us and I found myself fighting for my life as several of them came at me at once. I saw Ethan and Sin close by snared in their own battles, but we were getting overwhelmed.

I coated my fists in ice as they got up close, settling on hand to hand combat as I slammed punches into every piece of flesh I could get near. I was sure I'd be dead already if that was their aim, but vines kept binding my arms and I sent spines of ice rippling over my body to tear through them. They were trying to capture me and I was sure I'd face something far worse than death if they did.

The only thing soothing me was that Cain had taken Rosalie out of here, and as much as I hated the asshole, I was grateful to him for once. Because Gustard could not get hold of her, it wasn't a fate I could allow.

Ethan hit the ground with a roar, his arms bound in vines as two Fae fell on top of him to keep him there.

"Ethan!" I cried, trying to get to him, but three bastards caught hold of me, wrenching me back.

The air was suddenly stolen from my lungs and as hard as I thrashed, I couldn't fight them off any longer. I'd used too much of my magic and there were just too damn many of them to take on at once.

I was forced to my knees, my hands bound at the base of my spine and my

magic effectively cut off.

Sin was still on his feet, gutting people with a chair leg he'd gotten from who knew where, his face splashed with blood and the killer in him on full show. He was ruthless even as his magic stuttered out and four Fae leapt on him to try and get him down. He continued to fight back, his muscles bulging, and he started using his teeth as a weapon too, ripping a man's ear off with a jerk of his head. He spat it back in the guy's face with a bellowing laugh that was every shade of crazy.

"My ear!" the guy wailed, stumbling back as more of The Watchers pressed forwards.

One of them beat Sin around the head with a wooden bat forged in his hand and Sin finally went down with a grunt, hitting the floor where he was immediately accosted by several fuckers and his arms were bound behind him.

"I'll. Kill. You. All," he panted, his shoulders bunching and a growl leaving him that was entirely beast.

"Sin, calm down," Ethan hissed, clearly fearful that they might just kill him if he continued to be a problem.

But the wild rage in Sin's eyes and the bloody smile on his lips said he'd gone to the craziest place that lived in him and he wasn't coming back any time soon. I looked to any of my remaining Shades who were still standing close by, willing my Charisma over them but The Watchers held them back as they tried to move forward.

We were all hauled to our feet at a whistle from Gustard and shoved along after him as his vile Watchers swarmed around us like vermin. I noticed other prisoners among them, Pudding, Brett, Sonny, Esme, Plunger and Ethan's second in command, Harper. We were marched after Gustard, led upstairs and I caught Ethan's eye as he was pushed along close to me.

I didn't know what to do, and it looked like he had no ideas either. We were penned in, surrounded by too much power to fight against. My Shades were being cut down or starting to flee and I had to let them go or else force them to die here in a fight they were too outnumbered to win. I turned my Charisma on my captors instead but their loyalty to Gustard was too fierce to be swayed to me. That motherfucker had used his Cyclops manipulation on them too many times in the Order Yard, and there was no way I could cut through it with my persuasion without a lot more time.

How the hell had everyone gotten their cuffs off? Had Cain done this? Surely he wouldn't have. He hadn't even been happy about releasing *my* magic let alone all of the psychos' magic in this prison. Fuck, what the hell had happened?

We finally arrived up at the Mess Hall and were guided into the room which had been transformed for The Watchers' needs. Beds had been brought here and there were a couple of big guys stationed by the kitchens to protect the food. I did not wanna know what this place would be like now Gustard had locked down a vital resource. The other prisoners would have to fall in line with him if they wanted to eat. And now he and his unFae scum had their power back, how would anyone be able to rise up against them?

I was led to the back of the room and shoved to my knees among the rest of the prisoners while Gustard was offered a cup of water and he took his time sipping on it as he assessed us.

Someone brought Gustard a chair with some pillows on it and he dropped smoothly onto it in front of us, resting his elbows on his knees as he flattened a crease out of the arm of his jumpsuit.

A noise from above us drew my attention and I looked up, my muscles bunching as I met the gaze of a man suspended from the roof there by vines which were knotted around his ankles. Blood steadily dripped from two



wounds which had been carved into his biceps and I swallowed a lump in my throat as I recognised Hastings, his eyes wild with fear and a certainty of his own death while a gag remained stuffed in his mouth. My gaze caught on one of the dripping wounds and I realised Gustard or one of his minions had carved a single large eye into his flesh, the blood dripping into a puddle on the floor before us.

“Now,” Gustard said, looking between us all with his cool gaze. “Who’s going to tell me where Rosalie Oscura has scurried off to?”

My jaw locked and I knew in that moment that I’d face any torture before I gave up a single thing about my mate. Not that I knew where Cain had taken her anyway, but it hardly made a difference. Gustard could peel me apart piece by piece, but he’d find no clues to her whereabouts within my flesh.

“We don’t know where she is,” Ethan spat.

“I heard you’re her little moon bound bitch, Shadowbrook,” Gustard said as a smile curved up his thin lips. “And I know Werewolf mates share each other’s pain.” He snapped his fingers at some huge oaf beside him with a shaved head and a large gut and he stalked toward Ethan who bared his teeth in defiance. “Let’s see what it takes for your beloved to come and rescue you.”

The brute slammed his knuckles into Ethan’s face and I swore at the asshole as he laid into him, my heart clenching with fury over seeing him hurt.

“Stop!” I roared, but no one listened, hands restraining me so that I couldn’t get any closer.

Ethan was shoved to the floor and pounded on until blood was seeping from his lips.

Harper screamed all the while, tears streaming down her cheeks. “Alpha!”

she yelled and Gustard finally called his man away.

“That’s enough, Mo, we need him still breathing so the Oscura bitch has a good reason to come here,” Gustard said and Ethan was pulled back onto his knees, his shoulders heaving as he drew in ragged breaths.

Bruises were blossoming along his cheeks and his right eye was puffing up from the beating. It made a growl rip through my throat, but no one was paying me any attention.

Gustard looked to the door impatiently then released a sigh of disappointment.

“Are you okay, Alpha?” Harper sobbed, shuffling closer to Ethan on his right and nuzzling her head against him. He nuzzled her back reassuringly and Gustard wet his lips as he watched their interaction.

“Perhaps Rosalie is more susceptible to a different kind of pain?” he mused, then beckoned Mo closer who leaned down so that Gustard could whisper in his ear.

I tried to catch the words but they were spoken too quietly for me to catch, leaving me unsettled. I shared a nervous glance with Ethan as Mo strode forward again and grabbed hold of Harper. Her eyes widened as his massive hands locked around her head and she looked to Ethan in alarm, struggling to get free.

“Let go of her!” he barked in a powerful tone, but Mo just roared a laugh and in the next instant he cast wooden spikes from his palms, slicing right through Harper’s skull and she fell still in an instant.

It was all so terrifyingly quick that I couldn’t even process what had happened until he dropped her at Ethan’s feet in a pool of blood.

Hastings started screaming through his gag above us, thrashing against his restraints in panic at the sight of her death.

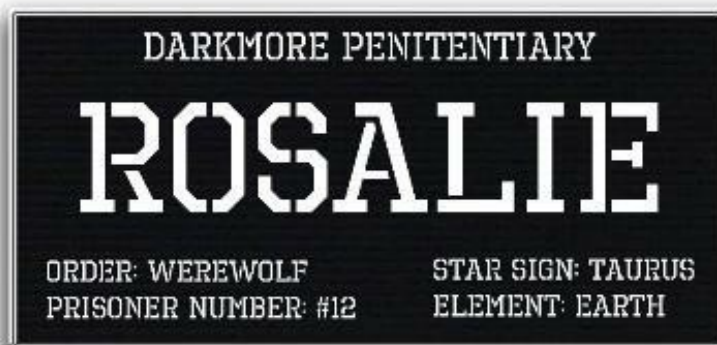
“No!” Ethan cried as the lifeless eyes of his second stared up at him and a

single tear rolled down her cheek into her bloodied hair. “You motherfuckers! I’ll kill you, I’ll kill all of you!”

Sin was thrashing like a wild beast again as he tried to get free and Ethan was giving him a run for his money as he tried to get up and lunge at Gustard. But more of The Watchers fell on them and they were quickly held down once more.

My pulse thumped in my ears and it sounded like a warning bell ringing in my head as I stared at the bloody mess that had been made of Harper.

“Alright then,” Gustard purred. “Who’s ready to start talking?”



I glared at Cain from my position taped to a chair in the CCTV observation room as he stood with his back to the door and his arms folded across his chest.

He'd shot me in here so fast that I'd barely been able to figure out which way was up before my ass hit this chair and my hands were restrained behind my back by a swathe of duct tape which also served to immobilise my magic

My chest heaved up and down while I bared my teeth at him and the echoes of Ethan's pain slowly faded from my limbs. But that did nothing to ease the ache in my heart over knowing that he was out there, hurting, needing me.

The mate bond gripped my heart in a vice and squeezed as it urged me to go to him, help him, protect him from the source of this pain. But I couldn't move a single inch thanks to the overbearing bastardo who was currently blocking the door.

"I'm going to rip your head off for this," I snarled at him but Cain didn't even blink, though the way his left arm muscles flexed made me think the curse was giving him some trouble right about now. "This isn't protecting me, can't you see that? You're just trapping me here and letting them rip my heart from my chest piece by piece. I have to go to them. I miei compagni della luna. They need me." That last sentence came out choked and I fought

the urge to break as I strained against the duct tape once more. I couldn't break. Not here. Not now. They needed me and I wasn't some weak bitch to be beaten. I was their mate and I refused to abandon them. I just wasn't getting much choice in that at the moment.

"I'm protecting you," Cain bit out, his eyes flaring with determination as he gritted his teeth against the pain the curse was clearly delivering to him.

"Then why is your curse growing?" I snarled. "Tell me that. If what you're doing is what's right for me then why is it digging its way beneath your skin and burying itself in your bones as we speak?"

"Are you controlling it?" he accused.

I barked a humourless laugh. "No, boss man, I don't control the moon. It controls me. And I can feel the power of it burning through the air just like I can feel my heart pounding in my chest. The moon knows you're hurting me so it's hurting you right back."

"I'm not hurting you," he insisted. "I'm keeping you safe. Out there everyone wants to kill you, all of the prisoners are out for a taste of your blood. You're not the leader of the Oscuras in here anymore, Rosalie! You're just a girl who I can't bear to see-"

Cain cut himself off and turned away from me, glaring up at the screens - not that it would do him much good. Some of the inmates had clearly taken to destroying the cameras and now only a couple of them remained functioning, none of which gave us any information on where the others were or what was happening to them.

"To see what? Me hurt? Because you're hurting me right now by doing this. You're tearing lumps from my soul and setting them alight. I need them, Mason. I need to go to them and protect them and hell, I'd even die with them if that was what it came to. Don't you get that? Can't you even try to understand what it feels like to value someone else's life over your own

because of how you feel for them?”

Cain looked back at me sharply, like he thought I was trying to trick or trap him, but I had no conniving left in me anymore. I was just a beaten, broken girl with a failed dream and a heart that was in the process of tearing from my chest without my mates.

“Please,” I breathed, a tear breaking free of my restraint and tumbling down my cheek in a rush.

Cain’s jaw ticked, his gaze cutting from me to the screens before meeting mine again. That steely grey colour of his pupils seemed to harden before he shook his head with a violent jerk.

“No,” he barked. “I’m not sending you out there to your death.”

My chest cleaved in two at his words just as pain flared through my ribs, letting me know that Ethan was being hurt yet again. I tipped my head back and howled, a long, low, mournful tune which sung my heartache to the skies way above us and begged the moon to help me.

Cain swore before dropping to his knees in front of me, one hand slamming to the floor while the other clawed at his jumpsuit in desperation. He tore the fabric open and I sucked in a breath as I found the curse mark covering the entire left side of his body, the silvery rose vines creeping up the side of his throat and crossing his chest like it was aiming for his heart.

Cain’s muscles flexed against the agony the curse was causing him, his veins bulging as a snarl of pain escaped his lips and as his gaze moved up to meet mine again, I found blood trailing down his face from his eyes.

“Mason,” I gasped in panic, yanking against my restraints once more while he remained on his hands and knees, prostrated before me and struggling to stay upright.

“Rosalie Oscura!” Gustard’s magically amplified voice suddenly boomed through the prison and my heart stilled as I held Cain’s gaze while listening

to hear what else that psychotic bastardo had to say to me. “You and I are overdue some quality time together. So I’m going to make this nice and simple. You have one hour to find your way up here to the Mess Hall or I’m going to start taking heads from your loyal little followers.”

Silence fell and I howled again, battling against my restraints and snarling furiously.

“You have to let me go,” I insisted, fighting so hard that the chair I was strapped to began to buck off the floor.

“I can’t!” Cain roared suddenly, shooting towards me and leaning down to snarl right in my face. “Don’t you get it? I can’t just let you go and watch you walk to your death with that psychopath. This whole plan of yours was insane from the beginning, but you have to see now that it’s over. This is all over. You’re out of luck, out of ideas and you’re running out of time too. Just admit it, Rosalie. Just accept it. You can’t get all of them out of here...but that doesn’t have to mean it’s the end for you as well.”

I stared up at him as a drip of his blood ran down his cheek like a tear from his eye before falling and splashing against the knee of my jumpsuit.

“Let it go now, Rosalie. You did what you could, more than any other Fae would have managed in your position. But it wasn’t enough. Because this place is impenetrable. You can’t break out. You know it as well as I do,” Cain said, his voice imploring.

“I don’t,” I replied in a broken whisper, my heart thrashing like the wings of a hummingbird inside my chest. “I don’t know that, and I refuse to even allow the thought of it to take up room inside my mind for a single second.”

“There’s still a chance for you,” Cain begged. “A chance for *us* if you really meant any of the things you said to me. Because the guards or the FIB will be taking this place back under their control sooner or later. But you have your gifts from the moon. You can hide at my side, I can protect you

and get you out of here. Don't throw your life away down here on a hopeless dream." His hands gripped the arms of my chair so tightly that I was pretty certain that was the only thing holding him up against the agony of the curse which was burning through his veins.

I looked back at him as more blood slowly tracked its way down his face from the corners of his eyes, reigning in my temper as I tried to show him the pain I was feeling at being trapped down here while my mates were in trouble.

"The curse is hurting you because you're hurting me," I told him firmly, needing him to hear me. "Don't you get that? Keeping me away from them hurts me, it tears at my soul and rips me open inside. I can't breathe knowing they're in pain somewhere, needing me, waiting for me. How do you think I would survive it if you took me out of here and left them behind? You'd be cursing me to a life of suffering and pining and wasting away without them out there."

"But you'd have me," Cain said, flinching a little at the words as if he hadn't meant to give voice to them.

"I need them too," I replied, my voice catching as another spike of pain flared through my flesh in an echo of what was happening to Ethan. But that wasn't even the worst of this. My Wolf bond to Ethan meant I could sense his pain, but my link to Roary didn't work in the same way, so I had no idea if he or Sin were even still alive. And the fear I felt over that was all encompassing.

Cain finally seemed to grasp what I was saying, some of the tension leaving his shoulders as he sagged forward and pressed his forehead to mine, his blood dripping against my cheeks.

"I can't just let you run into Gustard's trap," he growled. "We need to come up with something better than that."



“Well we need to come up with it fast, stronzo, or they’re going to run out of time and you’re going to start bleeding from your ass too,” I growled.

Cain breathed a hopeless laugh before dropping his mouth over mine and kissing me hard, his fingers moving to the tape he’d used to secure me to this star damned chair as he used a flash of fire magic to release me.

I bit down on his bottom lip, shoving to my feet as he jerked back a step and he gave me an appraising look as he swiped the blood from his face.

“I’m not going to bleed to death from my fucking asshole,” he said firmly and I smirked at him as I felt the curse receding through my connection to it now that he was helping me.

“Then maybe you need to learn to play nicer with others,” I suggested, nudging past him as I moved to look up at the few functioning feeds from the CCTV cameras. “Or better yet, just learn to take your orders from me from now on. We all know I’m going to be the top dog in this little game of ours long term anyway.”

Cain scoffed as he moved to my side, glancing at the screens before looking at me again.

“So tell me what amazing plan you’ve got now?” he prompted, his tone saying he didn’t believe I had one. But as my gaze landed on the feed from the isolation unit, a small smile tugged at the corner of my mouth.

“What’s that old saying - the enemy of my enemy is my friend?” I asked slowly.

“Down here, the enemy of your enemy is more likely to just be the next in line to try and kill you,” Cain replied.

“Maybe. But only after they’ve finished with our mutual adversary first.” I turned to look at Cain with a dark smile taking my lips captive and the look of dread on his face only made it widen.

“Why do I just know I’m not going to like this plan one bit?” he huffed.

“Because it’s brilliant. But all the most brilliant plans come with at least a little risk attached.”

Cain sighed, massaging his arm where the curse mark plagued him before nodding for me to continue.

“Remember that big scary Vampire dude who’s been locked away down in isolation for fuck knows how long after he killed a bunch of people up in the Magic Compound?” I asked innocently.

“No,” Cain snapped instantly.

“The one who is probably unhinged and kills without mercy...”

“No,” he snarled more forcefully.

“The one who just so happens to hate Gustard with a vengeance to rival my own...”

“I said no, Twelve, have you lost your fucking mind? That man is a monster given flesh if ever I saw one. It takes eight guards to escort him for his showers down there and that’s without him having access to his magic. If we let him out of the hole he’ll cause a massacre, he’ll-”

“Probably be mighty grateful to whoever it was who set him free,” I supplied, my smile deepening. “Especially if they happened to bring food and information on where he could find Gustard...”

“You’re insane,” Cain said angrily, turning away from me and swiping a hand down his face. “If I’ve said it once, I’ve said it a thousand times.”

“No, I’m Rosalie Oscura. And I always have a plan. This will work, you know it. He’ll want the food and he’ll want out of isolation. Besides, he already hates Gustard and wants his head. I say we let him have it.”

“Why did the stars curse me to fall for a crazy woman?” Cain hissed beneath his breath as he paced back towards the door.

I moved after him, catching his hand and pulling him around to look at me so that I could tug at the front of the jumpsuit he wore and reveal his bare

chest beneath it.

I ran my fingertips over the silver rose vines which were now spreading across his chest and he groaned softly as I caressed them.

“I am your curse, Mason,” I breathed, dropping my mouth to one of the rosebuds on his neck and feeling my moon gifts buzzing through my flesh as I placed a kiss against his skin which made him shiver. “But maybe I could be a blessing too if you let me?”

I drew back and he sighed as the vines retreated a little, moving away from his heart and back down from his neck. I could feel the magic in me swelling for a moment like I was running beneath the light of the moon, but as I tried to get the curse to retreat further, it halted. And I knew in no uncertain terms that this wasn't on me to break.

Cain seemed to understand that too as he looked down at his chest before reaching up to cup my cheek in his rough palm.

“I guess we're going to release a madman on the prison then,” he said in a resigned tone and I grinned at him before darting across the room and rummaging in some of the cupboards there where we'd found the guards' supply of snacks earlier. Luckily we hadn't eaten all of it and I found a big bag of BBQ flavoured chips alongside a couple of chocolate bars lurking in the back.

I hurried to the door, ignoring Cain's negative grumbling as I called on my moon gifts and managed to make myself invisible once more. Cain covered his features with a concealment spell and we slipped out of the surveillance room together before hurrying to the isolation unit.

“What the hell happened back there anyway?” I asked as we ran. “How did the prisoners all get control of their magic again?”

“Wilder,” Cain growled. “He shifted and pretended he was you. Then he let himself get hurt and asked me to heal him so that he could get a read on

my magical signature. The cuffs were off before I realised what the fuck he'd done."

A furious snarl ripped through me as I realised what had happened. I'd told that Incubus. I'd made myself more than clear and he'd gone against my orders again. *Gah!* I was going to kill him once I got done saving his infuriating damn life.

We stopped outside the Isolation Unit and I forced myself to focus on the task at hand as I waited for Cain to open the door.

Cain hesitated for a moment before using his magical signature to unlock the door for us and directing me into the cold corridor ahead of him.

I released my hold on my moon gifts and strode to the far end of the block, standing before the heavy metal door there and reaching out to open the hatch.

Cain tensed beside me, clearly still hating this plan, but he did nothing to stop me as I opened the hatch and peered into the darkness within the cell.

