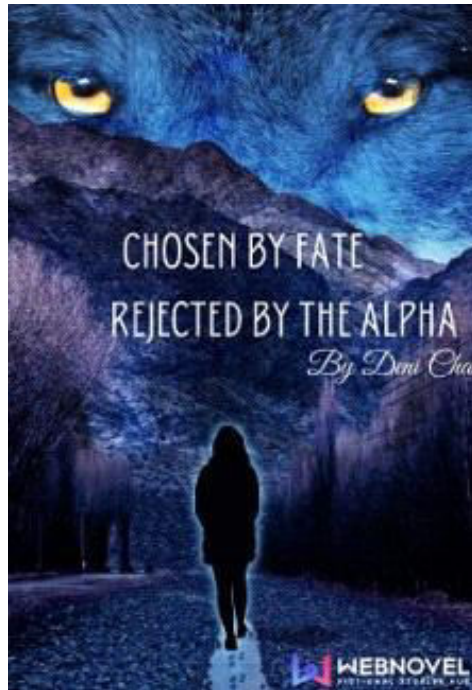


CHOSEN BY FATE, REJECTED BY THE ALPHA



as once very high ranking in the hierarchy of the Red Springs pack. My grandfather actually used to be the Beta to the previous Alpha, however, that Alpha was killed in an attack just a few years ago and his son took his place. But even being the Beta wasn't enough to keep my family from losing face in a massive scandal.

We wolves are a proud people. Those are the words that Grandfather would tell me every day since I was a little girl. As far back as I can remember. But that pride hadn't stopped my mother from disappearing for a weekend when she was fifteen and coming back to face her father's fury. And then, to make matters worse, they found out she was pregnant. She refused to tell them who the father was. They naturally assumed that the

father was not a wolf, which made me an abomination in their eyes.

Regardless, I was still part of the pack, and the previous Alpha had ordered that I was to be treated like any other member of the pack until it was certain that I would not shift like everyone else. Our wolf forms usually show at any time between the ages of thirteen and eighteen.

Many think that the sooner you shift the stronger your wolf will be, but that's not always true, but boys will be boys and they still compete however they can. Now here I was, nearly nineteen, and I still haven't shifted. But I still had every other aspect of being a wolf. I had the speed, the strength, the heightened senses, the fighting instinct, everything. I was very much a member of the pack. I was clearly not human, but as of yet, I was not a werewolf either. I just didn't belong anywhere.

I couldn't ask my mother about my father myself. If she was just too scared to talk to her father or if she might be less scared now after all these years. The ridicule and shame heaped on my family when she was pregnant and right after she gave birth was too much for her to handle.

She ended up taking her own life when I was less than a month old.

The only thing my mother left behind for me was a pendant that she had asked to be given to me when I was old enough. I honestly can't believe that they followed through with it, and if it were left up to Grandfather, they probably would not have, but after my mother's death's I lived primarily with my Uncle Wesley and his wife Eve, they had two boys who treated me just like a sister and were the best part of my childhood.

Honestly, life would have been pretty good if it hadn't been for Grandfather. I swear he hates me. He had ridiculously high standards for me. Always telling me things like I would never be allowed to make the same mistakes that his poor excuse for a daughter had made.

I had every one of his rules drilled into me every day for years. I was not allowed to attend public school with my cousins and the rest of the kids in the pack. I was made to train and learn many different things. I was taught etiquette, martial arts, ballet, boxing, fencing, foreign languages, musical instruments, and a ridiculously hard curriculum.

Grandfather paid for it all, hoping that I would shift by the time I turned eighteen and he could at least marry me off to a good family and use me to regain some status in the hierarchy. But then my birthday came and went, and it became more than abundantly clear to everyone that I just was not going to shift. I had no wolf. I was an abomination, a freak of nature, something that shouldn't be mixed in with the rest of the pack.

Yet I still had to follow all the pack rules. I still had to attend all the pack gatherings. I still had to bow my head and bend my knees when the alpha gave the order to kneel. His words were like a compulsion to the pack, and we were simply unable to defy them. And even with all that, I was still treated as an outsider by most of the higher-ranking families. As someone who just didn't belong with all the cool kids.

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Chapter 2 - Trinity- The Harvest Moon Gathering? Oh Goddess!

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Trinity

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I could tell the lecture was coming to an end, Professor Thompson's tone of voice always gave her away, so I pulled myself out of my daydream and paid attention enough to get the homework assignment for the class. The composition we were to write would be all too easy for me, again. It had been a little over a month since classes had started and I was still bored. I was taking four classes, and the only one even remotely interesting was the Intro to Criminology class. I hope this gets more exciting soon. I told myself again as I was leaving the room.

"Hey Trin, I see you were spacing out again." I heard a man's voice call out to me from behind.

"Yeah, Astro, can't you keep yourself grounded for a

single class?" Another added.

"Ignore them Trin." Juniper sighed smacking the two of them on the arm while the four of us walked to the side of the hallway, so we didn't block anyone walking past us. These were the only friends I had ever managed to make in my entire life.

Juniper and her twin brother Cedar both had light ash blond hair, bright green eyes, and sharp angular features. They were both tall, but Cedar was still half a foot taller than his sister at least, he was well over six feet tall. The other man was her mate Paul. He was shorter than Cedar by a few inches, yet taller than Juniper, with hazel eyes and jet-black hair. They were also werewolves, which meant they were also part of the pack. But they were so low ranking in status that they said they didn't care what anyone had to say. They would form their own opinions about me.

The day I had met them had been both a terrifying and happy one. I didn't know how they were going to react to me, but when they accepted me, it was like one of the biggest victories of my life. I had only known them for a

little over a month, but that didn't seem to mean anything to them. They treated me like I was one of them, similar to how my cousins treated me at times, and it made me happy.

"Paul, could you not call me Astro please? It has nothing to do with my name."

"No? I think it's very fitting for an astronaut that spends the entire class floating through space." He guffawed at his own joke as soon as he had spoken it.

"Honestly." Juniper laughed at him as she smacked him again. "Why do I bother to deal with you again?" She asked.

"Because the moon goddess said that we were destined to be together forever and therefore you're head over heels in love with me and find me irresistible." He recited, his usual come back to her exasperated question was very practiced. Probably because she asked it so often.

"Oh yeah. That must be it." She giggled as she stretched up on her toes and pulled him toward her so she could give him a quick kiss.

"Blech, can you wait until I am not around to do that?" Cedar complained. The four of us laughed at our typical daily routine.

"Hey Trin, want us to give you a ride home today, or is your cousin here?"

"No, Carter is probably already waiting for me, so I should hurry up. See you guys next week." I started to run toward the door.

"What?"

"Don't you mean tomorrow?" I heard Paul and Cedar yell after me, causing me to skid to a halt and turn back to them.

"What are you talking about?"

"The Harvest Moon Gathering." Juniper spoke flatly, like she was talking to a child, or someone slow.

"Oh My Goddess! I can't believe I forgot about that." I exclaimed, slapping my hand to my head.

"Good thing you have such good friends who will remind you, that way you can be prepared at least a little in advance." Paul laughed at my surprised response.

"Har-har very funny." I told him with a biting edge to my voice.

"Ouch, rein it in Astro." I growled at him, half playfully half not.

I ran toward the parking lot, weaving through the throngs of people on my way. I could see Carter standing by his Jeep 4x4 waiting for me. He was as close to a doting brother as I was ever going to get, and most of the time it made me really happy, though I would never admit that to him.

"You're late." He barked as soon as I was close enough for him to growl at me.

"Sorry, I was talking with a couple people after class. Good thing too, because they reminded me of something." I answered, my voice filled with annoyance that was only partially aimed at his impatience.

"Oh yeah? What did they remind you about?" He questioned with a laugh. He obviously thought it was something trivial.

"The Harvest Moon Gathering tomorrow night, I had completely forgotten about it."

"Seriously Trinity, how could you possibly forget about that?"

"Well, it's the first time that we are gathering for the harvest moon, we usually only gather for the hunter's moon, not both. It's not my fault I forgot a break in tradition, especially when I am usually kept out of the loop, anyway." Honestly, could he really blame me? Since my eighteenth birthday, most of the pack acted like I didn't even exist. If it wasn't for the monthly allowance and tuition, I would think that Grandfather had forgotten about me as well, but I guess he could just be having his

secretary handle it and not even know what's going on.

"Come on, Trin, let's go." He told me, climbing into the Jeep, a smile on his face, and a laugh in his voice told me that he would always be there for me like any brother I could ask for.

"Why is there a gathering tomorrow, anyway?" I asked him while he was driving out of the city and toward the compound. Now I say compound because that is what the pack calls it, but the truth is, it's actually just a gated community where a large number of pack families lived.

The compound was bordered by the forest on the north and west and backed up to the mountains. A river snaked along the south side of the compound and around the base of the mountain. Using the Elements around us, we had created a literal fortress for us to live in. All but the exiled, those who left by choice or just those who wanted a bit more freedom (typically new adult males) lived at the compound. It was the safest way for us to protect ourselves from the humans and them from us.

"The Alpha has to find a mate, so he has to hold as many gatherings as possible before the year is over. If he doesn't find his Luna in our pack, then he needs to start

traveling to other packs to look for a mate there. But since there is the chance that other pairs can form their mate bonds at the gatherings as well, every non-mated pack member has to go. And mated members can go because it is a gathering so it would be wrong to exclude anyone."

"Well that explains why Juniper and Paul are going, they're already mated." I mused. "But, honestly, why do I have to go? We all know that I am not going to be his mate. I don't have a wolf, so I can't form a mate bond." I whined indignantly.

"You don't know that, Trin." He told me automatically. He would always tell me this when I would get depressed when I was younger. Back when I actually got mad at myself, or at my mother, for me not having a wolf. There's nothing I can do now though, so I am just going to do the best I can with my slightly enhanced life.

"I am not human, and I am not a wolf. I don't belong anywhere. Just ask Grandfather." I snapped, a little more anger dripping from my voice than I had intended.

"Yeah well, sometimes I would like to tell ol' gramps where to shove that holier than thou pride of his." Carter snapped, causing me to laugh. He had always hated the way Grandfather treated me the most. Probably because of my two cousins he was closer to my age at only two years older than me, unlike his brother who was six years older than me. They both loved me, but Noah grew up and moved on with his life. He had even found a mate recently, got married and moved into his own home in the compound.

"Still Carter, we both know that no one is going to mate with me, and even if they did, they would just reject me, anyway."

"You can't reject a mate bond, Trinity. You know that." He sounded shocked by my words.

"Oh, I know, but that doesn't mean they wouldn't try to reject me. They'd probably rather go unmated for life. They'd start the first order of Buddhist Monk wolves." I chuckled, laughing at my own joke.

"That's not funny." He growled.

"Actually, it is, and you know it. There isn't a single man in this pack, who would take me as a mate." I told him firmly.

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Chapter 3 - Reece- I Don't Want A Mate!

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Reece

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I was sitting at my desk listening to the reports from my personal assistant Noah. He was highly efficient at his job, which meant that the reports always lasted longer than absolutely necessary. He could convey all the information in less time, but there was no telling what the

extra info would provide in the long run.

He reported on the restless independent wolves living in the next city over. He informed me that the pack whose territory bordered ours, but had significantly less land than us, was causing a bit of a stir with talks of a possible attempt to overthrow me and take my land and people. There was talk of a rogue coven of magic users, witches and warlocks, that had decided to settle in our area. We haven't seen the likes of them in nearly twenty years, according to the elders and the record books.

Noah was so thorough and good at his job that I had considered making him my Beta, his grandfather had been my father's Beta after all. But there was all that unpleasantness that his family had following them. And it wasn't like they could escape from it, the girl was still there as a constant reminder of what had happened. I felt bad for the guy, truly. And he was smart as hell, he really was the best wolf around to be my assistant, I just wish he wouldn't drone on for so long. Ugh!

"And lastly, all of the unmated females have been assigned to their groups. You will spend your time at each

of the Full Moon Gatherings looking for your mate among the women assigned to the group number for that gathering." Noah stood straight as a pin as he recited the information from memory. Standing there with his clean-cut features, dark hair and eyes, he seemed to only be missing the penguin suit to make him look like an old-fashioned butler. The thought was enough to almost make me laugh, which made me mad. I was supposed to be indignant and angry right now, I don't want to go to these damned gatherings.

"I will not need an entire night just for that. I will know within five seconds if anyone in the group is my mate." I grumbled.

"The Elders seemed to think you should spend some time alone with each one of them if possible, but as much time with the group as a whole if not."

"If they're not my mate, then spending more time with them won't make a difference. These glorified speed dating traps they've set up for me won't change anything at all." I yelled.

"Hey, don't snap at me, I'm not the one who set all this up, alright." Noah commanded, dropping his work facade

for just a moment as he smiled at my frustration. I had to remember he was my friend, and this wasn't his fault.

My anger was getting the better of me. I had been on edge for weeks now, and things were likely to get much worse with what was to come. Throw me into a battle with another pack and tell me I might not come back alive, and I'd jump in with both feet. Tell me that a rogue is challenging me for my position as Alpha and needs to be put into his place, and I will knock him down a peg or twenty. Tell me that a warlock has kidnapped a human child and needs to be dealt with stealth and precision, and I will be first on the scene.

But tell me I need to be made to socialize with a gaggle of giggling she-wolves that think they have a chance to be the next Luna, or think they have a chance to be the next one to warm my bed for a night. That they think they might have a chance at my money, or the status I could offer. Whatever the reason was, it would always be the same. They would always be the same. Women were shallow, useless creatures that used you to their own end and then just left you without so much as a word.

That's why I don't want a mate. Women only care for themselves. There may have been a few exceptions, like his mother. Before the incident, she was the greatest

woman in the world, without a doubt. But now, now she was just a shell of her former self. She just sat there, day in and day out, in a catatonic state, like a vegetable. She sat staring out the window and drooling on herself. She hadn't moved, spoken, showed any kind of life at all. Not since the betrayal seven years ago that had led to my father's death. The betrayal of a woman who only cared for herself and no one else. I couldn't let someone like that ruin my pack again, I simply wouldn't allow it.

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Chapter 4 - Trinity- Grandfather's Visit

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Trinity

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The first thing I noticed when I got home was that my

Aunt Eve had made my favorite dinner, Honey Garlic Pork Chops. The second thing I noticed was that Grandfather was there. I hadn't noticed him first because his car wasn't there and the food overpowered his scent, otherwise I would have smelled him long before I had seen him. No matter the circumstances, Grandfather used them against me, pointing out my lack of tracking his scent as further proof I was not one of them. I wish he would stop it already; I already knew I wasn't a wolf.

"I see you are the same as ever, Trinity."

"It's nice to see you too, Grandfather." I lied, with just the slightest hint of sarcasm in my voice. "To what do I owe the pleasure of having you visit me today?" I asked him. He grimaced. Grandfather knew I was forcing myself to be polite to him.

"I have come bearing warnings for the upcoming full moon gatherings. And I have prepared your attire for tomorrow's event."

"That is very kind of you Grandfather, but I already had something picked out." I told him. I had not expected him to buy me an outfit for the gathering.

"Did you buy it new for this occasion?" He asked, already seeming to scoff at my answer as if he was predicting an unfavorable response.

"No, but it is something that I have not really worn before."

"Then it is unacceptable. This is too important of an event. You must have a new outfit for tomorrow night and each of the subsequent events. There is still a chance you will meet your mate and be bonded from there onward. You must make the best first impression possible. For what other purpose did I spend my time and money training you?"

"I wouldn't know?" I told him, sounding annoyed. This was typical behavior for Grandfather, of course, but I had expected it to end when I turned eighteen and proved to be useless to him. But apparently, he was still hoping to marry me off to someone dumb enough to mate with a girl who had no wolf.

Grandfather had his secretary show me the dress that I would be wearing to the gathering tomorrow. It wasn't too bad, thank the Goddess. It was a dark midnight blue that would complement my pale complexion nicely. It was made of silk and felt wonderful to the touch. The hidden undertones in the blue were shining as the light hit it.

The front was cut a little low for my taste, but from there it went up into three straps on either side of the bodice, the straps went over the shoulders to connect and then fan out in the opposite directions. The straps connected to the sides of the dress and another purely decorative set of three straps came out across the lower back connecting in the middle.

Altogether, the straps created an elaborate design across the back. And with the bodice going up so high with the straps, the plunging line in the middle didn't seem so bad, but time would tell when I tried it on. It must have been either specially made or hemmed to be perfect for my height. Compared to the other women in the pack, I was short. Like, really short.

The average woman in the pack was around five-foot-nine. Some were taller, and some were shorter by only a margin of a couple inches. Me on the other hand, I was five feet five inches tall. Almost half a foot

shorter than all the women. And considering that all the men were taller than the women, that made them all tower over me.

There were the few rare cases where a man was closer to the height of the women, but none was shorter than five-foot-ten in the entire pack. That was another reason I was considered a freak among the pack. But the height could have been overlooked if only I had shifted into a wolf by the time that I was eighteen.

"It is very lovely, Grandfather." I told him, which was the truth. "But you did not need to go through the trouble of getting something so obviously expensive." I told him, reminding him that he was supposed to have cut me off. How am I supposed to go on in peace if you show up at random like this?

"I most certainly had to. Who knows what kind of monstrosity you would have chosen for tomorrow evening? You are the only unwed female in our family, we must put our best foot forward." He was of course slipping into his old ranting again. Couldn't you ever just do something because you love me or cared for me,

Grandfather? Is that too much to ask for? I asked myself while consciously trying to hold back the emotions that threatened me. Emotions had no effect on Grandfather, I had learned that long ago.

Grandfather had apparently decided to stay for dinner, which was unusual to say the least. But once he was gone and life was back to normal in the house, we were all able to relax. Even uncle Wesley got tense when Grandfather was around. But soon, the night was over, and the day of the dreaded gathering had arrived.

I was so nervous about that damned Harvest Moon Gathering that I couldn't sleep and was awake before the sun was even up. I went for my usual morning run earlier than I typically did so instead of just running the streets of the compound until I got to the exit and then running either to town or half way, depending on my mood, I decided to run out of the gates and then into the woods.

The ground there was more difficult to run on, but it also felt so invigorating to run in the woods. Having grown up with the forest nearby had given me a deep love for running among the trees. The dark canopy of leaves

above me, the musty earthy smell of the dirty churning beneath my feet. The smells of the forest were so familiar to me that I would recognize them anywhere.

I was running at nearly top speed when there was something in the way the forest smelled that I didn't recognize. Something that stirred something deep inside of me. Something that made all the hairs on the back of my neck stand at attention and all my senses go on high alert. They simultaneously screamed danger and I want more at the same time. I knew whatever, whoever, it was that I should not stick around.

There was someone else in the forest, or they had recently been there. Someone who smelled like chocolate, coffee, cinnamon, and the forest after the rain. It was sweet, spicy, and robust, and mixed with my favorite smells of the forest. It intrigued me to no end, but something told me that I needed to get away from that area, away from that scent, right away.

I turned around and ran as fast as I could back to the road. I ran back through the gate of the compound and didn't stop until I got back home. By the time I got there, my heart was about to burst out of my chest.

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Chapter 5 - Trinity- The Gathering At The Alpha's House

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Trinity

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After I was finished being primped and pampered by Aunt Eve and put in the dress that Grandfather had brought, I was ready for the dreaded gathering. Juniper and the others were going to pick me up on their way, it would be easier for me with them there.

When we left my house, which was located in the upper section of the compound thanks to my family's status, or previous status, we headed to the northernmost road. I had lived in the compound my whole life, but even so, I had never actually been to the Alpha's house before. I

had gathered with everyone at the clearing where important meetings and events were usually held, unless the weather was too bad. But I had never actually been to the Alpha's residence, and judging by Juniper's response, neither had she.

"This is actually exciting." She exclaimed as we drove up the long, long driveway that led up to the Alpha House. At the back of the compound there was a small road, but this road was actually a driveway. All the houses in the compound stopped before the forest started. All except for the Alpha's. The Alpha House was at the end of a two-mile-long driveway, weaving between the tall, thick trees as the road sloped ever upward. The farther into the forest you went, the higher into the mountains you went. The Alpha House wasn't very high, but it was still impressive to see.

I noticed several strings of lights strung between the trees. I was pretty sure that they had been hung just for the gathering tonight, but how was I supposed to know for certain. Whatever the reason for the lights, though, they gave off a beautiful yet eerie glow. It was strange, we had only left at a quarter to seven, but it looked like it was full dark outside now. The sun shouldn't have set

that quickly.

As we got closer to the house, I saw that several men about my age were directing people where to go. Cedar pulled the car to a stop and a man asked who would be attending the gathering as an unmated pack member.

"I will." Cedar and I both said at the same time.

"What is your name?" The man asked me, ignoring Cedar.

"Trinity." I told him, sounding a little confused.

"Last name?" He asked me, a stern tone in his voice. As far as I knew, I was the only pack member named Trinity.

"Whitton." I told him, now feeling annoyed. I noticed his jolt in surprise when he heard my name, I see my legacy is well known among the entire pack.

"Miss Whitton, you are in group number three. You will be

having your one on one and group meetings with the Alpha at the gathering in two months' time if he has yet to find a mate by then. Please, use this time to mingle with the other pack members. Should you happen to find a different mate among the pack, the Alpha would consider this gathering to be quite the success." I had no idea what-so-ever what he was talking about, but I nodded my head anyway and Cedar drove to the parking space that the man indicated for us.

We followed the lights further up the path. Soon, we came to a huge stone mansion. It looked like it had been there since the start of the 1900's, but had been beautifully restored and well maintained over time. It was easily 10,000 square feet, if not more. The place was massive. I could even see a tower sticking up in the roof, a tower of all things, like it was a castle. This is like a whole different world.

The gathering was being held outside. That was fine with me. I was overwhelmed just looking at that house, actually going inside it would be too much. There was a dance floor set up among all the dazzling lights. A beautifully decorated, yet somewhat tacky, screened tent was where all the food for the evening was being held. It

was beautiful because someone had tried their best to make it look amazing, tacky because try as you might you just can't hide those bug screens.

The gathering was apparently a buffet-style dinner, where we would all mingle, talk, dance, and do whatever. I just wanted to go home already. Granted, the food did smell very delicious.

The party, as everyone around me was calling it, was just getting into full swing. Juniper was dragging me around to all her friends to introduce me. Most of them seemed like they wanted to be friends, but that they couldn't go against what they had been told or taught for years. The end result was every single person I was introduced to sneering at me and asking why I even bothered to show up.

"I'm so sorry, Trin." Juniper was close to tears when the last of the people she had wanted to introduce me to had snubbed me.

"Don't worry about it, Juniper, I'm used to it by now." I told her with a reassuring smile.

"That makes it worse." She almost cried.

"It's really fine Juniper." I told her as I rubbed her arm gently.

"I'm going to go give them a piece of my mind, and you can't stop me." She began, seeing as I was about to try to do just that. She hurried away from me. I knew it would just end in failure for me to try to associate with so many different pack members. I was happy just having the few that I called friends now. It was more than I ever thought I would have.

I didn't want to join the party. Not to mention Juniper would have more fun with Paul and her other friends if I wasn't around. I could just stay out of everyone's way, and Grandfather would never know that I had completely blown off the party and ignored everyone there. It was a win-win for me.

I had just decided that I was going to ignore the party when I caught the faintest trace of that intoxicatingly dangerous scent from this morning. Whoever that scent

belonged to, he was here at the gathering, and I definitely did not want to see him!

I ducked under the string of lights and followed the line of trees a little further into the forest. I could tell that whoever it was I was avoiding had been in this part of the forest as well, but the scent was very old so it was not likely that I would run into him now. I found a tree that looked as if it had fallen down in a storm a very long time ago. It was half buried in the forest floor, making it low enough that I could sit on it easily, and the bark had been smoothed down, making it less rough for me to sit on. Feeling confident the tree wouldn't ruin my dress or feel uncomfortable against my legs, I settled in for a long wait.

Unfortunately, I hadn't been there for long before the scent started to get stronger. Much, much stronger. He was coming towards me and he was coming fast.

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Chapter 6 - Reece- My Wolf Smells Our Mate!

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Reece

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The evening was already giving me a headache. I welcomed the main group that had already arrived by seven, Noah told me I should have waited since there was still a steady stream of pack members coming up the path.

"If they couldn't be here by the time it started, that's on them." I growled as I stalked off in the direction of the group I was supposed to be 'entertaining' for the night. The sooner I met with them and found out if any of them were my mate, the better.

Truth be told, I had already smelled my mate. This morning, in fact. What were the odds? I had been running in the forest outside the compound, trying to burn off some of this pent-up frustration I've been feeling.

I was running with no clear goal in sight, just circling around and around. And on one of my laps around the forest, I happened to catch the faintest whiff of something different. Something that hadn't been there when I had started.

I followed the scent to where it was strongest among the trees. Whoever she was, she had been running through the trees the same as I was. The scent was intoxicating. It had my wolf on edge and was almost enough to make me lose all control over him.

Whoever she was, she smelled like warm apples, vanilla, and some sort of spice. It was like an apple pie, and it was mixed with the smell of the wind just before a thunderstorm. I could smell the slightest trace of ozone and rain in her scent. She smelled sweet, warm, and exciting. And I had to find her.

I followed the trail again, as it led out of the forest and back to the road. There were old trails that led toward town, but the freshest scent was heading back toward the

compound. I followed, but the mix of all the other wolves made it more difficult, still I wouldn't give up.

I had reached the upper section of the compound, meaning her family was high ranking. The elders would be happy about that. I didn't care. I didn't want a mate, my wolf clearly did, but I needed a mate. If I didn't find one soon, they would force me to step down and hand my pack over to my cousin Caleb. That spineless twit wouldn't know how to run the pack, we'd be ruined in no time.

No, I wasn't looking for this girl cause I wanted to, I had to. It made no difference that the smell of her was already tightening things in my body, and I was currently running around on four feet instead of two. No, simply put, I needed this mate.

"Alpha." I heard someone call out to me as I was getting close to finding where the scent was the strongest. Where my mate lived. "We have a problem." My Beta was calling out to me. Damn him, he would be getting an earful when we were back in my office. With a growl, I turned and ran back to my house in the forest.