"Hey," I called. "I thought you might be hungry."

I placed the bag of chips and one of the chocolate bars on the little ledge created by the hatch and stepped back again, remembering how easily Sin had grabbed me when I'd spoken to him like this and choosing not to be an idiota by standing so close again.

Silence greeted me from inside the cell and I straightened my shoulders as I went on.

"You don't know me, but I'm thinking the two of us could be friends. You see, there's a riot going on right now and all the guards have been driven out of the prison. And I happen to be about to go upstairs to the Mess Hall to kill Gustard. But because he's an unFae piece of shit, he's got a whole gang waiting to take me on at once and stop me from doing that. So I was thinking maybe if I got you out of there, you might be interested in evening the odds?"

Silence lingered in the air again but then suddenly the chips and chocolate bar were snatched from the hatch and my heart leapt as the sound of the wrappers being torn open filled the air.

Cain was tense and rigid at my side, but he said nothing, just waiting and letting me go on.

“I’m not talking about us fighting like him, just to be clear. But I hear you’re a powerful bastardo and I happen to be able to pack a punch myself. There’s no strings attached. No star bonds or bullshit to pass between us. Just your freedom and the option to come help me kill that stronzo. Sound good?”

The sound of him eating continued and I couldn’t help but think of Sin’s stories about this guy. Had he really eaten his own face? That seemed too ridiculous to be true. But then everyone down here was at least a little unhinged. So maybe. Perhaps I was about to let him loose and discover that he had no face at all.

*Only one way to find out, I guess.*

I nodded to Cain who looked more than a little dubious about this whole thing, but as a flare of Ethan’s pain sang through my veins again, I gritted my teeth and nodded firmly.

“Do it,” I snarled. “Let him out.”

My palms tingled with the magic I might need to use to defend myself if this all went horribly wrong, but I felt confident somehow, my instincts urging me on. And they’d never guided me wrong before.

Cain unlocked the cell door and I yanked it open, remembering how sweet freedom had tasted to me when I’d been released from my cell after spending months down here. Fuck knew how he must have felt after being trapped in that cell for years.

A prickle ran down my spine as the thump of heavy footsteps moved in the darkness of the cell, drawing closer to me as the shadows inside hid this

new beast from my eyes.

The guy was huge, like a Dragon Shifter on steroids huge and he had to duck to step beneath the doorway of the cell he'd spent his life trapped inside up until this moment.

Light spilled onto his face and I smirked up at him as he looked down at me from within a curtain of dark, lank hair. He had a face. And it was pretty handsome beneath the rough beard that coated it, his eyes dark and full of wicked promises which I couldn't wait to see him unleash.

I got the distinct impression he was considering ripping my head clean off of my body as his assessing gaze roamed over me and my smile widened.

"Welcome back, big man," I purred, not showing the least bit of fear despite the fact that he was about four times the size of me.

I pulled a shot of Order suppressant antidote from my pocket and felt Cain tense beside me as I offered it to our new friend alongside the other bar of chocolate. But if he was going to be able to help us, he'd need magic which meant topping up his power and that meant he needed access to those bitey Vampire fangs of his.

I was just hoping he wouldn't decide to try his luck chomping on me first. "Let's go wreak some havoc."



## 29 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...

“Well.” Gustard pushed to his feet. “Looks like the pup has abandoned you all. Maybe she’s crawling through the pipes like a sewer rat looking for a way out right now. Which means you’re all dead weight to her. Literally.” He cast a wooden bow and arrow in his hands, taking his time as he aimed it at my head.

I growled at him, facing my death without flinching.

“Get away from him!” Roary barked.

“Dead, dead, dead,” Sin sang and at first I thought he was singing that song at me before he went on. “You’re all pretty little bird’s eggs in a nest about to fall. My raptor is coming and she’s going to tear you all to pieces. Better hatch – better fly! Ca-cor!”

“Oh I’ve waited a long time to silence your insufferable tongue, Wilder.” Gustard aimed the arrow at him instead and I lunged forward to try and knock him off balance.

Strong hands pulled me back and Gustard released the arrow, making my heart rate ratchet up. It whooshed through the air towards Sin’s head and he jerked backwards at the last second.

The arrow sank into Plunger’s leg a few feet away and the guy didn’t even

react.

“What the fuck?” Gustard growled as Plunger stared down at the arrow and the blood seeping out around it.

“I’m made of moleskin, sir,” he laughed. “My thighs are the epitome of robust.”

“Enough of this,” Gustard snarled and Hastings whimpered from his position tied to the ceiling above us. “Kill them all. Make it bloody.” He dropped back into his chair, tossing the bow and arrow away as his men closed in around us.

A cold, silver knife was pressed to my throat and I howled a long note, praying Rosalie would hear the goodbye and hating that I’d never see her face again. I wasn’t afraid to die, but I was afraid to lose her, torn away from my mate by death. It wasn’t fair. We had barely begun to love each other.

The knife slashed across my jugular and pain splintered out across my flesh, blood rising in my throat, my mouth, and my back hit the floor as I was released. A blur in my periphery made me turn my head as I spluttered and felt my bond to Rosalie calling to her, begging her to come to me in my final moments.

My cheek pressed to the cold floor and my gaze settled on Sin as the blur of motion collided with the two big guys behind the Incubus who were trying to keep him still long enough to kill him. They hit the ground beneath a huge weight and my eyes focused on Cain as he swung around, slashing the binds holding Sin in place and freeing his hands.

“Freedom!” Sin whooped and a blast like a tornado exploded from him, knocking down The Watchers closest to him like they were a bunch of skittles.

I had no idea where he’d gotten the lust from to recharge his magic, but as Plunger came into view beyond him with a clear hard on, I had a feeling I



could guess.

I tried to call out to Sin, but no words passed my lips as he sent The Watchers blasting away from us and Cain worked to free the rest of the prisoners, shooting between them in a blur as our enemies tried to take him down.

Suddenly hands were on me, rolling me toward them and I found myself looking up at Roary, his face fixed in a frown as he pressed his fingers to my throat.

“Don’t die, brother. You’ve got a family to forge with me and Rosalie. We can’t do it without you, alright?” he said roughly, trying to hide the fear in his golden eyes.

I couldn’t answer, the pain in my throat blinding as his fingers ran over the wound and worked to heal it. His face fixed in concentration and I reached toward him, locking my hand around his arm and squeezing in thanks for what he was doing for me. He’d given up his chance to run because of me.

“Lions don’t leave anyone in their pride behind,” he said in a growl, apparently reading my thoughts.

My eyes widened as an ugly, bearded guy loomed over his shoulder with an ice pick cast in his hand, but as I shook Roary to get him to turn around, Plunger barrelled into the asshole, knocking him to the ground beneath him. The Mole’s leg was now healed and he’d stripped down naked for some unknown, star damned reason.

“No one disrespects my authori-tai,” Plunger snarled before kneeling either side of the guy’s head and slapping him repeatedly in the face with his dick, using his earth magic to hold the unfortunate fucker down.

Air poured down my throat as Roary finished healing me and he pulled me to my feet as I wiped the blood from my mouth. People were fighting everywhere I looked and The Watchers were pressing their advantage

quickly, their numbers too great for us to take on for long. As Cain slammed to a halt in front of me and Roary, I could tell we were far from out of the woods yet, but I latched onto the hope in his eyes.

Sin closed the gap between us and I realised he was shielding us from the onslaught of magic, but his strained expression said he wouldn't be able to do it forever.

"Where's Rosalie?" I demanded.

"Don't worry about that. We need to-" Cain started but he was cut off by a booming voice that filled the whole room.

"GUSTARD!"

I looked over Cain's shoulder, spotting a frighteningly large guy there with his fangs on display. I recognised the Vampire who'd been sent to isolation years ago for killing several guards after he'd found out his appeal had been denied.

"Hey buddy!" Sin jumped up and down. "Remember me? Oh, you grew your face back, yay!"

Gustard turned pale and that was about the closest I'd ever seen him to pissing his pants as the Vampire tore through the room and started ripping out throats with his fangs.

"Kill him!" Gustard cried in alarm and his people surged towards the Vampire as one, casting magic his way.

"Buddy! Hey, hey!" Sin flicked his fingers as he continued to jump up and down, shifting some of his power into shielding the murderous Vampire so he could continue to kill The Watchers in droves.

"Stop it," Roary snapped at him. "Don't get that psycho's attention."

"But he's my friend. My one true buddy. My bestie from another nestie," he said, batting Roary away as he tried to slap a hand over his mouth.

"Buuuuddy!"

Thankfully, the Vampire didn't seem to hear him as he continued to kill members of The Watchers, but that didn't stop Sin from waving at him.

Brett, Sonny and Esme howled as they fled from the room and Cain jerked his head in an order that told us to follow him that way too.

There was a scream from above us and I jerked aside as Hastings fell from the roof, the vines that had been holding him up there now severed.

Cain grabbed his hand and yanked him to his feet a moment before Hastings flung his arms around his neck and hugged him tight with a sob of relief.

"You came for me, Mason!"

"Err, sure. Of course I did," Cain replied though the look of confusion on his face said he'd had no idea the dude had even been here.

My connection to Rosalie suddenly flared hotter and my head snapped around as I spotted her among the fight, snapping the neck of some worthless Watcher who was working as a team with some of his friends to try and take down Pudding.

I took one step to move that way, but she had it well under control and I was captivated by her for a moment, watching as she killed with such skill and such perfect fury that I swear it made my heart race for her. She pulled Pudding from the bodies when she was done, towing him towards us and we ran to join her. She was so beautiful among all the destruction, like an angel carrying death on its wings.

The spell was broken as I spotted Plunger slapping The Watchers' corpses with his turtle tattooed cock and I decided I didn't need to scar myself further by witnessing any more of that, howling as I ran to my mate.

Sin, Roary, Cain and Hastings kept close and Rosalie and Pudding slipped smoothly into the protection of Sin's air shield as we reached them. There was no time for greetings as The Watchers noticed us pulling ranks and

Gustard ordered some of their attention onto us once more. But we were already running, tearing towards the exit while Rosalie started ripping the floor apart behind us with her earth magic, blocking anyone from following.

As we spilled through the door, she twisted around and yelled out in effort, building a huge wall of earth over the only exit and the screams of The Watchers carried to us beyond it as the psycho Vampire drew more blood.

A twisted smile pulled at my lips and I hoped Gustard met a bitter end at his teeth, but I was disappointed I wouldn't be there to see it. He'd had Harper killed and she hadn't deserved that. She'd been good to me, loyal. And she hadn't even had long left to serve in Darkmore.

A whine left my throat and as Rosalie stumbled from the exertion, I caught her, turning her in my arms and crushing her to my chest as I nuzzled against her head.

"No time for that," Cain snarled, shoving my shoulder. "We need to move.

"Wait," Roary hissed. "The wall...it's moving."

"What?" I looked up and Rosalie pulled back to look too, her hands raising as she prepared to cast once more.

The dirt was shifting in the middle and Rosalie's upper lip peeled back on a growl. "I'll blast whoever comes through to pieces."

A naked ass suddenly shoved out of the dirt and Plunger slithered backwards out of it onto the ground, falling dramatically to the floor. "Oh my hiney, that was a close call, wasn't it, friends? So when is our great expedition concluding? I have been most anticipating your summons and have collected all the equipment you requested, Miss Rosalie."

"Well go get it then," Rosalie said, fighting a grimace at him as Hastings shuddered and turned so he didn't have to look at Plunger any longer.

"The potatoes are on board." He patted his ass and I shuddered, holding Rosalie tighter.

“Are the potatoes up his ass?” Sin whispered in my ear.

“Yes,” I gritted out.

“Right up his ass?” he pressed.

“Yes, Sin,” I hissed.

“That’s impressive,” Sin cooed. “That’s more than you’ve had up your ass, isn’t it? How many do you think he has up there? Also, I’m kind of hungry. Do you think we’ll be eating soon? Ooh, we could have roast potatoes.”

“I need you to get some carrots too,” Rosalie said. “Can you do that?”

“I will find a way, ma’am,” Plunger said, saluting her then he ran off down the corridor into the stairwell.

“Thank fuck for that,” she breathed as more blood curdling screams rang out from behind her earth wall.

I raised my hands, freezing it up tight as Roary added his magic to it too. It wouldn’t hold forever, but it might just stay in place long enough for The Watchers to be destroyed. *Here’s hoping anyway.*

Rosalie led the way down the corridor and we ran behind her, my shoulder rubbing Roary’s as I shared a relieved look with him.

“Thanks for saving my neck.” I smirked and he smirked back.

“No problem, brother,” he said.

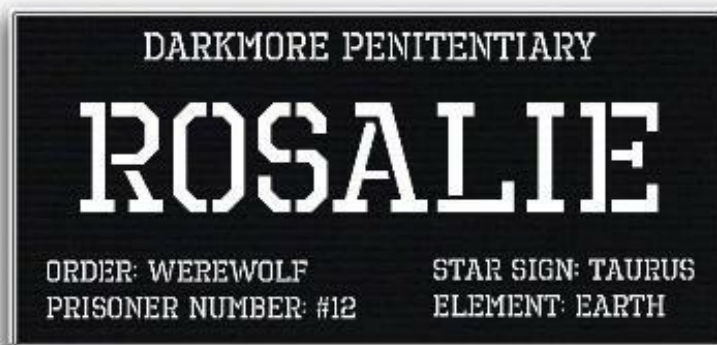
Sin barged through us, nearly knocking me off my feet and I snarled.

“Woops,” he called as he joined Rosalie and I growled in anger.

He started talking to her, but she didn’t talk back and I had the feeling she was pissed, but I wasn’t sure why.

As we ran deeper into the prison, I didn’t know where we were heading, but my mood descended as the relief of escaping wore off and gave way to a morbid fear that took root in my bones. We may have been alive, but now the whole population of Darkmore knew what we were up to and would be out

for our blood. Not even the Oscuras would be a safe haven anymore. So we had to hide, and fast.



“Come on,” I barked, the relief in me slowly being swallowed by anger as I led our group down the stairs as fast as we could go.

Sin kept pace with me, chattering excitedly like that had all gone exactly to plan. But I’d felt Ethan’s pain as his throat was cut, I could see the blood staining his jumpsuit and I knew exactly how close I’d just come to losing both of my mates back there.

And a big part of the reason for that happening was down to Sin and his bullshit delusions that we had some kind of secret language in which me firmly telling him not to do something somehow equated to him doing it.

By the stars, now we had the entire prison free to use their magic however they liked and as brutally as they wanted with zero ways for us to stop them. It was a fucking disaster.

We made it to the next level down from the Mess Hall and I paused, chewing on my lip for a moment as I tried to figure out what our best move was now.

“We could go to level seven,” Roary suggested. “Use the Belorian’s cage. I doubt anyone else has thought to make use of that space since they can’t know the thing is dead and we can take a bit of time to figure out what to do from there.”

I nodded vaguely, happy with that plan for somewhere to hide but still

having no idea on how I was going to get us out of here now. We were fast running out of time and now we had a whole new host of problems to deal with. Not to mention the fact that if we didn't make it out of here after all of this, the other prisoners all officially wanted our blood which made the prospect of us serving out sentences in here even less appealing that it had been before.

“You should take these, hound,” Pudding said as we began to move downstairs again and I looked around at him to find him holding out a stack of pudding cup transmitters. “That way we can update you on the results of our diversionary tactics.”

“What?” I asked in confusion, accepting the cups from him as he smiled knowingly.

“You need time to make a new plan. Me and your other hounds aren't needed for that. We'll distract The Watchers so that they think you are somewhere other than where you are. It's a good plan.”

My brows went up and I found Sonny, Brett and Esme all nodding along eagerly.

“We can hide our faces and run them all in circles, Alpha,” Sonny promised. “They won't know what way is up by the time we're done.”

“Are you sure?” I asked, looking between them and they all nodded in agreement.

“Yes. We're the ones they're least interested in. We can do this, Alpha,” he promised me.

I moved closer to them so that they could all hug and nuzzle me and they yipped excitedly as they turned off on level four with Pudding to go and cause their distractions.

“Aren't we going back to the guards' quarters?” Hasting asked Cain, his gaze flitting between Roary, Sin and Ethan nervously.



“Not yet,” Cain said gruffly. “It’s not safe to head down to the hatch at the moment. But don’t worry, we’re safe with this group.”

Hastings nodded, though he didn’t seem sure and I offered him a warm smile as he looked my way in an attempt to reassure him.

“We’ll look after you,” I promised softly and he offered me that sweet smile of his in return.

“I knew you were one of the good ones,” he said, giving me a doe eyed look and Sin snorted a laugh.

I punched him in the bicep, glancing in the direction my Wolves and Pudding had taken as my heart knotted with concern for them, but I was relieved too. I desperately needed a bit of breathing room to think and they were going to buy me that time away from being hunted by the rest of the prisoners.

“Do you think Esme’s tits are natural?” Sin asked, moving closer to me and ignoring the low growl that escaped me as we all began to jog down the stairs again. “Or do you think she spilled an engorgement potion on them once? I knew a guy who once spilled an engorgement potion on his ear. Big eared Ralph we called him - on account of his big ear. Never did figure out why he didn’t just shrink it again. The thing was so big that small children used to crawl right inside it and it was so heavy that he used to have to hang his head to one side and drag the ear along the floor all the time.”

“Stop talking,” I growled and Ethan perked up to my right, his gaze locking on me as he sensed the shift in my mood faster than Sin seemed to be picking it up.

But I couldn’t help it. I was pissed. Everything that was supposed to go right had gone unbelievably wrong and though a lot of it was just shitty luck, there was a whole heap of issues which we were continually facing because Sin thought anarchy was a good pastime.

“How about I tell you the story of three dicked Pete instead?” Sin offered, not seeming to catch on to my boiling temper at all as we reached level seven and headed straight for the Belorian’s cage.

As far as I knew, we were the only ones who were aware the beast was dead so most of the prisoners probably believed it had returned here, making it the perfect hiding place as no one in their right mind would choose to face that monster. Magic unlocked or not.

“It wasn’t that he had three dicks attached to his body,” Sin went on excitedly. “It was that he had this old shoebox with three severed-”

“Stop,” I snapped, flicking a silencing bubble up around him as the last of my patience withered away and I found myself glaring up at the Incubus who still didn’t seem to have the faintest idea that I was pissed at him.

“I need a word with Sin in private,” I told the others, my gaze flicking to Hastings for a moment to let them know what I really needed was for him not to be listening in on us.

Sin was still chatting away within his silencing bubble but none of us could hear him for now which he didn’t seem to mind one bit.

“Come on, Jack, you look exhausted,” Cain said, catching on quickly and drawing Hastings into the cage ahead of us. “Why don’t you get some shut eye while I keep watch?”

“What’s the plan for Wilder then?” Roary murmured as he fell into step with me and the rest of us moved inside the abandoned cage too.

“Firstly, I intend to kick him in the dick, then we’ll see where the wind takes me from there,” I muttered.

“He means well.” Ethan nudged my arm gently and I looked up at him in surprise.

A sigh escaped me but it didn’t do much to calm my temper. “Well if he wants to be a part of our pack then he’s going to have to learn to do better

than that,” I growled.

“He’ll be out of it for at least an hour,” Cain said, drawing my attention to Hastings who was now sitting against the cage wall with his head tipped back as he snored softly.

“Good. I have an incubus to deal with.” I flicked a silencing bubble over Hastings just in case Cain’s sleep spell wasn’t strong enough to keep him out of it through the noise of this discussion and Roary closed the cage door behind us, leaving us in the dim red lighting within the room.

Ethan cast a Faelight to hang above us and brighten the space and I turned to Sin with my jaw ticking before releasing him from the silencing bubble so that his voice could fill the space again.

“What if I tell you about twelve holes Sally?” Sin suggested brightly and a snarl ripped from my throat.

Cain smirked as he took a position beside the door to the Belorian’s holding cell, folding his arms over his chest and leaning against the wall as he watched us like he couldn’t wait to see the show.

“Do you even understand what you’ve done?” I gritted out, my hands fisting at my sides as I fought against my temper and my instincts which were demanding I force him into line whether he liked it or not. Because I was an Alpha Wolf and this little crew of convicts and a seriously unwilling guard were becoming my pack whether they liked it or not. I could feel it in our interactions now, the shift in our dynamics, the way we were finding our places amongst one another.