I was now stalking toward the group of scantily clad

women. They all looked like the same type I was used to seeing. The only thing they were good for was a distraction. Taking my mind off something for a night but never to warm my bed again.

I've never slept with the same girl more than once. None of them have ever been worth my time for me to go back to them again. All they were after was my money, my power, my status. They never really wanted me, just what they could get from me.

The group was exactly as I thought they would be. Giggling incessantly, grabbing onto me constantly, throwing themselves at me with no regard for their dignity or self-respect.

I played nice with them for as long as I could, but after nearly an hour their chatter was like nails on a chalkboard. It was driving me insane. I had to get away from them. None of them were my mate. None of them smelled like the girl from this morning.

The longer I stayed with them, the longer it would be

until I actually found her. And wasting my time with these women was angering my wolf to no end. He didn't care about these useless she-wolves. I had to physically pull my wolf back by the scruff of his neck to stop him from changing.

I excused myself from the group. I hoped it was politely but judging by the looks on their faces it was probably more forceful and angrier than I had intended. I didn't care, I just wanted to get away from them and they would get over it.

I wanted to avoid as many of the pack members as possible. I didn't need them asking me how my mate search was going. I just wanted to be alone right now. I had to get away.

I had only made it halfway to the edge of the trees when I smelled her. She was here. My wolf roared within me. I nearly lost control of him again. I hauled him back with a grunt of frustration and followed my nose in the direction of the scent.

I did my best to avoid the people in my way as I hurriedly followed the scent. I admit I might have run into a few people or stepped on a few toes. But I paid no mind to

them. I just kept moving with a single-minded focus.

I passed by the edge of the dance floor. Ducked under the tacky lights the elders had insisted on stringing up everywhere. The scent was getting stronger the further I went into the trees. She was still here. It was not like this morning when she had disappeared before I got there.

The night was dark, and the forest was darker, but that didn't matter. I could see just fine in the dark, and tonight I would just need my nose. I closed my eyes and followed the scent. The smell was stronger with my eyes closed, so intoxicating.

The scent had almost reached a fever pitch. My wolf was howling nonstop inside my head. I couldn't even hear the sound of the forest around me. My entire world had zeroed in and had closed down to be nothing but the smell of the girl my wolf was searching for.

With my eyes still closed I took one last step, and my foot collided with a fallen tree. In a display of utter gracelessness, something I never expected to come from me, I fell onto the tree. What I discovered when I fell, was that the girl was there, hiding on the fallen tree.

I fell, literally on top of the girl. She yelped a cute, yet muffled, scream when I landed on her. My face was filled with a mass of hair that caused me to let out an actual growl of pleasure. I felt the girl stiffen beneath me and I could smell fear instantly mingle with her intoxicating scent. Why was she afraid?

I disentangled myself from her, standing up to get a look at the person that fate and my wolf both said was my mate. I grabbed her by the elbow and pulled her up with me.

"Oh my Goddess." I heard her gasp as I stood. She had clearly seen who I was and recognized me, but just as I was about to get a look at her face, I heard someone call from the nearby party.

"Trin are you out there?" A female was saying hesitantly.

The girl before me gasped again. And while I was distracted, looking toward the voice that had intruded on us she turned tail and ran back toward the party. She grabbed the girl's hand and ran as fast as she could.

I followed after her, closing in on them. I saw that they met up with two males that seemed confused and were heading down the drive. If I didn't hurry, she would get away again.

"Alpha Reece!" I heard one of the giggling she-wolves from earlier call out to me. In no time at all the entire group of fifteen she-wolves had surrounded me, blocking my path to follow her.

"Where were you Alpha?" One of the gigglers asked.

"We missed you." They were relentless.

"Get out of my way." I growled. I heard their collective gasps of fear and indignation. I didn't care. I had to follow them, I had to find the girl before she got away again.

I pushed my way through the women surrounding me. I weaved my way across the entire gathering as fast as I could. But by the time I got there, they had disappeared.

They were gone, and the scents were too mingled. I would have to track her another time. My wolf was furious. Unintentionally, I let loose a roar of displeasure that seemed to bring the entire gathering to a halt.

"Everyone leave! NOW!" I Yelled at everyone in attendance. I saw the fear, shock, and confusion on every face around me as I stalked back into the house. My wolf was angrier than he had ever been and if I didn't get him away from innocent people, they would be in danger.

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Chapter 7 - Trinity- The Alpha? Oh Goddess, I'm Doomed!

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Trinity

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I had been sitting there on the fallen tree, trying to hide away from the party, when that dangerously intoxicating scent had gotten stronger. I had wanted to get away from it. I had wanted to stay as far away from whoever it was as I possibly could. And yet, here I was with him coming right at me.

The best thing I could hope for would be him skirting around the area I was at. Being too focused on whatever he was searching for and leaving me alone. I hoped he would just not notice me.

"He probably doesn't notice my scent like I notice his." I whispered to myself.

Just as the scent was getting too strong for me to ignore, I saw his shadow in the distance. He was not going to skirt around me, he was coming right at me. I tucked myself into the tree, trying to hide as best as I could.

He was walking awkwardly. Almost like he was blind. He was moving slower than I would normally have expected someone to, even with walking among the trees. That was when I noticed he had his head tilted up and he

seemed to be following his nose.

I still couldn't see his face from this distance. What I could see was that he was tall, very tall. He was probably around six and a half feet tall. He was well built, more muscular than either of my cousins, or Cedar and Paul, which were the only comparisons I had that weren't much older than me.

I could tell he was going to run right into me. I couldn't do anything about it. I was too nervous to say anything to stop him. I could always pretend to have been asleep on the tree later. My best bet now was to just sit there and not move a muscle.

He took one final step and his foot collided with the tree. He fell forward landing right on top of me. My face slammed into his shoulder as he pushed me backward.

I screamed as I fell toward the forest floor with him pressed against me. The feel of him against me made my body jolt with surprise and something else I didn't quite understand yet.

At my scream he let out a low growl. I couldn't tell if he was mad or not. I stiffened at the sound, afraid of what he would do when he saw me.

I felt his weight lift off me. As he stood, he grabbed my elbow, a little forcefully, and pulled me up with him.

I pushed my hair out of my eyes, but it was still covering most of my face. As soon as I could see I looked into his face. What I saw made my heart fill with fear. The man standing before me was the Alpha. This can't be happening. I thought to myself.

"Oh my Goddess." I gasped in shock. But before the man could see who I was there was a mercifully angelic voice calling out to me, or it seemed that way to me.

"Trin are you out there?" It was Juniper, she was looking for me. I had been gone for quite a long time after all. I silently thanked her as I spun on my heels and ran toward her. I heard him growl behind me. He truly was angry that it was me he had run into. Of course he would be, he was the alpha, and I was a nobody. Oh Goddess, what is he going to do when he finds me. What's going to

happen to me? I was so scared.

"Trinity, what's wrong?" Juniper asked me.

"I've got to get out of here. Now." I told her, breathlessly.

"What happened?" She asked me. She had not seen the man in the forest with me, so she had not known what had happened.

"I don't want to talk about it, I just want to get out of here." I was on the verge of tears when I answered her.

"Trin are you ok?" Cedar asked as we came running up to them.

"Astro what happened?" Paul asked me. I just shook my head.

"I need to get out of here." They could see the fear in my eyes and hear the tears that threatened to spill into my voice.

"Let's go." Paul said, grabbing Juniper's hand.

"Yeah, come on." Cedar grabbed my arm and followed after them.

We made our way to the car as quick as we could. I slid into the front seat next to Cedar, Paul, and Juniper in the back. Cedar backed out of the spot he had parked in and hurried down the drive. He went a little faster than he should have, but honestly, I wanted him to go faster.

By the time we reached my house none of us had said a word. We made the entire drive in silence. I could not bring myself to tell them what happened. And if the alpha were to blame me for what happened in the forest, I may never see them again. But still, I could not tell them what happened.

"Will you be alright?" Juniper asked me. I shrugged my shoulders in response.

"I'm not going to press you for details, not yet, but when you're ready, we will all be here to listen. You hear that Astro." Paul told me. I nodded.

"I'm worried about you Trin, but I want you to know that we are all here for you." Cedar added. I smiled at all of them.

"Thank you, guys. And I am sorry for ruining your night."

"You're more important than some party." Cedar promised me.

"Yeah, what's a party when it comes to taking care of your friends?" Paul smiled at me.

"Call me when you're ready, ok Trin." Juniper implored, smiling. I was nearly crying from their kindness when I got out of the car. I was scared out of my mind, but I was so glad to have such great friends.

"Trinity, what's wrong?" Aunt Eve asked me as soon as I was inside, her green eyes opened wide in shock.

"Did something happen?" Uncle Wesley added, his dark brown eyes mirroring the shock in Eve's eyes. Wesley with his dark brown hair like my own, and Eve's hair that was a much lighter and softer brown, like chestnut, the sight of them was warm and comforting, they were home to me. I felt safer near them.

"Did someone do something to you?" Aunt Eve asked.

"No, nothing like that." I assured them. "But the party just wasn't for me." I told them.

"You look scared and on the verge of tears." Aunt Eve noted.

"That looks like more than the party not being for you. If someone was intentionally cruel to you, then that is unacceptable. We can lodge a complaint with the Alpha directly."

"NO!" I shouted. "No, there is no need to involve the alpha. Everything is fine. Don't worry. I just don't like going to these types of things." I grimaced at them.

"Are you sure?" Uncle Wesley asked me.

"I'm sure." I could feel their love for me, they cared for me so much.

"Hey." We heard a voice call from the door as we were talking. Carter seemed to have come home.

"Hey Carter, why are you home so early?"

"The party is over." He said, shrugging his shoulders.

"The alpha got really upset about something and ordered everyone to go home. It was the strangest thing."

"Wow, I wonder what it was." Aunt Eve asked him.

"No clue." Carter muttered before looking at me. "What happened to you at the party?" He asked. I jumped at his question. Carter, unlike Eve and Wesley, had always been able to tell when I was lying to him. But I still didn't want him to know what was going on.

"Everyone that Juniper introduced me to was rude and mean. They all snubbed me and made fun of me for even going to the party. It just got to be more than I can handle."

"Those assholes." He growled. "What makes them think that they're any better than you are?"

"They're wolves and I'm not." I told him simply. It was the truth after all.

"That doesn't matter, you're still part of the pack." He was so frustrated. I loved him for that, he would always defend me.

"Thank you, Carter."

"For what."

"Nothing." I said as I threw my arms around him, hugging him tight. He was my rock in the pack and

always seemed to calm me down. Looking up at him with his dark hair that was so like my own, like our whole family's, and his green eyes that were closer to my shade of blue, I was reminded again how much like a brother he was to me.

"You're being weird." He noted. He sounded annoyed, but he hugged me back none-the-less.

"I know." I laughed at him. "I'm tired though, I'm gonna get ready for bed." I tried to smile at them cheerily, but I wasn't sure if it came out that way.

I trudged up the stairs to my room. The solace I felt at being in a space that was all mine was almost enough to make me feel better. Almost. But there was still no telling what the alpha would do to me. It might be nothing. Then again, I could be banished from the pack.

Banishment wasn't so bad, except that meant never seeing my family again, or the few friends I had managed to make. And if that were to happen, then Grandfather truly would cut me off completely. I would be on my own with no way to support myself. It was a scary thought, but I would manage somehow. Lots of other people do it every day.

I stripped off the dress Grandfather had given me. It had begun to make me feel disgusting somehow. Like the dress itself played a role in everything. I knew that was not true, I was just looking to pass the blame somewhere.

Once I was out of the dress, I took a long hot shower in my bathroom. One of the upsides to Uncle Wesley's house was that all of us had our own private bathroom, and there was more than one hot water heater so we never really had to worry about someone else needing hot water at the same time. I was able to stand under the steaming water until I felt the stress from the evening start to leave my body.

After showering and feeling somewhat calmer, I dried off and dressed for bed in a pair of comfy baby blue fleece pajama bottoms and matching long-sleeved tee-shirt. But after crawling into bed, the memories of the alpha's growls returned. It seemed nothing was going to make this night any better. I really am doomed.

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Chapter 8 - Reece- She Got Away, AGAIN!

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Reece

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After stalking back into the house, I made my way to my office. I did my best not to shift as I stomped through the halls. And I tried really hard not to destroy anything along the way. I only managed one of those tasks, and as I walked into my office on two feet, shifting was what I had not done.

I don't even remember what all I tossed, smashed, or threw recklessly around the rooms and halls I passed as I made my way to my office. It didn't matter. My wolf was angry, and I would only be able to hold him back for so long before he lost all control.

I slammed the door behind me, still wanting to be alone. I could hear the numerous sets of footsteps following behind me as they sought to know exactly what had happened tonight. Nobody knew why I had ended the event early and roared at everyone to leave. Nobody knew why I was so rightfully and thoroughly pissed off. If only they did know.

"Doesn't she know what's happening?" I growled to myself as I flung my chair out from under my desk with more force than I intended. It flew toward the window, had it not been reinforced glass it would have crashed through and fallen to the ground three floors below.

"Does she not know that she is my mate? Can she not tell by my scent like I can tell by hers? What is wrong with her? Is she just frightened? Was she just overwhelmed because I am the alpha?" These were all questions I wanted answered but had no one to ask them of. For the rest of this evening I just wanted to be alone.

"Alpha?" I heard an insistent knock on my office door. I growled in response. "We need to talk about this evening." He demanded. Michael was the most persistent

of the elders, he was the typical liaison for them and therefore one of the biggest thorns in my side lately. I was really starting to dislike him.

"Not now." I roared toward the door.

"We need to discuss the events that transpired this evening Alpha." Michael insisted.

"I said not right now." I roared in an even louder tone of voice. "We can discuss things tomorrow, but for now go away and leave me be." I made it a command knowing full well he would be forced to obey.

"As you wish, Sir." He conceded. I could not see him through the door, but I knew he would be bowing his head at least. Good, he will not be bothering me for the rest of the night.

I needed to run. I needed to think. I needed to find her. These were the thoughts that were running through my mind. I opened the balcony door and stepped outside, taking a breath of fresh air. If I didn't shift soon, I was likely to lose control on the wrong person.

Looking down at the ground three stories below I kicked off my shoes. I was too impatient to take my time, but good shoes were harder to replace than clothes.

Once the shoes were safely set aside, I leapt from the balcony and shifted in mid-air. I landed on all fours, my paws digging into the dirt. I could feel the dirt and leaves pushing up between my toes, it was a familiar and comforting feeling.

I knew it would be a bad idea if I ran toward town. I would be tempted to find her and drag her back here. I didn't know if I wanted to scold her for running away or claim her. My thoughts were so conflicted between my human mind and wolf mind. But I knew if I went to find her tonight, I was just likely to frighten her. She had already seemed scared of me for some reason.

I spent most of the night running in the mountains. The higher I climbed the harder the run got which was exactly what I needed. I could feel the frustration ebbing away with each passing hour.

It was nearly dawn when I finally made it back to the house. I shifted and walked as quietly as I could to my room. A long hot shower was what I needed now.

Usually I showered quickly, get in, wash, get out, there was no reason to linger. But this time I saw the merit in lingering. The hot water seemed to be melting away my anger and frustrations, leaving behind the exhaustion that I had hoped the run would leave me with.

After the shower I dried and dressed in a pair of hunter green sleepers and a dark gray t-shirt. I was exhausted. From the morning run, finding and losing my mate twice in one day, the gathering, and the evening run. I was physically and mentally spent. I drifted into an uneasy sleep.

I kept dreaming about a girl. A girl that I had only glimpsed fully in the distance. I had seen her figure just fine when I was up close, but I hadn't seen her face at all. She was short, slim, but sporty. I felt the firmness of muscles beneath the skin of her arm, but that didn't take away from the soft supple feel of her skin.

She was so much shorter than me, it seemed she was shorter than most of the she-wolves were, but it could have just been the way we were standing. I was taller even than the average male, so all women, even pack women, were short to me.

When she was running from me, I had seen that her hair was long and dark brown. It flowed down her back in hypnotic waves. And the color of her skin, it looked like it had been kissed by the moon. She was pale but not sickly pale, it looked like a natural color on her. And it made her look beautiful. If only I have seen her face. I kept telling myself in the dream. Then I would have a complete picture.

My body was reacting to her, even from the memory inside the dream. I felt the jolt run through me when I first fell on her and again when I grabbed her arm. Our bodies would call to each other until the mating was complete, until I marked her.

As the dream progressed, things started to turn dark. There was a dark purple cloud that started to fill not just the sky but was also creeping across the land. It was unnatural and everything it touched seemed to scream in pain and agony. Pack members were running from it in fear and the girl that would be my mate was standing just

out of my reach as the cloud engulfed her. When it dissipated, she was gone. I had no clue where she was.

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Chapter 9 - Reece- Meeting With The Elders, I've Got A Mate!

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Reece

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"Alpha!" I heard someone shout in the dream, causing me to jerk awake with a start. That was when I noticed the knocking at my door. "Alpha, it is time for you to rise, it is nearly noon." I could hear my assistant, Noah, calling to me from the other side of the door.

"Fine." I growled at him as I got out of bed. I hurriedly washed my face and dressed for the day.

Once I was ready and left my room, Noah was there waiting for me.

"You have missed several appointments already this morning." He informed me.

"It's Sunday." I grumbled.

"You're a busy man, busy men never have a day off." He informed me in his straight-laced uptight tone of voice.

"Is that why I have to see your ugly mug every day?" I asked him with a laugh.

"Laugh it up Reece, but if I wasn't here half of your work would never get done." He growled, dropping his butler voice.

"I never have you do my work for me." I growled at him.

"I never said you did, but if I weren't here, then there would be no one to make you do your own work."

"Fair point." I smiled at his words, like I said, he was the only one I had met capable of being my assistant. He made sure everything in the pack got done properly, and he was one of my best friends. One of the only people I could ever truly be myself around.

"The elders have been hounding me all morning about what happened last night. And there were several important phone calls you were supposed to take. I handled them myself as they were not beyond my ability, but honestly, you really should have been ready for work much sooner."

"Then why did you let me sleep so long?" I asked him, annoyed.

"I simply didn't have the time to come and wake you myself until now. And the ladies on the staff were too afraid to do so on their own. Apparently, you were so angry last night they didn't know if you would take it out

on them for disturbing you this morning." Noah was not so politely telling me that I had lost my shit, and everyone was now walking on eggshells afraid that I would snap at them or on them, literally biting them.

"I managed to get mostly calmed down before bed. But I have to admit, I am glad you woke me, I was having a crazy dream."

"Crazy good or crazy bad." He asked, wiggling his brows.

"If it was the good kind, I wouldn't be happy you woke me up."

"There is such a thing as too much of a good thing. But I don't think you've ever experienced that, you minimalist." He sneered at me playfully. I just growled at him in response.

"Growl all you want Cujo, we have work to do."

"What's the top of the list?" I asked him.

"The meeting with the Elders." He smirked, pushing open my office door, revealing the five old men sitting in the various chairs and sofas. I growled low in the back of my throat. "They're your problem now." He said as he walked into my office ahead of me. "Sorry to keep you gentlemen waiting, the Alpha is ready for his meeting with you all." I glared at the back of his head, wishing I could rip it off in that moment.

The Elders were used to being treated as the top priority, so they had not taken kindly to being pushed aside the night before and made to wait this morning.

"Sorry gentlemen, I had a late night and overslept. My assistant was kind enough to finally come and rouse me from my slumber just recently."

"This is all very unlike you, Reece my boy." Frederick, the oldest of the Elders and my great uncle said sounding concerned. "Is everything alright."

"Everything is fine, I assure you." I gave them a placating smile.

"What happened last night boy?" Oswald, second oldest and my least favorite Elder demanded.

"My, I thought you knew, but the Harvest Moon Gathering was last night." I told him.

"That's not what I meant, and you know it." He growled at me. "I meant, why did you end the party early and demand that everyone was to leave?"

"Ah, well, that is a bit complicated." I grumbled trying to avoid the subject.

"Complicated how?" Michael asked me firmly. He made it clear they were not going anywhere unless I answered them or made them leave. I truly didn't want to make five old me leave by force, so I had no choice but to answer them.

"I believe I found my mate." I told them, making it sound simple.

"That is wonderful."

"Congratulations boy."

"Excellent son."

"This is cause for celebration."

"You should be overjoyed." They all congratulated me at once. The cacophony of voices mixed together just made my head hurt.

"It's not that simple." I told them.

"What's not simple?" Michael asked me skeptically.

"I don't know who she is." I told them, this part angered me the most, and it seemed to shock everyone else in the room. I heard the collective sound of six gasps rend through the air. Even Noah was shocked by this.

"But don't you know everyone in the pack by face at least?" Michael asked me.

"I didn't see her face. There were things obstructing my line of sight, and unfortunately she ran away with her friends before I could catch her."

"How did she manage to run away from you?" Noah scoffed.

"That gaggle of giggling she-wolves that you all insisted I spend the entire night with surrounded me as soon as they saw me come back from the forest."

"Was she among that group? We can track her down that way." Oswald seemed hopeful.

"Of course she wasn't, all the girls last night were shallow and had no self-respect. They smelled of greed and manipulation."

"Then where did you meet this girl?" Michael asked me.

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Chapter 10 - Reece- Noah's Got Some Bad News!

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Reece

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"I had needed a break, so I excused myself from the group. I was headed for the trees when I smelled her scent. Truth be told I had smelled her that morning too, but she had already left the woods when I came across her trail. I had almost tracked her down when Caleb called me about a rogue trying to cause problems. I had tracked her to the upper area of the compound, but that was as close as I got until the party." I could see the Elders looking at me with excitement, encouraging me to go on.

"When I smelled her again, I hurried in her direction. I followed the scent into the forest and out to a fallen tree. There I ran into her hiding on the tree."

"Ran into her?" Noah asked me.

"I was following my nose, not my eyes." I snapped at him, which only made him laugh. "Whatever. Anyway, I tripped and landed on her. The smell was so strong that my wolf had no doubt, she was my mate. I had just pulled her to her feet, but her hair, her long dark hair had fallen into her face when she fell. She managed to see me and notice who I was."

"She gasped and was scared. But then a girl called out to her, and she took advantage of my momentary distraction and bolted. She grabbed the girl's hand, and they left the party with two males. I tried to follow but that gang she-wolves wouldn't let me pass until I snapped at them. By the time I got to where the cars were parked, they were gone, and all their scents had mingled inside the car."

"I could have chased after them, but I would have gotten more frustrated having to track her scent mixed among so many others that way, and there was no telling if she had stayed in the compound or not after that. So, I figured the best option would be to send everyone home before they were in danger from my wolf's frustrations."

"This is not good."

"We need to find her." The Elders were starting with their crap already.

"You think I don't know that. I need to finish the mate circle so that the pack can be whole. I know that. I understand that just fine. You do not have to lecture me. I know that with every passing day, my pack is weakened by its lack of a Luna. I'll find her and bring her back. Don't you worry."

"Well, out with it boy, tell us everything you can about her. Tell us what we can use to identify her."

"I don't know much." I admitted to them. "I know she lives in the upper part of the compound, because her scent is strongest there. I know she is a lot shorter than

me, but so is basically every woman in the pack. She had dark brown hair. And her friend called her Trin." At that last part I heard Noah's sharp intake of breath. I looked at him and he seemed uncomfortable for some reason. He noticed my stare.

"Alpha Reece, can we talk?"

"Talk." I told him.

"Privately." He insisted. That was unlike him.

"Very well. Gentlemen, please excuse us." I left the Elders in my office and went down the hall to a rarely used conference room.

"What is it?" I demanded of him as soon as we were in the room.

"I think I know who the girl is." He told me.

"Really?" I asked, sounding hopeful. But even with my mood lifting ever so slightly Noah looked as if he were

about to tell someone their puppy had died. Why was he dreading this conversation so much? "Who is it?" I asked him, now not certain I wanted to know.

"If I am right, it's my cousin, Trinity." I should have known from the start. The nickname, Trin. There were no other girls in the entire pack named Trinity or had a name similar to it enough to have the nickname Trin. Why hadn't I connected the dots sooner?

"Your cousin?" I asked bewildered.

"Yes." He looked as if he really didn't want to be telling me this.

"That is the girl that I think it is isn't it?" Noah just nodded his head. "She never changed did she? She never got a wolf?"

"No, she did not." Noah admitted, shaking his head. This was why he had not wanted to tell me. And why he had insisted on talking alone. I felt the growl start to rumble

low in my chest long before I ever heard it.

"This cannot be!" I roared. "There is no way that I can mate with a girl that does not even have a wolf. She will be too weak. She will be inferior. She will not be strong enough to be a Luna." I could see the emotions conflicting on Noah's face. He loved the girl, she was his cousin, his family, and I had heard him say she was like a sister to him. But here he was telling his alpha that this girl was supposed to be the next Luna, and he knew she wouldn't be strong enough.

"There is no way she can handle the role of Luna, the threat it will pose to her and the pack. It will make us the laughingstock of the entire wolf community. But that is beside the point. She simply would never be strong enough to handle any situation that were to arise. She would be nothing but a weak, senseless liability." I growled.

There was no way in Hell I would take her as my mate. My wolf be damned. I would find a new mate. I would do whatever I had to do to make this problem go away. She simply was not fit to be my Luna. I never wanted a mate to begin with and I certainly wasn't going to take a weak girl that was just one step away from being human as my mate. No way in Hell.

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Chapter 11 - Trinity- I Tried To Avoid Trouble, Now I Might Die?

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Trinity

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When I woke the next morning, I had decided to skip my morning run. I didn't think it was safe considering all that had happened. I decided to text Juniper and ask if she had any plans for the day and to see if she was willing to help distract me for the day. Her and Paul were one of the few couples who had decided to live off the compound after they were mated. They were still in school and wanted to act young and carefree. I was basically using

her as an excuse to hide away somewhere off the compound, but I don't think she would mind.

Cedar was the one to come pick me up since he still lived on the compound with his parents. We drove into town and met up with Juniper and Paul at the movie theater. We planned to have a whole day to distract me. They didn't ask me a thing about the night before, which made me grateful. They truly were the best.