Ethan and Roary were getting it. I could tell by the way they’d shifted in their attitudes towards me and each other. They were willing to bend, to accommodate, to grow into their roles as a part of this famiglia. And maybe that was to do with the mate bonds I’d secured with them, but I was pretty sure it was also because they were pack animals at heart. A pride wasn’t so

different to a pack after all. Just another form of beast whose instincts drove them to surround themselves with family and protect them at all costs.

But Sin wasn't falling into place. He wasn't learning to work with us the way my instincts demanded he should. And he was flouting my commands far too often for my inner animal's liking.

"Are you referring to the hats I've been making for everyone?" Sin asked innocently, raising a hand and conjuring a selection of hats made out of flames for each of us. "I just need to figure out how to make the fire less hair burnish - because the rest of us don't want to end up looking like Roary, amirite?"

"Fuck off," Roary snarled at him and Sin sighed dramatically before banishing the hats again.

"I'm not talking about some fucking hats, Sin," I said, fighting to contain my anger as my Wolf paced back and forth inside my skull, fangs bared and ready to pounce. "I'm talking about you going against my direct orders and releasing the magic of every prisoner in this place. I'm talking about you ignoring my plans and following your own crazy ideas to the bitter end despite being specifically told not to do it."

"Hey, I can't help it if Officer Randy got a rager for me and tried to slip me the D while I happened to be holding the remote for the cuffs and-"

"Are you even sorry?" I barked.

"What? Why?" Sin looked at me in utter bewilderment and for a moment I almost felt bad for calling him out, for getting so angry at him and wasting energy on this when we needed to be focusing on our escape. But then he opened his fucking mouth again. "Is it because the others aren't on our level? That they can't understand our secret language and don't get that this is all just a show for them to watch while I know deep down you're really pleased I pulled off your plan to perfection and-"

Sin stumbled back as I shoved him, a snarl ripping from my throat as I had to fight the urge to shift and completely lose my shit.

Ethan and Roary moved closer behind him, offering me silent support while Sin continued to look at me like he couldn't understand what I was laying out so clearly for him.

"I did not in any language on this earth tell you to give the prisoners their magic back. We had a plan. We just needed them to help us push the guards back. But now every stronzo in this place has full access to their power and wants to use it against us, because of you!"

"Wait," Sin said slowly, the smile slipping from his face. "Are you...actually angry at me for this?"

"Angry? Of course I'm fucking angry you pazzo bastardo! Ethan almost died up there because of what you did! I almost lost my mate for the sake of some reckless idea you had to liven up this shit storm by giving a bunch of psychopaths the means to kill with ease. When we were the only ones with our magic free, we had an advantage, we were safe. But thanks to you we can't even move around the prison safely anymore. I don't have the support of my pack and everything has gone to hell!" I roared at him, unable to hold back the tide of my fury over everything that had gone so wrong for us now that I was finally letting it out.

Sin gaped at me, his eyes darting to the others who stood firm around him, clearly on my side with this.

"But the lemons were a good shout though, right?"

I could only blink at him for several long seconds and then I really did lose it.

"No, Sin, the lemons weren't a good idea. They were a fucking insane idea cooked up by a man who everyone in here says is insane. And I didn't want to believe them, I wanted to see the real man beneath all of that bullshit, but

maybe I was just kidding myself because you *are* insane! You're a fucking liability and if I end up stuck down here for the rest of my miserable life thanks to your half cocked plans and imaginary secret language with me then I can promise you that I'll never speak to you again. You fucked up and if you seriously can't see that then I don't know what to say to you because I can't be your fucking babysitter, and I can't cope with you doing this over and over without ever taking any star damned responsibility for your actions!"

Sin stared at me as he finally seemed to grasp that I wasn't kidding and the spark in his eyes dulled into something dark and unreachable a moment before he lost his shit.

With a bellow of rage, he turned and slammed his fist into the wall of the Belorian's cage, denting the metal as he fuelled the punch with air magic and causing the whole structure to rattle and echo around us.

He roared like an animal and ripped an enormous feeding trough from the wall before hurling it to the back of the cage with a furious energy that made my heart skip a beat. The others all moved to stand around me, magic brimming in their hands as they tried to place themselves between me and the monster who was Sin Wilder, but I wasn't afraid of him. I refused to feel anything other than the fury that had set my blood boiling at this point.

"If I'm such a burden to you then you won't be wanting me here for your special little meeting of the mates then, will you?" Sin roared, his eyes flaring with a dangerous aura that was potent enough to scorch the air surrounding us. "Come on, Mason, let's leave them to it."

"I'm not going anywhere with you, you fucking nut job," Cain growled, flames igniting in his hands as he stood his ground before me.

Sin looked from him to Roary and Ethan then his gaze finally met mine and a mournful howl escaped him before he turned and raced away from us.

“Shit, do we need to go after him?” Ethan asked, taking a step in that direction, but I was too fucking angry to indulge Sin’s temper tantrum right now.

“No,” I barked, my Alpha tone ringing in my voice and making Ethan turn a scowl on me as I tried to force him under my command. “Just let him go. We don’t even have a plan to get out of here anyway, so what fucking difference does it make now?”

I turned and strode away from them, blowing out a harsh breath as I pinched the bridge of my nose and tried to gather myself.

My hands were shaking with a violent energy and my mind was racing with so much anger that I couldn’t think straight to even begin to form a plan.

A soft whimper drew my attention to Ethan as he moved to my side and I looked to him, letting him see how fucking hopeless I felt and drinking in the emotion in his eyes as he leaned close and pressed a kiss to my neck.

“It’ll be alright, love,” he murmured, his hand moving over the base of my spine as he drew me closer and continued to kiss my neck.

“We’ll figure it out,” Roary agreed as he moved to my other side and reached out to push his fingers into my hair.

“I’m too angry to even try and think right now,” I hissed and Roary nodded.

“We know. We can help,” he said, leaning down to kiss the side of my jaw.

“Let us help,” Ethan agreed, his hand moving to grip my ass as I fell still and tried to focus on the feeling of their hands on my body instead of the rage which was still coiling through me.

A growl escaped me, but they ignored it, the two of them manhandling me and ushering me towards the wall where Roary pushed me back against it in a clear demand.

“You need to relax, little pup,” he said firmly. “You’re coiled too tight and you need this release.”

I growled again, but as their mouths moved to either side of my neck and their hands began unbuttoning my jumpsuit, the noise seemed to turn into more of a purr. I closed my eyes and tipped my head back, concentrating on the blissful feeling of their flesh against mine as I gave in to what they wanted.

“Seriously?” Cain growled, but I ignored him.

“Let us worship you,” Ethan said. “Let us own you, Rosa.”

“Okay,” I agreed on a breath, feeling the need in the two of them as well. We were all knotted up with dark energy and still reeling from escaping that encounter with The Watchers. We needed a moment to lose ourselves in, to reset the restless, anxious feelings inside of us and let it all go for a little while.

My jumpsuit was tugged open and I let them pull it off of my arms before they peeled my tank top and bra off next.

Ethan dropped his hand to the top of my panties and slowly began to push his fingers beneath the fabric as the two of them kissed their way down to my tits and each began sucking on my nipples.

A throaty moan escaped me and my eyes flicked open again just as Ethan found my clit and began to toy with it.

Cain stood opposite us, his arms folded as he watched us, his grey eyes flaring with heat and want while his body remained rigid and unmoving.

I moaned again as Roary pushed a hand into my panties too, my gaze still locked on Cain’s as my Lion slicked his fingers around my opening and began to tease my throbbing pussy.

Cain didn’t make any move to leave as I began to fall apart beneath the touch of my mates. He just kept standing there, watching us, the weight of his



eyes on me making my skin burn and the words I wanted to use to call him over to join us weighed heavily on my tongue.

But I didn't speak them, wanting to see how far he'd let me push him, how much of this he'd stay for, how much hungrier that look in his eyes might grow before he'd snap.

"I love you, Rosa," Roary growled against my breast before sucking hard and pushing his fingers into me, making me moan loudly.

I clawed my fingers into Ethan's hair and fisted the fabric of Roary's jumpsuit as the two of them began to work together to destroy me. My moans and words of praise filled the air as I switched to Faetalian and Ethan groaned hungrily in reply.

They found this perfect synchronicity, the two of them thrusting and circling their hands in a way that had me panting for them, but no matter how perfectly they touched me, I couldn't quite let go.

Roary released my nipple from his teeth, moving up to kiss my lips in a demand, but the tension in my body was knotted so tightly that I couldn't reach my release.

I growled in frustration, kissing him hard before shoving his head back down to torment my aching nipple, bathing in the feeling of the two of them worshipping me as I tried to chase down my climax.

My gaze fixed on Cain once more and I lowered my eyes to the solid ridge of his cock inside his pants while he continued to watch us.

"What's the matter, Twelve?" he taunted as I rocked my hips into the movements of Roary and Ethan's hands, loving every second of it while still chasing that moment of annihilation. "Have you been down here so long that you've forgotten how to do something without being told when to do it?" he taunted.

"Fuck you," I panted, moaning as Ethan circled my clit harder, pushing

me so close to the edge that I felt like an elastic band poised to snap.

“Is that what you need? My cock inside you to make you come?” Cain asked, a dark smile colouring his lips as he said it, causing my mates to growl angrily as they upped their efforts to bring me to ruin. “Because it seems to me like you’re lacking something with your moon mates because they’re not getting the job done.”

“Get lost, asshole, no one invited you to this party,” Ethan snapped as Roary drove his fingers into me even harder and I cried out, so close that every muscle in my body was locked up with tension, but it still wouldn’t break.

“Be a good girl and come for them, Twelve,” Cain commanded and my back arched as I fought against him on principle, but I could tell that he wasn’t going to let me off that easily. “Now, Twelve,” he growled in that boss man tone of his that always got me so riled up. “Come.”

And like a backstabbing little bitch, my body gave into him, a cry escaping me which echoed off of the walls as my pussy clamped tight around Roary’s fingers and I finally fell apart, my body sagging back against the wall as all of the tension inside me tumbled away.

“Good girl,” Cain mocked as the others drew back and I breathed a laugh laced with irritation.

“Fuck you,” I muttered again. But unfortunately for me, none of us had time for that.



## **26 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...**

A storm was tearing through my body and a fog of thunder and lightning cracked and sparked inside my brain. Fire bloomed in my hands and licked across my skin, urging on this murderous beast in me, begging me to let it out. I was insane, was I? Well okay then, let's see how insane I could be.

There were prisoners everywhere, but they scattered at the sight of me, making no attempt to engage me in the fight they could see in my eyes. They were all afraid, tiny little crawling crawlers who had no spines, nothing but jelly in their bones. I wanted to crush it out of them in my fist, feel it ooze between my fingers and laugh while I did it. This rage in me wouldn't leave until it ripped me open and clawed out the eyes of any unfortunate fucker to get in my way.

"Fight me!" I bellowed as I rounded the stairs onto level six, but there was just a squeaky little mouse man there who turned tail and ran. I pounded my fist against my chest in time with the thrashing of my angry heart, it was a war drum, a call for blood. But no one answered it.

So I dropped my hand and turned back into the stairwell, marching up it with intent as I twisted the fire in my hands into furious beasts with horns and sharp teeth.

*Rosalie hates me.*

*Rosalie thinks I'm crazy.*

*Rosalie's going to leave and I'll never see her again.*

I was gonna be alone down here for eternity, rotting in the dark where even the scum of the world turned their back on me unless they could get something from me first. When I shifted into the form they desired, then they wanted me, then they'd come closer. But I didn't want to be the prison's whore anymore.

Rosalie had liked fucking me as me. I'd liked fucking her as me too. No one ever wanted this body when they could have their favourite movie star or Pitball player fucking them instead. My mother had left me in the trash and everyone I'd ever fucked had done the same the moment they were done with me, the moment I turned back into myself.

Maybe it was the curse of an Incubus or maybe it was just to do with the fact that I was plain fucking unlikable. Too different, too odd. Jerome had beaten up one of the boys in our foster home because he'd called me a freak. And while my brother had been doing that, I'd been putting gnarler beetles in the asshole's pillowcase as a special night time surprise. Those were nasty little buggers who would crawl in your ears and up your butt and lay all of their eggs inside you while you slept. If I was a freak, then what did you call the guy who had beetles crawling out of all his holes? Beetle Butt, that's what. No one even remembered his real name after that.

Dammit, I missed Jerome. I missed Rosalie. And I missed the rest of The Daring Anacondas too.

I let out a sigh. It was over. My pretty little dream wrapped up in a bubble of hope had been popped and now I had to go back to reality. Reality sucked Griffin ass and I didn't want any part in it. I'd spent so long in isolation, I knew how to disappear into my head, but maybe I didn't wanna go back to

fantasy land in my brain. I'd had a taste of fantasy in my real awake life and now it was gone. Gone, gone down the drain, never to come back again.

"Hold still, you little slut," a harsh voice reached me from the corridor leading to the Magic Compound.

"I'll kill you! I'll bite your dick off if you put it anywhere near me! I'm a taken woman," a girl snarled in reply.

I extinguished the flames in my hands, rounding into the corridor as bloodlust slicked over my tongue and I felt the urge to kill sizzling deep into my core.

I recognised the girl pressed to the wall as Laura Metz, one of the Oscura Werewolves, and the big guy holding her there was one of Sparkle's gang, Glitterpuff. He had a tattoo on the back of his neck of a rainbow which ended in a gold pot that was overflowing with blood. The words *I'll send you somewhere over the rainbow* were inked colourfully beneath it.

Glitterpuff fisted his meaty hand in Laura's hair and a coldness trickled through my veins that left me numb and as calm as a lake's surface. Beneath it lurked the danger though, the crocodile in the dark. And my jaws were about to snap, snap, snap this fucker up.

Laura struggled to get free but I realised her hands were bound behind her, frozen in ice and Glitterpuff had an ice dagger in his hand which he pressed to her kidney.

"I heard your so-called mate was a married man," Glitterpuff taunted her. "You're just a little stalker who tried to kill off his true mate."

"Shut your face!" she roared. "He's going to come down here and gut you with his claws. He'll tear your skin from your bones and eat what's left of you, you dickwad!"

Glitterpuff laughed as I crept up behind him, my breathing slow and steady, my fingers twitching with the need for death. Anyone's death. But

mostly his death.

“Well I hope he does, because I’ll enjoy bending him over and driving my stallion cock into him while he screams and-” Glitterpuff’s words were cut off as I locked my fingers around his throat, my palms scolding hot and searing the flesh from his bones.

He wailed as I threw him to the floor and his blade melted as I surrounded both of us in a circle of hellfire that was so hot, it made him scream.

He raised a hand to heal the damage I’d done to his throat, but I kicked him in the face to stop him, leaping on top of him with a growl.

He tried to get up, but I kept kicking and burning, the fire drawing in around us like it was hungry for a taste of his flesh and I let the flames have what they desired. He wailed and thrashed, trying to use his water magic to douse the fire, but he was nowhere near as strong as me, and as I used my air magic to hold him down on the ground, I caught hold of his jumpsuit in my fist and leaned down so I was nose to nose with him.

“Burn, baby, burn,” I purred.

Fire crawled from my skin into his, but he wasn’t made to withstand the heat like I was. He screamed and fought and tried to cast another blade of ice in his hand to help him, but it melted under the intensity of my power and I smiled wider and wider as he realised the fight was already won.

“Why!?” he cried as I burned him from the inside out and the outside in, cooking him in my hands.

“Because the world doesn’t want you anymore, you rapey slug boy,” I snarled and he gargled on his own blood as I let the fire consume him, walking away and patting down the singes on my sleeves as I strode towards Laura.

She was pressed to the wall, staring at me with her jaw slack and eyes wide like she thought she might be my next victim. But her crimes weren’t

the kind I cared to punish. I liked to watch evil bleed out and die at my feet. This girl was unhinged, but my hinges had been removed a long time ago, so I wasn't one to judge.

I tipped an imaginary hat to her and carried on down the corridor towards the Magic Compound, hunting for more prey. One kill wasn't enough to sate me and I had a feeling that even if I burned the whole world down, I would never feel right again.

I was out of the band. A shitty bass player tossed into the gutter. But Rosalie would sing on with her guitarist Roary, drummer Ethan and keyboardist Cain, and maybe she'd find a new bassist soon. A better bassist. Someone with an even cooler name than me, like Fox Harlequin or Saint Memphis. Damn, those were cool names. Did Sin Wilder even stand a chance against them? I doubted it. Especially not when the new guy always played in tune and knew how to match the rhythm. I'd always been playing my own song, and Rosalie had figured it out in the end. I didn't fit. Never had. There wasn't a keyhole for my key. I was destined to be like one of those winged keys in Harry Potter, flapping around with nowhere to go, just a shiny decoy that had no use once you caught hold of it.

*I don't wanna be a flappy key.*

I made it to the Magic Compound and found the door busted open, though there was only one person inside - besides several dead bodies on the ground. Plunger was standing in front of the wall that divided the two halves of the compound, naked and jiggling his ass as he drew a picture on it with what looked like a potato and his own shit. It smelled bad and I didn't really wanna stay, but as my gaze set on Plunger and my upper lip peeled back, I realised I'd found my next victim.

I stalked closer, a tiger in the grass as I approached him with intent. My angry heart was starting a riot in my chest, but there was no one else in there

to join him for the anarchy. The lonely little dude was missing the heart it had fallen for and it felt like it had a few jagged pieces now. Pieces it was using as shanks to stab the inside of my chest.

I noticed Plunger was drawing Darkmore on the wall, every level of the underground prison sketched out with surprising skill considering it was drawn in his own faeces. He was humming and jiggling his ass as he worked, oblivious to his death creeping up behind him.

As he started to add the huge dome on top of the prison, I fell still, my gaze riveted to that part of the drawing. My mind was a steam train in that moment and something about this image was making a little man shovel coal into the fire to get the train going. It began moving out of the station as my lips parted, wider and wider as I stared and the train picked up speed, steam billowing from its chimney and I gasped.

“Choo choo!” I cried and Plunger snapped around with a yelp.

“Oh my gonads, what in the world are you doing a-creeping up on me, sir?” Plunger demanded as he backed up, a poo-tato still in hand.

“Don’t you see it?” I growled, pointing at the dome. “Look! Don’t you see?”

“I see our fine, sweet lady of a prison there, Mr Wilder, but unfortunate-lai I don’t see your point.”

“Oh Plunger, Plungey, Plungeberry pie! Look! Look!” I jumped up and down, my heart doing a skip and a bounce and putting down its sharp weapons as it saw what I saw. A way to get out, but better than that, so much fucking better, a way to make Rosalie forgive me!

I let out a squeal and turned around, sprinting back out of the compound as fast as my legs would carry me and hearing Plunger racing after me.

“Is something the matter?” he called, but I ignored him, turning into the corridor and moving faster, leaping down two, three, four steps at a time.



“Mr Wilder!” Plunger called, trying to keep up but no one could keep up now, I was casting air at my back and under my feet, and suddenly I was flying like a canary down a mine.

“Rosalie!” I cried. “Rosalieeeee!” I slammed a hand to my mouth, realising the prison people were looking for her and I had to be smart. Had to be the cleverest shrew in the clan.

“Rosalie went up to the Magic Compound!” I shouted instead. “She’s up at the compound!” A few of the Fae I passed raised their eyebrows and started heading that way. No one engaged me though. I was moving too fast, flying over their heads and spinning on the wind like a torpedo as I sailed down the stairway.

When I reached the corridor leading to the Belorian’s holding cell, I did a fly by past it three times before I shot up the hall, which unfortunately meant old Plungey caught up to me. But he was just a naked Mole and he was already a part of this breakout plan. Plus I could still kill him if Rosalie wanted him gone. I’d just snap his Moley legs and break his Moley neck.

I landed in front of the door and started knocking on it frantically.

“Psssst. I’m back,” I whispered.

“Fuck off, Sin,” Roary barked and my heart flinched, but he had reason to harbour angries at me so I tried again.

“I’ve got an idea,” I said brightly.

“You and your ideas are our biggest problem right now,” Roary snapped.

“Just let him in,” Rosalie said and my spirits lifted. I could still be useful. I had a use!

“We can’t trust him,” Roary said in a low voice as I pressed my ear to the door.

“Well I’m not leaving him out there.” The door opened and I came face to face with Rosalie, her eyes still full of anger and her jaw tight.