We saw a double feature, all the while stuffing ourselves with popcorn and junk food. After which we went to the mall and I had a little bit of retail therapy with Juniper while the guys showcased their reflexes for the whole world to see at the arcade, men never truly grew up.

After shopping we had a late lunch where we complained about everything we possibly could in our lives, it was nice to just vent and get the frustrations out. But still, I didn't say anything about the previous night.

We decided to go back to Juniper and Paul's place after that. Several card games, board games, movies, and a

very unhealthy delivery dinner later, and I was ready to pass out on their floor. I could feel someone carrying me and based on scent I could guess it was Cedar, he truly acted like a doting big brother just like my cousins did. He laid me on the couch, and someone covered me in a blanket. I instantly fell into a deeper sleep.

I Dreamt of the alpha coming for me again. Banishing me. Beating me. Doing Goddess knows what to me. But every time I saw his face, it both terrified me and excited me. I wish my body would make up its mind. Does he scare me or excite me? Same with his scent. Is it dangerous or intoxicating? Why do I find it both?

The next morning, we had our usual classes. I hadn't intended to sleep over at their house but the early mornings and troubled sleep two nights in a row made me fall asleep much sooner than expected. So, I ended up borrowing some of Juniper's clothes for the day. She was so much taller than me, that I had no choice but to wear shorts. Thankfully, it was still pretty warm out, even though it was the beginning of October.

I would have to skip my training though. As much as I would like to follow my typical routine, I just couldn't train without my gym bag. So, I texted Jim and let him know that I wouldn't be there today. He texted back that

he understood, and he'd see me next time. When I turned my phone on to send the message though, I saw that I had several voicemails and text messages from my family. Noah had left several of them, so had Carter and Aunt Eve. I was worrying them, and that broke my heart. I would have to explain everything to them when I got home.

Class went about the same as usual. I was glad that I had turned my assignments in online Friday before everything had happened. Once our day was over, I decided to grab lunch with Juniper and the guys before heading home. They had plans in the city, and I didn't want to inconvenience them any further, so I decided to walk back to the compound. Besides, I could use the extra time to think.

The walk from the restaurant back to the compound would take me around forty-five minutes. From the gates up to the house about another thirty. That was if I didn't run any of it. Running would help with the pent-up frustrations, but it would get me home that much sooner. Getting home sooner meant I would have to explain things that much sooner as well. I had to make a decision here.

I had decided to walk to the compound, I would decide on whether to jog from the gates home when I got there. I was only about a mile from the gate when I sensed someone running at me at full speed. It was the scent of a wolf I had never smelt before so I knew I didn't know him. And judging by the set of his ears and the growl coming from him I could tell he wasn't here for a friendly chat. Oh Goddess, did the Alpha send him after me? I asked myself.

Before I could think too much on the situation I spun out of his way, causing him to barrel past me and skid into a tree. There was a possibility that this was a nomad, a rogue. If that was the case, then he wouldn't know the forest as well as I did. I turned and darted into the trees. He got to his feet quickly and followed after me.

I could hear his rumbling growl behind me. He was faster than me, but I would have the element of surprise on my side. He would not be expecting me to know how to defend myself like this.

I let him get closer to me, a little too close for comfort in truth. Then I jumped to the side and used the tree as a springboard, flipping in the air to land a double kick on

top of his head. I heard a satisfying thud as my heels made contact and heard an even more satisfying yelp of pain. He was momentarily dazed by the blow.

Once he recovered, he was chasing me again. Gaining on the lead I had won myself in his confusion. I could hear his panting breath as he came up behind me. This time instead of using the tree as a springboard, I slid down to the ground, lying flat on my back. I used the combined momentum of my slide and his run, adding to that I threw my feet up pressing them into his soft underbelly, I sent him flying up and over me to collide with the tree I had been running towards.

He roared in frustration. He was not expecting me to catch him so off-guard like this. He thought I would be easy prey. Well, think again pal.

No sooner had I thought that though, my foot caught the roots of the tree as I tried to stand. It wasn't long, but it cost me dearly in my fight to gain a lead and plan my next attack.

He recovered from his collision with the tree sooner than I had expected and was after me almost immediately. I hadn't had time to get enough of a lead.

This time he caught up with me instantly and pounced on me. We rolled through the dirt and leaves. When we came to a halt, he was pinning me to the forest floor with his teeth bared in front of my face.

I was scared, more terrified than I had ever been in my life. But I wasn't about to show him that. I couldn't move my arms with his massive paws pinning my shoulders to the ground, but I could still move my legs. I brought my knee up into his belly. I must have hit a tender spot because he growled fiercely in my ear and set his teeth against my throat.

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Chapter 12 - Trinity- I've Done What Now? Oh Goddess, Help Me!

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Trinity

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Before I could even see what happened the weight holding me down was gone. There was the sound of wolves snarling and snapping at each other. I had never seen either of these wolves before, but I definitely recognized the scent of the second wolf that had arrived. It was the Alpha. Oh Goddess, what is he doing here? I thought. But then I noticed that he seemed to be attacking the wolf that attacked me. So, either he didn't send that wolf and wasn't mad at me, or he wanted to deal with me himself.

I was stunned for a moment. And hypnotized. Watching the two wolves fight each other. Plus, I had never seen the Alpha in his wolf form, and the other night was the first time I had seen his face up close. Why was I seeing so much of him lately?

When he was in wolf form his fur was mostly black, he had gray around his face and on his underbelly that extended down around the insides of his legs and under his tail. His wolf eyes were a bright gold, a slight contrast to the deep rich honey golden color I had seen the other night. In either form he was gorgeous. And he took my breath away. But since his wolf form stood about as tall as me with paws larger than my head, lethal was the word I should be using for him.

I heard more people approaching us followed by a loud yelp. The wolf who had attacked me was now lying motionless on the ground.

Coming back to my senses I got to my feet and started to turn away from the scene. I was going to run for my life, but I was halted by a deep, smooth voice. It felt like something deep inside of me was churning just listening to that voice. I had heard it before but had never felt a reaction like this.

"Don't you dare run again. Stay right where you are." He told me. I had no choice but to stay. I knelt on the ground and sat on my heels with my head bowed. I was

too afraid to look at him.

"Trinity." I heard Noah's voice, as the others I had heard coming towards us were finally close enough to see what had happened. They would have made it sooner if they had changed into wolf form, but there had to be someone around to carry the extra clothes for the Alpha, and to carry the prisoner that was now lying unconscious on the ground.

"Noah?" I called out to him, confused.

"Dammit Trinity, why didn't you check your messages?" He asked me with anger clear in his voice.

"I figured you were all just angry at me for not telling you that I was not coming home last night. I was going to explain everything when I got home."

"Explain what?" I heard the Alpha growl behind me. It was clear he didn't like me, his voice made that abundantly clear.

"Why I was acting so weird the last few days and why I

was gone last night."

"Where were you?" Noah asked before the Alpha had a chance.

"I fell asleep at Juniper's house after spending the day hanging out with her and her mate. I hadn't intended to, but I had two nights of broken sleep and two early mornings in a row. The exhaustion caught up to me." I was looking at Noah out of the corner of my eye. He had handed the Alpha a bundle of clothes and was staring at me in disbelief. I was still not ready to look at the Alpha.

"Why did you leave so early yesterday? Why was your phone off all day? Why were you ignoring your family?" Noah threw question after question at me.

"I wasn't ignoring you. When I was with Juniper, we went to the movies and saw a double feature, I had to turn my phone off. I'm sorry Noah." I put my sincerest feelings into my voice, hoping he would understand.

"Why didn't you tell anyone what happened at the Harvest Moon Gathering?" He asked me.

"What are you talking about?" I asked him, playing innocent. I heard the Alpha roar behind me. "Are you referring to how I got in the Alpha's way and angered him? How I have been wondering how he will punish me ever since?" I asked Noah, letting the Alpha know very clearly that I hadn't intended for it to happen and I have been stressing over it ever since.

"Do you not know what happened?" Noah asked me.

"What are you talking about?" I asked him.

"Trinity, you mated."

"Mated?" I shouted. "With who?"

"With me." I heard the Alpha growl behind me, the sound of his voice made me shiver and made the hairs on the back of my neck stand up all at the same time.

"What are you saying?" I asked them. "That can't be true. I can't mate with anyone, especially the Alpha." I pleaded.

"Trinity, when the Alpha is near, do you notice his scent stronger than anyone else's?" Noah asked me.

"Yes."

"Don't you know what that means?" He made it clear that he thought I was being slow on purpose.

"I've never been around the Alpha before. I didn't know how his presence affected the pack. How was I supposed to know that the Alpha wasn't like that with everyone?" The Alpha growled at my words.

"Are you ignorant of our culture as well?" He asked in a condescending tone.

"No, I am not ignorant. But having never come face to

face with the alpha of my pack, I did not know if he would have that kind of effect on more than just me. No one ever talked about the scents of a mate bond when I was growing up, so all my knowledge is on a purely academic level." I was growing frustrated with the two of them.

"Well, I am here to tell you now, girl, you are my mate. And you're coming with me."

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Chapter 13 - Trinity- Into The Alpha House

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Trinity

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The Alpha's words scared me. I was his mate. How could this be? I wasn't supposed to be able to mate with

anyone in the pack. And here I was mated to the Alpha of all people. How did this happen? How could I get away from this?

"Reece, be nice." Noah pleaded with him. The Alpha just growled in response. I had never actually heard the Alpha called by his first name before, so it was a shock to hear my cousin talk to him like a friend. "Come on Trinity, let's go." Noah beckoned me towards him with a wave of his hand. The Alpha said nothing in protest to this, so I got up slowly and walked to Noah's side.

I chanced a look up at the Alpha. I wanted to see his face. To see what type of mood he was in. I regretted it instantly. The look on his face was almost cold enough to freeze me in place. If looks could kill. I thought to myself. The only good thing was that he had managed to get dressed while my back was turned, so I didn't have to add the embarrassment of seeing him naked to the long list of things he seemed mad at me about.

I followed Noah to the car, the Alpha had taken the lead and was waiting for us in the driver's seat when Noah opened the back door.

"Get in." The Alpha grumbled to me immediately. I slid in across the seat and Noah got in next to me.

"Do you understand what is going to happen now?" Noah asked me.

"In theory." I admitted. This was true. I know what happened when mate bonds were formed. I knew what was expected from a normal couple. But I had no idea what would be expected of me in this situation. I could only speculate. The Alpha scoffed at my answer.

"We will discuss it in detail later then." Noah told me, a slight smile on his face. It was clear he had hoped he didn't have to be the one explaining everything to me. I just nodded my head and sat there, trying to process everything that had happened today.

"More importantly, are you hurt?" Noah asked me. I saw the Alpha's eyes flicker toward me in the mirror, almost like there was hope in them.

"Just a few scrapes and bruises." I told them. "If he

hadn't caught me so quickly that last time, I would have nothing. But unfortunately, my foot caught the roots as I was getting back to my feet." I heard a snicker at my words come from the front seat. The Alpha thought me fighting for my life was funny. "If I had not fought, I would surely be dead by now." Anger was filling my voice. Why was he scoffing and laughing at everything I said? A mate isn't supposed to act like that. I saw anger fill his eyes at my tone of voice. He wasn't happy with how I was talking to him.

We made it to the house. The one I thought was too big and never wanted to go inside. The one that looked so massive I was likely to get lost every time I left a room. The house that made me gulp in fear and hesitate at the threshold. Once I go inside everything will change, it will all be different.

Noah pushed gently on my back, urging me forward to follow the Alpha as he led the way into the dark looming house. It was still daylight outside, and there were plenty of windows letting in plenty of lights, but it felt as if I would be swallowed by the dark if I went in the house.

However, I had no choice but to follow him inside. I took a deep breath and stepped forward. We had come in through a back entrance near the garage, so we had

entered through the kitchen.

It was a kitchen so massive and pristine that it was unlike anything I had ever seen before. There were two massive side-by-side refrigerators, there seemed to be four ovens built into the walls, in a two by two square pattern. There was a massive walk in pantry that I could see out of the corner of my eye, and more kitchen utensils than I could name. It was definitely a dream kitchen.

There seemed to be an informal dining area located in the kitchen as well. There was seating at the counter with bar stools as well as a table and chairs that seemed cozy and almost out of place.

Beyond the kitchen there was a hallway with some storage rooms that led down to a formal dining room that was so massive it just seemed ostentatious.

The Alpha just continued to stomp along past all of these rooms. Down more hallways until he got to a massive set of stairs that led up. He climbed them in silence with Noah and me following.

He went up the stairs, then even more, until we were on the third floor. He quietly continued to stomp his way down the hallway until he came to the door he was looking for. He pushed the door open with great force and led the way inside. Noah once again pushed me on the back, urging me in, so I took another deep breath and nervously entered the room.

I saw that the Alpha had gone to stand at the back of the room, leaning against the window and glaring at the room and everyone in it. Aside from the Alpha there were five elderly men I had never seen before as well as my Grandfather, my Aunt Eve and Uncle Wesley, and Carter. Since Noah had come in behind me, it meant that my whole family was here. Oh Goddess. I said to myself. This could not end well.

"Shall we get right to business?" One of the old men spoke in a gravelly voice, standing up and walking toward me.

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Chapter 14 - Trinity- Truly Seeing The Alpha

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Trinity

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"Hello young one, I am one of the five elders of the pack, my name is Michael." He said spreading both of his hands before me in a show of welcome. "I would like to welcome you here with us today Luna. What shall we call you?" He asked me. I could not believe the words that were coming out of his mouth. I was momentarily stunned. However, that did not last long, I caught sight of Grandfather and knew he would be disappointed if I did not keep my composure.

"My name is Trinity." I told him with as much confidence as I could force into my voice.

"Ahh, Trinity, what a lovely name for a lovely girl."
Michael cooed, clearly attempting to flatter me. I turned

to look at Carter sitting with the others, an incredulous look on my face, but Carter was just looking at me with a look of shock and fear. That just frightened me more.

"Now then Trinity, let us discuss what all of this means for you and the pack." Michael indicated a chair for me to sit down. Knowing that it would cause more problems if I refused, I accepted his offer and allowed him to guide me to the seat.

From the seat I could see everyone in the room. It was like a throne that sat opposite of the Alpha's desk that was almost like his own throne in the room. I saw my family looking at me with concern, everyone but Grandfather. Grandfather was looking at me with his usual sneer, but it was mixed with an unusual amount of pride and well-maintained gloating.

The elders were all looking at me curiously. The five of them looked so similar yet so different. They were all old and wizened. They had gray hair and their skin was yellowing around the edges. But their eye colors were different, and the angles of their facial features were different.

The most interesting person in the room by far, was the Alpha. I had always seen him from afar. And the other night I had seen him up close for the first time. The sight of which was enough to take my breath away. But seeing him now, being able to look for more than a glance, I was able to appreciate things I had never noticed before.

I was able to appreciate things like how when the light hit his hair just right it looked like it was shining with the glint sapphires. Like the jet-black color had started to turn blue in places. Like how his honey-golden eyes seem to track even the smallest movements made in the room, and that they seemed so deep that I could get lost in them.

I seemed to notice how his high cheekbones, angular jaw, and full lips were drawing all of my attention, causing me to need to force my eyes away from them. Looking down only made it worse though. I saw how the muscles in his arms and chest strained against the shirt he was wearing. The fabric was clinging to him almost like a second skin making every line stand out in eye-popping detail.

His tall muscular frame was leaning against the window. I knew he was taller than most members of the pack. He

was at least a foot taller than I was. He looked strong, powerful, and lethal.

Yet, in that moment, seeing him and smelling him so close to me, all I felt for him was lust. I didn't know why.

Every time I had smelled his scent before it had frightened me. And it still did, to be honest. But the lust was overpowering it at the moment. Perhaps seeing him there, getting to see him so clearly, made it that much more powerful.

I heard someone clear their throat, I nearly jumped in response, startled by the interruption to my ogling of the Alpha. Goddess, they probably know what was going through my head. I thought. At least he was avoiding looking at me.

"Now then Trinity." Another of the Elders was speaking to me. "There is much we need to discuss and plan so that we may all move forward. As you are probably well aware, it is a joyous occasion that the Alpha has finally found his mate after nearly six long years." The old man

was saying in his wizened old voice.

I just nodded my head in response. Of course I understood, the whole pack had been waiting for him to find his mate for the longest time. That was the point of that whole gathering that would forever be the worst night of my life. But I didn't know what he wanted me to say in response, so my nod would have to suffice.

"Now, as you know, we will have to hold the claiming ceremony. There you will be marked in front of the entire pack." Michael, the elder who spoke earlier added. My eyes opened wide at his words. In front of the whole pack?

"Now, there is nothing to be afraid of my dear." Another man was saying. "We simply need to introduce you to the pack as the new Luna and have the Alpha mark you as his own. Of course, it won't be the final marking, that will be private between the two of you. But it will be a show of possession in front of the entire pack. Marking you as his so no others try to stake a claim."

This man's words were not calming me down in the slightest. What exactly did these people think I was capable of doing. I can't do these things. Especially not in

front of so many people. This would definitely not end well for me.

"Don't worry Trinity, it will be quick, and we will all be there for you." Noah assured, having sensed my fear and hesitation at the old man's words. I just nodded at him. I didn't trust myself to speak here, I would likely end up screaming instead.

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Chapter 15 - Trinity-New Home

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Trinity

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"You will, of course, need to move." Michael informed,

looking at me matter-of-factly.

"Move?" I asked, shocked.

"Did you think that my mate would live anywhere but at my house?" The Alpha growled at me.

"No, sorry, that is not what I was meaning." I told him apologetically. He scoffed at my response, resuming his silent observations.

"You will begin living here at the estate immediately." Michael droned. "Have you prepared everything?" He asked looking at Aunt Eve.

"Yes." She cried looking at me with red-rimmed eyes. She was sad, she clearly didn't want me to go. I love you Aunty Evie! I said to myself, the childish way I used to address her when I was young was enough to break my heart.

"I hear you've been attending classes at the university." Michael asked, looking at me as if he expected an explanation.

"Yes, I intend to be a lawyer. I am studying law, or I had intended to." I told him.

"There should be no problems with you continuing your education. An educated Luna would only benefit the pack more." He smiled at me.

"Thank you." I told him, not knowing what else to say.

"Aside from the marking ceremony, you will also be expected to accompany the Alpha on all pack-related business that requires a Luna's presence, they will vary in type and responsibilities. The Alpha will help you along the way, as will other pack members who assist him." Michael seemed to be the one who was handling my entire entrance into the Alpha's life, didn't he have anything to say about it? I snuck a look in his direction, and he was still glaring at the whole room, I felt the look nearly freeze me in place.

"When shall we have the marking ceremony?" One of the

other elders asked Michael.

"I do not believe we should wait very long. I believe this weekend would be appropriate." He answered thoughtfully, essentially rushing my deadline right before my eyes. "If we hurry and hold it soon, then we can avoid the other pack females getting hopeful for the other gatherings." He added.

Ahh, that was why he wanted to rush things. Let all the other unmated females in the entire pack have another reason to hate me. Not only did I not have a wolf, and they shunned me for that, now they could hate me because I had stolen the Alpha from them. Gee, thanks Michael for making this all so easy for them to understand.

"We will work out the rest of the details, Noah, would you be so kind as to show the Luna to her room?" Michael asked. "You may all go with them. I know having her family will make things easier on her." He added, looking at the rest of my family seated around the sofas.

"Come on Trinity." Noah commanded, guiding me by my elbow. I glanced back into the room once just before leaving it behind, I found the Alpha glaring at me as I

left.

Noah led us down the hall, up to the fourth floor, and to a room nearly at the end of what he called the north wing.

"There is an elevator, if you ever want to take that instead of climbing four flights of stairs a day." He told me as he opened the door with a key.

The room inside was massive. It was easily four times as big as my room at home, if not bigger. There was a massive dark wooden, ornately carved four-poster bed covered with a sky-blue comforter and deep navy-blue pillows and curtains.

All the furniture matched the bed, a beautiful dark wooden color, and ornately carved. There was a nightstand on either side of the bed with a lamp on each. There was a chest of drawers, a dresser with a mirror, an armoire, a vanity table, and chair with a navy-blue cushion, and a beautiful wooden trunk at the foot of the bed.

On top of the regular bedroom furniture there was a sitting room area complete with a navy-blue couch with sky-blue pillows and a wall mounted TV. There were shelves built into the wall all around the TV, that would be perfect for storing books and movies on.

At another area of the room there was a desk complete with what looked like a state-of-the-art laptop and a table and chairs that would seat four people comfortably. Both the desk and the table set matched the rest of the furniture in the room perfectly.

Everything was beautiful, perfect, and way too much. I felt overwhelmed just being in the room. I would never be able to relax in here.

"Let me show you around." Noah started walking around the room.

"You're going to act like nothing happened?" Carter yelled at him.

"Let me finish the tour Carter, and then we can all talk."

Noah told him firmly.

"Fine." Carter growled. I was happy Carter was saying what I was not yet capable of saying. I was still in shock over everything.

Noah led the way around the room. He showed me where the hidden mini fridge was, though it didn't seem so mini to me. He showed me where my not one, but two closets were. I didn't even own enough clothes to fill one closet let alone two for crying out loud. And he showed me where my bathroom was.

I had expected that a room this extravagant would have its own bathroom. But what I didn't expect was the sheer wow factor of the bathroom itself. The room might be too much, but this bathroom might be just what I need to survive.

To call the bath a soaking tub would not be doing it justice. The tub was built into the floor and even a man as big as the Alpha could lay down in it comfortably and have room on every side. It was gigantic. I did not want

to know how much he paid on his water bill or would be when I started using that tub.

Adding to the luxury of the tub was the shower surrounded by glass. It was beautiful. There was a bench on the inside that apparently would have hot water running through it so it would not be cold to sit on. There were twelve different shower heads that could spray at the same time, or I could pick and choose which ones. That meant I could get one hell of a relaxing shower.

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Chapter 16 - Trinity-New House, New Life

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Trinity

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Noah told me how the house operated. There was a full staff that worked in shifts, so there was always someone here if I needed them. There was someone to cook, someone to clean, someone to do laundry.

All of my old annoying household chores would be a thing of the past. But I would have rather been at home doing chores with the family than living here with the Alpha that I didn't know.

Apparently, whenever I needed to leave the house, I had to let someone know. That someone could be Noah if I was most comfortable with that. But the Luna needed to be considerate of others and let someone know where she was going and when she would be coming back.

"I think this should go without saying, but your little incident from last night will not be tolerated here." Noah said firmly.

"What incident is that?" Grandfather asked me, looking angry.

"Nothing to be upset over Grandfather." I assured him.

"Clearly it is, if it is unacceptable whilst living with the Alpha." He growled, looking exactly like he did when he was the Beta in his younger days.

"I was visiting a friend yesterday, and the two sleepless nights and early morning just caught up to me. I ended up falling asleep on her couch. I had not intended to stay out overnight." I told him.

"That is unacceptable and inappropriate Trinity Faith!" Grandfather roared.

"I didn't mean to. I had intended to go home." I told him firmly.

"That is besides the point. You need to be more responsible young lady. You are the Luna of this pack now. You have duties now. Transgressions such as those will not be tolerated." I could hear the same old lecture tone entering his voice, I really didn't want to do this, not

right now.

"Fine, Grandfather, I understand. I will be an upstanding model citizen from now on, you have my word." I ground out through clenched teeth.

"You had better be." He demanded before stalking out of the room.

"Dad?" Uncle Wesley called after him.

"Don't worry Trinity, he loves you in his own way." Aunt Eve said comfortingly. She had always tried to convince me of this, I never once believed it.

"No, he doesn't." I snapped back. "He hates me, he always has." The pain I had felt through the years was threatening to spill over, but now was not the time. I still had to hold it in. I had to stay strong for a while longer.

"Don't worry about him Trinity, I love you." Carter declared, wrapping his strong arms around me. My constant defender that he was, he never could stand to see the way Grandfather treated me, and he would

always tell me he would love me twice as much in Grandfather's place.

"I love you too Carter." I told him. Aunt Eve and Uncle Wesley had been the only mother and father I had ever known, Carter and Noah had been my brothers of sorts. And now here I was being told I had to leave home. To move somewhere else with someone I barely knew. I was scared, and I needed the comfort of the hug he was giving me.

"Noah, how could you let this happen?" Carter asked him. "How can you just stand there and watch as the Alpha takes her away from us?"

"You should be happy, Carter. She has found her mate." Noah told him.

"Her mate?" Carter scoffed. "All of you were saying that you never thought she would find a mate. That without a wolf she probably couldn't form that bond with anyone. And here we're supposed to just believe that the Alpha of all people is her mate. Do we have any proof?"

"Ask her yourself." Noah said pointing at me still wrapped in Carter's arms.

"Trinity?" Carter and Uncle Wesley both asked me at the same time, looking for an explanation.

"I didn't know it was a mate bond at first. I first came across his scent in the forest." I admitted, as I started to tell them all about what had happened two days ago. I started with my run and finding the intoxicating and dangerous scent that scared me, and how I ran home. Then continued through everything up until I was attacked in the forest by a rogue today.

I told them about how I tried to run away again, afraid to see the Alpha, who I recognized by his scent. But the Alpha ordered me not to run and to stay put. From there Noah could take the story.

I watched their faces as I spoke. I could see the shock in their eyes when they heard about the party. And the fear from my being attacked on my way home. I hadn't been lying when I said I had a few scrapes and bruises, but they were not on my face, so they probably hadn't

noticed them just by looking at me. It had been a busy evening after all.

"Are you alright?" Aunt Eve asked me, motherly concern filling her voice as she reached her hands toward me. "I can't believe I didn't notice you were hurt sooner."

"I'm fine Aunt Eve, I only have a few scrapes and bruises, they're already healing." I told her. I may not have healed as fast as the other pack members did, those who have shifted, but I healed faster than a human.

If I were to compare it to anything, I'd say it's the same rate that a cub healed at, a child of that pack that had yet to have their first shift. Just slightly accelerated compared to human healing, but it was nothing compared to the healing of a full wolf.