I swallowed the rising lump in my throat then dropped to my knees in front of her, shuffling closer. “I know what people say about me is true. I know I’m crazy. I know my thoughts don’t all line up in a row of geese – or dogs – or whatever the saying is. I know I’m a lot and I know I do things that don’t make sense sometimes.” I shuffled even closer, staring up at her as a frown creased her brow. At least she was listening, so I grasped onto that and went on. “I know I don’t always make good decisions, but when it comes to helping you I try to make decisions which seem like good decisions. But I’m not always the best judge of those and I think I fucked up. Well, I know I did. Because you’re angry at me and I think that’s the worst thing because it gives me all this pain right here.” I pointed at my heart. “It kind of feels like a steak knife in my chest, sawing off little pieces of my ribcage. Um, anyway, to sum up...shit, I’ve lost it. What was I saying? Hang on, let me start again,” I said, my neck too hot and my brain all scrambled. She was so pretty. And not just face pretty, soul pretty. I wished you could snap a photo of someone’s soul because hers would be the most beautiful fucking thing I’d ever looked at, and if I had a picture I could keep it in my pocket forever. I’d seen the Solarian royal jewels once and they had nothing on her. I mean, it was in a photo I’d peeked on through an old guy’s window, but they were real twinkly and they had nothing on the twinkliness of Rosalie’s essence.

“Sin,” Rosalie sighed and I shook my head, wanting to get this out right.

“I’m sorry. I’m sorry like people in movies are sorry when they’re standing out in the rain and have flowers and there’s music and stuff.”

Roary came into view beside Rosalie, flicking his fingers so a storm cloud appeared above my head and rain started washing over me in a torrent.

“Thanks, buddy,” I whispered and he scowled.

Rosalie’s fingers twitched too and a bouquet of wildflowers grew in my hand. I grinned at her as she folded her arms, waiting for me to continue and

Plunger started singing Kiss the Girl from The Little Mermaid behind me. Roary sniggered, but Rosalie's eyes were fixed on me and I wanted to fulfil the need burning in them.

I could do this. The movie thing. I could pretend to be a movie star who was bold and handsome and perfect. I was an Incubus. Pretending was what I did best. But I didn't wanna pretend when it came to Rosalie. So I just stared at her and tried to say this in the only way I knew how – with my words jumbling and everything not quite making sense.

“You're a star, the brightest one I've ever, ever seen. Brighter than the sun and all the other stars combined,” I said. “And I wanna worship you every day and every night and have my fate ruled by you. I want my horoscope defined by you, I want every prediction in my life to be your choice, to rest in your hands. But I'm just a Fae, so I make stupid decisions even when fate tries to guide me. I fail tests, I make mistakes, so many fucking mistakes, wild girl. But I'm trying. I'm trying so hard and sometimes I think I was made wrong because I always seem to do the opposite of what people think I'm supposed to do. But I'm back here again with another idea, and I think this might be a good one, but maybe it's terrible, so maybe you can decide that instead of me?” I offered her the flowers she'd grown for me and she took them with a snort and a slight shake of her head.

She schooled her features quick though, clearly still mad and I couldn't blame her. I'd fucked up like a salty cornflake that had snuck into the cereal box.

I was kneeling in an ever-growing puddle of water and Plunger was still singing as I started to shiver.

“Come in,” she sighed at last, heading away and Roary scowled at me as he banished the rain soaking me.

I stood up, trailing water inside and flicking my fingers to dry myself out

with my fire magic. Plunger followed me through the door and Roary shut it firmly behind us before grabbing my arm and yanking me close to him. A silencing bubble slipped over us as he spoke in a low, aggressive tone.

“I told you what I’d do if you ever fucked her over again, Wilder,” he hissed and I nodded, guilt washing through me.

“One more chance?” I pleaded and he frowned, clearly not having expected me to say that. “Pretty please with a cherry on top? And whipped cream. And a pineapple.”

He growled angrily, a vein pulsing in his temple.

“Roary, let him go,” Rosalie called and I looked over at her as she sat on a wooden chair she must have cast there as the rest of our breakout gang gathered closer. Cain was glaring at me like he wanted to rip my throat out and Ethan wouldn’t meet my eye.

Little old Hastings was sitting in his floor corner, still tucked away in a silencing bubble so he couldn’t listen in, but he was more a part of them than I was right now.

This was a scene I knew well. I was the outsider who they mistrusted, but this was the first group of people it had happened with that I actually cared about.

“Don’t make me regret this.” Roary released my arm, dropping the silencing bubble and I walked over to the group as they closed in around Rosalie on her chair like they were protecting their queen.

Roary took to Rosalie’s left side while Ethan stood on her right and Cain lingered in the shadows behind her. They were a unit, a force to be reckoned with and I wanted to be a part of it again so bad it hurt. My gaze slid to Hastings again, his eyes haunted as he looked at me and I offered him a small wave. When he returned it, I smiled like the Cheshire Cat. *Hello, little guard friend.*

“So what’s your idea?” Rosalie asked tightly, the flowers now resting by her feet.

I cleared my throat as Plunger moved to my side and Rosalie glanced at him with a flicker of distaste in her gaze before turning her attention back to me.

“The dome that surrounds the Order Yard is charged with more magic than any of us could even imagine conjuring at once,” I started in a rush of words. “It’s big too. So big. Which means there’s a lot of magic in it. Think about how much magic is in it. So. Much. Magic.”

“We get it. It’s a lot of magic,” Roary hissed. “What’s your point?”

“Well imagine I’m the dome, okay?” I said and Ethan rolled his eyes, but I kept going. “And imagine Plunger is the forcefield in the ground above the top level of the prison.” Rosalie looked to him then waved a hand to cast some earth boxers made of leaves onto him to cover up his cock.

“I shall be most humbled to act as our fine Lady Darkmore’s forcefield,” Plunger said with a bow.

“Right, so my magic is in here.” I pounded my chest and Roary gave me a dry look that spoke of his impatience. “And my fingers are like little conduits for it, see?” I placed my forefinger against Plunger’s shoulder. “So we just need a big fat conduit all primed and ready to go and then-” I released a blast of air magic, sending Plunger flying across the room into a wall, making him shriek in alarm. He hit it with a smack and skidded down it onto the floor then started swearing colourfully as Hastings gaped at what I’d done in fright.

“So...in conclusion to my presentation,” I said, folding my arms. “We just need to build a conduit thingamabobbin and hook it up to the forcefield that stops inmates burrowing out from the top level of the prison then give the dome a slap on the ass to send her power zipping into the forcefield to make it go bing-bang-boom, and we can dig our way out. I mean yeah, there’ll be

those worm monsters, and yeah, there'll be the sensors in the ground and the bombs and any other traps buried out in the soil, but we've got magic now to protect ourselves from all that. Plunger can sniff out the bombs with his Mole nose like before and we'll be able to fight the worms. The forcefield is our biggest issue because we can't get through it. But once it's gone, we can handle the rest." I beamed, my chest puffing out.

Rosalie shared a look with Ethan and Roary, seeming intrigued, but Cain spoke before any of the others could.

"It won't work," he said flatly. "You'd need to blast an immense amount of power into the dome to force its energy through the conduits and even if you had ten Fae casting magic at it, it wouldn't be enough."

"What about a lightning strike from a Storm Dragon?" Rosalie got to her feet, turning to Cain and my heart did a dance over everyone actually taking my idea seriously.

Cain frowned. "Well...yeah that could do it, I guess, but-"

"So all we need to do is hook up the dome to the outer forcefield and blast it with lightning to destroy the forcefield," Rosalie said excitedly, turning to me with that glittery look in her eyes again that she'd lost after her last plan hadn't worked.

"The blast would kill everyone in here if it wasn't done right. If you fuck up and don't make absolutely certain that the dome's power is all directed into the forcefield then it will find somewhere else to disperse itself – somewhere like the enormous metal lined prison we're all standing in. Then everyone inside this place will be fried by the blast," Cain said, shaking his head. "It would take some masterful earth magic to pull it off."

"And you don't think I'm masterful, Mason Cain?" Rosalie asked teasingly and he almost cracked a smile. It was like a ghost of a lip twitch and a glint of a glimmer in his eyes. I liked it.

“You’re the most masterful Fae I know.” Roary caught hold of her, dragging her against him and stealing a kiss from her lips. “But it’s fucking risky.” His eyes snapped to me. “So I vote no.”

“Oh come on, Roar, it’s perfect.” Rosalie rolled her eyes.

“I don’t think it’s a terrible idea,” Ethan agreed, glancing over at me. “Definitely not your worst.”

I grinned, looking between them all like a Labrador waiting for a rub between the ears. Or a sniff of cheese. Ooh I could really go in for a sniff of cheese right now.

“I think it could work,” Ethan added and we shared a best friends grin. His didn’t involve any movement of his facial features, but my smile was big enough to blind the room.

“It’s too dangerous,” Cain growled with a firm shake of his head. “You’re not grasping the magnitude of the power in that dome, if it escapes into Darkmore, we’re all fucking dead.”

“I can do it,” Rosalie said in a growl. “I know I can.”

“Are you serious, Rosa?” Roary hissed. “Sin is the one who’s caused the whole prison to start hunting us. Now you’re gonna go along with one of his crazy ideas?”

I winced at that word and Rosalie caught it, immediately turning and slapping Roary in the chest.

“This could work, Roary,” she insisted. “And I’m in charge, so I say we’re doing it.”

“Are you sure, love?” Ethan caught her hand, turning her towards him and pushing a lock of hair behind her ear.

“Yes,” she said firmly and he nodded, breaking a mischievous grin.

“Alright then,” he agreed. “If you’re in, so am I.”

She smiled at him, tracing her fingers over the mate mark behind his ear as

Cain and Roary shared a look of frustration.

“Rosa,” Roary snapped and she turned to him with a growl as she met the Alpha in him with an Alpha of her own.

“My decision is made, Roar,” she growled. “We have just over a day to get out of Darkmore and I’m not wasting one more second discussing this. So you either get on the ride or you’ll be tied up and forced to go on it anyway. Because I’m not leaving this prison without you, and this is our final chance at freedom.”

Roary sighed, shaking his head in defeat as Cain started stalking back and forth in anger beyond them.

Hastings looked very confused inside his silencing bubble and I smirked at him because for once, I was on the in while someone else was on the out. I mean, I wasn’t all the way in yet, but I was sliding deeper and soon I’d be slamming in all the way up to the hilt.

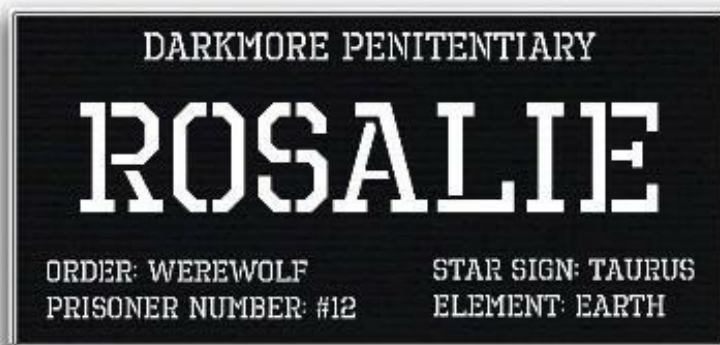
Rosalie brushed her fingers over Roary’s cheek in a ‘I’m sorry you’re pissed, but I’m also the boss bitch so I’m a do what I want and you can’t stop me’ kind of way that was hella hot, then walked away from him towards me.

“Come on, Sin.” She jerked her head in a command to follow her. “We’re going to the Order Yard. The rest of you wait here until we get back.”

The other Alphas looked unhappy about being bossed around, but I wasn’t gonna fight that fight. Our girl was glowing with big dick energy right now and I was happy for her to whip me into shape however she liked.

I skipped along at her side, but she still seemed angry at me and the skip fell out of my step as we exited the holding cell into the corridor. My mood dipped as I realised she hadn’t forgiven me and I vowed on every atom in my body, I’d make sure she pulled this off and got out of Darkmore. Because I needed to make up for that sad frown she was wearing, and I’d do anything to make her smile again.





## **25 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...**

I stood inside the Order Yard with Sin at my side as he held us contained within a bubble of air magic so that we could still breathe up here, despite the fact that the guards had sucked the oxygen from the space hours ago.

My skin hummed with the feeling of the faint moonlight which was reaching down through the clouds to caress me, and I couldn't help but keep glancing up hopefully for a chance of them parting to let me see the lunar being for myself.

Unfortunately there was no sign of that happening any time soon, but I was pleased enough to just be standing out here beneath it at all.

"I need to call Dante and let him know the new plan," I informed Sin who was standing by my side, remaining suspiciously quiet like he was trying his hardest to stay on his best behaviour for me.

Sin nodded and I narrowed my eyes at him, certain that him holding back this hard could only really end in an explosion of crazy and still feeling a bit pissed at him over his most recent escapades.

I lifted the pudding cup to my ear and held my breath as I waited on Dante to answer my call, but it wasn't his voice I heard when the call connected.

"Hey, little lupa!" Leon called excitedly, the sound of wind rushing

around him colouring the background of his call.

“Leon? Why are you taking my call?” I asked in confusion, fear spiking in my chest for a moment as I worried that something had happened to my cousin. There might have been a lot less warfare with other gangs in the last ten years after everything that happened during Dante’s rise to power, but his position as a leader of the most notorious gang in Solaria meant there was always a danger of him coming under attack.

“Calm down, you don’t need to worry - we’re already here,” Leon replied with a laugh and I flinched as thunder rumbled through the clouds overhead before rain broke free of the heavens and came crashing down onto the dome above our heads.

“Wait,” I said, excitement and confusion filling me at once. “You’re *here* here? Like that’s you guys up in the sky above me right now?”

“The very same,” Leon said, a whoop of laughter following his words just as a flash of lightning filled the clouds and I caught a glimpse of an enormous silhouette flying in the heavens above.

An excited howl escaped me and I grinned up at the sky, resisting the urge to jump up and down and wave only because I was afraid the guards might be watching me from one of the cameras they had hooked up out here.

“How did you know I needed you?” I asked.

“We got a tip off from the best Seer in Solaria,” Leon replied.

“Really? He *saw* us escaping?” I asked excitedly. “He knows this will work?”

“Err, well no not exactly,” Leon hedged. “His exact words were that there was ‘a minuscule opportunity for success but that it relied upon us being here at the opportune moment and even then, it absolutely wasn’t guaranteed and was supremely unlikely to work.’ Which all in all sounds pretty fucking positive to me, don’t you think?”

“Oh my stars, that sounds like a definite yes,” Sin said enthusiastically and I frowned at him because it absolutely didn’t.

“Well, beggars can’t be choosers,” I said with a sigh. “And I’ll make those odds work in my favour no matter how shitty they may sound.”

“That’s the spirit,” Leon agreed and Dante roared like he could hear us and agreed too.

“Okay, well I’m going to create a conduit between the dome covering the Order Yard and the forcefield which delves beneath the ground to surround the prison. Once that’s done, we’re gonna head to the guards’ quarters as they’re the closest we can get to ground level and then I’m gonna tunnel us the fuck out of here. When I call you again, I need you to hit the dome with a blast of lightning powerful enough to make it short circuit through my conduit and fry the forcefield. Got it?”

“On it, little lupa,” Leon replied. “And we have the stardust ready and waiting to get all of you the fuck outa here once you make it past the outer fence too.”

“See you soon then,” I said with a smirk.

“See you soon,” Leon promised.

I crushed the pudding cup in my fist and grinned at Sin for a moment before remembering I was still pissed at him and dropping the smile from my face.

“Don’t look at me like that, wild girl,” he begged as I turned and started walking for the edge of the dome so that I could create the conduit we needed. There was a spot I had in mind with a lot of tree cover surrounding it and no cameras nearby so that I could be confident the guards wouldn’t spot us.

“I’m just finding it hard to trust you, Sin,” I said, ignoring the tug in my gut over keeping my anger at him alive. “And I don’t think that letting you

off the hook is the right thing to do all the time. I feel like you still believe that we have some secret language where I agree with every crazy idea that pops into your head.”

“Don’t call me crazy,” Sin muttered. “It makes me flaccid and if I don’t have any lust to fuel my magic then it’s going to run out and we’ll suffocate and everyone else will die or remain trapped down in Darkmore for the rest of forever,” he added conversationally like that was fine by him.

“What do you even want, Sin?” I demanded, turning to him. “Because it sure as hell doesn’t seem like you want your freedom. Don’t you want to get out of here? Don’t you want to see the sky whenever you like, have free access to your magic and your Order at all times? Do normal things, live a normal life?”

“I don’t want normal,” Sin bit out, his sharp tone making me pause to look at him. “I want wild. Wild like you.”

I stared at him while I tried to figure out how much truth there was to that. Did he really want me or was it just the fun of this game we were playing that had him enticed? He was so all over the place that it was hard to pinpoint his exact feelings on the matter, but I had to admit that he’d shown me a lot of loyalty ever since he agreed to the idea of me busting him out of here.

“I just need to know that if I give you an order you’ll follow it,” I said firmly. “Just until we’re out of here. We’re almost out of time and I really don’t think there’s going to be any more shots after this one. This is our final chance, our last plan - it has to work, Sin. Do you understand that?”

“I do,” he replied solemnly.

“Do you? Because I’m talking no more lemons, no more monsters, no more giving psychopaths weapons that they can use against us.”

“I got it,” Sin said and I almost relaxed before he shot me a wink.

“Why are you winking?” I demanded.

“I’m not,” he said, winking again.

“Sin,” I snarled, stepping right up to him and glaring at him. “No winking. No secret language crap. Just-”

“Sorry to interrupt, but you might like to know that I’m almost tapped out. We have about ten seconds before my magic fails and we both suffocate and as we’re almost to the edge of the dome, I don’t think we can make it back to the elevator in time to escape,” Sin said conversationally.

“What?” I gasped just before his magic stuttered out and I choked on the half breath I’d just inhaled.

My eyes widened and my chest tightened as I looked up at Sin who just shrugged, pointing at his dick then flopping his hand about to point out how flaccid it was.

*For fuck’s sake.*

I growled furiously as I was forced to release my last breath and I leapt on him, crushing my mouth to his and biting down on his tongue hard enough to make him bleed. Sin groaned through the blood in his mouth and I dropped my hand to his cock, rubbing it through the fabric of his jumpsuit and feeling it swell instantly as he began to dry hump my hand.

The bubble of air appeared around us again and I broke the kiss, sucking in a huge breath which my lungs took down gratefully.

“That was hot, kitten, but it’s not enough to keep me going while we pull this off,” Sin warned.

“Did you do this on purpose to make me fuck you?” I snapped. “Because this is pretty shitty timing for-” my voice cut off as the bubble of air popped again and I snarled furiously before yanking the buttons of my jumpsuit open and dragging my tank top down to expose my tits.

Sin groaned as the air bubble reappeared and as furious as I was, I knew I wasn’t going to let either of us suffocate just because I was pissed at him.

I kissed him again, hard and angry as his hands moved to my nipples and he began to toy with them in a way that had me moaning within seconds.

“So fucking wet for me, wild girl,” he groaned in anticipation and I huffed irritably because he hadn’t gotten anywhere near my pussy which meant he just knew that because of his gifts.

“You’re an asshole,” I moaned but I was starting to forget why I was so pissed at him and as he shoved me down onto my back, I only moaned for a whole new reason.

Sin yanked and tugged at my clothes while kissing and sucking on my nipples until I was writhing and before I knew it, he had me fully naked on the grass beneath him.

“Ready, kitten?” he purred, looking down at me and licking his lips in a way that let me know he fully planned on forcing me to forgive him by the time he was done with me.

“Just get it over with,” I growled, trying to keep up some pretence of my rage while my pussy throbbed with need for him.

Sin grinned at the challenge in my tone then rolled me onto my right side before hooking my left leg over his elbow and sinking his cock into me with a slow, drawn out thrust that had a whimper escaping my lips as he filled me.

I felt his piercings as they slid all the way inside me, the strange angle awakening nerve endings which weren’t used to so much attention as I braced myself against the ground.

Once his cock was filling me, Sin groaned in satisfaction and the air surrounding us cooled, making my nipples peak just as he slapped my ass hard enough to make my pussy clench tight around his shaft.

I moaned and Sin chuckled before pushing two fingers into my ass and beginning to fuck me.