A wolf could be shot, dig the bullet out and fully heal within half an hour to an hour. Me, it would take about two or three days, minimum. But it would definitely be an easier speedier recovery than a human's recovery.

"This is why you need to check your messages." Carter reprimanded me.

"Agreed." Noah added.

"I'll check them more in the future." I told them.

"Uh huh." Carter said, disbelievingly.

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Chapter 17 - Trinity-I Need To Get Out

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Trinity

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Noah continued to show me around the house. After which Carter grumbled about how things didn't add up. Eventually, they all left me in my room for the night. Noah told me that he would have dinner sent to me tonight as he guessed I was too nervous to eat downstairs. He was right.

Not long after he left an older man pushing a cart came to my room. He was not quite as old as the Elders, but he wasn't far off. He came into the room and set the trays full of plates, a few glasses and a bucket of ice down on my table. I didn't know what was for dinner yet, but it smelled amazing.

Dinner turned out to be fried chicken. Simple enough, but it tasted divine. Even after having been brought to the room it was hot and still crispy. It was served with creamy mashed potatoes, sweet baby carrots, steamed broccoli, dinner rolls, and a creamy chocolate mousse pudding for dessert. It was an amazing dinner, simple but delicious.

Noah must have told them my preferences ahead of time as well, as they even brought me my favorite juice with

dinner. This was already overwhelming me. I appreciated everything that whoever it was that made the dinner had done for me, but it felt awkward.

I was restless after dinner. Staring at my bags that my family had brought over. They had packed all my stuff and brought it over at some point during the day. That felt wrong to me. I should have been allowed to pack my own things. What if there was something they weren't supposed to see? There wasn't, but still, what if?

I kept thinking I should put my stuff away. I need to settle in. I have classes tomorrow and I am getting tired, so I need to be ready for the morning. But I just kept feeling like I didn't belong here. This wasn't where I should be. For some reason, I felt like no one wanted me here, especially after the look that the Alpha gave me.

Finally, I had had enough. I couldn't stand being in this house. I had to go home. But I knew I couldn't go home ever again. I knew I couldn't go to Juniper's ever again. There was nowhere in the pack safe for me anymore. Nowhere.

I didn't care. I had to go. I had to get out. I dressed in my own clothes, changing out of the ones I had borrowed from Juniper that morning. I decided to wear dark colors for this plan. Black jeans, dark blue t-shirt, black jacket, black hiking shoes. I pulled my hair back in a high ponytail and braided it so it wouldn't get in the way.

Once I was properly dressed, I left my room. I only really knew of one route out of the house, but it was a long one. I was lucky enough to not pass any staff members most of the way down the stairs. The elderly man from before did ask me where I was heading, and I stated honestly that I was going to the kitchen. Perhaps he would think I just wanted a drink.

After that encounter, I saw no one else. I managed to make it out the back door and out into the night without incident. The cool night air was like a breath of new life being breathed into me. I wanted to sigh in relief, but I had to remain quiet.

I quickly, yet quietly, hurried down the slightly sloping mountainside. I hadn't paid much attention the other night, but they must have levelled out a lot of the mountain side to make that dance floor possible. The

same went for the house, it was built into the side of the mountain, it obviously had the natural supports, but they had also levelled out the side of the mountain just a little before construction.

I had decided to run through the trees, so as not to be seen. I had not even made it a quarter of the way down the slope when I heard the voice. That deep, smooth voice that stirred things deep inside of me.

"And where the hell do you think you're going?" He asked me. He was in front of me somehow. He had managed to leave the house and get ahead of me. Or he was already outside. Either one.

"Just going for a run, I didn't get my run in these last two mornings." I said nonchalantly.

"Really?" He said sarcastically, clearly not believing me. "Let me make one thing abundantly clear to you right now. If you try to run away again, I will make it so you can't leave the house ever again. As it is, you're under house arrest until the marking is done. After that, I can

use the mark to track you down and bring you back no matter where you run off to." His voice may have sounded seductive, but his words were enough to anger and terrify me. I gasped at his declaration.

"Do you understand what I'm telling you." He asked me. I nodded my head, my eyes wide with fear and understanding. "You look like a scared little bunny rabbit." He chuckled, laughing at me. His laughter was enough to force the scared look off my face and replace it with one of anger.

"I do not look like a rabbit." I growled.

He just chuckled at my response as he threw me over his shoulder and stomped back toward the house. He moved quickly. And before I knew it, we were outside my door.

"Get in your room, little bunny. And if I catch you outside again, I might just get myself a new lucky rabbit's foot." He glared at me menacingly in the dark. His threat was real, and I knew it. He would punish me if I tried to leave again. And before I could even open my door, I heard him calling over a subordinate and telling him to guard my room.

"Don't even think about going through the window, little bunny, you don't have a balcony, and there is nothing for you to climb down. And if you tried to make a jump from this high, it'd probably kill you." He was right, that's why I hadn't gone through the window to begin with. I just puffed my cheeks out in frustration and glared at him. He stalked off down the hall ignoring me.

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Chapter 18 - Reece-She Sure Is A Handful

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Reece

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What in the world were they thinking? Forcing me to take

her as my mate. Though I knew I had no other choice, I could still be pissed off about it. What I should be asking was what was the Goddess thinking making a girl with no wolf my mate. And to top it all off, she was already a massive handful.

First it took me forever just to find her. I was dragged away from tracking her. Then there was her running away from me. Then my assistant tells me he knew who she was all along. Well that was convenient. Those words had been music to my wolf's ears, but they were like a death march to my human ears.

No wolf meant she couldn't protect herself. That meant she was weak, a liability, a weakness. I couldn't afford to be weak dammit. But I had no choice. I had to take the girl as my mate, whether either of us liked it or not.

And to make matters worse. While in the middle of searching for the girl, I was told that the rogue that was causing problems the other day had crossed into my territory and was making a beeline for my compound.

That put every one of my pack members at risk. There was no telling if he had gone into a rampage, losing all connection with his human mind. If that were the case, he would have no rationality left in him and he would become a mindless killing machine.

Another drawback, the rampage would increase his strength, so lesser wolves would be unable to fight him off. Women and children were especially at risk if they crossed a rampager. I had to deal with this rogue immediately.

Then, what should I see when I track the intruder wolf down? The girl who is meant to be my mate. I knew instantly, her scent flooded into my nose and filled my mind. As much as I wish I could stop them, thoughts of hands off and that's mine went through my mind. I blame my wolf as he was the one I was running as.

I could see the two of them in the distance as I was running. Trinity was losing her lead, but it looked intentional. She was setting him up. The next thing I knew, I saw her jump to the side, kick off from the tree and do a backflip. She landed with both heels crashing down on the wolf's head. I nearly laughed at the sight. The move was quite good.

She was back on her feet and running again. I followed to keep them in my line of sight. The wolf, having recovered, was chasing her again. This time she didn't spring off a tree. No, she spun and slid onto her back, using her downward slide to kick upward with both feet. The combined momentum had sent the wolf flying into a tree.

She skidded to a stop and spun to her feet, unfortunately though her foot caught a root of a nearby tree, causing her to stumble. That, plus the fact that the wolf recovered quickly meant that he was chasing her sooner and closer than she had planned.

The wolf caught her and tackled her to the ground. I could smell the sharp scent of blood and her scent intensified. I knew instantly that she had been injured in some way. She can't die dammit, she's my mate, I need to complete the circle. I roared to myself as I raced toward them.

He had her pinned to the ground, but she still brought a knee up to his tender underbelly. I heard him growl in pain and frustration before he bared his teeth and set them against her throat. Not on my watch. I roared.

I tackled the rogue wolf off of her and wrestled him to the ground. It was exactly as I had expected, he has lost all sense of himself. He was rampaging. I was able to knock him unconscious, eliminating him as a threat for the time being. That was when I saw that my mate was attempting to run away again.

She had turned and was on her feet, but before she had taken more than two or three steps I had shifted back, standing there human again. I didn't growl at her, she was plenty scared of me already, but I did issue a command.

"Don't you dare run again. Stay right where you are." She knelt on the ground and sat on her heels, bowing her head in deference.

She was already a handful, that was for sure. Like when we were in the meeting with the Elders and she was too busy staring at me to pay attention to the room around her. She thought I wasn't watching her, but she needed to learn to watch a room indirectly.

She had probably never been in the same room with me for so long, and therefore never seen me so up close, besides the brief glimpse the other day. The same could be said of me. I had never seen her this close before. At least not when her head wasn't bowed or blocked by her hair.

She was pretty, that was true. But being pretty alone wasn't all it took to be Luna. If that were the case, then any of the girls in the group from the other night could be Luna. But her looks were different from theirs somehow. Her hair was a deep, rich, dark brown that was just a few shades lighter than my black hair.

And where most of the women in the pack were either naturally tanned like myself, or went tanning in the summer, she was like porcelain. I'm sure her skin would look like milk and mine honey if the two were laid side by side.

And another intriguing feature was her eyes. With such dark brown hair, I would not expect to see bright crystal blue eyes that seemed to shine in the light. The eyes were unusual to say the least.

But no matter how interesting, intriguing, or beautiful I found her. No matter how intoxicating or irresistible my wolf found her scent. I simply could not accept her as my mate. Not fully. It wasn't safe for her. She would get herself killed. And she would bring my pack down with her.

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Chapter 19 - Reece-She's Running Again!

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Reece

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But she was a handful, that was for sure. That was why I had to sneak out of my own house to catch her when she was trying to run away. If Vincent had not been on night watch as he was walking the halls, he would never have

come to notify me that my new mate and our soon to be Luna was trying to escape.

Oh, she thought she was clever. Telling Peter that she was getting juice, telling me she was going for her missed run. She thought she was going to get away. I still didn't know why she would want to run away. She was going to have everything she ever wanted right. This is what all the girls in the pack seemed to want, to be mated to me and ascend the ladder. Oh well, she would come around. Until then, I had to threaten her.

"Let me make one thing abundantly clear to you right now. If you try to run away again, I will make it so you can't leave the house ever again. As it is, you're under house arrest until the marking is done. After that, I can use the mark to track you down and bring you back no matter where you run off to." I told her, causing her eyes to open wide in shock and fear. That was mostly true. I would be able to track her, but it wasn't that easy.

"Do you understand what I'm telling you." She made such an unusual face at this that I couldn't help my response. "You look like a scared little bunny rabbit." I laughed at

her.

"I do not look like a rabbit." She growled at me.

I laughed again, she squealed as I threw her over my shoulder and marched her to her room. I worked hard to ignore the feeling of her soft supple body pressing against my shoulder. When I set her down, I warned her yet again.

"Get in your room, little bunny. And if I catch you outside again, I might just get myself a new lucky rabbit's foot." I assigned a guard to her room and gave one last bit of advice. "Don't even think about going through the window, little bunny, you don't have a balcony, and there is nothing for you to climb down. And if you tried to make a jump from this high, it'd probably kill you."

After all my threats and warnings, I left her alone. I stalked down the hallway to the southern wing where my room was. That's why I am in this predicament that I am in now.

I was currently tonsils deep in a bottle of whiskey, trying to take my mind off the last two days. I had just about

drunk myself into a stupor and was attempting to make my wolf forget about the way our body felt when that girl was around. Things weren't going so well.

"I'm going to have to assign guards to her." I told myself. "But who should I choose?" There were several among the pack that were strong enough and capable enough, but not many that I would trust with being inside my home or around my mate constantly. I was really going to have to bite the bullet and branch out here a little.

Things were going to get complicated here for a while. A long while.

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Trinity

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"UURRGH!" I screamed in frustration. "What an ASSHOLE!" I heard a laugh coming from beyond the door, apparently my guard had heard me. I didn't care, let him hear. I was too angry not to vent to myself.

"Who does that overgrown dog think he is, anyway? Throwing me over his shoulder and carrying me back to my room. Doesn't he know I'm more than capable of walking?" I continued to vent as I tore through my bags and found some clothes to sleep in. I didn't care about making a mess at the moment, I just needed to change my clothes.

"I swear if he tries something like that again I am going to give him more than just a piece of my mind. I'm going to give him my hand across his face or my boot up his ass." The laughter was continuing almost steadily at my tirade. Glad you're enjoying yourself pal.

I finished changing and flopped onto the bed, though I was certain I wouldn't fall asleep anytime soon. But, before I knew it, my eyes were closed, and I was sleeping soundly.

I woke up early again the next morning. Thankfully I had a dreamless sleep for once, so I didn't have to worry about any nightmares waking me up this time. But I was

really getting tired of waking up before the sun rose.

I knew they wouldn't let me go for a run. Not after last night. So, I decided to take a shower. I really wanted to soak in the tub, but that would have to wait until I had more time. I had class soon and didn't have the time for a really long soak.

The shower was amazing. The powerful jets of hot water that I could concentrate to specific muscle groups on my back helped to ease some of the tension I was feeling. I had a feeling I would be stressing out and would be full of tension a lot during my time here.

"What am I thinking?" I asked myself. "It's not like I'm ever going to live anywhere else. I am the Luna, I am his mate, this is my life now." I stated, realization hitting me hard.

I had just finished dressing and tidying up my mess from the night before when there was a knock on my door.

"Trinity, are you awake?" Noah asked me.

"Yeah Noah, I'm awake." I told him.

I heard Noah unlock my door with the same key he had used the night before.

"I was going to give this to you. I had forgotten to give it to you last night." Noah said, indicating the key in his hand. I held my hand out to take the key from him. "But now I am not certain I should." He growled glaring at me.

"Why not?" I asked him.

"Why not?" He asked. "Why not?" He yelled it that time. "Dammit Trinity, why the hell did you try to run away last night?" He demanded. His eyes were full of fury as he glared at me.

I could see he was mad at me. He was hurt that I had tried to leave and tried to run away from the Alpha. I knew that he considered the Alpha to be one of his best friends, but to me the Alpha was a dangerous person that I didn't know. It was one thing following the Alpha's orders when they didn't affect your daily life, but when it came to me personally it changed everything drastically. I was scared, nervous, and just didn't know what to do.

"I..I..I was not trying to run away." I stammered. He glared at me ever harder, if that was even possible. "I had missed my morning run, so I-."

"Don't peddle your lies to me Trinity. I'm not buying them." He roared. "You were trying to run away. WHY?"

"Because I'm scared Noah. Alright! Is that what you want to hear? I'm terrified. I don't know what to do. I'm in over my head. The whole mate bond terrifies me. Just being around the Alpha, smelling him, yeah it's exciting because of the bond but it scares the hell out of me too." He recoiled at my words, or my tone, I wasn't sure which. The shock in his face quickly turned to pain and then compassion. He was torn. He didn't know where to put his loyalties right now, and that hurt.

"I'm sorry Trinity." He began.

"Just stop." I told him. "Just stop Noah. It's my problem. Just tell the Alpha that I won't run away again. I promise.

I know that it's no use. I promise that I will stay here, no matter what. Just, make sure he lets me finish my degree, alright."

"Once you are marked, you can go again." He told me.

"You mean I have to miss the entire week?" I asked him incredulously. "They might drop me from my classes."

"I'll see what I can do." He promised. "But you're not going today, that's for sure. Not after what happened last night. Take that as a punishment for attempting to run."

"Fine, but please make sure I can go tomorrow." I insisted.

"I'll try."

"And don't tell the Alpha that I am scared to be here." I told him.

"You know, he is your mate now, you can call him by his name." Noah sighed.

"Not a chance. I'll do that when he gives me the permission to do so." I told him. Noah just nodded. He knew how people were when it came to the Alpha.

"I'm going now, I will come back by later. Why don't you take this time to unpack? Someone will be by later with breakfast." He told me as he walked toward the door. The key to my room still in hand. I heard the lock click into place after he left.

So, I am a prisoner for the time being. I thought to myself. Well he did say I was under house arrest.

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Chapter 20 - Trinity-Luna Preparations And Conditions

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Trinity

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I was just about to text Juniper and tell her that I wouldn't be in class today when I heard my door being unlocked again. That was quick for breakfast. I thought. But it wasn't someone bringing food, it was Noah again.

"There was one last thing I needed to tell you." He said seeing the phone in my hand. "It seems I might not have caught you in time."

"What?" I asked him, perplexed.

"You are to tell no one about the fact that you are the Alpha's mate and the new Luna. That announcement will be made to the pack as a whole at the gathering this weekend." He was looking at my phone pointedly as he spoke.

"I was just telling Juniper that I wasn't going to be in class today." I told him. "I hadn't even sent the message yet." I groaned showing him the screen.

"That's good. Go ahead and send that message. I would really hate for them to take away your phone while we await the gathering." He told me.

"He would really go that far?" I asked him, shock filling my voice.

"We cannot have the news spreading prior to the gathering." He told me firmly.

"I won't tell anyone." I told him. "I don't want it to be true, so I am not going to start bragging." I told him flatly. Noah just nodded and left the room again. I heard the lock click once more.

I unpacked my things and organized my room. I ate the breakfast that was brought to me. It was delicious, the same as the meal was from the night before. And I worked on the assignments Juniper texted me that were for the classes I had missed.

Noah came around lunch time with a woman I did not know. She was slightly older, tall and thin with hair that had begun to turn from light brown to silver gray. Her bright green eyes were still sharp and focused though, and she had a friendly smile.

"Trinity, this is Gina, she is the top-rated seamstress in the pack." I knew who she was immediately. She was the one who made all ceremonial clothing for the Alphas and former Luna. There was a seamstress before her that did the same thing. If she was here, that meant she knew who I was.

"Good afternoon." She told me, bowing to me slightly. "It is wonderful to meet you Luna." I looked to Noah, concern filling my face.

"There is nothing to worry about. She is sworn to secrecy, and she has been working for the Alpha's family for a long time." Noah told me. I just nodded my head.

"The traditional dress worn at the marking ceremony is always passed down from Luna to Luna, but the problem is, you are so much smaller than the others." She chatted, looking at me curiously. She had helped alter the previous Luna's dress as well apparently and knew what

types of changes were typically made. "And we don't have much time." She mused aloud.

Gina set a stool in front of me and directed me to stand on top of it. She took several measurements.

"You're short, and your waist is so much smaller than most of the pack women." She muttered more to herself than to anyone else. "But your bosom is just as ample as everyone else's, but on that tiny frame of yours it still makes the bodice too big." She continued to mutter while sketching something.

Before long she kicked Noah out of the room, telling him that there would be no men permitted in the room for the next stage. Once he was out the door, and I heard the lock click into place again, she was directing me to take my clothes off.

"Excuse me?" I nearly yelled before I caught myself, just barely managing to speak in a civilized tone.

"I need to pin the dress to the right length, so you need to put it on. Chop, chop, off with those clothes so you can put the dress on."

I understood what she wanted, but that didn't make it any less awkward. With slow, halting movements I managed to strip down to my underwear. But as I reached for the dress, she moved toward me, the dress in hand. She was helping me into the dress. Oh Goddess, this is too weird!

After several embarrassing minutes the dress was fully in place. It was not sitting the way it should have, but the feel of the fabric was wonderful. It was softer than the silk of the dress Grandfather had given me.

The base color of the dress was black, but that was lost under the silver that adorned it. There was silver all through the skirt and train so that every time I shifted it caught the light. The bodice and straps were black, but they were covered with silver that hung down to make long shimmering sleeves and a flowing cape that spread out behind me. The black was barely visible unless I moved in just the right way. The dress was so mystifyingly beautiful.

"I don't want to cut away too much, but I fear I will have to." Gina was saying. I couldn't let her do something so permanent to the dress.

"No, we can make it work." I told her.

"Really? And how?" She asked me.

"Leave it long and flowing like it is, just tighten things up in the chest. Making it an empire waist should solve the problem." I told her. I didn't want the dress cut more than it needed to be.

"Hmm. That just might work." She mumbled looking at the dress and sketching something on her pad. "Yes, I think it will." She said looking at me. "You're quite amazing Luna." She was smiling happily. I didn't know how to respond so I just shook my head, I was nothing special after all.

Gina helped me out of the dress. I put my clothes back on. And then she was escorted out and Noah came to join me for lunch.

Lunch was tense and awkward. I didn't know what to talk to him about. He knew I didn't want to be here. I knew I couldn't leave. We both had to adjust to the changes that were happening in our lives.

"I spoke with Reece." Noah informed me, using the Alpha's name, probably in an attempt to make me less nervous about him. It didn't help.

"Ok?" I said, not knowing where he was going with this.

"You can resume classes tomorrow."

"Thank you." I interrupted him.

"Under one condition." He continued.

"What condition?" I was confused.

"You need an escort."

"An escort?" I was perplexed.

"Someone from the pack to make sure you won't run away." He said firmly.

"I'll be with Juniper and the others." I told him.

"They won't cut it. They have not been trained as warriors, at least to our knowledge, and they are your friends and might likely help you escape." He said matter-of-factly.

"And risk the punishment?" I asked him, skeptically.

"You never know."

"So, who will be escorting me? You or Carter?" I was guessing it had to be one of them.

"I cannot do it as I am Reece's personal assistant, and Carter was not chosen."

"Then who?" I asked, getting nervous now. Surely, he wouldn't do it himself, would he?

"A warrior from the pack. Someone the Alpha can trust to protect you. If you remember you were also recently attacked and will need to be guarded, in case it was not a random event." Noah was trying to use the attack yesterday as part of the cause for the guard duty.

"And I handled myself pretty well, if you remember."

"Yes, but you still lost the fight." He said sternly.

"I don't need a warrior following me around."

"Then you don't need to go to class." He looked at me firmly. I growled at him.

"Fine. But after I am marked, I will be allowed to go without the armed escort, right?" I asked him sarcastically. "He said he can track me by my mark, so I was only under house arrest until I was marked." I told him what the Alpha had told me.

"We will discuss that later, when the time comes."

"I am not going to have some random guy I don't know following me around all day every day." I snapped at him.

"Then get to know him." He snapped back.

"Dammit, Noah."

"You brought this on yourself. You were the one that got into that mess yesterday and you were the one that tried to run away. If only you had checked your messages, then things could have been a lot different." He growled at me. I puffed out my cheeks in frustration at him. "Deal with it, Trinity, and maybe it will go away soon enough." I growled again but nodded my head, accepting his terms.

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Chapter 21 - Trinity-Breakfast With Reese

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Trinity

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I am proud to say I behaved myself for the remainder of the night. I didn't do anything that would make my family or the Alpha mad at me. I ended up soaking in that dream tub of mine. Note to self, have some sort of slanted rest installed for my short ass to sit on or buy floaties for my bath pool.

The following morning, after freshening up and getting dressed for the day, I actually left my room and had breakfast in the kitchen for the first time. Walking through the house felt surreal after being in my room for so long.

I had seen so little of the house so far, but they still didn't seem too keen on showing me around yet. Someone would have to do that soon though.

I was being guided by the same guard that had come to watch my door the other day. I glared at him, knowing he had heard me bad mouthing the Alpha.

"Is there something wrong Luna?" He asked me with a perplexed frown.

"No, just not in the greatest of moods." I told him. This was true. I was still irritated, but at least things were looking up.

"I am sorry to hear that." He told me with a slight frown.

He guided me quickly to the kitchen. There was a woman that looked to be in her fifties standing near the stove taking bacon out of a pan. The only other person in the room was the Alpha.

"Good morning, Dearie." She called out to me as we entered the room. "How would you like your eggs this morning?"

"Poached." I answered immediately.

"Well, that makes two of you." She said with a little laugh in her voice. I glanced at the Alpha in surprise. "Hard or soft yolk?" She asked me.

"Soft."

"Now ain't that just a coincidence, I won't have to change anything at all." She giggled, smiling wide. Apparently, the Alpha and I had the same preference in eggs, go figure.

"Why don't you sit down and join us." The Alpha said to the guard, breaking the uncomfortable silence.

"I appreciate the offer Sir, but I have already eaten. Perhaps a raincheck? If you don't mind though, I will go run a perimeter check before it is time to go." He declined inclining his head to the Alpha.

"Very well, do as you must." He told the guard who nodded and left the room. Now the Alpha and I were

alone aside from the cook.

"Here you are Dears." She said sitting down two plates piled with food. There was bacon, sausage, and ham, hash browns, toast, eggs, fruit, and a pile of rice that smelled sweet.

I had been entirely focused on the food for a few moments, so I hadn't even noticed that the cook left the kitchen. When I looked up, I was alone with the Alpha. I sat up straight and gulped reflexively. He noticed.

"Just eat your food." He grumbled, and without another word he started on his massive plate of food. I ate a bit of everything, it was all amazing. I noticed the Alpha had put cinnamon and butter on the rice that I had never tried before so I tried it both before and after adding the same to mine, it was better with them added. I ate as much as I could, but I could only eat a little more than half of the food, she had made me too much.

We had eaten in complete silence. He never looked at me once during the whole meal after he told me to eat my food. I felt uncomfortable the entire time, at least the food was good. I wonder if he would just let me eat in my room from now on.

I had begun to rise from the table when he finally broke his silence.

"I'm letting you out of your cage today, little bunny rabbit, don't disappoint me." He rumbled in his deep voice. Goddess, why did that voice have to affect me so much?

"I won't run away again. I promise." I told him. I knew he wouldn't believe me, not after the other night, but I still answered him honestly.

"Good." He said, his voice almost purring at me. "Though, perhaps I would like a game of chase, being an overgrown dog and all." His words flowed, almost like water, across the table to me. Uh oh, my guard had spilled the beans on me, that jerk. I gulped again from fear which only made him chuckle.

"Just remember to be a good girl today Trinity, I don't want there to be any problems. Remember, you now

represent me as well." He explained as he stared at me intently.

"I know. I will not do anything to embarrass you." I told him. "On purpose." I added in a whisper. He still heard it though.

"At all." He growled.

"I can't account for other people's actions. If someone were to, say, trip and spill a drink on me accidentally causing my white shirt to become see through that would not be my fault and therefore should not be held against me." I had pinched my white tank top that was only partially covered by my midnight blue jean jacket.

"There is indeed a simple solution to that problem." He offered with his eyes resting on the tank top in my hand. I quickly smoothed it back into place. "Do not wear a white shirt, hence that problem will never exist."

"The problem was purely hypothetical and will likely

never happen. As I have gone nearly nineteen years without a similar incident ever happening, I believe I am safe. I was merely just using the scenario as an example."

"Do you always talk like that when trying to win an argument?" He asked me.

"I didn't think we were having an argument, but merely a discussion. And I thought since I am studying to become a lawyer, why not practice talking like one now?" I answered his question.

"Keep working on it." He mumbled, insulting me.

"Hmm." I hummed, puffing out my cheeks in frustration.

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Trinity

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"Just remember the rules for now and things will go smoothly." He grumbled, glaring at me. Something in me just snapped. I couldn't hold back anymore, Alpha or not. I had been hearing this kind of bullshit from Grandfather my whole life, I didn't need it from him too.

"And what rules would those be?" I asked, sarcastically. "Bow down to your every whim, have no say in my own life ever again, become nothing but a piece of property like the furniture?" I asked. He grinned at me, but it was not pleasant at all.

"You've got a rebellious streak, don't you?"

"What was your first clue?" I asked him. "Was it the first, second, third, or fourth time I tried to run away from you? Or did it take you until right now?" I couldn't control my tone. My attitude was leaking out. The one I had

worked so hard to control for years when dealing with Grandfather. I thought I could use the same disciplined strategy to deal with the Alpha, but I was having no luck there. I saw his smile widen and an evil glint enter his eyes.

"Take care how you talk to me, I don't like that tone with most people. I will overlook it for now, since your life is changing completely, but I will not overlook it forever." He was growling at me as he spoke, a deep rumble low in his chest, but for some reason it didn't frighten me as much as it used to. I was still scared of him, definitely, but I was not going to cower forever. If I was going to survive in this house with him, then I had to show my backbone sooner or later.

"Or what Reece? You'll get rid of me? Please do it. I dare you. Either you'll end up mateless and have to step down as Alpha and watch someone else run the pack in your stead, or you'll end up just as banished from the territory as I will."

"Where did all this newfound confidence of yours come from?" He asked me.

"It's always been there, but I was just too shocked over the events of the last few days to truly be myself." I answered.

"Hmmm." He seemed to hum in response to my answer. "No matter, just do as I said and follow the rules, Bunny." There he went with that annoying nickname again.

"Once again, I am not a Bunny." I growled at him. For someone without a wolf I still had quite the impressive growl when I wanted to. "And you still haven't told me the rules, Reece." I added. I realized that was the second time I had used his name since we had been sitting here, almost arguing. Oh Goddess, why did I just start using his name like that? But he didn't seem angry about it at least.

"Then listen closely, Trin-i-ty." He said my name slowly, stretching out every syllable, perhaps to annoy me instead of using the Bunny nickname. "For the time being, you are not to leave this house without a guard. That is for more than one purpose. One is you being a flight risk, the other, is the unknown factor of exactly what happened the other day. You were attacked by the rogue after all, I cannot be certain that you were not the

intended target. You are the Luna of the pack now, which means your safety comes before all others."

"Oh my, Reece, are you worried about me?!" I asked in a fake southern voice pretending to be flattered. He growled at me, his was much more impressive than my own growl had been.

"Shut it." He snapped at me. "You are not to tell anyone that you are the new Luna, not until after the gathering this weekend, I'm sure Noah told you that already. Also, when it comes to pack related business, you will do what I say, when I say it. There are times a Luna is expected to accompany her mate, sometimes for show and sometimes to assist in other pack business." He droned flatly, almost as if he were trying to push aside all emotion.

"Aside from that your main responsibilities lie with the women and children of the pack. My job, as Alpha, is to maintain order for all, but to handle the business related to the men. That would be things such as training warriors and the like. Up until now, I have had to handle everyone in the pack, but once the ceremony is over, you

will be taking on the role you are meant to have." He was glaring at me like he expected me to object. I just shrugged my shoulders.

"I expect you to behave properly, as befitting a Luna and my mate."

"And what exactly does that mean? How have I been known to behave improperly?" I snapped at him.

"Oh, I don't know, perhaps when you just fell asleep at a random friend's house without informing your family. That will not happen now that you are Luna."

"I know that, I had not intended for that to happen." I told him, defiance filling my voice.

"Which makes it even worse. Acting out on purpose can be curbed easily. Forgetfulness, stupidity, lack of common sense, those things are not so easily fixed." He was blatantly insulting me now.

"Now listen here Fido, I am not stupid, forgetful, lacking in common sense or anything else similar to that. It just

so happens that the two nights and subsequent mornings prior to that incident were to blame. I had little sleep from stressing over your damned gathering and then what happened at that gathering. Then while I relaxed at a friend's house the exhaustion caught up to me. So, in truth, I guess you are to blame. Since it was your gathering, and you that literally fell on top of me and at the gathering." I vented my frustrations at him.

"First, I am only going to say this once, don't ever call me Fido again unless you want to see what kind of punishments I can dream up for you." He said menacingly, making me shiver. "Second, I didn't want that gathering any more than I wanted a damn mate, if anyone is to blame then it's those damn fools, the Elders." He growled. "I will let this slide only once. Just remember, behave yourself when in public from this day forward."

"You have my word. I will behave myself in public." I fully intended to use his wording against him sometime, soon. He nodded his approval and left the room, his agitation was clear in the way he walked.

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Chapter 23 - Trinity-Guard Duty

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Trinity

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"Luna?" The guard from earlier came into the room. It took me a moment to respond, not used to answering to the title.

"Yes?" I asked hesitantly.

"If you are ready, I will be driving you to class now." He answered politely. He would be a welcome change to the way Reece was treating me.

"Thank you." I said, nodding my head. As I went to stand up, he hurried over and pulled my chair out for me.

"Allow me." He offered. It wasn't a heavy chair, and I could move it easily, but it was clear he was trying to be a gentleman.

"Thank you." I said again. It seemed to be basically all I was saying to him.

We were walking through the back door to the garage that I had come in through the other night. I hadn't looked around before but there were about half a dozen cars at least. Some might belong to staff, but I am guessing that more than one belonged to Reece. It's funny, I can't even bring myself to just call him the Alpha anymore. I thought.

There was a very expensive foreign sports car, I could not tell what the make and model was from where I was, but I knew it was very expensive. There was also an off roading vehicle, a pickup truck, and a much less flashy but still very expensive sedan that looked to be made by BMW.

"How many vehicles does Reece own?" I wondered out loud, I didn't expect an answer, so I was surprised when my guard responded.

"Five in total." He said. "But I believe one is being used by someone else at the moment to run an errand."

"Excessive." I mumbled.

He walked to the sedan and opened the passenger door for me.

"After you Luna." He indicated that I should be gracious and just sit down. He then walked around the car and slid in behind the steering wheel. "Now shall we be off."

"Um, can you stop calling me Luna? Especially considering that people are not supposed to know about that yet." I asked him, feeling uncomfortable.

"Not to worry, the title is currently reserved only for use at the estate. I will be calling you by your name when we get to town, Trinity." He smiled at me as he spoke.

"That reminds me, I do not know your name." I told him.

"Ahh, you are right, we have yet to be introduced. My name is Vincent, it is a pleasure." He introduced himself, inclining his head again.

"It's nice to meet you Vincent." I started to smile, then I remembered something. He had ratted me out when I vented to myself the other night. I glared at him sharply.

"Is there a problem?"

"Sort of."

"What is it?" He asked.

"You're a snitch." I told him. He looked at me with his brows raised, confusion on his face. "You ratted me out after I vented to myself. You told Reece I called him an overgrown dog." To my shock Vincent laughed.

"I'm sorry Trinity. He could tell I was keeping something from him, I had no choice but to tell him. I had intended

to keep that a secret for you." His laugh and smile were infectious, I couldn't help but join him.

I was feeling at ease with Vincent, he had a likeable personality. And unlike Reece, he didn't tower over me as much, so I didn't feel like a dwarf. Vincent was a more comfortable six feet tall. He had sandy blond hair and yellow-green eyes. He had the sort of good guy friend vibe. Not that I had had many guy friends until I met Cedar and Paul, but Vincent just seemed like he was a pretty nice guy overall.

It felt nice driving into the city. I used to be able to see the skyline, the cityscape, the lights and buildings of Colorado Springs just over the horizon when I looked out the window back in my old room. Now all I saw were trees.

We chatted the whole way to campus. Noah did tell me to get to know my guard, so that I wasn't uncomfortable. I learned a lot about Vincent. He was twenty-eight years old and had been mated for eight years. They were happily married, according to him anyway, and had two kids, a six-year-old boy and a three-year-old girl. He had

been working in the Alpha house his entire adult life and he loved his job.

He really did seem like a nice guy. But I was certain that anything I said to him he would report it right back to Reece. I had to be careful what I said to him or in front of him.

We got to school a little earlier than I usually did, so I didn't have to rush at all. When I went to take my messenger bag out of the backseat, Vincent took it and put it on his shoulder before I had the chance. I looked at him confused.

"Allow me to carry this for you, Trinity." Either he was trying to be really polite or he was truly a gentleman.

"Reece should take lessons from you." I told him jokingly as we walked into the building together. Vincent laughed.

"It's nothing special." He told me looking embarrassed.

As we were nearing my Intro to Criminology class, I saw Juniper and the others waiting outside the room. She was

clearly waiting for me. She started to run to me but then spotted Vincent walking beside me carrying my bag. She stopped immediately and just stared in confusion. I continued walking until I had joined them.

"Hey guys." I greeted them, trying for cheery but failing. I was nervous talking to them with Vincent here, as nice as he was.

"Hey Trin." Cedar called out looking at Vincent.

"Hey Astro." Paul said, confused by the newcomer's presence but still trying to act normal.

"What happened yesterday?" Juniper asked me. "Why did you have to miss class?"

"It's a long story, I'd rather not get into it right now." I told her. I wish I didn't have to hide things from her. She looked at Vincent again, she clearly knew something was up, and she could clearly tell that he was a wolf as well.

"I don't think we've met." She told him. "I'm Juniper." She held out her hand introducing herself.

"Vincent." He said, shaking her hand gently. "It's a pleasure Juniper."

"Hey, I'm Paul." They shook hands as well. Cedar eyed him suspiciously for a moment, clearly unsure of him before he eventually held his hand out as well.

"I'm Cedar, Juniper's twin brother. We're all friends of Trinity's but we've never heard of you before." He hissed, rather rudely. Vincent laughed before responding.

"We only met recently. I was asked to keep an eye on her after an incident the other day." He informed him, smiling.

"What incident?" Cedar looked at me skeptically.

"After we all had lunch and I was heading home, I was attacked by a rogue wolf." I told them.

"Oh my Goddess, Trin, are you ok?" Juniper asked.

"Are you serious Astro? Did he hurt you?" Paul asked, just as concerned as Juniper. Cedar continued to look at Vincent for a moment, trying to detect a lie, but what I had said was true, so he couldn't sense anything off.

"I knew we shouldn't have let you walk." Cedar exclaimed, sounding angry with himself.

"No Cedar, it's not your fault, none of your guys' fault. I wanted to walk home to clear my head. I was to blame more than anyone."

"I believe the rogue is the one to blame." Vincent interjected.

"Yes, he was primarily to blame." I agreed. "But I'm fine. I defended myself pretty well until help arrived. I only got a few scrapes and bruises. Your clothes didn't even get ruined Juniper, though I do still need to wash them." I told her.

"I don't care about the damn clothes." She snapped,

pulling me into a bone-crushing hug. "Let me know these things in advance next time."

"I will." I told her, hugging her back.

It was nearly time for class to start, so we had to hurry inside the lecture hall. Usually Juniper sat with Paul, at the back of the room. But today, all three of my friends sat around me, like they were trying to protect me.

Vincent was not part of the class, so I didn't know how to explain his presence if the professor asked, but he seemed to go unnoticed.

Sometime, in the middle of the lecture, Juniper leaned over and asked me something that I had hoped to avoid.

"Have you heard anything about the gathering this weekend?" I shrugged my shoulders noncommittally, trying to brush the subject off.

"What do you know?" Cedar pounced on me sensing that I knew more than they did.

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Chapter 24 - Trinity- An Interrogation

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Trinity

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"Isn't it weird to have another gathering after just a week?" Paul asked.

"This one isn't for the Alpha to look for a mate though." Juniper said, staring right at me. "This gathering is for the entire pack, save for very young children."

"Yes, I had heard that almost every member of the pack must be there." I told them.

"Heard it from where." Cedar asked. He and Juniper were like good cop bad cop, only it was hard to tell which was which.

"Just around."

"Uh huh." Cedar said, not believing me at all.

"Trinity, does this meeting have anything to do with why you are being followed around by that warrior from the pack?" She asked me.

"I don't know, they might bring up the rogue that attacked me. I don't know what all is going to happen. How am I supposed to know?"

"You're a bad liar Astro." Paul told me matter-of-factly.

"What are you talking about?"

"I think you know exactly what we are talking about."
Cedar snapped. I just looked at him, eyes full of regret.

"What are you not telling us?" Juniper asked me, hurt
filling her voice.

"I can't talk about it." I told them.

"Does it have to do with the gathering?" She asked me.

"I can't talk about it." I said again.

"Ok." She sounded like my answer had been a yes. "And
does it have anything to do with why you missed school
and are being followed around by a high-ranking pack
warrior?"

"I can't talk about it." I said again. Regret was clear in
my voice and on my face.

"Last question." She whispered. I looked at her
pleadingly. "Does it have anything to do with the Alpha?"

I glanced at Vincent before repeating the line again.

"I can't talk about it." I was close to tears now. I didn't want to hide things from them.

"That's all I needed to hear." She said knowingly. She had understood what it all meant. They were all looking at me, Juniper with eyes narrowed in scrutiny, Cedar and Paul with eyes that had gone wide in shock.

"Are you ok Trinity?" Paul asked me, I could hear genuine concern in his voice. "I remember how scared you looked the other day." He added in a whisper.

"I'm fine." I told him, smiling. "And I think that's the first time you've used my name in weeks." We laughed quietly amongst ourselves.

I snuck a glance at Vincent, I knew he was listening to everything that we had said, but I hadn't broken my promise. I didn't tell anyone anything. He sensed my eyes on him and turned to look at me with a smile.

The remainder of the day passed in its usual style, only

with an extra tag along with us. Vincent had insisted on carrying my bag everywhere. Thankfully I only had two classes today, so I didn't need to be overly embarrassed by his doting.

We drove back to the house, or estate as I had heard others call it, I had thought the drive would be quiet, but he had a few things to say.

"I am glad you kept your promises, Luna."

"Please don't start with that again Vincent." I told him.

"You're going to have to get used to it." He told me. "You might as well get the practice in now." He laughed at me as I groaned at the thought.

"Fine, but only at the house." I told him.

"Fine, only at the house, Trinity." He laughed. "But like I said, I am glad you kept your promises. The Alpha will be

happy to hear that as well."

"What exactly are you going to tell him?" I asked, concerned for my friends who had figured things out on their own.

"Just as I said, that you kept your promises." He answered with a smile. He really was a nice guy.

"Thank you, Vincent."

"There is no need to thank me, Luna." He spoke my title, exaggerating it, as we pulled up to the house. I groaned in response all the while he was laughing at my reaction.

The next few days passed in a blur. I went to class accompanied by Vincent every day. He continued to carry my bag everywhere we went. He got along with us fine, but he was also a lot older than us, so we felt a little uncomfortable letting loose with our typical brand of humor. But perhaps he would be a good influence on Paul and Cedar, hopefully he'd help them mature somewhat.

Now, I was sitting alone in my room the night before the

gathering, stressing over the upcoming ceremony. Gina was coming soon for the final fitting of my dress. Aside from that I would have nothing to distract me.

They brought me an early dinner in my room. Apparently, Reece was out for the night and eating alone in the kitchen would have been uncomfortable, so I preferred to eat in my room instead.

Gina came shortly after the dinner that Abigail, the cook, had made for me. The dress had been altered to the specifications we had decided on. She set up the stool, told me to strip and helped me into the dress just like before.

The fabric felt just as luxurious as I remembered. I marveled at how it shined in the light but was so soft. Gina's hands moved quickly and efficiently as she worked to make the dress lay in just the right way.

"Oh my Goddess, but doesn't that look amazing on you." She gasped when she had me dressed. I turned to look at myself in the full-length mirror that stood in the corner of my room. My eyes opened wide when I saw the completed dress.

Gina had tightened the bodice so that it accentuated and showcased my ample chest. The excess fabric had not been cut off but instead been cinched and decorative pleated in the back, still it was mostly hidden by the long, shimmering silver cape.

She had raised the waistline, creating an empire waist. The dress then flared and flowed down and out around me. The length had not been altered either, so it had a very long train. The dress would be trailing behind me quite far as I walked. I would need to be very careful with every step.

It made me look smaller and more delicate than I usually did, but it also made me look somewhat ethereally beautiful. I felt like moonlight walking. The shining silver light of the dress reflected in my eyes making them shine as well.

I couldn't believe how different just a dress could make me look. But it felt like I was looking at a completely different person. Someone I didn't recognize at all.

Gina helped me out of the dress and put it in its

protective bag. She hung it in one of my closets then excused herself. It seemed more real now, having the dress so close.

I was having a hard time relaxing. I knew I would have a hard time sleeping tonight as well, so I figured I should look for a book to read. Even with as many books as my Aunt had sent over, I couldn't find anything I wanted to read. I decided to ask the guard at my door if he could take me to the house's library. I wanted to see if there was anything there that would interest me.

"Leslie?" I called out to him and he opened the door almost immediately.

"Yes Luna?" He poked his head into the room. He was an OK guy, not as likeable as Vincent, but nice enough. He had light blond hair and pale green eyes. He was tall and lanky looking, but Vincent assured me he was a good fighter.

"Can you take me to the library? I can't find anything in here to read." I told him. He looked at the small library I

had in my room.

"Sure thing, Luna." He answered with a smile and a nod.

He led me down to the second floor to where the library was. It was a lot bigger than I was expecting. The room was massive, and every wall was covered in floor to ceiling bookshelves. It was like my own personal heaven, as long as it had some books I would be interested in.

I perused the shelves looking at what the room had to offer. There was some of everything it seemed. Like it was a collection gathered by many different people over many, many years.

Finally, I found something that would satisfy my need to read. It was a collection of classic short stories. I hadn't seen it in years and was delighted for the chance to read it again.

I sat on the sofa near the window, tucking my feet up under me and curling into a ball in the corner of the seat. I cracked the book open and began to read.

I sat there reading peacefully in silence. I don't know how long I was there. I must have fallen asleep at some point. I started having a very strange dream.

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CHOSEN BY FATE, REJECTED BY THE ALPHA

Chapter 25 - Trinity- Strange Dream, And The Morning Of The Marking

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Trinity

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In my dream, Reece was there, standing before me. He was being nice to me for once, which was how I knew it was a dream. His scent was filling my nose and my mind, making my body melt. I could feel him embracing me in a

sweet gentle hug.

"You sure are a handful." He whispered with his arms wrapped around me. He had a sweet gentle smile on his face. It was hard to visualize because I had never seen the look on him before, so his face kept going fuzzy. Nothing else seemed to happen, and the dream ended shortly after that.

I woke to the sound of the alarm blaring on my cell phone, where it was lying on my nightstand. Somehow, I had gotten back to my room. I was confused and disoriented. I didn't remember going back to my room. I started to wonder if that was really a dream last night, or did Reece really carry me to my room?

No, he would never do something like that. The most likely scenario was either Leslie carried me back or he woke me up enough to make me walk back but not enough for me to wake up and remember it.

I looked down and saw I was still wearing the same clothes as the night before. Well, that's actually

comforting. I thought. I didn't want someone changing me in my sleep.

I washed my face and got dressed for the day. I wouldn't be showering until I got ready for the gathering, no need to shower twice in one day. Vincent came by shortly after I was ready for the day to take me down for breakfast, he must have been on morning duty today.

The only thing I was looking forward to about tonight, was not being under house arrest anymore. I would be allowed to roam about freely without Reece being afraid I was going to run away again.

It was pointless anyway. I could feel the pull of fate. I could tell I was meant to be with him. The universe was pushing us together. And that draw for each other would only get stronger. So why should I bother fighting?

Sure, I might not love him right now. But I probably would, sometime soon. That's how mate bonds worked. It's what we were all taught growing up. Your mate is like your other half. Without them you feel incomplete. You will feel drawn to them. Once you meet them fate will push you together at all costs.

I'm sure it was only a matter of time for us too. Things were just so new. And there had been my bad decisions in the beginning. If I hadn't tried to run away, maybe we would have spent this week getting to know each other instead of me being trapped in my room.

Oh well, live and learn, right? We will make up for lost time. Once I'm marked and I can move about the house freely, I will see him more often and we should be able to talk more. I'm sure we will get along.

During my mental ramblings we had made it down to the kitchen, it was time for me to have breakfast with Reece. Things were marginally better than the first day. We hadn't argued or snapped at each other like we did at the first breakfast together. Mostly they were silent though.

We were eating in silence alone in the room again and working our way through French toast, bacon, and eggs. Abigail had learned how much I could eat and had stopped over filling my plates, which was good, I hated to waste the delicious food she had made.

We were nearly done eating when I heard him clear his

throat to get my attention. I looked up to see him staring at me for once. My eyes locked onto his and held them. Looking into them I was able to feel just how strong the pull of the mate bond could be, when I was around him it was like I lost a bit of control over my rational mind.

Staring into his eyes was like falling into a deep warm pool. But if you weren't careful, that pool could be filled with fire or acid. Right now, he seemed to be trying for a relaxing mood, so the rich honey color felt inviting.

"I have a meeting after breakfast with the Elders, about tonight, they would like you to be there." He told me, his deep, smooth voice washing over me. I almost didn't catch what he wanted from me, finally my brain clicked.

"Alright." I answered, a little slow. He seemed almost annoyed at my response but said nothing. Once we were finished, I followed him to his office, moving silently behind him.

We had not been in the office for more than two minutes when there was a knock on the door.

"Alpha, the Elders are here." Well, he sure knows how to time things down to a T. I thought to myself. I was sitting in the same seat as before. Reece was sitting at his desk unlike last time. Noah escorted the five old men into the room and then stood at attention behind Reece. If we were living in feudal times, my cousin would be called an attendant instead of an assistant. I just hope he didn't perform all the same jobs that they did in feudal times. I had to fight not to smile at the idea that had popped into my head.

Reece and the Elders were discussing how tonight was going to progress. I was to get ready before sundown. The ceremony would not happen until it was full dark, but I had to be in the forest before the others. I would be waiting in the trees with my escort guards, Vincent and Leslie, while I waited for Reece to explain why the meeting had been called.

When the time came, Reece would come to me. He would then guide me to stand atop the stone that served as the podium and stage for gatherings in the Lunar clearing.

The Lunar clearing was a place of power for our pack. It was a natural clearing that had nearly a perfect view of

every full moon, no matter the season. The moon shone down on us all connecting us with the Moon Goddess.

The stone we used for the podium and stage was a large natural formation that was in the shape of a perfect circle. It was also a bright white color making it stand out among all the red of rocks and mountains around us. It actually looked like a full moon came to rest on the ground for us. And just by being in the clearing any member of the pack could feel stronger for a while.

Once Reece escorts me to the platform, he will announce me to the pack as the new Luna and his mate. That is when Michael, one of the Elders, would come forward and help us finish the ritual. It was like a cross between me being sworn into a political office and getting married at the same time. I had to take vows of a sort.

The most important thing was supposed to happen after the vows, Reece would mark me. This meant that he would do a targeted shift, only bringing out his long and lethally sharp wolf teeth. Then he would sink his teeth into the soft flesh and muscle where my neck curved into my shoulder.

I listened to them giving me the description of what was

to happen. I tried to make it feel as academic as possible, detaching myself from it as much as I could. But try as I might, the thought of him biting still made me nervous.

I looked at Reece out of the corner of my eye. I wanted to see if he was anywhere as nervous about this as I was. The look I saw on his face was one of anger and annoyance. That was completely opposite of what I was expecting.

The meeting wrapped up shortly after. There was not much for me to contribute. The reason for my presence had just been to make sure I understood what was expected of me. Reece stayed at his desk while Noah escorted me and the Elders out.

"Get some rest until it's time for you to get ready, you hear." He whispered to me before he turned and went back into the office.

"You will do fine, child." One of the Elders told me, I didn't know his name yet.

"Thank you." I smiled at him.

"Just relax and let the boy handle it. He may be young, but he is a good Alpha." He added. I nodded nervously.

"We will be there as well, Luna, so no need to worry." Michael said, placing a comforting hand on my shoulder, smiling warmly.

If you find any errors (broken links, non-standard content, etc..), Please let us know < report chapter > so we can fix it as soon as possible.

Chapter 26 - Trinity-A Dream With An Ominous Feeling

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Trinity

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Vincent took me back to my room. I was already feeling mentally exhausted from the day, so I decided to take a nap. I was asleep almost as soon as I laid in the bed, quickly falling into a restless sleep.

I was walking through the forest, dressed in the Luna dress. There were no guards or escorts near me like there was supposed to be. It was dark, but I could glimpse the full moon through the branches.

There was no wind, nor the sound of any animals in the forest around me. Everything was eerily quiet. I continued to move forward, in the direction of the clearing that I knew was ahead of me.

The silence of the forest around me was unnerving. I was growing increasingly uneasy with every step I took. I couldn't sense anyone in the clearing ahead, no movement, no sound of breathing or heartbeats, no scent of anyone.

I could see the opening for the clearing ahead. I started to hurry, afraid to be alone among the trees. But as I got

closer to the opening, a strange purple fog started filling the world around me.

The closer I got to the fog, the more uneasy I felt. I could hear whispers coming from within the fog, several voices. But even though I could hear the voices, I couldn't make out what they were saying.

The voices were strange. I swear I could feel them actually crawling along my skin, raising goosebumps all over my body. I shivered at the feeling.

When I passed the edge of the trees into the clearing, I walked into a solid wall of the fog. I pushed through it with some difficulty, it was like walking through water.

"Ahh, I see it's you." Spoke a man's voice I didn't know.

"Who's there?" I asked.

"You are not the one I was expecting." He continued

ignoring my question.

"Who were you expecting?" I was confused by his words.