He started out slow, driving his cock in and out with long thrusts that

made sure I felt every inch of him before he picked up the pace.

My tits bounced with every sharp slam into me and I just hoped that my cousin wasn't peering down from those rain clouds because I wasn't able to do anything other than take Sin's cock and beg for more beneath him.

I was so mad at him but his dick was so big and it was hitting me just right and I was finding it hard to cling onto my rage as he fucked me just right.

My pussy tightened around him as I came and he pumped his fingers in my ass to force even more pleasure from me before spanking me again.

I snarled furiously at the dominant treatment, but he was already flipping me onto my back, throwing my legs over his shoulders and slamming in so deep that his pubic piercing assaulted my clit.

Sin caught my wrists in his grip and drove them down onto the grass above my head before picking up his pace again, holding me at his mercy and fucking me so good that I didn't even remember to make a fuss about him domming me.

He fucked me hard and dirty and when I came again, I brought him with me, feeling the hot spill of his cum filling me as he snarled my name and kissed me hard.

"Say you're mine, wild girl," he demanded, keeping me beneath him while his cock stayed buried deep within me. "Promise it and I'll do whatever you want. You can boss me about to your heart's content and I'll sacrifice everything I've got to make all of your wishes come true."

"Okay," I agreed on a breath, seeing the honesty in his eyes and feeling how much he needed that to be true. "I'll be yours if you'll be mine, Sin Wilder."

"It's too late for that," he promised. "I've been yours since the moment you gave me that pot of pudding."

He kissed me again before drawing back and releasing me at last, tugging

me to my feet and handing me my clothes as I caught my breath.

“Sorry I was so angry with you,” I breathed.

“Sorry I’m so anger inducing,” Sin replied seriously, causing me to laugh. “But I have a big dick, so that helps balance the scales, right?”

“Come on. We have work to do.” I finished dressing and led the way to the edge of the dome which crackled with power above our heads as we reached it.

Sin cast concealment spells around us as we stepped out of the trees to approach the dome and I crouched down beside it, digging my fingers into the soil and closing my eyes as I drew on my connection with the earth and began to cast.

It took me almost half an hour to craft the magic. Creating metal always took more energy than the other kinds of earth magic and I wanted to make sure that the bridge between the dome and the shield surrounding the prison was strong enough to hold all of that power when it was forced to cross it.

Sin stayed vigilant by my side and the pounding rain from Dante’s storm provided plenty of cover from any prying eyes outside.

When I was satisfied that the work was done, we crept back into the bushes.

“I’m going to top up my magic on our way back,” I explained as I quickly ditched my clothes and handed them to Sin. “Then it’s time for us to get the fuck out of here at last.”

“Hell yes. This plan is infallible,” Sin agreed. “So let’s go break out of the impenetrable prison!”

I shifted into my silver Wolf form and Sin leapt up onto my back so that he could keep a bubble of air with us as I ran to replenish my magic.

I howled to the moon as we took off into the trees and I begged it to keep me safe too because I knew in my soul that this really would be our last



attempt at this, so nothing could go wrong.



## **24 HOURS UNTIL THE FIB ARRIVE...**

“This could really work,” Ethan said for the hundredth time and I snarled as I paced the dingy room.

“It’s fucking suicide is what it is,” I muttered.

“Bullshit,” Ethan growled. “You know it can work or you would have tried harder to stop her from going.” He pointed at me accusingly and I ground my teeth together, unable to deny that. Alright, I could see the merit in this plan, despite the source of where it had come from. Sin Wilder was fucking insane, but for once he’d come up with something tangible that might actually get them all out of here. The problem was, I couldn’t just let Rosalie storm out of Darkmore with a bunch of violent criminals in tow. Sin was a psychopath who had a body count that rivalled Lionel Acrux himself.

“I don’t like it, but I trust Rosa,” Roary said darkly. “And if this is the only way, then I’ll suck up my worries over trusting Wilder and do whatever she asks of me.”

“I shall also be of service,” Plunger added as he started stretching in the far corner of the room. He was bent over, touching his toes and the leaf boxers Rosalie had made for him split right up the ass crack.

Hastings buried his face in his hands, mumbling something under his breath about the awful couple of days he'd had.

"By the stars," I snarled and flicked my fingers to cast a silencing bubble around me and Rosalie's two mates, turning my back on Plunger again. "You expect me to just let someone like that walk out of here?" I pointed at Plunger. "Do you know what he did on the outside? He's a fucking pervert and a rapist."

"Well I don't plan on letting him out of here, Officer," Ethan said, giving me an intent look that said he'd murder Plunger before he got that far.

"And what about you two?" I snarled, pointing between them. "You're no innocent Fae."

"My time was due to be up before I got caught with that fucking cuff key and got years slapped on my sentence. How is that fair?" Ethan demanded.

"Those are the rules," I snarled. "You shouldn't have stolen a key."

"I didn't," he laughed coldly. "I took the hit for Rosalie."

I frowned as I saw the truth in his eyes over that. I couldn't even call him a fool for it, because with the way I felt about Rosalie now, I knew I'd take any punishment to keep her from harm.

"Fuck," I cursed, pacing more furiously. "Don't go making me feel bad for you. I didn't land your ass in Darkmore, you did that. And it's my job to fucking keep you here."

"Oh screw your job," Ethan scoffed. "You could have walked away from us ten times since this shit started, but you're still here. I'm well aware you're lusting after our mate, Cain, so get off your fucking high horse."

I ground my teeth, not looking at him or Roary. I was hungry for blood and both of theirs were seeming really damn appealing right now. But if I drank from one of them, I was pretty sure I'd rip their throats out in the process and Rosalie would not be best pleased with that.

“This is all getting too real,” I rasped. “I promised to help her in return for her trying to figure out my curse, but if it comes to a point where this plan is really working then I can’t just stand by and allow a bunch of psychopaths to escape back out into the world. I’ll let her out. I’ll help her do it. I’ll even let you two go with her to ensure she makes it, but I cannot let anyone else leave this prison.”

I didn’t mention my other reason for deciding to allow them to leave with her, but I knew I had to. She’d made it more than clear to me that separating her from them caused her endless pain and heartache, and as such as I might not have liked the fact that she was mated to these two assholes, there wasn’t anything I could do to undo it. Besides, the curse would only punish me if I even tried to keep them from her. Though I had to admit that it was the pain it would cause her that motivated me the most. She was still my weakness, but I was beginning to accept that was the case.

“So your plan is to betray her?” Roary snarled. “Let her think we’re all getting out with her but stop Sin and the others at the last second?”

“It’s not a betrayal,” I spat.

“It is,” Ethan piped up. “Because she needs to get Sin out of here too or that asshole who paid her to rescue him is going to come after her.”

“She’s afraid of that guy, too,” Roary added darkly. “She hasn’t said it outright but she’d warned me about him. She isn’t willing to cross him and you know how fearless she is. That means that this Jerome asshole really is dangerous and she genuinely believes he’ll be able to get to her if she crosses him.”

“Shut up,” I snapped, not wanting to hear it.

“It’s the truth, Cain,” Roary said in a growl. “Rosa came here to get me out but she needed the help Jerome could offer so she took him up on the job to rescue Sin too. And I’m afraid of what will happen to her if we leave this

place without him.”

“Sin Wilder is a murderer,” I growled.

“He only killed bad guys if that helps,” Ethan said with a shrug. “He was a hitman for hire but he only took on jobs where the mark deserved to die. You can ask him about it, he told me about some of the sick people he took from this world and I actually think he did all of us a favour.”

I growled at him, refusing to give a shit if that was true. Wilder was still a killer. End of story. Shadowbrook had served his sentence so I could justify that one and the Lion had only ended up here because he’d been rescuing Rosalie if I was to believe her stories. But that didn’t make him innocent, it only meant he was unlucky to have been caught.

Lionel Acrux had been a terrible choice of someone to steal from. But he had stolen from him which meant he’d earned his sentence here, no matter what any of us may have thought of that motherfucker. The Dragon Lord. The cousin of my own bane, Benjamin Acrux.

“You stole from Lionel Acrux,” I grunted, not looking Roary’s way, but wanting to know more about that story if I really was going to be letting him walk out of here. Besides, I didn’t want to hear any more of their bullshit reasons for me releasing Wilder. It wasn’t going to happen.

“Yeah, to help my brother. He needed something Lionel had. We didn’t do it for personal gain, not all of it anyway. I wouldn’t have risked stealing from that raging psycho of a motherfucker if I hadn’t had a good reason to. But I’m not excusing what I did anyway. I’m a thief. I’m proud of being one too. But I didn’t deserve what I got. Ten years is more than long enough for theft – have you ever heard of another inmate serving a sentence as long as mine for the same crime? I didn’t deserve Lionel showing up here at Darkmore and making a fucking death bond with me which made it impossible for me leave this place with an appeal or a pardon. I’m trapped in here for the entirety of

my youth because of his ego. He stole my life from me and the only loophole left open to me was that he didn't include the idea of escape in the death bond which is clearly why Rosa chose this course of action."

"Why would you even go along with a death bond?" I muttered, distracted by that because no Fae was fool enough to make a promise which would result in their death if they broke it even if it was the Dragon overlord asking them to do it.

"He said if I didn't make the deal with him, he'd hand Rosa over to the authorities." Roary stepped closer to me and that news settled over me like a heavy weight. "He knew she'd been at his house. He saw her. But he let her off to get some sway over her cousin Dante because he wanted a pet Storm Dragon. So now I don't get to leave Darkmore until I'm an old man unless I can take advantage of that loophole and escape this place."

Ethan laid a hand on Roary's shoulder and I got the impression it was the first time he'd heard this. I wasn't heartless, as much as I liked to act like I was. And as I looked at the man whose life had been stolen by Lionel Acrux, then turned to the one who'd given up his chance to leave this hell for Rosalie, I had to admit I was running out of reasons to hate them.

"Not to go overkill on you or anything, man," Ethan said. "But I'm also innocent of my crimes."

"Oh come on," I said dryly. "Don't bullshit me."

"It's true." Ethan shrugged. "I took the fall for someone I love because they had a baby on the way and I wasn't gonna see their life get fucked up by one stupid mistake they made."

Roary nuzzled against him and they went all fucking fluffy animal on each other for a moment.

"You care about her too," Roary said. "And I know it's more than just you trying to break that curse. I've seen the way you look at her. You don't want

her getting hurt.”

“So what?”

“So let Sin leave with us,” he urged. “To protect her from Jerome. You could even come with us if you wanted to...”

The offer didn’t exactly sound enthusiastic and Ethan breathed a growl in response to it, but it was there all the same. It was an idiotic suggestion though. Wasn’t it?

But as I thought of the raven haired girl who had captured every part of me from the moment she’d first walked into this place, I had to admit that the idea of her leaving me behind wasn’t one I was looking forward to.

I clucked my tongue, figuring my time as a guard at Darkmore was fucked anyway. I didn’t know what the security cameras had seen or what a judge would even believe once the evidence was analysed. I could say I’d been magically Coerced, maybe they’d even believe it. But some part of me didn’t even want this life anymore. It had been all I’d known for so long though that I was afraid of what life would look like without it. I didn’t have anything out there. But if I was honest, I didn’t have anything in here either. Especially once Rosalie left.

I sighed, rubbing my eyes, knowing I was being worn down. Because all I really wanted was for this to be over, for Rosalie to get out and for me to not be so fucking afraid of what was going to happen to her if she didn’t make it out before the FIB came. And I was afraid for her if she stayed here too. Whatever they’d been doing down in Psych wasn’t just going to end now that some of the people who worked in there were dead. The Warden was a part of something fucked up that was taking place there and she’d had Rosalie’s name down for whatever it was. I didn’t want her anywhere near that shit.

“I’m not coming with you,” I gritted out, because the idea of that was just too much. I couldn’t give up my entire life for a girl who had lied to me and

manipulated me for months, no matter how captivated I was by her. But maybe helping her was the key to my own survival, the thing I needed to do to break this curse and save my sorry life. And so long as she ended up safe and away from here, I'd deal with what came after.

"You two I'll allow. But not Sin. He's volatile, he's dangerous and he's a murderer. I'm not going to let him back out into the kingdom to continue killing, because a Fae like that does not get reformed. His mind is twisted. He's got no conscience. There's no excusing who he is."

"Fine," Roary agreed reluctantly, though his jaw ticked like he wasn't happy about that and Shadowbrook definitely didn't seem so sure.

"Look I know he's off the rails, but I genuinely think he means well," the Wolf tried.

"Means well?" I snarled. "He gave magic back to every psycho in this place. How many murders do you think there's going to be now before the FIB arrive? How many inmates are gonna die because he's so fucking reckless that he can't think beyond his own crazy whims?"

Roary nudged him, giving him an imploring look and Ethan's throat bobbed as he nodded and he slowly bowed his head.

"Fine. Not Sin," Ethan murmured, though he looked pained to say it. "But you have to swear you'll help Rosalie get out, no matter what." He held his hand out to me and I strode forward, taking it firmly in my grasp.

Rosalie might have been at risk from this Jerome guy once she escaped without the Incubus, but I hardly doubted there was anyone who could take her on once she got out of here and returned to her gang family who was ruled by a damn Storm Dragon. And she'd have her mates to protect her too. So this was the right choice.

"I swear it," I said and magic flashed between our palms as the deal was struck.



I glanced over at Hastings who was watching me and disbanded the silencing bubble as I pulled my hand from Shadowbrook's. I strode over to sit with him and he glanced at me a little nervously.

"You're not gonna leave me, are you?" he asked in a low voice.

"No," I promised, frowning at the kid and wishing he hadn't had to go through all this shit. It looked like it was going to leave a scar or two on him that might never really heal. "I'm just ensuring we get out of here without a knife in our backs," I said and he nodded, seeming relieved over that. It wasn't exactly a lie either because I'd told Ethan and Roary point blank I didn't want them getting out of here, so they could have turned on me anytime they liked. If it hadn't been for Rosalie holding them off, I knew I'd have been dead long before now, but she wasn't here currently so there was nothing stopping them if they wanted to strike at me or Hastings. Though as I glanced over at them, I didn't see any murderous intention in their eyes. They were just talking between themselves, their words hidden from me within a silencing bubble and though I didn't like that, I couldn't do much about it.

"When I get out of here, I'm gonna go and visit Sunshine Bay," Hastings said with a decisive nod. "I always wanted to go there. Do you think we'll get a big pay out for this shit?"

"I dunno," I muttered, not wanting to mention the inquiry that would definitely happen as soon as Darkmore was locked down again. The FIB were going to be looking for someone to blame and shame for this mess. And the Warden would need to cast responsibility off of herself if she wanted to keep her job here.

"Doesn't matter either way, I've got some savings. I can afford the flight there, then I'll just get some cheap accommodation," Hastings said and I patted his arm awkwardly. "Do you wanna come with me?" he asked, a hopeful gleam in his eyes and I cleared my throat, knowing I couldn't

commit to that. I didn't know what was going to happen when I helped Rosalie and her mates get out of here, but I had the feeling it might just blow up in my face.

"Yeah," I said anyway, because I didn't want him feeling shittier than he already did right now. "I'd like that, Jack."

He smiled, seeming to relax and I took in a long breath as I leaned back against the wall and tried to ignore Plunger as he continued to stretch and show off way too much of his naked ass.

My mind ran over Rosalie as it always seemed to these days and all I could think was that she was the mistake I couldn't stop making. And I couldn't even regret it anymore.

I was just starting to chill out when an alarm cut through the air like a wailing bomb siren, filling the whole prison. I shot to my feet in a flash, panic slashing my chest to ribbons.

I knew what that noise meant even before the booming male voice carried to us magically on the air to explain it.

"This is Agent Carver. Darkmore Penitentiary is now under FIB jurisdiction. All prisoners are instructed to get on their knees and remain in place with your hands on your heads while you wait to be detained. Any inmate who remains on their feet when approached will be killed on sight."

"Fuck!" Roary bellowed as Ethan clawed a hand through his hair.

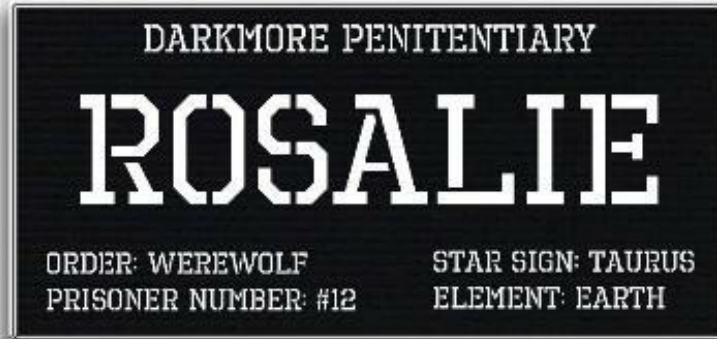
"They're early," Hastings gasped, looking hopeful, but that was the exact opposite of what I was feeling. This was the worst fate that could have befallen us. We were officially out of time.

I ran to the door, tugging it open a crack and Ethan and Roary crowded in either side of me as we all peered out, spotting FIB agents in black jumpsuits racing up the stairs at the far end of the corridor.

"We have to move our hineys," Plunger hissed.

Roary pushed the door shut, his face paling and panic etching into his features. “Rosa,” he croaked and for once I was sure I felt the exact same way as him and Shadowbrook.

Because Rosalie was up in the prison and her final plan just got all kinds of fucked. So what the hell were we gonna do?



Sin and I stared at each other with wild, panicked eyes as we stood in the elevator beneath the Order Yard. The sound of the FIB racing towards us while prisoners screamed and panic filled the air sent fear spiralling through me.

Why now? Right as we'd been about to finish this, why was our luck so fucked all the star damned time?

We'd had another day to escape this place before the FIB showed up – I'd been relying on that like it was a fact. But I realised now how fucking dumb that had been. Protocols and plans laid in place for theoretical situations couldn't be relied upon in a volatile situation like this. The guards had come down to try and force us back under control and had found us waiting for them where we had no right to be. We'd fought them back and they'd been forced to create a barrier to contain us – it was no wonder the FIB had decided to step in. I should have seen this coming dammit.

“Are we fucked?” Sin asked. “Fucked up the ass with a chocolate sundae and a batch of sprinkles on top?”

“No,” I breathed, but every fibre of my being screamed yes. “We can...we just have to...I've got it.” I snapped my fingers and Sin perked up like I held the answer to every question ever asked.

“I'm gonna use my moon gifts to hide and you have to shift into that Tiny

Tim form so I can carry you.”

“G-spot Joe?” Sin asked excitedly, bouncing on his toes.

“Yeah. That one. Hurry.”

The sound of pounding boots and screaming inmates were drawing closer and my heart pounded with fear as I called on the moon to shield me and felt my body fading out of sight.

“Catch me, wild girl,” Sin cried excitedly, jumping towards me with his arms outstretched before shifting in mid-air into a tiny naked version of himself with a little D swinging between his thighs.

He slapped against my cheek then kicked off of my face and grabbed a fistful of my hair with a tiny whoop of triumph right in my left ear.

“Hold on tight,” I breathed, casting a silencing bubble around us as I opened the elevator doors before taking off down the stairs as fast as I dared.

Inmates were charging up towards us, crying out in panic as they ran and I had to dart to and fro to avoid them while they couldn’t see me.

We raced down one flight of stairs, then another and another before I skidded to a halt above a group of Fae who were all kicking and stomping on an inmate who was trying to shield his head from their blows on the ground beneath him.

“One last kill before we’re taken down!” Sparkle cried enthusiastically, urging her herd on as they whinnied and snorted in violent excitement.

They were blocking the entire stairwell and I couldn’t risk bumping into any of them as I passed by in case someone started shouting about an invisible Fae running through the halls. The FIB couldn’t catch onto us. We needed every advantage we could get to execute this plan before they managed to lock this prison down again.

“Throw me in her mouth!” a squeaky little voice yelled in my ear and I frowned as I plucked Sin out of my hair so that I could look at him.

“In her mouth?” I hissed, wanting to stay quiet despite my silencing bubble.

“Yeah. I got this, wild girl. Trust me.” Sin winked and I almost tossed him in the opposite direction, but I sucked up my doubts, turned my aim towards Sparkle and as she opened her horsey mouth wide to whinny, I threw Sin’s little naked body straight between her lips.

A tiny shout of, “Geronimo!” sounded as he flew towards her and Sparkle suddenly doubled over, heaving and coughing before straightening and looking around at her herd in disgust.

“I think I just swallowed a bug,” she said half a second before her entire body exploded and a mixture of bloody, rainbow-coloured glitter splattered the walls and every single member of her gang.

A full sized, blood covered, butt naked Sin Wilder stood where Sparkle had been just moments before with his hands on his hips as the herd all stared at him in horror.

“Boo,” he said dramatically and the Pegasuses whinnied in fright, all of them turning and racing away with screams of horror.

I gaped at Sin in shock as the Fae they’d been beating to death crawled into a corner and placed his hands on his head to await the FIB.

“Thank you,” he breathed though he looked like he wasn’t certain that was the right thing to say.

“No time to stand around, kitten,” Sin called. “Catch me and let’s fucking go!”

He took a running jump in my direction, shifting into G-spot Joe once more and forcing me to lurch forward to catch him before he could fall to the floor. I tucked him down the front of my shirt and started running again while he giggled in my cleavage, taking two steps at a time as I raced down towards the Belorian’s holding cell.

As we reached the fifth floor, I skidded to a halt, my insides clenching with fear as a whole platoon of FIB agents stalked up the stairs shoulder to shoulder with magic crackling in their hands and inmate cuffs hanging ready at their belts.

I fell still, glancing back up the stairs and wondering if I should try and hide until they passed, but a furious roar made me whirl around before I could make up my mind.

“Nigel!” Sin called excitedly in his tiny voice half a second before the huge Vampire I’d released from the isolation block came shooting around the corner and went crashing into the platoon of FIB agents.

He carved a path right through them with his Vampire strength and shot away down the stairs as half of the agents fell to their asses with cries of fright and blood spilling. There were at least four corpses among them, their throats ripped clean out and I thanked my stars that that guy was on our side before taking off down the path he’d created through the agents.

“I thought you said that guy in Psych was called Nigel,” I hissed at Sin while I ran.

“Everyone’s a Nigel if I can’t remember their name, kitten, duh.”

“That’s not a thing,” I shot back, making it beyond the agents and racing downstairs even faster than before.

“Of course it is. There are no real Nigels, sex pot. That’s just a myth the government want us all to believe. It’s a damn conspiracy and I refuse to buy into it.”

I opened my mouth to question that logic then decided to forget it. We needed to focus on getting the hell out of here, not the real or mythological existence of Nigels in the world. Especially as I knew for a fact that Pudding’s real name was Nigel.

I made it to the seventh floor just as more FIB agents came charging up

the stairs and I darted into the corridor, thankful that none of them bothered to head this way as I sprinted for the Belorian's cage at the far end of the hall.

I ripped the door open as I made it inside, releasing my moon gifts and reappearing between our group, spotting Pudding and my Wolves amongst them too.

"You made it!" I gasped in relief while Roary and Ethan both grabbed me and crushed me between them.

"Where's Sin?" Ethan asked and a tiny giggle followed his question as I felt Sin clambering out of my cleavage.

He jumped away from us and shifted back to a normal size, grinning from ear to ear while placing his fists on his hips and standing there fully hard while smeared in blood and glitter from head to toe.

"I'm right here, baby, but I'll have to wriggle on up your butt later - because we've got a prison to bust out of first!"





My hyper mood descended into sadness as we all headed to the stairwell and Rosalie crept ahead using her invisibility powers to make sure the way was clear. Because there was a real tragedy that had happened in the past few days. One I wasn't sure how to rectify. Well, I knew how, I just didn't have the whats and the whens figured out yet.

The sad thing was, it had been way too long since Ethan had had anything shoved up his butt. And shrinking down into G-spot Joe and taunting him with a butt crawl experience had reminded me of the games we used to play together. The laughs, the wrestles, the accepting look in his eyes when he realised a nevercot plum was going in his anus whether he wanted it to or not. It was our thing. We'd bonded over it, but with all the breaking out and death descending on us from every angle, there'd been no time for any object-up-the butt fun. I didn't even have an object in mind. A lemon maybe, but for what purpose? If he didn't need to put it up his butt, then where was the game? The fear of being caught? The awkward waddle as he passed a guard? If we escaped from Darkmore, that game would be no more.

"Sin," Ethan snarled in my ear. "You need to move."

"Okay," I sighed, shuffling along as he shoved me.

Rosalie had made me some little leaf boxers to cover my cock and I had to say they fit like a dream. I was ready to change my lifestyle to leaf boxers

only, because these were like a silky dove's wing wrapped around my piece.

"Now, asshole," he growled and I realised the others were already jogging down the stairs after Rosalie.

I took his hand, threading my fingers between his. "You waited for me, shadow man."

"Yeah, well – you're one of us," he said with a shrug,

"Really?" I asked, perking up like a chicken with a fox knocking on her door.

"Of course. But listen, man." Ethan tugged his hand free of mine as he glanced at the rest of the group and quickly cast a silencing bubble around just me and him to keep what he wanted to say private. "Watch out for Cain. He has an issue with letting you escape because he thinks you'll murder a bunch of people once you're free."

"And that's...bad?" I asked, arching a brow.

Ethan swiped a hand down his face then sighed. "Yeah dude, it's not ideal. I mean, we all know it has to be done from time to time, but I think the way you clearly enjoy the bloodshed just gets him on edge – like right now you're kinda covered in blood and stuff so that's sort of making his point."

"It's sparkly blood," I pointed out and he sniggered before using some of his water magic to clean it off of me.

"There. Now you look less...deranged. Anyway, don't worry about it because me and Roary have your back. Just be ready to shift or hide or do whatever you have to when the time comes because he plans on stopping you. I'm just giving you a heads up."

They had my back? *Oh wow. Wow on a cow. They loved me.*

I closed my eyes and leaned in for a kiss, but I stumbled and opened them again when I found nothing there and spotted Ethan striding away after the others. I grabbed his hand again as I caught up to him, wondering if now was

a good time for some skipping, but he didn't seem keen.

He yanked his hand free and shoved me along and we both started running together down the stairs. Rosalie wasn't invisible now, leading the way at the front of the group and I started thinking about what it would be like to fuck her while she was invisible. Would I see my own cock inside her? It'd be like fucking a ghost. Dammit, why had no one ever fantasied about fucking a ghost before? I could turn invisible too if they had. I'd have to try and make it someone's new favourite fantasy.

"Ethan," I hissed.

"What?" he grunted.

"How cool would it be to fuck Rosalie while she's invisible?"

"Not the time, you idiot," he snipped, seeming on edge about something. I mean sure, the FIB were here and sure, certain doom lurked around every corner, but when life gave you danger lemons you had to make danger lemonade. And I knew a lot about that. I had lemons stashed all around the prison for every occasion. Mostly for Belorian related occasions, but the fight with the guards had proved a lemon could be a deadly weapon as well as a juicy friend.

"When I get out of here, I'm going to plant a lemon tree and call her Big Bel after my friend who died."

"What friend?" he asked in confusion.

"Don't be ridiculous, shadow man, you know exactly who I mean. We all said goodbye to him." *Stupid shadow man.*

"I don't know what you're talking about," he said in frustration.

"Would you shut up?" Cain snarled over his shoulder at us and I rolled my eyes dramatically.

"Mason's so moody," I stage whispered to Ethan.

"Don't you dare call me Mason, inmate," he snapped.

“Shh,” Rosalie hissed, beckoning us closer to her and I felt a silencing bubble wrap around us as we grouped together.

“Is it time for the potatoes to be used, ma’am?” Plunger asked.

“No,” she growled, pressing a finger to her lips and her Werewolves whimpered a little as they pressed closer together.

Pudding cracked his knuckles and I zoned in on a pudding cup stashed in his pocket. One that looked unopened. I licked my lips, suddenly hungry and desperate for pudding so I sidled closer.

“Is there a problem, hound?” Pudding asked in his booming voice as I crept up beside him.

“My moon senses are trying to tell me something,” she breathed, then shut her eyes all mysterious like and I dipped my fingers into Pudding’s pocket.

“What is it, Rosa?” Roary asked anxiously as he moved close to her, but she didn’t answer.

Pudding’s fingers latched around my wrist and I growled in frustration as he pushed my hand back against my stomach.

“Do not take my pudding, Incubus. That is my victory pudding for when this is all over.”

“Well maybe *I* want a victory pudding, did you ever think about that?” I snarled, lunging for it again, but he slapped my hand away, giving me a flat look.

“Then you should have brought your own,” he said simply. He had a point. But I could have a point too if I just found a sharp stick and poked him with it.

“Sin,” Ethan snapped, taking my arm and drawing me away.

“He has pudding,” I hissed at him.

“That’s really not our priority right now,” Ethan warned. “Just stay quiet and wait for Rosalie to tell us what to do.”

I chuckled at him, laughing harder and harder until I was roaring with mirth. He was so whipped I bet he had strike marks on his ass. *Ooh, I wanna whip it too. I love domming down an Alpha.*

“Would you shut him up?” Roary groaned.

Cain shot towards me, slamming a hand over my mouth and glaring into my eyes.

“Enough,” he warned and Hastings glared at me over his shoulder with an expression that said he’d back up his guard buddy if it came to it. Oh looky how the guards had gathered like a band of merry ravens. Maybe he’d try and stop me from escaping here too, but they’d never catch me, I was a sneaky ninja and they didn’t have half my skills.

Rosalie snapped out of her reverie and jerked her head in a command, moving faster and faster down the stairs.

“Hurry,” she barked and Brett, Sonny and Esme yipped in agreement as they sprinted after her. Brett and Sonny kept stroking their hands over each other reassuringly, sharing looks of fear as we all jogged along after our Alpha queen. There was a lot of lust shared between the two of them and it helped stoke my magic like a tiny cock fire burning inside me.

We made it to level eight and Rosalie beckoned us on. We ran past the corridor and I threw a glance down it, catching sight of three FIB agents there detaining several inmates. One of the prisoners got to his feet, releasing a blast of air magic with a cry and an FIB agent took him down in a fiery blaze, the guy screaming and screaming as he was killed.

*Fuck a cuckold in the ass. Let’s get the hell out of here.*

We raced on down to level nine and Rosalie cried a warning, turning invisible half a second before an FIB agent stepped out into the corridor.

“On your knees!” my wild girl screamed, dropping the silencing bubble and we all staggered to a halt and dropped to the floor on the stairs.

The agent held fire, snatching a radio from his belt. “Back up required on level nine.”

He strode towards us, his dark eyes skipping between each of us as he scowled, no sign of fear in his eyes at facing so many dangerous inmates with their magic intact.

“I’m a guard!” Hastings piped up and the agent frowned at him in his orange jumpsuit, but he did have that earnest little face and I guessed it was pretty convincing.

“Alright. Get over here, I’ll scan you in to check your identity then you can assist with the detainees. You pull anything though and you’re dead.”

“Of course. Officer Cain is with me too,” Hastings said, pointing at him. “We had to conceal ourselves as inmates.”

“Very well. Up,” the agent beckoned them over to him and I watched as the two guards headed towards the man, wondering if they would spread us wide and fuck us now they had an out. I’d be diving on the murder train before that happened though.

I tried to catch sight of Rosalie, even though she was invisible, but if anyone could see her it was definitely me. I squinted, trying to use my radioactive squinting powers to find her.

*Found her. She’s right there by that crack on the wall. Yup. Hey, wild girl. I see you. Oh you like that do you? Wanna take your clothes off for me, sex pot? By the fucking stars, your tits are nice. But this isn’t the time. Oh what are you doing now? Touching yourself for me? Rosalie, you dirty girl, you need to focus. We’re in trouble, baby. Oh fuck it, okay.*

I slid my hand into my jumpsuit, my cock hard and ready for her as always.

“Sin,” Roary growled from beside me. “What the fuck are you doing?”

I winked at the crack on the wall where Rosalie was, ignoring the Lion

puff and stroking my thick length.

The bleep of radios further up the stairs said the FIB backup were heading this way so I worked my cock faster, knowing we didn't have much time. *Rosalie you are one filthy fuck of a Werewolf. You want this? Yeah, you do. You always want it.*

Rosalie appeared right behind the FIB agent, nowhere near the crack – *wow she moves fast* - and cast a thick vine around his mouth to gag him as well as leaves over his eyes. I twitched my fingers, stealing the air from his lungs even though that was technically unFae and technically I was a bad boy for it. But Rosalie liked me being a bad boy.

Rosalie bound the agent's arms to contain his magic and Cain shoved him onto the ground as my girl gestured for us to run.

"Oh my stars," Hastings cursed as we all leapt up and started running.

"Halt right there!" a booming voice came from behind and I let go of my cock as I swivelled my head and caught sight of five agents racing after us.

"I'm a guard!" Hastings cried but this bunch clearly didn't believe him as they spotted their little buddy all tied up on the ground and a fireball was shot at his head. He squeaked in alarm as he ducked it and Cain gave him a shove to make him run with the rest of us as they all opened fire.

The wall was blasted apart as we ran down the winding stairwell as fast as we possibly could and I threw up an air shield behind us to slow them down. The others did the same, casting as many obstacles behind us as they could to keep them back, but the agents were fiercely powerful and we didn't have time to stand there and cast anything stronger to hold them off.

The sound of our magic tearing apart carried to us and Esme screamed in fright as a fireball whizzed overhead and the wall exploded above her.

Rubble cascaded down and I leapt forward out the way of it, but Brett and Sonny were knocked to the ground along with Ethan.

I caught hold of Ethan's arm, tugging him up and out of the rubble with a lurch of all my strength as the agents appeared behind us.

Brett and Sonny scrambled to get up too and I cast air magic to try and blast away the rubble that was holding them down.

But as I tried to get them free, Pudding was struck in the back with a blast of water as he was lumbering his way down the steps and he collided with me so that we all started falling in a tangle of limbs. I kept hold of Ethan while I fell, making sure he was with me for every bounce down the concrete stairs. *I won't let you go, pickle. Just ride me like a pony.*

"Brett!" Sonny howled just before fire consumed them in a blazing inferno that billowed down the entire stairway, filling it up as it flared towards us like an unstoppable beast.

I threw out my hands, air magic exploding from it in a wall that guttered out the flames before they could touch us and Rosalie released a noise of anguish as she looked back to see Brett and Sonny lost to the raging inferno. *Oh no.*

Ethan clapped my shoulder as he looked to me. "Thanks," he panted. "You fucking saved me."

"Move!" Cain barked, encouraging Rosalie along who blinked back the pain in her eyes while Esme started baying like her heart was hurting and sadness washed into me too.

"Wait. We need to make a better barricade here to give us some time to escape – we can't risk them seeing where we're going," Ethan called, starting to cast a thick barrier of ice in front of my air shield, the flames continuing to batter it. When those agents stopped the blaze and realised we hadn't died in it, they were gonna be a bunch of moody Mandys for sure.

Everyone who could help hurried back to cast a wall in place while Hastings clawed at his hair and stared around anxiously at the situation he



was in. Not much he could really do about it now. He was on the rollercoaster and he couldn't get off the ride until it was over.

As Rosalie stood beside me casting her magic, I leaned close to her, pressing my lips to her cheek, wanting to banish some of that pain I saw her in her eyes.

"They were relying on me," she gritted out.

"It's not your fault," I said. "And even if it was, that's okay too because sometimes we do bad things even when we don't mean to. But it wasn't your fault, wild girl. If anything, it was mine because I got Ethan up and I could have got one of them up instead, but I chose him because he's Ethan, and...I think I love him a little bit. Not like I love you, but like in a 'I wanna suck his dick sometimes way', you know?"

"You love me?" she whispered, turning to me with glistening eyes while Ethan looked over at me from beyond her with wide eyes.

"I think so," I said with a frown. "It's the biggest feeling I've ever had, so it must be that. It's so big I'm surprised it stays in my chest actually."

"Come on," Cain snapped. "That'll hold for now."

Rosalie nodded, moving to wrap an arm around Esme as she drew her along and convinced her to stop crying. She glanced back at me though, her eyes full of a thousand questions and I was pretty sure they were the good kind.

We ran down to isolation and Cain opened up the door for us like a good boy before we tore along the corridor between the cells and raced down to the maintenance level.

I kept glancing back over my shoulder, but there was no sign of the FIB agents and I had to hope we'd lost them.

We gathered under the place where Cain could access a secret tunnel to the guards' quarters and I bounced on the balls of my feet in excitement at the

game.

“I can’t let you in there unless you all make a star vow with me not to kill the other guards,” Cain said firmly and Rosalie nodded in agreement, directing us all to make that promise.

When it was my turn to do it, I tried to do a secret handshake with Cain, swatting his hand left then right, then trying to hip bump him. He didn’t like that, so I sighed and slapped my palm into his while he glared at me and we recited the words needed to make the vow. Magic clapped between us and I yanked him closer before he could get away. “Thirsty, Officer Grump?”

“Let go of me,” he warned but I could feel his bloodlust just like I could feel all the other kinds of lust, and I knew I was getting to the bottom of that bitey look in his eyes.

“Officer Grump is thirsty!” I announced then tilted my head to offer him my neck, wondering if he might decide to let me run away without any drama after all if he got his kicks from me first. “Have a drink. I’ll jerk off to keep my magic levels high.”

He growled deep in his throat, trying to get his hand out of mine, but I wouldn’t let go. This was my chance to seduce him and that was my greatest talent.

“Are you thirsty, Mason?” Rosalie asked as she appeared beside us and I looked between the two of them, licking my lips as his lust went from a ten to a ten-hundred. *Fuck yes. I was here for this show.*

“Yeah, he needs to bite you.” I caught the back of his head, shoving it so his face smooshed against her neck.

“Stop it,” he jerked back but Rosalie caught hold of the back of his head too and held him there.

“Drink,” she commanded her voice all sultry sexy and the tension in his body slackened.

I chuckled as he gave in to the primal urge in him, slicing his fangs into her neck as a groan of need escaped him. My fingers twisted between Rosalie's as we held him there and our eyes locked. Yup, this was fuck hot. And I had plenty of ideas about how I'd like to get Cain involved in some kinky ass blood play while he took bites from me and Rosalie. I could shift my canines into Vampire fangs too and we could play all kinds of twisted games with her. *Mmm.*

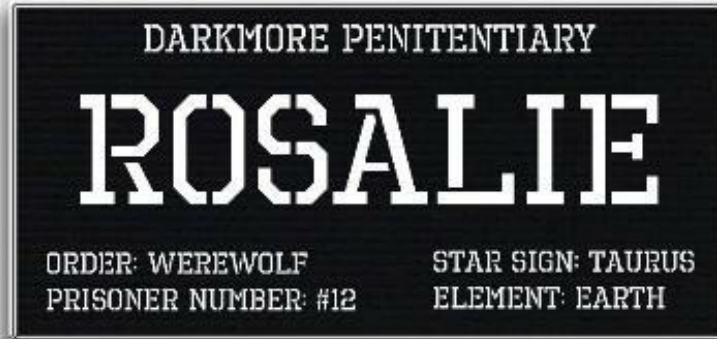
"Enough." I knotted my fingers in his short hair, yanking his head away and he turned on me with a feral snarl, lunging forward like he was about to rip my throat out for interrupting him mid-feed. *Whoops.*

I cast an air wall in front of me and he slammed into it as blood trickled from his mouth and rage coursed through his angry eyes. Damn, it didn't look like I'd managed to seduce him after all.

"Open the hatch, Mason," Rosalie said, yanking him over to the concealed button by the back of his jumpsuit.

He glared at me the whole time, but he did as she told him and we all looked up into the secret hatch as it opened and the ladder descended.

"Ready, steady, go!" I cried, running up it first with a laugh of glee as I made it into the tunnel above. I shuffled along into the crawlspace with a whoop of joy as I took the lead in the race. We were closing in on freedom and I could taste it in the air that was whipping against my skin. "Can't catch me, bitches!" I called as the others came after me. "I'm a whippet with wings!"



We gathered at the bottom of the ladder which led up into the guards' barracks, our group bottlenecking as Cain paused and turned a dark look on me.

“This is it,” he snarled. “You’re sure you can trust everyone here to keep away from the guards? I know they swore not to kill them but that doesn’t mean they won’t hurt them.” His gaze moved to Sin and I raised my chin as I held his eye.

“I swear it. None of us will do anything to the guards beyond subduing them if they come at us. We’re focused on getting out of here. Not looking to hurt anybody.”