"She must not have been as strong as I thought. It's a shame." He seemed to be on the verge of tears. "No matter, we will finish this another time." He added. I felt something pushing hard against my back. I stumbled and felt myself fall.

There was no cliff here, but it felt like I was falling from extremely high up. It didn't make any sense. I opened my mouth, ready to scream, when I felt someone grab my shoulder.

I jerked awake, startled by the dream and the sharp shaking of my shoulder.

"Trinity." Noah was calling me. My heart was pounding in my ears and I almost didn't hear him call my name.

"Noah, you scared me." I growled with a glare. "What do you want?" I asked him.

"You need to get ready." He snapped at me.

"What? I just went to sleep a few minutes ago." I said, shock filling my voice.

"No, it's been awhile since you came back to your room. Mom is here to help you get ready, as is Nikki." He answered. Nikki was Noah's mate, the closest thing to a sister I had, she was sweet, bubbly, and super girly.

I felt disoriented. I didn't feel like I had slept at all. I was still exhausted, and I was covered in sweat. My heart was racing a mile a minute and I could still feel goosebumps all over my body.

"Are you alright?" Noah asked me. I didn't know how I should answer that question. I know it was just a dream, but it felt real and it had scared the hell out of me.

"Yeah, I'm fine. Just nervous you know." I gave him an uneasy smile. He looked at me with concern written all over his face. It was clear he loved me, but that he was warring with his duty to the pack as well. "I'll be alright." I assured him. "I just need some comfort from family right now." I smiled. This made him smile as well.

"You're such a kid sometimes." He laughed at me, but he hugged me tightly.

I needed to get ready for the night in a hurry. I rushed through a shower and wrapped myself in a towel. When I went back to my room, Aunt Eve and Nikki were there waiting for me.

On the table in front of Nikki was a case full of make-up so large that it actually made my eyes pop open in shock. That was way too much in there for one person to own.

"Don't give me that look. I do everyone's make-up." She demanded in her bubbly voice.

"Just as long as you know, I'm not used to using that much make-up. I wear it but not that much. I wear accents here and there that bring out natural looks instead of wearing heavy make-up." I told her nervously.

"Trinity, how long have I known you now? You think I

don't know your make-up preference." She laughed at me. "Come on, sit down."

I should trust her. She had gone to school to be a make-up artist and hair stylist. She had dreams of doing hair and make-up for the rich and famous. But for now, she was happy being a stylist for the pack.

I sat in the chair at my vanity while Nikki started running the brush through my hair, it felt good having someone brushing my hair like that. She seemed to have a vision in mind, and I was too nervous to think about what would look best right now, so I just let her work and let my mind wander.

I had tried not to think about it over the last week, but my life would never be the same. I had gone from being a no wolf nobody to the mate of the Alpha, the Luna of the pack. Literally the second in command in our entire wolf pack.

But even with all that so-called power and authority it gave me, I would be severely limited for the rest of my life. I would never again be able to just do something at the spur of a moment. My life was now dedicated to hundreds of other people. This was way too much for me

to process right away. I didn't know how I was going to manage it all.

While I was contemplating my future, Nikki's quick and efficient hands had pulled just the top of my hair back in a loose, yet elegant braid. She had used a set of hair combs held together by a very thin, fine silk.

The silk threads were black, and they formed a diamond pattern that was hard to see against my dark brown hair. But the most important part of the combs were the silver pearl-like beads attached to it. The pearls were placed at various points along the diamond pattern.

The combs themselves and silk all but disappeared against my dark hair, the only thing visible were the beads. They looked like little moons nestled in my hair.

"It looks beautiful Nikki, thank you." I told her, smiling at her in the mirror.

"Now time for the make-up." She smiled, turning me away from the mirror.

She put lotion on my face and rubbed it in before proceeding. She had listened to, and remembered, my make-up preference. She was not going overboard.

She was doing my eyes first, so I just sat there with my eyes closed, letting her work. Occasionally she would give me instructions, like to move my eyes or mouth in a certain way. Before I knew it, she had finished and turned me to look at myself again.

She had used a medium shade of gray, close to pewter. My eyelashes were so long and dark that they made my eyes pop, they looked huge. My milky white skin stood out even more, almost making me glow like the moon. She had used no blush as it wouldn't show in the dark tonight, anyway. And for my lips she had used a blood red color. I thought at first the color wouldn't work with me, but the more I looked at it, the more I could tell that the whole look would go perfectly with the dress.

"You look gorgeous." Aunt Eve gushed to me. "My little girl is all grown up." She cried, tears falling steadily from her eyes.

"Let's get her into the dress." Nikki called, I could hear the eagerness in her voice.

Nikki took the dress from the closet while Aunt Eve was helping me finish getting ready. She was rubbing a thin layer of body oil on my back while I rubbed the same oil onto my arms and legs. Aunt Eve then brought over a pair of all black gladiator sandals. They had leather soles and black silk that criss-crossed over the top of my foot and then wrapped around my leg. The sandals tied halfway up my calves.

Once the shoes were fully laced and tied, Nikki held the dress ready for me. She and Aunt Eve helped me into it so that I would not mess up my hair, make-up, or the dress itself. When they had finished settling the fabric into place, I looked at myself in the full-length mirror.

The fabric of the dress left my shoulders bare before it flowed down into the long flowing sleeves and the flowing cape like train. My hands were just barely visible at the ends of the sleeves, but everything else was completely hidden by the dress. My hair spread out like a dark curtain over my shoulders, the braid swinging gently with every turn of my head.

"You look like you could be the Moon Goddess herself."
Aunt Eve gushed as she looked at me.

"You look amazing." Nikki seemed proud, smiling at me. I knew they were saying what they honestly felt, but I looked so different from what I usually did that I didn't feel like myself. I was starting to get even more nervous than I already was.

While I was looking at my reflection there was a knock at the door. Steeling my nerves, I took a deep breath to settle myself before answering.

"Come in." I called in a raised voice.

The door opened and Noah came in, followed by Vincent and Leslie. All three of them stopped in their tracks the moment they saw me.

"Wow." Leslie said without tact.

"Oh my." Vincent whispered.

"You look beautiful Trinity." Noah told me, he seemed to be the only one capable of forming a full sentence. Their reactions made me smile and I had to stifle a laugh.

"Thank you." I told them, trying to hide my embarrassment.

"Are you ready to go?" Noah asked me. "It's time for you to head to the forest, the others will be arriving shortly."

"Yes, I'm ready." I told him. It was time for me to begin the next phase of my life.

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27

Chapter 27 - Trinity- Into The Woods

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Trinity

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I left the room with the three of them, Aunt Eve and Nikki would come to the forest shortly and I would see them there. No sooner had we walked out the side door of the house and into the twilight of the night, than Noah began to speak.

"I think this should go without saying, but the two of you need to make sure that the Luna is protected at all times. Not only will the Alpha be very upset if any harm comes to her, but as she is my family and very dear to me, you will have to answer to me as well." He glared at the two of them. I heard Leslie gulp to my left.

"No need to worry, Noah, I will make sure that everything goes smoothly." Vincent told him confidently with a smile.

"You'd better." Noah told him. Seeing him be so

protective of me made me happy. It reminded me of when we were little, and he was there at the house with me and Carter more.

"Please, come this way Luna." Vincent asked, a slight smirk on his face. He knew I hated the title but that I needed to get used to it, so he used it every chance he got. He guided me in the direction of the forest with a wave of his hand. Leslie was taking the lead, so I followed after him.

We were walking along a path that wound through the trees to the clearing. It was a different path than the one everyone else would be using. This path seemed to be only used by the Alpha and those who worked in the Alpha's house.

Reece's scent was very strong along the trail, the traces of his scent made my heart race and stomach do backflips. The mate bond was getting stronger already. I shuddered to think of how it would be after he marked me.

We had only been in among the trees for a few moments when I stumbled on the path. Vincent quickly reached out and grabbed my shoulder to steady me.

"Are you alright?" He asked me. I smiled sheepishly at him in embarrassment.

"Yes, I just stumbled, that's all."

"Perhaps it would be better if I escorted you properly then." He said. Vincent was always a gentleman and so nice to everyone. "May I?" He asked. I nodded my head in agreement.

Vincent gently gripped my right elbow with his right arm crossed in front of his body. He then placed his left hand lightly on my left hip. This would allow him to make sure that I would not be able to fall in either direction.

We continued walking. Vincent making sure I would not be able to fall again. We were making good time as we proceeded silently through the trees. I was too nervous to talk, and I didn't know what to talk about.

When we got to the spot where we needed to wait, I had no choice but to stand there and think quietly to myself. Leslie had been standing by a tree nearby staring at me for several minutes. It was starting to make me feel uncomfortable.

"You really look beautiful tonight Luna." He finally spoke, breaking the silence.

"Thank you." I told him, not knowing what else to say.

"It's truly a shame." He said looking at me.

"What is?" I asked him, confused.

"That I don't have a chance, the Alpha took you for himself." He answered with a strange smirk.

"Umm.." He was making me feel awkward. I had never had a problem with him before today, so I didn't know why today would be different. I looked over at Vincent, a pleading look in my eyes.

"Leave her be." Vincent told him sternly.

"I'm just saying." Leslie grumbled.

"You're bothering her." Vincent told him.

"She's fine." Leslie told him.

Vincent was about to snap back at him when we heard footsteps coming our way. I could smell Reece's scent getting more intense. Noah was not with him, which meant he had gone to the other path with Aunt Eve and Nikki. Leslie and Vincent both stood a little taller just before Reece came into sight.

"Welcome, Sir." Vincent told him.

"We will begin immediately. Wait for me here." He told them without pausing. He never even looked in my direction as he passed quickly by.

"Yes Sir." They said together.

We stood near the edge of the trees, waiting for Reece to come get me. Vincent was on my right, Leslie was on my left. After a few moments I felt Leslie brush his hand against mine. I jumped, startled by his touch. Vincent noticed my distress and glared at Leslie.

Knowing that those gathered for the ceremony would hear if they argued, Vincent decided to handle the situation quietly. He pulled me to the right, putting me on his other side and placing himself between me and Leslie. I silently thanked him for the help.

I was standing there, watching through the trees as I heard Reece's voice ring through the night around us. This was a sign of a true alpha, a man who knew how to command power and attention. When he spoke everyone around him stopped and listened.

"Welcome, Red Springs Wolf Pack." I felt Reece's voice brush over me like a warm heavy hand stroking my flesh, I shivered in response. "I appreciate you coming on such

short notice. I know that this is not when we would normally meet up, as that would be in three weeks during the Hunter's Moon. But I have an announcement to make to you all."

I heard a rush of whispered voices rise among the gathered crowd that I could barely see. Curiosity was running rampant through them.

"There is cause for major celebration. Friends, family, pack mates, I have found my Luna." He announced. The crowd was silent for a moment before erupting into a loud and raucous cheer.

"Thank the Goddess!" Was yelled several times.

"Congratulations Alpha Reece." I heard more than once.

"Who is she?" Someone yelled, and many others picked it up. Soon they were chanting.

"Who is she? Who is she? Who is she? Who is she?" I was getting nervous hearing them chanting, it was like a demand to know if I was good enough. My heart was

pounding, and I was starting to hyperventilate.

"The Alpha will be here momentarily, Luna, you will do fine. You are the best Luna we could ever ask for." Vincent said holding my left hand tightly in both of his as he looked me in the eye. "There is nothing for you to worry about. We are all here for you, I am here for you. If you ever need anything, just call and I will come to your aid." He was so kind, so much like my cousins, I needed his kindness in that moment. His words helped me to calm down.

I could hear footsteps coming towards me as Reece's scent grew steadily stronger. It was time. I was going to be introduced to the whole pack as the new Luna. I can do this, I've got this. I told myself, mentally psyching myself up. I took one last deep breath before Reece came into view. When I finally saw him, I knew that I was wearing a confident, radiant smile.

Reece passed the edge of the trees, out of the clearing and onto the path. He looked toward me for the first time that evening, the moon wasn't full, but it was still bright enough for him to see me clearly.

The light of the moon peeking through the branches was

shimmering off the dress making me shine with an ethereal essence. I saw him stop in his tracks and gasp with his eyes open wide. He looked shocked.

"It is time to go now." He whispered to me, his right hand extended toward me. I took his hand and held it lightly. He pulled me to his side gently, switched his hold on my hand from his right hand to his left so that he could wrap his arm around my waist. The overall effect made us appear much more intimate with each other than we were.

Being so close to him I could hear his heartbeat. It sounded faster than normal, but as I didn't typically hear it I had nothing to compare it to. But it was pounding nearly as fast as mine that had sped up considerably when his large, warm hand slid around my back.

He guided me forward, out of the trees, and into the clearing. I could see the entire pack, save for the very old and very young. Most of the faces were new to me as I had not socialized among the pack much. They, likewise, were confused upon seeing me, few of them knew what I looked like, but all of them would know me by name.

If you find any errors (broken links, non-standard

content, etc..), Please let us know < report chapter > so we can fix it as soon as possible. Chapter 28 - Trinity-Marked

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Trinity

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Reece guided me to the raised stone platform. It was shining in the moonlight just like my Luna dress was. Now that I was not hidden by the trees and I was in full view of the moonlight I seemed to be glowing completely. The light all around me made my hair look black instead of brown where it rested against my shoulders.

As Reece stepped up onto the platform, he lifted me with him instead of waiting for me to step up after him. The sensation of having my feet leave the ground completely was disorienting and disconcerting, but it only lasted a moment. After we were on the platform, he switched to only holding my hand and lightly pulling me along beside

him.

We were now in full view of everyone in the pack. I could feel all eyes on me. Most were looking at me with awe on their faces, but there were a few who seemed displeased.

"Allow me to introduce your new Luna, Trinity Whitton." Reece's voice rang through the silent air. I heard the collective gasp of nearly everyone in attendance. A few of those near the front with looks of awe turned to displeasure. A sharp scent started to grow among the crowd. Rage! Someone was very unhappy with me it seemed, and their scent was letting it be known.

"NO!" A woman screamed from the middle of the crowd. I could see her pushing her way to the front. The rage was coming from her. It was rolling off her palpable waves.

"I refused to accept her as my Luna! She doesn't even have a wolf!" She was still yelling, her voice going shrill. "She wasn't even in the group from the last gathering! You hadn't even spent time with her! It wasn't her turn yet! You could have mated with someone else! She

doesn't deserve to be our Luna, she isn't good enough for you! She is worthless! She shouldn't even be part of this pack!" She was screaming so loud that she was nearly incomprehensible.

Reece had already let go of me and moved to the front of the platform. I heard a rumbling growl beginning deep in his chest and growing steadily louder. His muscles tensed as if he were about to leap in front of the she-wolf who had dared to defy him. Just before he leapt, there was a flash of movement from beside the woman.

CRACK! The satisfying sound rent through the air as someone slapped the woman across the face, hard, and sent her reeling. The woman nearly lost her balance, she just managed to recover before tumbling to the ground.

"What?!" The woman shrieked, shocked.

"Don't you dare talk about my niece that way!" Aunt Eve yelled, fury and motherly love pouring off her so strongly that I could physically feel it from where I stood. Reece, taken aback by the sudden unexpected events paused momentarily in surprise.

"You know nothing about her!" Nikki added.

"My niece is five times the woman you will ever be. She is who the Alpha is fated to be with. It would make no difference if she met him now or in two more months when it was time for her group, the results would have been the same. No other woman would have mated with him because we wolves only have one mate in life. And whether you like it or not, Trinity is the Alpha's mate." Aunt Eve's voice rang through the night, silence followed her tirade.

"She is not worthy of being a Luna!" The angry she-wolf tried saying again.

"And what makes you think you are! What makes you think that you know what it takes to be a Luna?" Nikki demanded of her. "Trinity is smart, diligent, and fair. She will treat everyone with the respect and care they deserve. You on the other hand would divide our people with your petty prejudices." Nikki scorned the woman further. "You're shallow, egotistical, and self-centered. That's the absolute last thing we need for a Luna. Grow up Donna and learn that the world doesn't revolve around you."

"ENOUGH!" Reece had recovered from his momentary shock and apparently, he was done watching the soap opera unfolding in front of us. "All of you shut up, now." He roared. His voice held the authoritative command of the Alpha. His power and fury were rolling off him in stronger doses than any of the emotions that any of the women were giving off.

"What you fail to understand, Donna, and all of you who showed your displeasure upon my announcement, is that this is my mate, and it is not up for discussion. You will accept her, you will respect her, and you will deal with it. If you do anything other than that you will face the consequences." His voice held a razor-sharp edge as he spoke. "As you all know, the Goddess herself chooses our mates for us, it is not something we can defy or change. And the Goddess herself has said that Trinity is my mate." The hush continued.

Before anything else could happen to further ruin the evening, Michael hurried onto the platform.

"Let us finish the ceremony." He called out in a slightly nervous voice. Reece and I faced the crowd, Michael

faced us with his back to the people, he was smiling confidently.

"Trinity, you stand here before your pack, beside your Alpha mate, do you vow to put their lives before your own, from now until the day you pass from this world and ascend to the great eternal land of the moons? Do you vow to uphold pack traditions to the best of your abilities and do what is best for your people? Do you vow to follow your Alpha mate wherever he shall go, no matter the danger, no matter the opposition, to provide him with the support, emotionally or otherwise, that he might need? Do you vow to be the Luna of the Red Springs Wolf Pack?" My heart raced hearing the words, hearing what he was asking me to commit myself to.

"Yes, I Trinity, do so vow to be the Luna of the Red Springs Wolf Pack, performing any and all duties expected of me." I answered as I was instructed to do so. The clearing around us was silent, allowing my voice to ring through the night with a similar power and authority that Reece's did.

"Alpha Reece, please, mark Luna Trinity as your mate."

Reece turned to me. I could see the moonlight glinting in his eyes, a slightly evil look seemed to be hiding behind that glint. He smirked at me with his mouth slightly open. I saw the moment he had shifted just his teeth. His mouth moved just slightly forward, not so much that it could have been called a snout, but it was further forward than a human mouth. I could also see his teeth protruding out of it as they were now too long to fit inside.

Reece approached me slowly. He slid his right hand around my waist and his left hand around my shoulders. He tilted me to his left, my head fell onto my right shoulder. He put his mouth by my ear and inhaled deeply before he whispered to me. I shivered at the feel of him being so close and intimate with me.

"Don't scream." His nearly silent voice rumbled into my ear as he whispered.

He inhaled deeply at the bend of my neck one last time before opening his mouth wide and sinking his teeth into soft tender flesh and muscles at the curve where my neck met my shoulder. The pain was instant and sharp. I gasped loudly.

I could feel the pain shooting from my neck through my whole body. It jolted through me in waves, down to my fingers, my toes, deep areas hidden inside that no one had touched or roused in me yet. The pain was scary, exciting, and erotic all at the same time.

My body was trembling and quivering in his arms. His jaws clamped down harder, holding me in place and causing me to go completely still. I stifled a scream by biting my tongue. A heat was growing in my shoulder now and spreading through my whole body, a slow fire steadily growing. This was what we were waiting for. This was his mark being imprinted on me permanently.

The heat was growing by the second. It was unbearable. But still, I remained silent. Tears were forming in my eyes, but I refused to scream or cry out. I opened my eyes wide and looked up at the moon to stop the tears from falling.

Just as I thought I would not be able to handle the pain any further, that I had to scream or cry to let it out, the fire in my body finally stopped. I felt Reece's jaws slacken and then released me altogether. He pulled away from me, licking the bite mark once, then he held me with just

one hand on my shoulder.

"Wolves, I present to you, your Alpha and Luna." Michael declared to the gathered crowd. Everyone in the crowd before us bowed, going down to one knee and lowering their head in a show of respect. Everyone but Donna that is, she went to one knee, but she kept her head up to glare at me.

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Chapter 29 - Trinity-Help For The New Luna

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Trinity

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The strength in my body felt like it was quickly leaving

me. I swayed a bit, nearly falling. Reece tightened his grip on me, holding me steady.

"We are finished for tonight. I thank you all for coming. Be safe my friends." Reece dismissed the crowd. I could see Aunt Eve, and the other, my entire family, smiling at me with love and respect in their eyes.

After the crowd dispersed, the only ones left were Reece, myself, Noah, and my guards Vincent and Leslie. Reece let go of me and started speaking to Noah. Without his support I felt, again, just how much strength had left my body and how weak I was becoming from the night's events. I swayed again, more so this time, nearly falling. Vincent rushed forward catching me just in time. Noah and Reece turned to look at us in shock.

"What's wrong?" Noah asked.

"The heat that rushed through me from the marking, it was so intense, so draining, that I feel weak now." I told him. Reece growled at my response.

"I still have some work to do. Will one of you carry her back?" He asked.

"I will." Leslie volunteered eagerly.

"No." I said instantly. I did not want him touching me right now. Reece and Noah looked at me with suspicion.

"I will do it." Vincent offered, silently lifting me into a bridal-like hold, cradling me in his arms and resting my head against his chest. "Shall I call someone to help her change when she is back in her room?" Vincent asked.

"I will call someone." Noah answered firmly, taking out his phone.

Vincent walked quickly. Off the platform, across the clearing, and through the trees. Before I knew it, we were already entering the house. I was surprised that I had not fallen asleep yet, my body just felt so very weak, but I guess I wasn't actually tired.

Vincent walked quickly through the house and to my room. He shifted me quickly in his arms to hold me one

handed so he could open the door. As soon as he was inside, he quickly shut the door, basically slamming it in Leslie's face.

"Hey!" I heard Leslie shout from the other side.

Vincent carried me to the bed and laid me gently in the middle of it.

"Rest here and wait for whoever is coming to assist you. I will stand guard at your door."

"But I am not under house arrest anymore." I reminded him.

"This is not to keep you in, Luna, but to keep other people out." His voice was strained as he was glaring at the door. I looked at it as well, thinking of Leslie standing on the other side.

"Thank you, Vincent." I said, putting all my emotions into the few words.

"No thanks necessary, Luna." He insisted, dropping to one knee and bowing his head just like the crowd in the forest had.

"You're the best guard I could ask for." I told him honestly.

"Thank you, Luna." He smiled, flipping that gratitude around on me.

Vincent stood up then and left the room. I could just barely make out the conversation from the other side of the door. That alone told me that Vincent and Leslie were both speaking with slightly raised voices.

"You can go now." Vincent barked.

"No, I'm her guard the same as you." Leslie whined.

"She only needs one to guard the door."

"Then you leave." Leslie demanded.

"She would prefer to have me guard the door." Vincent countered.

"Why? What makes you so special?" Leslie questioned him.

"Because you make her uncomfortable." Vincent told him flatly.

"That's ridiculous." Leslie scoffed.

"No, you overstepped your bounds. You need to back off or you will reap the consequences of your actions. I will not tell you again, Leslie, go home." Vincent commanded him.

"Fine, but this isn't the end." Leslie declared.

"Then make sure you change your attitude and behavior." Vincent told him.

"Yeah, yeah." Leslie grumbled.

The hallway became silent after that. After a few moments, the door opened yet again. Peter, the elderly butler-like man that usually brought me my food entered with my Aunt, Nikki and Vincent, he was also carrying a tray.

"Good evening Luna. I have brought you some juice and a plate of cookies. The sugar will help you to get some quick, temporary energy back."

"Thank you, Peter." I said as he placed the tray on my table. He then inclined his head in a quick bow before leaving the room.

"Are you alright?" Aunt Eve asked me.

"The marking has taken a great deal of energy out of her. I'm sure you ladies remember the fire that rages in the body from the marking. Well I would gather that the fire might be more intense when marked by the Alpha." Vincent answered for me.

"Yes, the fire was so painful." Nikki agreed, nodding her head.

"What do you need?" Aunt Eve asked, looking at Vincent.

"We called you back here to ask if you ladies would be willing to help the Luna prepare for bed. She is not capable of changing on her own tonight."

"Oh! Yes, of course." Aunt Eve answered with a hint of shock.

"Thank you, ladies." Vincent bowed his head before leaving the room.

Aunt Eve and Nikki got right to work. They each went to untie one of the gladiator-style sandals. Then they worked together to unbutton and slide the dress from my body. Nikki hurried to the bathroom to fetch a washcloth while Aunt Eve took the hair combs from my hair.

"Should I take the braid out as well? I know you used to leave them in quite often."

"You can leave it. It keeps the hair out of my face." I said with a slight giggle in my voice. Nikki came back then and started gently washing the make-up from my face while Aunt Eve went to my dresser to find something for me to sleep in.

I truly hated being doted on like this. But I knew I had no other choice. I could barely move on my own.

Once I was dressed, and thoroughly embarrassed, they helped me sit up in bed. Aunt Eve brought me the juice and cookies that Peter had brought for me.

"Here, drink up." She told me. "You need your strength."

"Thank you." I filled my voice with as much love and sincerity as I could. "For everything." I looked between them both. They look confused. "Both now and back in the forest."

"We weren't going to let anyone talk about you like that." Nikki declared.

"That's right. You're my niece, but you might as well be

my daughter. I will not let someone disrespect you, or indirectly the Alpha, that way." The love in their eyes filled me with joy.

"Get some rest, I'm sure you're going to need it." Nikki implied, wiggling her eyebrows at me and laughing when she saw the shocked look that filled my face.

She had just reminded me of what follows the marking. I was expected to consummate my mating with Reece tonight. Oh my Goddess! Now I understood why they had chosen my only sexy looking nightie. It was baby blue with thin lace straps, lacey embroidery around the bottom and at the low neckline above my breasts.

"Love you, see you later." Nikki called.

"I love you sweetheart." Said Aunt Eve smiling at me as the two of them left the room.

I was sitting up in bed about a half an hour later when I heard footsteps coming down the hall. I knew

immediately who it was.

"You may go home now." I heard Reece's voice.

"Yes, Sir." Vincent responded immediately. I heard his light footsteps retreating immediately.

"Trinity?" Reece said with a slight knock on the door. I was feeling better now, so I walked quickly to the door and opened it immediately. I saw him standing there still wearing what had been at the ceremony.

I remember how soft the fabric of that shirt had felt against my hands, it felt just like the shiny silver material of my Luna dress, but it was pure black. The long-sleeved shirt was buttoned almost all the way, but the top two buttons were left open, exposing just the barest glimpse of his chest. His black dress pants and black boots combined with it almost made it look like he was trying to appear intimidating, but the idea had been to make him look like that night sky and me to look like the moon that completed him.