“Cross my heart and hope to pie,” Sin agreed solemnly.

“You mean die,” Ethan hissed.

“Why would I hope to die?” Sin shot back. “I hope for pie regularly but I’m not suicidal, kitten.”

Cain gritted his jaw, but he seemed to accept my word and he shot up the ladder ahead of us to open the hatch which led into the Warden’s office.

I grabbed the rungs and as I heaved myself up behind him, the others close on my heels and began to climb.

My heart pounded with a frantic energy as I tasted freedom on the tip of my tongue and every inch I climbed drew me closer to it.

When I made it to the top of the hatch, Mason was waiting inside the Warden's office, his posture rigid as he stood beside the door and listened out for the rest of the guards.

I hopped out of the hidden hatch and landed on my feet, perspiration slipping down my spine in the warmth of the room. Darkmore was never warm like this, but I guessed the guards had it a lot better than the rest of us up here.

I shrugged my arms out of my jumpsuit and tied it around my waist, leaving my top half covered by my tank top. I strode towards Cain as the others began to climb out of the hatch behind me, nervous energy trickling into my veins.

I slipped my fingers between his as I reached him and he stilled, looking down at me in surprise and squeezing my fingers tightly

"I want you to come with me," I said to him in a low voice, needing him to hear me because I wasn't sure he fully grasped that yet. I wasn't just asking him to help me break out of this place, I was asking him to run with me.

"And what exactly would I do once we were out there?" he asked dismissively, but his grip on me tightened and I was certain he wanted this even if he wouldn't admit it to himself. "Once I help you escape, the curse should break and I'll be free to go on living my life."

"Without me?" I asked, wondering if he found that as hard to picture as I did.

Cain looked down at me with a frown furrowing his brow, his gaze slipping over my features like he was drinking in the sight of me before he nodded.

"Yeah. I don't have a place with you," he said, releasing my hand and moving to step away from me, but I caught his arm and growled at him.

“And what if I say you do?” We didn’t really have time for this, but I also had to say it now or I wasn’t going to get the chance at all. “What if I want you with me?”

“Then you’d be the first person who ever really had.”

I pushed up onto my tiptoes and kissed him, my fingers sliding into his hair and my pulse hammering at the thought of this being goodbye.

“Come with me,” I whispered against his lips.

“I can’t,” he replied roughly though the look in his eyes said he wanted to give me a different answer.

I nodded, my chest twisting with the sharp feeling of pain but I held myself there with him for a moment longer. “Remember what I told you about Mount Lupa then. So when you change your mind you can come find me.”

I made a move to step back, but Cain caught my arm and yanked me towards him again, pushing me up against the wall and kissing me hard as a growl of longing escaped him.

That kiss was like fire and danger and all the reasons we had to hate each other mixed into one. It was passion and heat and so much anger, but it was hungry and eager and aching too. It was goodbye in its sweetest form and the knowledge of that sent a tremble running through my limbs as I clung to him and my tongue met with his in a desperate plea not to be parted.

When we broke apart, my adrenaline was thumping and there was a thickness in my throat which held all of the unspoken words between us. But it was already too late for them and I could see the decision in his eyes. So I was just going to have to hold onto the hope that one day soon he’d realise that he still wanted me with or without the curse and he’d come meet me on that mountain. But until then, this was goodbye.

Roary cleared his throat and I turned away from Cain, staring him down as

he scowled at me, clearly less than impressed with me kissing the enemy. But I didn't have a shit to give and he could clearly tell because he dropped it.

“Ready?” he asked.

“Always,” I agreed.

Cain glanced at the group of inmates gathered behind us, his gaze lingering on Hastings who half fell out of the hatch with a relieved sob before he tugged the door open and moved out of my way.

A dark grin pulled at my lips and magic crackled in my hands as I led the way out into the corridor with Roary and Ethan flanking me.

The sound of the guards talking in their rec room led us towards them and I broke into a run as I burst through the door.

Yells of fright escaped the guards as they spotted the swarm of orange jumpsuits bursting into the room and I shot vines at them, immobilising two at once and binding them tightly to their chairs.

Roary and Ethan used ice to lock down three others, but the rest had a chance to stand and fight back before we could finish our work.

I ducked as a huge fireball came whizzing for my head, rolling across the carpet before a harsh wind slammed into me and knocked me even further from my pack.

Pudding bellowed a challenge as he lumbered into the room, taking a shot of earth magic to the chest and hardly even flinching before he cast his own magic right back at the guard who had attacked him and knocked her out.

Magic slammed into walls and the guards fought ferociously but we had the element of surprise, the determination of needing to escape this hell and pure strength of will on our side.

I shoved myself to my feet again, finding Officer Lyle waiting for me with his hands raised but as he shot a blast of water my way, I lurched aside and managed to snare his arms with vines which grabbed him from behind.

“OMS you guys,” Esme whispered as the fighting all came to a halt and I looked around to find her standing there with her shirt ripped open and her tits fully out. “I almost just had my nipple chopped off.”

A breath of laughter fell from my lips as I glanced around at the terrified looking guards but they didn’t have anything else to fear from us.

Hastings stood at the back of our group with wide, terrified eyes, but none of us paid him any attention as we turned to leave the room. He was tapped out anyway so he was no threat to us and he’d be safe in here now that the FIB were on their way.

“Addio per sempre, stronzi,” I said to them with a grin, whistling for the others to follow me back out into the corridor before using more vines to seal the door to the rec room, leaving the guards locked up nice and safe inside it for the FIB to find.

“Gah,” Ethan exclaimed as he rounded a corner and I winced as I stepped up behind him, finding Plunger butt naked and bent over as he stretched.

“Just limbering up for our burrowing,” he explained while looking at us from between his legs. I tried not to look at his asshole which was staring at us too, but I swear the damn thing winked at me.

“We need to find a room on the east side of the building as close to the surface as we can,” I said, turning away from Plunger because ew. But we still needed him, so for now I was just going to try and avoid looking at him.

Cain caught my eye from where he’d waited outside the rec room and he jerked his chin to gesture down the corridor beside him.

“That way,” I commanded, pointing the others in the direction Cain had indicated. “Plunger, you need to figure out a good place to start digging. I’ll make the call to Dante to bring down the forcefield and then we’re all gonna have to be ready to run like hell.”

The group all started jogging that way and I tugged a pudding pot from my



pocket to speak to Leon. It was time to call in the Storm Dragon and the FIB weren't going to know what hit them.

# Leon



What an epic day to be alive, man. I was flying above the clouds under the light of a full ass moon on the back of Dante in his Storm Dragon form. I swear the dude was even bigger than he used to be and the way his navy blue scales crackled with lightning made him all the more imposing.

My bro Gabriel circled above me in the sky, his black wings stretched out from his back in his half shifted Harpy form and occasionally he'd swoop below the cloud line to check on any activity going on below. Sure, I was anxious since he'd said the FIB had shown up, but I had faith in Dante's little cousin Rosa.

Especially as Gabriel had the Sight so he could catch glimpses of the future. He'd had a vision about the breakout that said the stars were aligned and tonight was the best chance Rosa had of getting out of Darkmore. Like not great, but her chances were at least ten percent, and I always looked on the bright side so I reckoned it was more like fifteen percent. And that was basically a hundred percent in Leon land. So it was a done thing.

Of course...there was that time five years ago when Gabriel had made a prediction that was soooooooo wrong that it had caused a lot of bad shit to happen. Like so, so, so bad. The worst. But it was all cool. At least it was for those of us who had survived it which happened to include me. I trusted him. He was my dude.

“Hey Gabe!” I called to him as he lowered down to hover beside me, his tattooed chest on show as his wings beat behind him and his dark hair was ruffled by the breeze.

“Don’t call me Gabe,” he growled and I chuckled at our shared love of our back and forth.

“I was just thinking about that time you made that prediction during the war that was really off and all that bad shit happened. Remember?” I called with a laugh and Gabriel glared at me.

“Why would you bring that up right now?” he demanded and I shrugged.

Dante released a crackle of lightning from his flesh that zapped me in the ass and I cursed.

“Not cool, man,” I called to him and he snapped his teeth at me.

A giggle sounded behind me and I twisted around to gaze in the direction of Dante’s ass where our supplies pack was tied onto him. We had all kinds of fun supplies in there like fireworks and stardust and most importantly of all, the snacks I’d packed for later. But where had that laugh come from? *Did Dante just let out a giggle fart?*

The bag started wriggling and Gabriel cursed, shooting forward and unfastening it. Two kids wriggled out of it and my lips popped open at the sight of them.

They ran up Dante’s back, diving at me through the air without a care for the life threatening drop either side of us. I let out an oof as they collided with me and I tugged them around into my lap, holding onto them tight with a laugh tearing from my throat.

“You’re in so much trouble, little dudes,” I warned as Dante let out an angry growl.

Gabriel came to land in front of me on the Dragon’s neck, glaring at the kids.

“Didn’t you see them stowing away with your Sight?” I laughed, but Gabe didn’t look pleased. Gabe looked murderous.

“I was focusing on the whole breaking out from the most dangerous prison in Solaria thing, Leon,” he gritted out then his eyes fell on the kids. “You two are grounded for the rest of the century.”

“Oh don’t be like that, Gabe,” RJ said and I scruffed her hair as I laughed.

“Don’t you start that again,” Gabriel warned.

“Gabe, Gabe, Gabe!” Luca took up the chant and I joined in.

“Don’t you call me Gabe. I’m your-” Gabe’s eyes glazed as he was struck with a vision and RJ looked up at me with mischief in her eyes.

“Your mom is gonna kill you,” I said as I grinned at her and Luca tugged on my long blonde mane.

“She’ll think it’s funny,” RJ said with a head shake that was so like her mother, it made me wish she was here for all the fun. She was probably searching the whole house for these two right now and I snapped a quick photo of us together on my Atlas and shot it to her so she knew they were safe. I mean okay, safe was a stretch, but they had me, a powerful Storm Dragon and a super protective Harpy to look after them so they’d be just fine. Probably.

Gabriel snapped out of his vision and pointed at me. “Answer it.”

Dante’s Atlas started ringing and I took it out, answering the call. “Rosa?”

“Hey,” she said, sounding tense as hell. “We’re ready when you are.”

“Oh I’m ready. Just bring my big brother to me soon, okay?”

“Promise.”

I nodded to Gabriel who took off from Dante’s back. “It’s time! Shoot the dome!” he cried.

“Bring it down!” Rosa shouted in my ear.

“We’re all over it little lupa,” I promised, cutting the call and Dante

plummeted through the clouds in an instant.

I wrapped my arms around the kids with a whoop as they laughed wildly and threw their hands in the air, the two of them so fearless that it probably should have been concerning.

“Faster, faster!” RJ cried and Luca howled like a Wolf.

We broke free of the clouds and my gaze fell on the huge gleaming dome below us and the sprawling landscapes of the Order Yard within it.

There were FIB trucks parked all around the entrance to the prison, but no one was looking to the sky as Dante swooped overhead and released a huge blast of lightning from his mouth. It split through the air in a flash of blinding blue and white light, slamming into the very top of the dome and with a noise like thunder the magic within it flared brighter and brighter for an endless second.

“Woah,” RJ breathed as the FIB and guards all cried out in alarm, the light growing more and more blinding before suddenly it rushed away towards the ground like falling water, seeming to disappear into the earth with a tremendous boom which must have been the sound of it destroying the forcefield.

The pull of magic in its wake made Dante drop several more feet and my stomach lurched as Gabriel swooped down over us, tightening up the concealment spells around us while I added my own magic to them too.

“Get back into the clouds!” Gabriel urged and Dante beat his wings hard, racing back to the cover of the storm he’d summoned as the kids whooped and cheered.

The damp clouds hugged us tightly as we made it to safety and I chuckled, snapping another photo of me, RJ and Luca with my tongue out, knowing exactly who I was gonna taunt with this pic later.

“You’re gonna meet your uncle tonight, little dudes.” I kissed the top of

their heads.

“Uncle Roary!” Luca bounced up and down.

“He’s gonna teach you all about being a cool ass Lion. You wait until you see his mane. It’s almost as shiny as mine,” I chuckled and RJ beamed at me.

My chest swelled and excitement raced through my limbs. My brother was finally coming home. And once he was back, I’d make sure I never lost him again.



The lights flickered and a shudder ran through the prison, the floor trembling violently beneath my feet. I held my breath, waiting it out and not releasing it until I was sure we weren't going to end up fired like Cain had predicted.

We all shared looks and Rosalie's eyes glinted with excitement as she stared up at the ceiling like she could see through it right to where Dante was soaring through the sky.

"A morte e ritorno. He's done it," she breathed and Cain's throat bobbed as we all moved toward the tunnel.

"This isn't gonna work," he muttered, but he didn't sound at all convinced of that anymore.

"Well why don't you go cuddle Hastings while we get on with our break out?" I suggested, pointing at Hastings out in the corridor who was sat on the floor with his face buried in his knees. It would be a hell of a lot easier if we could ditch him now rather than having to worry about him trying to stop Sin from escaping once we were up there.

"I'll be coming with you to the bitter end, Shadowbrook," Cain snarled and I glanced at Sin, not liking what Cain was planning to do when this all came to crunch time. But I couldn't worry about that now. We needed to go. And I had faith that between me, Roary and Rosalie we'd be able to get Sin out of here despite what Cain thought.

Rosalie moved to the place where we'd chosen to tunnel, beckoning us to follow and I headed after her as magic built in her palms.

"We're gonna move fast," she called. "Plunger, when you're ready start burrowing as quickly as you can for the surface, making sure you're careful to search for the hidden explosives in the ground with your nose powers."

"Absolute-lai, Miss Rosalie," he said and I got an eyeful of his naked ass wiggling back and forth as he revved up his Mole engines or whatever the fuck he was doing.

"Ready?" she breathed to us all and we nodded as one. "Sin, start shielding us."

"Sure thing, hot stuff," he said, flicking up an air shield as we all gathered close together and my shoulder pressed to Roary's.

"See you on the surface, love," I purred as I looked to Rosalie and she grinned, nodding in agreement.

A boom sounded further away in the guards' quarters and Hastings screamed like a girl out in the corridor, leaping to his feet and running towards us just as an ice ball slammed into the wall above him and exploded into a shower of sharp shards.

"Holy fuck, what's happening?" Esme gasped, clutching her tits which were still as bare as the dawn.

"Gustard's here!" Hastings yelled as he collided with Sin's air shield and the Incubus quickly let him into it before closing it up again.

"Plunger - go!" Rosalie yelled, leaping into the tunnel behind him as he smashed through the wall and started digging. Rosalie widened the hole behind him and everyone tore after her just as Gustard and a group of his Watchers appeared. A bunch of them had Order suppressant antidotes in hand, driving the needles into their veins and I swore under my breath as I sprinted into the tunnel.



Rosalie continued to widen it with her earth magic as she chased after Plunger who disappeared off into the dark ahead of her. The air became cool and damp, the scent of soil surrounding me as we travelled deeper into the earth.

Blasts of magic collided with Sin's air shield from behind us as The Watchers took chase and I cursed the stars for offering us bad luck yet again.

"Hurry after them! Don't let them out of your sight!" Gustard ordered his people and Roary and I worked to freeze the tunnel behind us to keep them back, but we had to focus on speed over stopping them and we couldn't waste the time it would take to properly strengthen it.

Fire bloomed through the wall we'd built followed by a tumult of combined magic which ripped the ice to pieces. We couldn't keep wasting time looking back so we just pressed on instead.

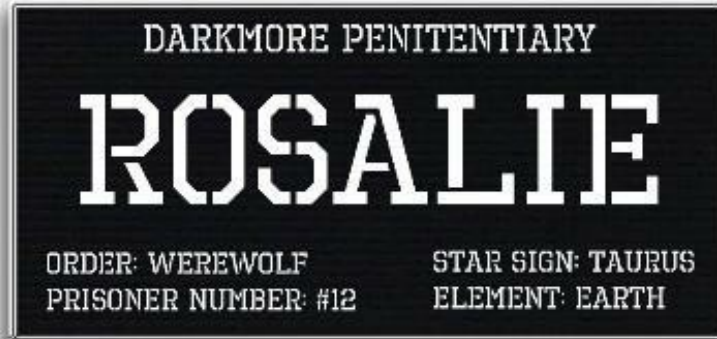
A rumble within the ground around us told me death was headed for us and Roary confirmed it as he shouted, "The worms are coming! Get ready to fight!"

My pulse thrashed as Esme wailed, stumbling along while grasping her tits like they might save her and Pudding kept hold of her arm so she didn't fall.

The rumbling grew closer and closer, and the path grew steeper and steeper beneath our feet as we raced for the surface.

We were so close to freedom, but there was so much danger standing in our way that I feared dying down in this dirt without ever seeing the moon again.

But as my gaze fixed on my mate up ahead, I knew I'd claw my way out of it if it was the last thing I did. Because Rosalie was leading the path to all that was good in the world, and she needed me out there as fiercely as I needed her. So we'd run from this hell together no matter what it cost tonight.



Sin bellowed with the effort of maintaining his air shield as the enormous worms slammed into it from every side, the rows of ringed teeth chomping wildly with the desire to swallow us.

I had to fight a flinch every time his magic shuddered and it was a battle to keep concentrating on my own power as I followed the narrow trail Plunger had carved through the soil, widening it so that we could all run along behind him.

“Holy fuck,” Ethan gasped and I glanced around just as a worm blasted its way into the tunnel behind us, swallowing one of The Watchers whole as his screams of agony filled the air.

I blinked at the place where he’d just been, watching the worm’s stumpy body as it slithered away and finding Gustard standing beyond it as it disappeared.

He grinned at me and I snarled at him in return as one of his men shielded him with air magic of his own. I should have known we weren’t done with that motherfucker yet.

Ethan threw a shield of ice up between us to stop them from following and Roary leant his strength to it too, blocking their path.

“We need to move,” Roary urged and I nodded, turning back to the tunnel Plunger had created and running on as I continued to widen it for our group.

“I’m not letting Gustard escape this place,” I said firmly as I ran on.

“Not a single psychopath will make it out of here,” Cain agreed in a low growl, his gaze shifting to Sin and making my instincts prickle. But if he seriously thought he was going to follow us to the surface and try to block Sin from coming with us then he was insane.

Roary gave me a look of solidarity and I knew he had my back on this. None of us were going to be left behind, and if that meant I had to use force to stop Cain from trying to restrain Sin then I would. I just hoped it wouldn’t come to that in the end and that the plan we’d come up with would work.

Plunger’s tunnel kept climbing, shifting sharply left and right to avoid the explosives buried in the ground as the worms continued to burst from the soil and slam into Sin’s shield.

“Hurry up, buttercup, or Ethan’s gonna have to start sucking me off to top me up,” Sin grunted.

“We’re almost at the surface,” I gasped, running on, clambering upwards as the tunnel became steeper and steeper and I used my magic to carve steps beneath our feet to help with the climb.

I could feel the difference in the soil surrounding us now, the looseness of it this close to the surface, the moisture in it, freedom so fucking close that we could almost touch it.

With a furious snarl, I threw my arms out before us and an explosion of dirt tore up and away from us to reveal the dark sky overhead and the enormous Storm Dragon who was soaring through the clouds there too.

My heart lightened and I raced up and out of the ground, a howl tearing from my lips in greeting as Dante roared a reply and lightning crackled around him.

The others all charged out around me and we turned towards the distant fence, breaking into a sprint as we set our gaze on it and the promise of

freedom beyond it.

“A morte e ritorno!” I bellowed, urging them all on with me and they roared it back at me in reply, fuelling my limbs as I charged towards the fence.

Another explosion of soil behind us made me whirl around as I spotted Gustard and a whole horde of the fucking Watchers emerging from the soil too.

“Go!” Cain barked at me as I bared my teeth at the unFae bastardo who was hijacking our escape plan. “I won’t let any of those fuckers escape.”

My heart wrenched as he shot away from me, slamming into the group of Watchers and using his Vampire speed to fight them while they yelled and tried to escape, but I couldn’t wait for him. He’d made up his mind. He wasn’t coming with me and I could only hope that one day he’d come to Mount Lupa and I’d see him again.

A tear slipped down my cheek as I turned my back on the guard who had stolen a slice of my heart and I howled again, rallying our group as we took off towards the fence and thunder rumbled in the sky overhead.

“Follow my hiney to avoid the mines!” Plunger yelled from just ahead of us, shaking his wrinkly Mole ass at us as he began to dart left and right, taking some zig zagging route across the open ground which made no sense to me at all.

But just as I started to make my own path across the plane, a tremendous explosion knocked me to my knees and one of Gustard’s men was splattered into a million pieces as a land mine took him out.

“Follow Plunger!” I roared, realising that he was using his gifts to sense the mines in the ground and taking off after his gross butt as fast as I could run.

Esme bounded along at my side, her tits bouncing wildly as she clutched

them against her chest and I flicked my fingers to build her a bra out of leaves as I took pity on her.

“Thank you, Alpha!” she gasped, running faster now that her boobs were secure.

Ethan howled loudly and Sin threw his air shield up at our backs as The Watchers realised what we were doing and took chase too.

Gustard was riding on the back of a Moose Shifter as he tore across the ground behind us and I cursed as I realised they’d gotten their hands on some of the guards’ Order suppressant antidote too.

“Left!” Plunger shrieked, jerking in the direction he’d indicated and causing us all to stumble as we followed right behind him.

My inner Wolf was pacing beneath my skin, begging to be set free but I wanted to have control over my magic, so I kept going on two legs, screaming encouragement at the others to keep up.

All around us land mines kept exploding and I used my earth magic to shake the ground at our backs and set more off in Gustard’s path.

Worms leapt from the ground at random, swallowing any Fae unlucky enough to find themselves in their path and I heard Hastings scream as one narrowly avoided him. He was running along with all of us, clearly wanting to escape the worms and Gustard just as much as the rest of us and I took pity on him, yanking him closer to us with one of my vines so that he could be protected within our group.

“We won’t hurt you,” I promised him as he looked around at us and we all continued to run. “We just want to be free.”

“Me too,” he gasped as he ran. “Free of this hell forever.”

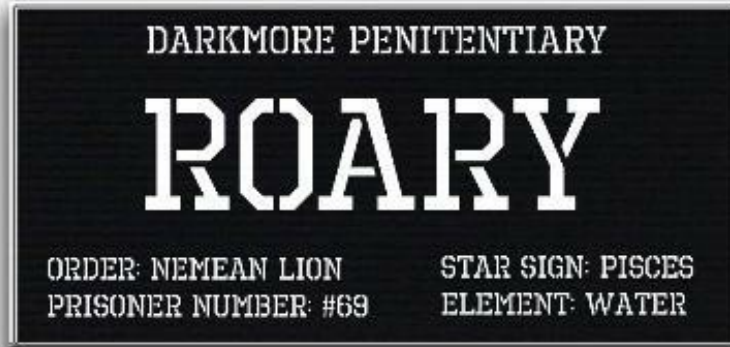
Pudding was falling behind, his lumbering stride consistent but slow while he waved the rest of us on like he didn’t have a care in the fucking world and people weren’t being exploded or devoured by tooth worms all around him. I

couldn't risk our group by waiting for him, so I could only hope he would be alright as we sprinted on.

“Right! Follow my authori-tai, it is my method!” Plunger called and we fucking did because I didn't want to be splattered into a thousand pieces across this damn field.

The fence was getting closer and Dante swooped beneath the clouds beyond it, roaring his encouragement at us to run faster while Leon waved at us from his back with his golden hair billowing in the wind. *Wait, is that RJ and Luca in his lap??*

Dante couldn't land on this side of the fence with all the mines here, so we had to get to him. And by the stars we would or we'd die trying because there was no way in hell I'd ever be a prisoner again.



The fence was so close, I could see freedom shining beyond it like the brightest star in the sky. I ran faster than I ever had in my life, my gaze swinging from it to Rosalie on my right again, making sure she was there. A smile started pulling at my lips as Dante's huge form landed beyond the fence and lightning ripped through it, blasting a giant hole in it and sending electricity crackling out through the air.

“Roary!” my brother's voice made me hunt for him in desperation and I saw him on Dante's back. “Where's your mane!?” he gasped in horror and I growled as I put another burst of energy into my veins.

“Run, Uncle Roary!” a tiny voice yelled and my heart lurched as I spotted my niece and nephew sitting on his lap, drinking in the sight of them for the first time that I'd ever seen them in the flesh and my heart leapt with joy and the urgent need to hold them in my arms.

“I'm coming, little ones!” I cried, a joyous laugh tearing from my throat.

I glanced back over my shoulder as a roaring boom rang out and I spotted Cain blasting a Griffin out of the sky who must have been one of The Watchers. The beast spiralled out of the air in a ball of flames, crashing into several other Watchers and taking them to the ground, sending dirt flying up around them. A mine went off in the earth and with an echoing bang they were all killed from the explosion. *Fuck.*

The shockwave of it crashed against Sin's shield around us and he yelled out in frustration as his magic died in a wave.

"I'm tapped out," he panted, looking fucking exhausted as he started to slow.

"Come on, keep moving." I grabbed his arm, my gaze locking on Cain as he turned his attention to Sin.

Rosalie slowed ahead of us as Plunger made it to the fence and Leon shielded RJ and Luca's eyes from his nudity.

Cain shot towards us in a blur and I shoved Sin forward, needing him to move right fucking now.

"Cain's coming for you, Sin, run," I urged as the Incubus stumbled into Ethan and I blocked the way to them as Cain collided with me.

He took me to the ground from the force he used and I snarled in anger.

"Where is he?" Cain demanded, looking up and I twisted my head, finding Sin gone and Ethan standing there with an innocent expression on his face.

"What are you doing?" Rosalie cried, pushing Cain off of me and tugging my arm to get me up. "We have to go!"

"Where's Sin Wilder?!" Cain bellowed, but my eyes slipped over his head to where Gustard was closing in on us.

But worse than that, far fucking worse. FIB helicopters were tearing through the air above, floodlights igniting on top of them and lighting us all up in the powerful beams.

"Go." Cain shoved me towards Rosalie and we started running again with Ethan racing at her side too.

Pudding had somehow made it past us, lumbering along at a brisk pace towards the gap in the fence and somehow avoiding every blast of magic that came his way.

A horrid shriek behind me made me turn and I spotted the Moose Shifter



Gustard was riding being pulled to the ground by a massive metal hook in its back with a chain that attached to one of the helicopters. Another hook came flying through the air towards us and I gasped as it slammed into the ground and tore up a mound of dirt as spikes ejected all along its sharp edges.

“Fuck,” I cursed in panic, shoving Rosalie along.

“Shift!” Leon cried and my Lion rose to the surface of my flesh, about to rip free of my body when a hook slammed into my back and I roared as I was hurled to the ground.

The spikes ejected, latching into my body and hot blood rushed over me as I was dragged backwards at an alarming pace.

“No!” Rosalie screamed and I cast ice blades in my hands, slamming them into the earth and tearing through it as I desperately tried to stop myself from being dragged away from her.

Rosalie was suddenly in front of me, diving to the ground and taking hold of my hands, binding me to her with vines.

“Stop!” I roared as we were both dragged towards the FIB and she fought to pull me back, tethering her ankles to the ground with more and more vines. But the hooks were in too deep and I knew there was no chance of getting them out. And there was no fucking way I was taking her with me.

“Rosa,” I rasped.

“Don’t,” she snapped. “I’m not letting you go Roary Night. Not again.”

I winced against the blinding pain tearing into my flesh and dropped the blades in my hands as I squeezed her fingers and my heart cleaved in two.

“Get out of here,” I commanded.

“No,” she begged, clinging onto me as her magic bound her to me and refused to let go. Tears burned in her eyes and desperation flared through her expression.

“I love you, little pup. But you’ve gotta do something for me.” I held onto

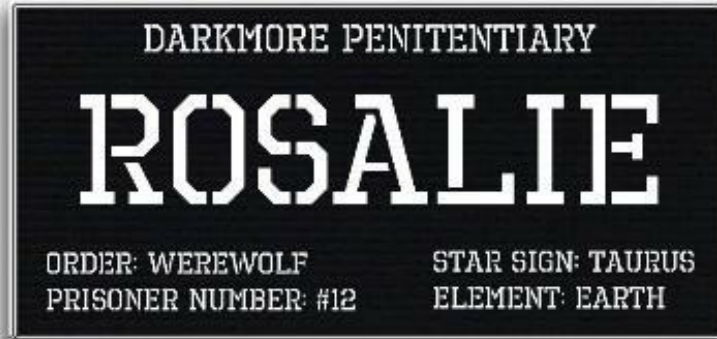
her for a moment longer as pain scored along my spine and I swore I was going to be torn apart if I didn't let go of her. "Don't come back for me."

I cast ice blades in my palms, severing the vines she'd cast tightly around my arms and her screams followed me as I was dragged across the ground and yanked into the air. I spun violently as the wind battered my body and I fought to get the hooks out of my back to no avail.

As I was raised up rapidly into the air, hands hauled me into the helicopter and a needle was jammed into my neck immediately before I could even try to fight.

The sedative rushed through my veins and I felt the spikes slide out of my flesh before the hook was pulled out too. I was vaguely aware of being healed before I was thrown down beside another body and my gaze landed on Gustard opposite me, his eyes slowly falling closed.

Darkness rushed over me and I tried to bring a piece of Rosalie with me into the abyss, but I couldn't grasp her. The feeling of her was slipping away, and I prayed that meant she'd run.



I screamed Roary's name to the sky, lurching after him, power brimming throughout my body as I called on every scrap of it I owned and prepared to fight to the death to tear him back from their clutches in that helicopter.

But as I started running, cries of panic sounded behind me and more helicopters crested the horizon, racing towards us with their own harpoon guns primed and aimed in our direction.

A solid body slammed into me and I was wrenched off of my feet as Cain's arms wrapped around me and he began to run with the full force of his gifts in the direction of Dante who still waited beyond the fence.

Away from Roary.

Away from my heart.

Away from the entire reason I'd even agreed to come to this place on this suicide mission.

I fought and yelled, throwing a blast of earth magic up beneath his feet and sending us tumbling to the ground just as he crossed through the hole in the fence.

Dante roared in distress and Gabriel yelled out to us, "It's now or never! Sixteen more seconds and we lose our chance to escape!"

"No!" I shouted, lurching to my feet again as someone else slammed into me and a shriek of alarm escaped me as my hands were bound in ice and my

magic was locked away.

“I’m sorry, love, but you know he’d want me to do this,” Ethan said as he grabbed my arm and heaved me to my feet.

A tiny Sin suddenly leapt from the waistband of Ethan’s pants, shifting back to his full size as I fought wildly to break free and he grabbed hold of me too.

“We gotta go, kitten,” he said urgently, tugging me towards Dante who roared and shot a bolt of lightning towards the closest helicopter in a warning.

I fought harder, my gaze fixed on the aircraft which held Roary, his name ripping from my lips as my heart broke into a thousand pieces and pain sliced through every inch of me.

Cain was there again, his arms banding around my waist as he snatched me out of the others’ arms and we shot towards Dante before he leapt up onto his back.

Dante roared, spreading his midnight blue wings and taking off into the sky as Sin and Ethan leapt up and grabbed hold of his legs.

Lightning poured from the Storm Dragon’s mouth and Leon dragged me into his arms, two little sets of arms curling around me too as a choked sob escaped him and he squeezed me tight.

“We gotta go, little Wolf,” he whispered with heartbreak in his voice as we tore away across the sky. Gabriel circled behind us, shielding us with his air magic from the helicopters which were racing along in our wake, their hooked harpoons firing all around us. “He’d want me to save you, okay?”

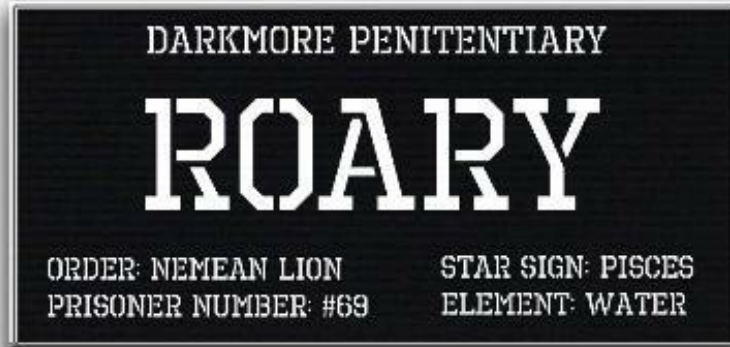
I shook my head, but it was already too late. Leon tugged a pouch of stardust from his pocket and threw a thick handful of the glittering substance into the air ahead of Dante.

With a flash of magic, we were whipped into the stars and tugged away

form Darkmore Penitentiary to our freedom.

Not that any of that mattered now.

None of it made the slightest bit of difference. Because the man I'd been in love with since I was fourteen years old wasn't with us. And freedom had never tasted so bitter.



“He’s coming around now, ready for extraction,” a female voice reached me from the fog of my mind.

“By the sun, I hate when they wake up. What do you reckon, Angie, is this one a screamer like the last one?” a male voice followed.

“He’s a Lion Shifter, I think we’ll make him roar, Roland,” Angie chuckled and the mist lifted from my mind a little further until I was able to crack my eyes open. They came into focus above me in blue scrubs with masks over their faces so all I could see were their eyes. There was something seriously disconcerting about Roland, his long dark hair held back in a ponytail, and the greasy gleam of it making my inner Lion shudder. There was a jagged scar running through his left eye which seemed much darker than his right, and wrinkles furrowed his forehead in a permanent frown.

A blinding pain started to rake at my chest and panic washed into my veins as the repetitive beeping of a heart rate monitor picked up somewhere nearby.

“Easy now, big boy,” Angie cooed.

I dropped my chin as they probed at something in my chest and I felt the horrible, gut wrenching terror of realising their fingers were pushing beneath my ribcage, *inside* my body. Healing magic took most of the pain away but

as my gaze settled on the hole carved into the centre of my chest, a strangled noise got stuck in my throat.

“What are you doing?” I slurred, drugs making my limbs heavy.

I couldn't move them at all. I couldn't thrash or shift. I was restrained and even if I hadn't been, I doubted I had the strength to fight.

“Extracting in five, four, three, two, one,” Roland said calmly then a blinding, unimaginable pain tore at my insides.

He had his hands in my fucking chest and was pulling on something vital inside me. I roared in anger and agony, trying to buck them away but my limbs wouldn't move.

“Get away from me!” I bellowed as Roland continued to yank and tug and suddenly there was a cutting sensation that seemed to sever something from my very soul.

“No – no – no!” I cried, frantic as Roland cut it away, taking that piece of me, stealing it from my being. And as he cupped a glowing blue light in his bloody hands, raising it from my chest, I knew what it was. I recognised this part of me as my Order. My Lion. They were taking my fucking Lion.

“No - please!” I found myself begging, terror scoring through me as this nightmare descended on me.

“This one's powerful,” Roland groaned like he could feel the strength of the creature in his hands. “Bring the jar, Angie.”

She grabbed a large jar covered in runes from a trolley as I started to convulse, foam rising in my mouth as a fit took hold of me and the hollowness in my chest made me want to vomit.

“Give him ten milligrams of Ivis elixir,” Roland barked then some drug flowed into my veins and the fitting stopped, my mind refocusing once more. But I was still in hell.

“There we are,” Angie sighed and I saw the jar with my Lion locked

inside it, the glowing light shimmering and a label on its side with a symbol of a Lion alongside my star sign and water Element.

She placed it on a trolley and picked up another jar, carefully unscrewing the top and handing it to Roland as my head spun and pain danced all along the inside of my flesh. I was in agony, but not because of the gaping hole in my chest, because of what had been torn from my body, taken from me.

“Give it back,” I begged, my voice croaky, broken. I felt weak and lost and so hollow inside I wanted to die. I’d rather they let me die than live on without my Lion. “Please, give it back. I need it.”

“Here we are now, hush, hush,” Angie said softly as Roland reached into the jar and took the glowing essence between his hands which pulsed and writhed in a different way to how my Lion had.

As Roland’s hands lowered into my chest, energy started to return to my limbs and I fought, my muscles bunching against the restraints. I didn’t want that alien thing in me. I didn’t want another Order. I needed my Lion. I *was* my Lion. Without it I was nothing, no one.

“Stop!” I bellowed at the top of my lungs, but Roland placed it within me and started casting magic which latched it to my soul.

I growled and groaned against the horrid new feeling of this thing inside me as it was bound more and more irrevocably to my being. The vomit started rising in my throat again and I jerked and begged, but nothing I did made them stop.

When Roland was finished, I felt it there, permanently seated within my chest, living and twitching and taking root in my body, changing me. So much was fucking changing and my skin was on fire as everything burned then turned icily cold. Roland healed the gaping wound in my chest, sealing it within me and I fell still as numbness gripped me.

And all at once I was dying, falling away into the dark as another seizure



took hold of me and I wanted it to end, prayed the stars would take me away because death was preferable to this. I was mutated, twisted beyond recognition, forged into some other beast that didn't belong in me.

“His heart rate is dropping fast,” Angie cursed and both of their fingers pressed to my body as healing magic rushed into me. “We need to stabilise him in the next minute or he's a goner.”

The darkness was creeping in and my body was twitching, jerking. No breath found my lungs and I didn't want it to.

*Take me away.*

*Let me go.*

Then somewhere in my mind, I found Rosalie. I saw her big brown eyes and the desperation in her to save me from Darkmore. My whole existence pivoted on that girl now. My Rosa, the sweet rosebud who had blossomed into a flower with thorns and beauty so unimaginable that it made me want to kneel at her feet and worship her.

But she was gone. And I was reliving losing her all over again. I felt her hands slipping from my body as I cut her vines free of me. I saw the anguish in her gaze when I'd had to let her go, and I felt the longing in me to be with that girl. Only that girl.

She was my mate, chosen for me by the moon and I suddenly realised that no force in this world could take me from her. Not even this.

So I started fighting to stay even when I wanted to die, and the tremors in my body slowly stopped.

“There,” Angie sighed happily. “That's a good boy.” Her fingers caressed my cheek and I tried to flinch away but found no strength in me to move.

I was here, needing to be here for Rosalie, but my body felt like it was someone else's, like everything I knew about myself had suddenly shifted. And it made me want to numb out so I didn't have to feel it.

As Angie and Roland moved away from the bed, they took the jar with my Lion in it with them and I felt its presence leaving me forever.

I wanted to scream, but no noise came out. My head lolled to the side and my gaze fixed on Gustard in a bed beside mine. His eyes were wide and glassy, and for a moment I thought he was dead before he blinked once, the emptiness in his gaze seeming to go on forever.

I stared back at him, sinking into that eternal void and trying not to feel the stirrings of this new, strange creature awakening inside me. It wasn't mine. It wasn't me. I was gone. And maybe staying here for Rosa was pointless, because even if she found me, I wasn't the mate she'd had to leave behind.

I was something else. Something wrong. Something twisted. And I didn't know if it could ever be undone.

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Are you all up in your ouchies?

Come and vent here in the [Feral Wolf Discussion Group on Facebook](#).

## Author Note

Dun, dun, duuuuuun.

Heyyyyy you. How ya doin over there? Are you filled with joy over Rosa and the gang finally escaping Darkmore?

I know, I know, not everyone escaped. And we really are sorry about Brett and Sonny. They will be missed endlessly and all of us will curse the stars for their cruelty and continued mockery of our pain.

On a happier note, I heard Plunger made it, clinging to Dante's tail with his poo-tatoes and a couple of carrots firmly on board too, so all is not lost!

Today the sun is shining and we've been finishing off this book with summer all around us and the happies shining on our souls, and I feel like you really got that vibe from the way the book went. Aside from those few times when a thunderstorm rolled through and rained shit down on everyone of course. But who doesn't love getting caught in a shit storm every now and then?

Oh right, Roary. Poor Roary. You'd think he'd suffered enough, but I guess he just hadn't...

So ummm, if you don't hate us and you like the way we torture you despite sometimes feeling murderous towards us then please come join our gang of deviants in our [Facebook reader group](#). We'd love to have you because each and every one of you holds a special place in our hearts.

The next book in this series will be out as soon as possible, so keep clinging onto the edge of that cliff and we'll write you up a parachute ASAP!

Love Susanne & Caroline x

P.S. If you like Leon, Dante and Gabriel, read the COMPLETE series the

[Ruthless Boys of the Zodiac](#) now! It's set ten years before the Darkmore Penitentiary series and features glimpses of young Rosa, Roary and Ethan.