He looked sexy. His body, his face, his whole aura, all of it mixed together to make a man that was near

irresistible when I looked at him. I don't know if all women respond to him like this. I said to myself. I could feel my heart pound, my stomach flip, and my mind go blank all at the same time, it made me feel dizzy yet happy.

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Chapter 30 - Reece-My Mate, Marked And....

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Reece

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Oh, that Little Bunny has been a thorn in my side and a massive handful. I swear. Coming down to breakfast in the kitchen for the first time and arguing with me. Calling me Fido of all things. Who does she think she is?

Though I never did expect her to have that kind of backbone. She surprised me, that's for sure. She seemed smart, and confident, once she got past the shock of everything that had happened in those few days. And the way she held herself it was clear that she would definitely make a good lawyer one day, contrary to what I said to her.

She was still rubbing me the wrong way. Having a girl with no wolf act like she could try and tell me what to do. What in the world was the Goddess thinking? I just hope that things work out in the end.

The night before the gathering I had a meeting with the Elders and a neighboring pack Alpha. I was out until the early hours of the morning. When I got back, I noticed the scent of one of Little Bunny's guards down the hallway of the second floor.

I went to investigate. It was one of the newbies, he was an independent that had joined the pack a little over a year ago. He had done well in showing his determination and dedication, so I thought I would give him a shot and try letting him guard her while she was in the house or at school. But as I saw him currently sleeping while sitting

on the floor next to the library door, and Little Bunny's scent was clearly telling me she was in the library, perhaps I should reconsider using him.

"What are you doing here?" I growled at him. He jerked awake and stood quickly, shock written on his face.

"Alpha?!" He cried, fear filling his voice.

"Again, what are you doing here Leslie?"

"The Luna wanted to read, so she asked me to bring her to the library."

"And so, you fell asleep while on guard duty?" I asked him sternly. This man would need more training if he was going to be a guard around here.

"I sincerely apologize, Alpha." He conceded, lowering his head in embarrassment.

"Leave, get out of my sight. You had better do your job properly next time, or you'll find out how unforgiving I

can be."

"Yes, Sir." He squeaked as he scampered off looking like a little rat. Now to make her go back to her room. Damn, why did I have to be the one to deal with her?

I walked into the room and saw her sitting on the couch near the window, book in hand. But as I got closer, it was clear she was not reading the book. Her head had slumped onto her shoulder, resting against the cushions, and the book was being propped up by her chest.

"Why, in Goddess's name, do I have to be the one to deal with this?" I breathed. But I knew why. I had just sent the guard home. Not to mention she was my mate, the Elders, and most of the people in the pack, would tell me it was my responsibility. "Dammit." I snapped.

I took the book from her hands. Trying to ignore the feeling of her breasts brushing against my hand as I took it from her. I then scooped her up into my arms.

Her hair was hanging loose, causing it to spill down and across my arm. The feeling of that silky sheet of dark brown hair flowing across my skin was almost mystifying.

A woman's hair had never affected me as much as hers had. I had first noticed it when I fell, literally, nose first into the mass of silky hair.

I leaned my head down and lifted her slightly at the same time. I pressed my nose against her hair, inhaling, drawing in the scent from her hair and neck at the same time. The smell nearly drove my wolf insane. Why does she have to be the one who has this power over me? I thought to myself angrily.

I carried her to her room, walking slowly so as not to wake her. Still, her eyes opened ever so slightly as she inhaled deeply, she then spoke one word.

"Reece?" I froze, afraid she had woken and caught me carrying her. I smiled when I saw her drift back off to sleep.

"You sure are a handful." I said.

After laying her in her bed I covered her with a light

blanket and left the room. Damn woman is making me do things I never wanted to do. What does she think I am?

The next morning, she acted like she didn't know I had carried her. Which was good. We went through the plan for the ceremony and she was dismissed to her room. Next time I would see her would be in the forest for the gathering. If only I had paid more attention when passing through to the ceremony, but I was running late and didn't have time to pause, I rushed by her without a glance. I didn't care if it hurt her feelings. She was a mate in name only right?

After I had announced to the pack that I had found my mate and I went to retrieve that mate for everyone to see, that was when I saw her for the first time that night. The moon was shining through the trees just enough to make the dress shimmer partially. I could see her perfectly. The gray used on her eyes, the blood-red lips, the little silver moon like beads that seemed to be floating in her hair, the pale moon color of her skin.

The sight of her stopped me in my tracks. I gasped when I saw her. My wolf was switching through howling and panting in my ears. My mate, my mate, my mate. He growled repeatedly. He was chomping at the bit, fighting to get to her. I hauled him back by the scruff of his neck,

telling him NO. My wolf growled at me, but he settled onto his haunches.

I led her to the platform and introduced her. A she-wolf of mid-rank was not happy and caused a scene. I was about to end the commotion when Little Bunny's aunt and Noah's mate stepped forward. The aunt smacked the she-wolf so hard she nearly fell on her ass. Then the two put her in her place. The sight was satisfying.

After my momentary shock at seeing the scene passed, I ended all commotion and forced the pack to accept my mate. The Goddess had chosen her, and I had no other choice so neither did they.

Michael performed the vows ceremony. After which it was time for me to mark her. I wish I didn't have to, but there was no getting past it. I pulled her close to me, whispered in her ear to not scream. If she did, they might think her weak. Then I sunk my teeth into her soft tender flesh.

I felt her jerk in my arms. The jolts of heat and electricity began almost immediately. They were passing from me to her with greater intensity with each passing second. The point where my mouth clamped down onto her was the

hottest part, but I could feel the heat spreading throughout her whole body. The heat was causing a reaction low in my body.

When all the heat and jolts of electricity were done, and the marking was over, I released her from the bite, licked it once and pulled away from her. Michael announced to the crowd that we were the Alpha and Luna. It was official now. She would have my mark on her forever.

She was weak from the marking and could not stand on her own. I had to have one of the guards carry her. Leslie offered, but strangely she quickly said no, a look of fear in her eyes. Vincent carried her instead. Noah also called his mom and mate and had them go and help her out of the dress and get ready for bed.

I was on my way to her room now, following the ceremony. I saw Vincent outside her door, Leslie was nowhere in sight, his scent long gone. I dismissed Vincent and knocked on the door calling her name.

"Trinity?" She answered it almost immediately. Nerves

and a hint of fear clear in her eyes.

What I noticed most when she answered the door, was the skimpy little nightie she was wearing. Was she trying to seduce me? Did she have expectations for this evening?

I growled. I'm not exactly certain why. Frustration? Anger? Arousal? Whatever the reason, the sound rumbled from my chest and caused her to stiffen slightly.

"Reece?" She asked me, confused.

"Hello Little Bunny." I knew she hated the nickname, and that made me smile every time I used it. I saw her eyes tighten in anger.

"I'm not a bunny." She snapped her usual retort. I wonder how long she will continue to object when I use the name.

"We need to talk." I told her, a hint of urgency and command in my voice. I knew that my commands would have less effect on her now that we were officially mated,

and she was the Luna. She was not an ordinary pack member now so she would be able to defy me to a certain extent, but I didn't know if she knew that.

"Ok." She answered, stepping aside and letting me into the room. She shut the door behind me.

As soon as we were alone, I turned on her. Pinning her in place with a glare so firm that no one in the pack had ever been able to withstand it. She would most likely cower in fear from it, from me, for the rest of her life.

"What is it?" She asked me, her voice not quite as shaky as I expected. In fact, she looked annoyed. Interesting.

"We need to make a few things clear."

"About what?"

"You and I."

"And?"

"We are nothing." I told her.

"We are mates." She told me.

"In name only. We will never be anything more. Do you understand me? I will never see you as anything more than a means to an end. You're a weak little girl that has no wolf. You will do your duties to the pack and do as you are told. But you and I will never be official mates."

"Really?" She questioned, looking taken aback by my words.

"Yes. I never wanted a mate in the first place. Women are weak. They make you weak. Having you around will only drag me down. Do your best not to drag me or my pack down. You will come with me on pack business. You will attend to the women and children, I will attend to the men, run the pack as a whole, and run my corporation. Unless we have to work together on business, we will have nothing to do with each other." I made my voice as firm and angry as I could. "You are nothing to me." I added.

Her nostrils flared, eyes narrowed, breathing deepened.

She was clearly angry.

"I'm nothing to you?" She asked me. "Really? That's rich. I know you feel the mate bond as much as I do."

"That doesn't matter. I can ignore that, and you, just fine."

"Let's just see about that." She mumbled.

"What's that?" I asked her, angered by her words.

"Nothing." She snapped at me. "Fine, I'm nothing to you, you are nothing to me. I didn't choose you either if you remember. I tried to run away. I didn't want to stay here in the first place, but you forced me to, you barbaric brute. Now I am stuck with you for the rest of my life. I have no choice but to be the Luna of your pack." She was nearly hyperventilating as she yelled at me. "Why the hell didn't you tell me any of this before I agreed to be the Luna tonight?" She demanded.

"Simple." I told her. "You wouldn't have agreed to be the Luna if I told you."

"You are damned right I wouldn't." She yelled. "Why the hell would I agree to be the mate for someone who will not treat me as an official mate."

"So are you telling me you expected us to be like a normal mate couple, falling in love, being happy, having a loving family. That will never happen. Eventually we will consummate the bond and have a child to carry on my family line, but other than that, there will never be anything between us."

"Oh, you must be out of your damn mind if you think I'm ever going to let you touch me. If I am nothing to you, then you can't touch me either. After all, you can't touch nothing."

"Oh, really? You think you can resist me?" Her eyes burned with fury at my words.

"Just try me Fido, I will do everything in my power to make sure you never touch me in an intimate way for as long as I live." I growled when she called me that

ridiculous dog name again. I stepped across the room, backing her up against the wall. One hand beside her head, the other gripping her chin firmly.

"What did I tell you about calling me Fido, Little Bunny?" I growled at her. "You want to see just what I can do to you?"

"Get off of me." She growled back, pushing against me with all her strength. In her fury she actually managed to move me, to my surprise. "Don't you ever touch me again. I will do my duties to this pack as I have agreed to. But I will never consider you my mate either. You're a self-centered, egotistical, violent brute. I would never fall for a guy like you. So, do me a favor, and stay out of my sight as much as possible, Reece." She put as much of her fury and rage into her voice as possible, turning it into a command. Had I just been a member of the pack I would have been forced to follow her order, but she couldn't make me do anything.

"I will gladly leave you alone until I have a need for you."

"That need will be mutual or you will lose something." She snapped back at me. Her eyes were full of hatred.

"We will see, I'm sure you'll be singing a different tune when the time comes." I rumbled.

"Don't worry, I won't change my mind." She pushed me away from her again and opened her door. "Now get out."

"You can't make me go."

"Wanna bet?" She asked, her voice was nearly hysterical.

"Next time, I won't be nearly as nice as I was today." I told her as I left the room.

She slammed the door behind me.

"He calls that nice?" I heard her yell. "That damn overgrown dog. What an ASSHOLE!" She had to know I could still hear her.

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Chapter 31 - Trinity-Exploring

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Trinity

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It's been a few days since I was marked. Every day when I showered, or when I changed clothes, or wore something that showed my shoulders I could see the mark growing steadily larger and darker. The tattoo-like image was forming. After about a week it would be an intricate design, the pack crest surrounded by a pattern that would be unique to Reece.

I had seen other mate marks. My aunt and Nikki had both shown me theirs, so had Juniper. Theirs were about the size of a half dollar. The crest, consisting of a wolf leaping displayed over a full moon.

Aunt Eve had thin lines swirling around the crest that almost looked like infinity symbols. Nikki's lines were more geometric and appeared in diamond patterns. Juniper didn't have thin lines, she had what looked like vines of ivy weaving around the crest.

As much as I hated Reece right now. As pissed off at him as I was and wanted to make his life a living hell. I was still interested in seeing what my mark would look like. The crest was almost fully formed now, so over the next few days I should start seeing Reece's personal touch.

Aside from when I was in my room, I didn't like the mark to be seen. Everyone knew I was the Luna, they knew I had been marked by Reece, but I didn't need them seeing it. The mark felt personal to me, intimate somehow. Like something that I should keep to myself because I was not a true mate. I guess, in a way, I was embarrassed by it.

It was for that reason I had taken to wearing a light jacket or cover of some sort everywhere I went. I was slowly changing my sense of fashion. Adding little things here and there, eventually, I would probably be a completely different person. The thought actually made

me sad.

I was still going to my classes. Juniper and the guys were doing their best to support me through my transition into being the new Luna. Vincent was still with me regularly as I went to school. As I didn't need to be guarded all the time anymore, the guards didn't need to switch shifts like before. Because of this, I hadn't seen Leslie much lately, thankfully. Hopefully, he would be back to his old self the next time I did see him.

Outside of school, I was allowed to do whatever I wanted. As long as it didn't embarrass Reece or the pack. And I had to take a guard with me. For this purpose, I had been introduced to two more pack warriors, David and Jeremy. I would need to call one of my guards before I could go anywhere.

David was a nice guy. He was similar to Vincent, but he wasn't as quick to do gentlemanly acts. I actually preferred that. I was used to it with Vincent, but I would be too embarrassed if everyone started treating me like that. But David was always quick with a smile and kind words. And he got along with everyone. And unlike Vincent, he was a little closer to my age, so my friends would be more comfortable around him.

I hadn't spent much time around Jeremy. He seemed alright, and I'm sure he was plenty capable. But he seemed standoffish to me. I had only met him twice, at the introduction and he guarded me once when I had an errand to run in the city. I was going to call Vincent to see if he was free, but Jeremy was already at the house, so he took me.

Both times I had met Jeremy he acted like he wanted to be anywhere but where I was. I think he might have been among those who were displeased with me becoming the Luna. There wasn't much I could do about it now. But I didn't want him guarding me much either.

Today, I was bored. I didn't have anywhere to go. No one to spend time with. And no assignments to complete. So, I was wandering the house. Since no one had taken it upon themselves to show me around, I still didn't know where anything was.

I could find my way down to the kitchen and dining area. I could find the library no problem. I could get to Reece's

office. And I could find my way out. But ask me about anything else along the way, and I wouldn't know what to tell you. I could probably find Reece's bedroom based on his scent, but I wasn't interested in finding his bedroom so that didn't matter to me at all.

I had started on the first floor of the house. So far, I had investigated the massive dining area in more detail. I found a grand ballroom, and actual ballroom like I had just walked into Victorian era London. The rest of the rooms on the first floor weren't so grand as those.

There were several large and small storage rooms. I found a parlor for entertaining, a study, and a games room. There was a solarium off the back of the house next to the garden and a greenhouse that I never knew about. Aside from these, the only other rooms on the first floor were the laundry room, which was massive, and utilities rooms.

I did find stairs that led to a basement. A quick search showed me that it was actually a massive wine cellar next to a walk-in freezer. This house truly did have some over the top stuff.

Almost everything from the second floor up was nothing

but bedrooms, conference rooms, and offices. There were linen closets, and some rooms that were just used for storing old furniture. But there wasn't much else when you went up from the main floor. I did come across a few different living rooms and sitting rooms.

It looks like things had been redone in the house a while ago. It seemed like the house used to be more inviting and welcoming. More open to visitors, but that it was closed off now. I wish I knew what had happened to make it this way.

I was almost done exploring the fourth floor. The same floor where my room was, and from the scent Reece's was as well. But I was in the north wing and he seemed to be in the south wing. I had never noticed before, but there was the faintest trace of another person's scent down this way.

I followed my nose, curious. It was an odd scent. It was weak, but it didn't smell like an old scent. So, the person must still be there. But I hadn't noticed anyone come into the house at all. And the smell was distinctly female.

I could tell that Reece's room was getting closer. His scent was so overpowering. That is probably why I never noticed it before. His scent overpowered whoever it was that was here. Whoever she was, it must be whoever Reece was in love with. Why he had been so upset that he had found a mate. It meant that he couldn't be with the woman he wanted to be with.

I was standing next to the room that I was certain was Reece's, the smell was so intense. But, oddly, her smell was not coming from inside. So, his girlfriend has her own room? I thought to myself. He must have wanted to be with her so bad, and then I came and messed it all up. Well, I tried to leave, asshole, you wouldn't let me.

I'd be damned if I would let him keep a mistress. I know I was only a mate in name, and I definitely didn't want him laying his hands on me. I don't care how irresistibly handsome I found him, or how I could actually feel his deep, smooth voice rubbing against me when he spoke. Or that his body looked so sculpted and sexy it drove me to fantasize about him in dreams. Nope, none of it mattered. I would never let that overgrown mutt lay one finger on me.

I continued to creep down the hallway as quietly as I could. I couldn't hear anyone moving around, but I did hear the faintest beat of someone's heart. She must be sleeping. At least I know what room she is in now. I can confront her later. I don't want to deal with some she-wolf who might be half naked and asleep. I turned slowly around, not making a sound, so I didn't wake her.

"What the hell do you think you're doing Little Bunny?" Reece roared at me as soon as I turned around and bumped into his chest. I jumped at seeing him so close and blinked in surprise. I wasn't expecting him back so soon. I stepped back and walked around him.

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Chapter 32 - Trinity-Talking To Nothing

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Trinity

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"Don't walk away from me." He said walking after me. I ignored him and kept walking down the hallway at a brisk, but mostly normal pace. "Dammit Little Bunny, stop right now." I hated when he used that stupid nickname, but I wasn't going to give him the satisfaction of a response, so I kept walking.

He caught up to me after just a minute. I was almost to the end of the hall, almost out of the south wing and back to the comfort of the north wing that I knew so well.

"I said don't walk away from me." He grabbed me by the wrist, forcing me to turn and look at him. He didn't grab me hard, and it didn't hurt in the least. That surprised me. For all his threats he'd made, he hadn't hurt me physically, yet. Once he had me facing him, he asked me his question again. "What the hell were you doing down here Little Bunny?" He asked me, his voice growing firm and deep as he got more and more angry.

He was only gripping my wrist lightly, so I yanked hard

and pulled myself free. I then turned my back on him and continued walking. This time he had had enough. He spun me around, threw me over his shoulder, and marched me to my room, which was at the end of the hallway I had just entered. I managed not to yelp or gasp as he did this.

He sat, or for a better word threw, me on my bed and then stalked back to the door and leaned against it. I had no escape, unless I could make it to the bathroom before he caught me. He noticed where I was looking and narrowed his eyes with annoyance.

"Don't even try, I would catch you." He growled, still glaring at me. "Now, start talking. First why have you been ignoring me?" He demanded. I put on a smile that was filled with fifty percent fake sincerity, fifty percent annoyance, and once hundred percent I hate the Alpha.

"Oh, well you see Reece, I just didn't think you were in that habit of talking to nothing." I told him. He looked at me perplexed. "That's what I am, right? I'm nothing to you. I just didn't think you would want to talk to nothing. And believe me, I was really surprised when you

managed to touch nothing too, though I would really rather you didn't." I said in my I truly hate you, but I'm going to ruin you tone of voice.

I saw his face go from annoyed to shocked to pissed off then he spoke.

"Feel better yet Little Bunny?" He asked me, annoyance filling his voice.

"Not in the least Benji." I told him. He cocked his head to the side, confused.

"Benji?"

"You showed an intense displeasure to Fido, so I had to rename the puppy." He growled at that.

"You think you're funny, don't you?"

"Extremely, just like you think you're so strong, just cause you're tall and can carry me over your shoulder."

"No, I know I'm strong, but I've been holding back out of respect, don't make me lose that for you. Got it."

"Same to you." I grumbled at him.

"Moving on." He shook his head, like he was trying to move past the meaningless, trivial blabber. "Why were you down that hall?"

"No one has ever shown me around, so I decided to show myself around." I said matter-of-factly. "So, who is she?" I asked him flat out.

"Who is who? I don't know who you're talking about." He avoided the question.

"Don't give me that." I thundered at him in as loud of a voice as I could. He quirked an eyebrow as if he thought my yelling was just for show.

"Who is that woman you have staying down that hall? Is

she your girlfriend? Lover? Was she who you wanted to be with before I showed up? Because remember I tried to get away fr-."

"First, I couldn't get you to answer me, now you won't shut up long enough for me to answer." He complained, interrupting me.

"You know what they say, be careful what you wish for." I told him with a small laugh.

"Smart ass." He snapped at me.

"Dumbass." I snapped right back. I wasn't going to let him get me off track. I wasn't going to let him think I was that easily quelled.

"It's no-." I could already tell he was going to brush me off. Then he would just think that he could walk all over me.

"Don't tell me it's nothing. Whoever she is, she has her own room here at your house, she's obviously someone that you care deeply about."

"You don't know what you're talking about." Every time he spoke it was in a growl, his anger was worsening.

"I know that there is a woman down that hallway. I smelled her scent and heard her heartbeat." I told him.

"Drop it." He snapped at me.

"No. You've told me that I must not embarrass the pack. That means that even though you and I are mates in name only, I can't find someone else. If I can't have someone else, then neither can you." I yelled at him.

"You've got it wrong."

"I highly doubt that. I refuse to let you have a secret lover, especially living in the same house as me. I may only be a mate in name only, but I am also the Luna of this pack and I will banish her if I have to."

"She's my mother for Goddess' sake!" He screamed at me.

His words shocked me. I was floored. His mother? The previous Luna? No one has seen or heard from her for about seven years now. Not since Reece had taken over the pack. I had assumed that she was dead, most of the pack had assumed that.

"I thought your mother died." I told him, confused.

"A lot of people think that." He sighed while looking down at the floor. "But in truth, my father's death broke her."

"Broke her? What do you mean?" His voice sounded so sad when he had spoken that I felt the need to comfort him, but I fought against it and asked to know more instead.

"She is nothing but the shell of the person she used to be. She just sits there, day in and day out. There is a maid that goes in there to take care of her. A doctor that checks on her. But she has not moved, spoken, or even looked at me in seven years."

"She's catatonic?" I asked, shocked at what I was

hearing.

"Yes." He sighed, nodding.

"That must be rough." I told him. "I'm sorry to hear that."

"I don't need your pity." He snapped.

"That is such a man thing to say. Empathy is not the same thing as pity you idiot." He growled at me again. "If you keep growling like that you will likely lose your voice or turn into a dog for real, one or the other." He growled yet again causing me to laugh at him.

"Why am I just now hearing about your mother?" I asked him. "I'm living here with you, and obviously misunderstandings are bound to happen. Why didn't you tell me before today?"

"Because it's none of your business."

"Actually, it is."

"How do you figure?" He asked.

"Well let's see, first is because I am your mate and therefore what affects you affects me, even if I am a mate in name only I still must know about the major things, especially those inside the house. Second is because I am the Luna, and she is a pack female which makes her my business." He opened his eyes wide at my words like he didn't expect me to have such a compelling answer for him.

"Fine, I will tell you about major things from now on." He grumbled. "But leave my mother alone. There isn't anything that can be done for her."

"So, you just leave her there? Letting a maid take care of her and a doctor see her?" I asked, shocked. I loved my family, even my grandfather for some reason, I could never ignore them like that.

"Don't try to tell me how to run my family." He yelled.

"You know nothing about me, my family, or my life."

"And whose fault is that?" I yelled right back at him. I was on my feet now, marching across the room, I couldn't hold my anger in any longer.

"You don't need to know any more than what I tell you." He growled as he flung the door open and left the room, slamming the door shut behind him.

"JERK!" I yelled after him for good measure. I knew full well he could hear me, in fact I was glad he could.

If you find any errors (broken links, non-standard content, etc..), Please let us know < report chapter > so we can fix it as soon as possible.

Chapter 33 - Trinity-Pack Visits Planned

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Trinity

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It was Friday now, three days since I had explored the house and found out about Reece's mom, and six days since I was marked. The mark was still just the crest surrounded by dark gray blurs, almost like a giant bruise. It was no closer to changing into its final tattoo-like image.

I was now being forced to have a meeting with the Elders and Reece again. Ugh! I had hoped when he said we were nothing to each other and we were going to ignore each other outside of pack business, that it would be more than three days in between each time I had to talk to him.

Noah had come to get me when I was in the solarium reading. It had quickly become a favorite place of mine. And since I could handle the cold better than a human, though not as good as a wolf (I hated being so different sometimes), it didn't bother me that it was October and got chilly sometimes.

He marched me straight to Reece's office and into the

room. He had asked me how I was adjusting to my new life. If I was ok, and how my classes were going. I don't think it was easy for him to be loyal to the pack and me at the same time. He seemed to be having a hard time since he knew that there was still a division running between us all.

When we walked into the office, I saw Reece sitting at his desk, my eyes going to him immediately as if of their own accord. Stupid traitorous eyes. Then I saw that the only elder in the room was Michael, which was confusing, but I said nothing.

I took my usual seat, which seemed to be reserved just for the Luna.

"Welcome, Miss Luna, how are you girl?" Michael asked me. It was a little condescending, the way he spoke to me, but I had heard him talk to Reece the same way. I know he respected Reece, so I guess it was just how he spoke, especially to someone so much younger than him. Maybe this was how other old men talked to their grandchildren and people young enough to be their grandchildren, who knows.

"I'm fine Michael, and how are you today?" I asked him, trying to sound like a proper Luna, I noticed Noah hide his smirk behind Reece and fought the urge to glare at him.

"Wonderful, I'm simply wonderful my dear. I can already feel the power increasing among the pack now that the Alpha has formed his mate bond and finished his circle." Michael beamed at me. "I am certain that the two of you will be the greatest Alpha and Luna there ever was." Yeah, don't hold your breath Michael. I thought to myself all while smiling sweetly at him.

"Thank you so much for that lovely sentiment." I told him sweetly. "Now, to what do I owe the pleasure of your visit?" I asked.

"I am here to discuss the Hunter's Moon event, and there are a few packs that the Alpha needs to go and visit over the next few months, you will need to accompany him on a few of those visits. Mostly as an introduction to formally introduce you as his mate." Michael was beaming as he spoke, like he couldn't be happier.

"Well, sounds like I will be busy then, doesn't it?" I giggled.

"It does indeed." He laughed as well. Reece cleared his throat to get our attention, grudgingly, I looked back at him.

Reece was sitting at his desk wearing a dark green button-up shirt, once again he had the top two buttons undone to show just a little flash of skin at the top of his chest. He had undone the buttons at the cuffs as well, pushing the sleeves up to his elbows. I couldn't see if the shirt was tucked in, or anything else, as he was blocked by his large desk, but the color of the shirt was striking against his honied complexion.

"I'm so sorry sweetheart, we have so much to discuss and you must be busy. We should get to work." I smiled at him sweetly. He blinked in surprise momentarily.

"Isn't she just so considerate?" Michael cooed looking at Reece with a smile as well.

"You have no idea." Reece smiled as well, the tension between us was thick, and probably misunderstood. "Let us get to business. As Michael said, we have a busy schedule coming up. This time of the year isn't usually as busy for me, but we need to introduce you to the neighboring packs. Especially the ones we have treaties with and those that swear fealty to us in exchange for protection. They may have their own Alpha and Luna, but we are still Alpha and Luna to them as well." He informed me, sounding serious.

"So how many packs do we need to visit?" I ask him, nervously.

"In all, we will be visiting ten packs. But we will not be visiting them all at once. We will break the visits up so that we do not leave our pack for that long." I looked at him confused.

"Some of the visits will be a quick exchange, but it will still be difficult to visit more than one in a single day and not have to stay away for the night." Michael answered for me.

"Ahh." I breathed, letting his words sink in. I hope we can have separate rooms, and that it's in a hotel and not another Alpha house. I said to myself.

"When we visit fealty packs, we will most likely spend very little time there, a morning or early afternoon meeting, then we can follow that up with a treaty meeting in the evening. We will be invited to dinner and stay in their Alpha house. The neighboring packs are close enough that we do not need to stay at most of them. If we end up needing to stay overnight, we will stay in a hotel along the way." Reece seemed to be able to read what was going on inside my head, that was disconcerting. I've gotta work on my poker face.

"When will these visits start?" I asked him. "And on what days of the week?" I wanted to make sure I didn't have to miss class, but I had a feeling that I wasn't going to be very lucky in this case.

"We will begin on November the 6th and return the next day. We will try to leave either Friday evening or Saturday morning when we are able to. This should work out for the both of us, as you have your studies, and I have business to attend to."

I was starting to think he was doing this for me, a sort of kind gesture, but then Noah spoke and almost made me laugh. As it was, I barely hid my smile.

"You would choose any weekday if I let you, but you have work, and I won't let you push that off onto me." Noah laughed, grinning at the back of Reece's head. Reece growled at him.

"Shut up Penguin boy." I wrinkled my eyebrow at that. He really does like making up animal nicknames for people, doesn't he? Michael laughed while I silently thought to myself.

"You kids are what keep me so young." He said laughing at Reece and Noah. Reece glared at him while Noah smiled.

"We will let you know the finer points of the travel plans a few days ahead of time, but for now, Noah will give you the list of prospective dates." Reece droned on, ignoring Michael.

"Thank you."

"Now, about the Hunter's Moon event." Michael smiled, moving the discussion onward. "That will be in two weeks yes?" He asked.

"I don't see why we have to have this meeting every year, the only thing that ever changes is the date of the event. It always happens on the day of the full moon." Reece grumbled.

Now that I thought about it, the last gathering was actually two days after the full moon. The Harvest moon on October 1st, but the gathering had been on the 3rd.

"Umm, can I ask a question, since the pack business is still new to me?"

"What is it, child?" Michael asked me. I know he didn't mean it condescendingly, so I tried not to take his wording personally.

"Why was the last gathering not actually held on the day

of the full moon?"

"Well, we felt since it wasn't ceremonial or traditional in nature, that we could move things around a little. And since it was a party and people were supposed," he paused looking at Reece. "supposed to be out until late, we felt it would be nice to have it on the weekend so they would be less likely to have work or school the next day." He answered with a smile.

"That makes sense. Thank you." I smiled.

"Not a problem. I'm glad you're trying to be a good Luna for your people."

"Anyway." Reece grumbled, drawing the attention back to the discussion. "The Hunter's moon event will be the same as always. Any adult member of the pack, or teenaged member with a wolf, may participate. Nothing in the way it is run will change from previous years."

"Yes, I know, but we still have to have the meeting, it is tradition. I have to make sure there is nothing changing. You know what they say about assuming. If I went into this assuming it was to stay the same and it was

different, what would that make me and the rest of the Elders look like."

"You're just insufferable." Reece told him, but he was actually grinning. I think he was just mentally calling Michael what you call someone who assumes something.

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Chapter 34 - Trinity- Plans For The Full Moon

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Trinity

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"You're just insufferable." Reece told him, but he was actually grinning. I think he was just mentally calling Michael what you call someone who assumes something.

"Fine, we've got it all figured out, we will have the same event at the same time." Michael said. But as he was about to stand, I stopped him.

"I've never been to the Hunter's moon events, could you explain them to me, at least briefly?" I looked at Reece and saw the frustration flash in his eyes, I smiled at him as sweetly as I could.

"Oh, that's right, you wouldn't know." Michael said in a kindly voice. "I will be happy to explain it to you."

"Thank you, Michael, you're so sweet."

"No." He smiled, blushing briefly before he continued. "You see, Child, the Hunter's moon event allows all pack members with a wolf to run through the forest and mountains in search of prey. We spend much of the night running freely. As we have to keep ourselves hidden from the humans, we're not really able to run through the forest in our wolf forms most of the time. We can manage it in small numbers or for short periods of time. And since the impact on the wildlife in the immediate area would suffer too greatly if we all started hunting freely

year-round, we are allowed one night a year when we can hunt without having to worry. Of course, we can get permission from our Alpha to hunt, but we can't hunt in excess or it will affect the natural way of things."

Michael's explanation definitely helped me to understand why the Hunter's moon event was so important to the pack members. They would look forward to it all year. In that moment, I kind of envied the rest of the pack for having their wolf.

I started thinking about what I would be doing on that day of the Hunter's moon. Then I remembered what day the Hunter's moon fell on.

"Wait a minute, what about all the children?"

"They don't have a wolf, they can't participate." Reece answered firmly, as if he thought I was stupid.

"No, that's not what I meant. The Hunter's moon is on Halloween. How are the children going to spend it?" I

asked them.

"Well, if they're old enough, they can go trick-or-treating alone. Or with friends and older siblings. But if not, I guess they'll just have to skip it."

"I've heard some grandparents are taking their grandchildren into the city, but there's simply not enough to take them all." Noah added. That broke my heart, the kids shouldn't have to miss Halloween.

"It's just a silly holiday, there will be more." Reece tried to put an end to the discussion.

"There will be others." Noah added.

"I'm sure the children will be fine." Michael finished for them. I just nodded my head.

This was breaking my heart. I know that it was an important day in our pack. But the parents have had several Hunter's moon events, they could skip it. It's not like the Hunter's moon was always on Halloween, the next time it happened their kids would all be grown, next

year they could have both, but this year put family first.

Perhaps I was just taking this personally because I was never allowed to go trick-or-treating as a child. Every year I watched my cousins get excited about their nighttime excursion. They would get dressed up and head out into the night with Aunt Eve and Uncle Wesley.

Grandfather would always come on Halloween and pick me up, telling them I was not allowed to go. I had insisted on getting a costume a couple times, but then I by the time I turned four I learned that I would never be going with the others.

Seeing them leaving without me always made me cry. Grandfather would tell me to stop my blubbering, that it was not ladylike to cry as I was. I would be given extra studies on Halloween, learning something he deemed I needed to improve upon.

Sometimes, I used to tell myself that Grandfather was just worried I would disappear on him, like his daughter did that weekend. He had failed and something happened

to his daughter. He never did believe that she had betrayed him, not deep down in his heart. And I think her suicide hurt him so much more than I, or anyone else, could fathom. That he was overprotective of me, and that he was just always a man that was bad with his words. At least that's what I used to tell myself, anyway.

The meeting was over now, and it was time for Michael to leave. Noah was showing him out. I was about to leave, as it was just Reece and myself in the room now.

"Did you enjoy delaying my day?" He asked me.

"I didn't do it just to be inconvenient." I told him honestly. "I truly hadn't ever been told about the event before." I told him.

"But you admit you wanted to be inconvenient?" He asked me. I just shrugged my shoulders. "You're playing with fire here." He told me.

"Good thing you're covered in so much ice." He arched an eyebrow at my words. "It'd be no fun if I melted you too soon after all, I need you to hang in there at least a little." He growled at me like he usually did. "Careful

Benji, or I might need to rename the puppy again." I cooed as I walked to the door. "Bye, sweetie." I chanted in a sweet voice, batting my eyelashes at him as I left the room.

I hurried back to my room. I had a plan, and I would need help to make it happen. I shut, and locked, my door before flopping onto my bed with my phone in hand. It only rang twice before Juniper answered.

"Hey there Trin, what's up?" She asked me in a cheerful voice.

"I've got a plan, but I need assistants to help me." I told her. I could tell that her attitude had changed completely, she was excited on the other end of the line now.

"What do you need?" She asked me. I smiled at her eagerness.

"Do you know what day the Hunter's moon falls on?"

"Yeah, Halloween." She answered automatically.

"Uh huh, what do you think that means for a lot of kids?"
I heard the gasp as she realized what was going to happen.

"Oh my Goddess, Trin, they're gonna miss it." Her voice was full of anguish as she answered.

"Yup."

"The poor kids."

"I want to do something about it."

"What can you do?" She asked me curiously.

"Well, I can't go to the event, so-." She interrupted me immediately.

"What do you mean you can't go?" She demanded.

"I don't have a wolf, Juniper." I reminded her.

"Oh, yeah, duh." She said laughing. "So, what are you going to do?"

"I'm going to throw the kids a Halloween party."

"Cool, where at?"

"Here." I told her. I heard her gasp at my declaration.

"You mean like out in the forest?" She was still in denial.

"Nope."

"You're going to throw a Halloween party for the kids, inside the Alpha house?" She asked.

"Yup, want to help me?" I was hoping she wouldn't be too afraid to come here and help me pull this off.

"Oh, you bet your tiny little ass I'm going to help." She told me firmly.

"What's that?" I heard Paul yell in the background.

"Trinity is throwing a Halloween party for all the kids at the Alpha house." She told him.

"Why?" He was confused.

"It's the same day as the Hunter's moon."

"Oh Goddess, I never even put it together until now. I can't believe we never even thought about it. We were only thinking about the wolf aspect of it I guess."

"Hey, ask Paul if he wants to help out too, you guys will have to miss the event though."

"You want to help Paul."

"Hell yes." He said.

"You'll have to miss the event." She told him.

"So, who cares, I've been to a few already, and there will be more. This is bound to be more interesting."

"Awesome." I was smiling to myself.

"Hey, can I help too?" I heard Cedar yell somewhere in the background. He must be at Juniper's house right now, that saved me a call.

"He was going to be my next call." I told Juniper.

"She said you saved her a phone call." Juniper answered him.

"You all should come by tomorrow, I don't want the wrong guards hearing about this, and since my room isn't being watched anymore, it's safer here than anywhere else." With that, my plan was set into motion, I just needed to get the rest of the help.

Over the next two weeks I enlisted the help of several others, secretly of course. Carter, Aunt Eve, and Uncle Wesley were of course willing to join me. Nikki would help but Noah had to prioritize his business as assistant but promised to keep Reece out of our hair while we got everything set up. He said, Reece just so happened to, conveniently, have a board meeting that day. An in person, in corporate office, meeting. I couldn't thank him enough, I threw my arms around him and hugged him tight as I thanked him for his help.

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Chapter 35 - Trinity-Ready For Halloween

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Trinity

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Abigail, the cook, agreed to help me make anything and everything I needed for the party and to stay to help out afterwards. Peter said he had to be here anyway, so he would help us as well.

Vincent was happy that we were doing something, his wife was going to miss the event as she had to stay home with their three-year-old and six-year-old, and she was apparently pregnant again. So, the two of them would be coming to help and would be bringing their kids.

Since about ninety percent of the pack would be at the event, there was nowhere to go trick-or-treating in the compound. Anyone wanting to take their kids would have to do so by going into the city. According to Vincent, a lot of parents didn't want to take their kids into the city for Halloween.

Vincent and his wife would spread the word about the party. I hoped that the word wouldn't get back to Reece just yet, but I'd deal with him when I had to. I had started overnight and express ordering lots of Halloween decorations online. I had them delivered to Aunt Eve's house, so Reece wouldn't find them yet. I had the staff clean the ballroom in preparation of the party, and I

planned tons of games and different treats for the kids.

I had learned from Noah that there were about eight-hundred members of the pack total. That included adults and children. I knew that many of the pack members still didn't trust me as the Luna yet, so I probably wouldn't get everyone here for the party. But I would be happy with about half, which would put me at around seventy-five kids. But some of them might have a wolf and be at the event instead.

After the two weeks of prep time, we were finally ready for the day of the Halloween party. Noah got Reece out of the house by 8 AM, that gave us all day to set up. The Hunter's moon event started at sunset, which was at 6PM tonight. Kids would be here by 5:30 so parents had time to get to the clearing and stash their clothes. We needed to work fast. Good thing I had helpers.

Everyone worked hard. We got the ballroom turned into a proper Halloween themed party room, a little scary, but not too scary for the little kids. We set up where the food would go, and little tables spread around for them to eat at.

There were game stations the kids could go to and play for prizes. The games included things like ring toss onto the spider legs, zombie brain toss, pin the bandage on the mummy, and a few others.

Being the artist that she was, Juniper wanted to let the kids do crafts, which I was all for. So, we got lots of things for them to create their own monsters, and there was a draw or color your own monster zone. Juniper had drawn a few different designs, and we made several copies.

Wanting something more 'manly' Paul, Cedar, and Carter suggested we turn the dining room into a haunted house full of those animatronic Halloween decorations, so we bought a bunch of them and made it as scary as possible. The first thing we did was send the guys through it when I was done setting it up, I laughed maniacally when I heard the three of them yell in fright at the end.

Ok, ok, I might have added a personal touch just for them and have since removed it. I had blown up a picture of Reece acting like his big bad Alpha self and placed it right at the end with motion activated recording saying.

"What are you doing?" It wasn't even Reece's voice, it was Vincent's, but the effect was still priceless. They, however, were not amused. Seriously, they have no sense of humor.

Abigail and I spent a couple days preparing things in the kitchen so we could cook everything easily the day of the party. We were going to order a bunch of pizzas to make sure the kids would all have something they would eat, just in case. But I loved to cook and invent some new things, so I wanted to have some fun.

I made some pumpkin pie bites that would be easy to pick up and eat without a fork, best of all they had a graham cracker crust, so good. And I made some homemade cinnamon rolls with pecans and pumpkin pie filling, alright those were for the grown ups (me) cause we (I) needed something too.

I also made a bunch of fun Halloween themed foods. I made grilled hotdogs that looked like fingers, complete with a small breadstick coming out of the end for the

bone and a spot cut off where the fingernail should have been, they looked pretty real.

There were lots of different kinds of Halloween and just seasonal foods the kids would love. We also wanted them to decorate their own miniature candied apples. We used a melon baller to make tiny apple balls so the kids could cover them in caramel or chocolate then add sprinkles, or nuts, or crushed cookies.

They were all encouraged to wear a costume, and we were going to have a costume contest. The kids could vote, but they'd probably pick their own costume. So, we adults would pick winners in different categories and age groups. I went out and got prizes for each of the winners.

I was super excited for the party. It was the first Halloween I was going to be part of. Once we were done setting up, we all dispersed so we could put on our costumes. It was almost showtime.

I had decided to dress as Snow White for the party. It actually kind of fit me, really. I had hair that was almost black, and my complexion was milky pale. I didn't watch Disney much, but I'm guessing the major difference was my eyes, hers probably weren't blue. Oh well, I couldn't

be an exact match.

I looked at myself in the blue over yellow dress that was what Snow White apparently wore. It had slightly puffy sleeves and a cape that was red. There were red accents on the sleeves too. Along with the shoes and headband. I thought I looked ridiculous. But it's all I had.

I put on the blood red lipstick that Nikki had used on me before, along with some light blush and blue eyeshadow. Mascara was last, to make my lashes stand out. I felt ridiculous, but I went down to the party, anyway.

"Oh my Goddess, Trinity, you look AMAZING!" Juniper screeched as soon as she saw me step off the elevator. I didn't want to take the stairs in the heels I was wearing.

"Don't over exaggerate." I told her.

"She's not." Carter told me.

"They're right, Luna, you do look amazing." Heather, Vincent's wife gushed.

"I must agree." Vincent added. I blushed hearing them all praise me. I was glad I was wearing the blush on my cheeks to hide it somewhat.

"More importantly, what are you wearing?" I asked Juniper.

"I'm dressed as Happy, one of the dwarves." She told me.

"We're all here." Carter indicated showing me his outfit. "I'm Doc."

"I'm Dopey." Paul declared coming up behind him.

"Are you sure you want to admit that?" I asked him.

"Shut it Astro." We laughed at the old joke. I watched as they all walked over. Juniper, Carter, Paul, Cedar, Nikki, and Vincent were all dressed as dwarves.

"You're missing one." I told them.

"Sorry, I'm late." David called out, running into the room and putting on his dwarf hat. I smiled. "You can't have Snow White without her seven dwarves." He added smiling.

"You guys are really great." I was beaming at them.

"Don't forget us." Aunt Eve called. I turned to look. "I'm the Evil Queen." She grinned.

"And I am the magic mirror." Yelled Peter, the butler.

"I'm the Evil Queen as the old witch." Abigail explained.

"I'm the Huntsman." Uncle Wesley boasted proudly.

"I can't believe you all coordinated your costumes because of what I chose." I was almost ready to cry, they put so much into this for me.

"This is your first Halloween ever, we wanted to make it special." Carter smiled as he came up and hugged me.

"Yeah, you're our friend, and we wanted to make this your best Halloween ever." Juniper said coming up and hugging me as well.

"Yeah Astro, we love ya." Paul added, throwing his arms around me. It soon turned into a mass of everyone telling me they loved me and a giant hug pile. But I loved every second of it. It even made me happy that Vincent and David were part of that circle.

"Don't forget me. I coordinated too." Heather smiled. "I haven't known you as long as the others, but I came as the apple." She said laughing as she pointed to the huge decorated pregnant belly that looked like a big red apple.

"That is perfect Heather, and I am so very happy that you are here."

Just then, we heard the approach of several vehicles outside. We all moved to the hall to greet the children for

the party, opening the large double doors to welcome them in. It seemed that everyone had chosen to arrive in groups.

About twenty kids and their parents were on their way inside. Their eyes opened wide as they saw us. Most of the pack members had never been inside the house itself, they were either too low rank or had work elsewhere.

"Welcome!" I called to them, beaming. I went around introducing myself to all the children and their parents as they were dropped off. Women with young children like Heather were staying so they could partake in the celebrations since they were expected to miss the event, anyway.

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Chapter 36 - Both-Halloween Party For The Pack

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Trinity

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Once everyone arrived and the party was about to get into full swing, we had forty-five kids altogether, less than half the kids in the pack, but a good start. I can get the people to trust me slowly over time.

The music was playing. The kids were having fun. The food was a hit. Everyone was enjoying themselves.

The next I knew I heard an angry voice growled quietly beside me after I handed a child a bag of treats.

"What in the world is going on here Little Bunny?"
Reece's voice was filled with anger and frustration.

"What a wonderful surprise." I called out, raising my voice. I knew he would come home at some point, and I was prepared for this. "Look everyone, the Alpha has

come to help us with the costume contest. Which category do you want to judge, Reece?" I tried making it clear that he had no choice since the children had all heard. He growled low in his throat. I noticed everyone else looked at me nervously.

"We will talk about this later." He Whispered before turning to the happy kids with a smile. "Which category would you like me to judge, sweetheart?" He asked me, playing along.

"I think it would be best if you should just pick your overall favorite. I have a special prize for the Alpha pick." I told him.

"You planned this." He whispered, I just shrugged at him.

I had all the children line up in front of Reece and he picked his favorite costume. I don't know if he picked at random or not, but his choice ended up being an adorably sweet little girl who was dressed as a beautiful princess. She was so happy when he chose her that she actually started crying, it made my heart melt.

Reece gave her the prize then excused himself to change for the event. He was ready and back down to leave in no time. He glared at me slightly before walking out the door.

The party lasted a while longer, but soon the kids were tired. I had planned for this. As their parents still weren't back and we couldn't send them home yet, we had set up a room as a sort of theater.

We put down pillows, blankets, and bean bag chairs so they could choose a place to sit or lay down. We then put on a family friendly Halloween movie and settled in waiting for everyone to get back.

Many of the children were asleep when their parents arrived. The parents were so happy that they and their kids got to enjoy the night. I received many thanks as I watched them carry their kids out of the house.

Reece hadn't come back with them, as I thought he would. He must be blowing off some of his frustration or building it up some more. So, I decided to take a shower and change for bed.

I noticed something was off as soon as I walked out of the bathroom. I didn't even wait, I needed to say something right away.

"What are you doing in here?" I demanded. Reece was leaning against the bedroom door, same as last time. "And why do you always do that? Do you think it makes you look cool?" It kind of did in fact. But then again, everything he did was cool, and sexy. Stupid mate bond.

Right now, I was just glad that all the towels I had in the bathroom were the oversized beach towel. They kind of swallowed me whole when I wrapped them around me, covering everything except my shins down and my shoulders up.

I noticed the shock fill his face when he saw me.

"Why didn't you take clothes in there with you?" He growled.

"Because this is my room, and I didn't feel like it, is that

alright with you Benji?" I yelled at him. Stupid overgrown brute of a dog. I growled in my head. "Stay there, I'll take my clothes into the bathroom and get dressed." I told him.

"Make it quick, I don't have all night."

"Oh, I wouldn't dream of wasting your time." I said in my falsely sweet voice I had been using on him lately.

"That's going to get you in trouble, Little Bunny." He warned me. I just grabbed some clothes from my dresser and went into the bathroom, laughing.

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Reece

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I had thought things were going to be alright between us, work wise at least, when she was being decently civil at the meeting for the Hunter's Moon event. She was

taking in all the information and acting like she might be a good Luna.

But then she went and asked Michael to explain what the entire event was about after I had expressed a desire to skip the entire thing. Apparently, she just wanted to waste my time. I mean, I understand she has never been to a Hunter's Moon event before but still, she could have asked at another time. Why waste my time?

And her fake sentiments, well, at least she can fake those pretty well. She called me sweetheart and Michael seemed to believe it was real. That was a relief at least.

I should have known she was planning something, and that that traitor Noah was in on it. After all, why would I have a board meeting on a Saturday, on Halloween, of all days.

I got back and saw that my house had been decorated and overrun by a horde of pack children and mothers with young cubs. I couldn't make a scene and scold her in front of everyone, they assumed she had my permission. This would be an issue I took up with her.

But then she went and manipulated me even further. She turned around with that fake smile of her, looking so sweet and innocent. And I had to admit that she kind of took my breath away. Her choice of costume suited her, her complexion was pale, and her hair was dark, so she made a perfect Snow White. And I saw that everyone who helped her had coordinated and dressed to accommodate her costume. Traitors.

She announced to the entire party that I had arrived to judge a special category of the costume contest, Alpha's favorite. She had even gotten a special prize for me to give the winner. She planned the whole thing. That sneaky little devil Bunny.

But I had to admit, she was smart. She knew how to get around things to get what she wanted. I played along. But I told her we would talk about it later.

So, what do I find when I come to her room? Her taking a shower, that's what. I have to wait and hope she doesn't take too long. So, I just lean against the door and bide my time. I hadn't been there long when I heard the water shut off. After a few moments, the door opens, and I have to fight to keep my jaw off the floor.

"What are you doing in here?" She demanded as I stood there, dazed, watching the light glisten off her slightly wet skin. It nearly made my wolf lose his mind as he screamed at me. Mate, mate, mate!

"Why didn't you take clothes in there with you?" I growled at her.

"Because this is my room, and I didn't feel like it, is that alright with you Benji? Stay there, I'll take my clothes into the bathroom and get dressed." She snapped at me.

"Make it quick, I don't have all night." I told her impatiently.

"Oh, I wouldn't dream of wasting your time." She said in that infuriatingly fake sweet voice.

"That's going to get you in trouble, Little Bunny." I grumble. She grabbed her clothes and went into the bathroom laughing. I growled at her in response.

Calm down! I told my wolf as I threw a metaphorical leash over him. He whined in my ears trying to tell me to claim our mate. He just didn't understand that it wasn't time yet. I wasn't ready for my heir now, and there was no other reason to claim her.

I heard the click of the door. Little Bunny came out wearing a pair of skin tight black pants, I don't know women's fashion so don't ask me what they were called, but it left nothing to imagination when looking at her bottom, which looked perfectly shaped. I nearly shook my head to get the thought out of it, but I couldn't be that obvious.

She had a red hoodie on over it. It was loose and comfortable looking in comparison to the pants. The color and the fact that it had a hood brought an image of little red riding hood to mind. Now that was a costume she could have chosen. After all, she already has a big bad wolf. I chuckled to myself, I couldn't help it.

"Is something funny?" She asked me as she sat at her table brushing her long dark hair. The brush moving slowly through her locks was nearly hypnotic. Dammit, she has too much hold over my wolf.

"No, just thought of something for later, that was all." I told her, pushing past the thoughts. "Do you want to tell me what the hell you were thinking? What made you think you could throw a party in my house like that?" I demanded, letting my earlier anger seep back into my voice.

"I live here too, isn't it my house as well?" She asked, feigning innocence.

"This is the Alpha house, you live here with me, but it is my house."

"Then I will move elsewhere." She countered, what crazy thoughts were going through her head.

"Like hell you will." I snapped. "I refuse to let my mate live anywhere but here. The rumors that would spread."

"I don't care about any damn rumors. I refuse to live with someone who treats me like a third-class citizen. If I am the Luna, if I am your mate and live here with you, then this is just as much my house as it is yours."

"Whatever." I yelled. "Why did you throw the party?"

"Because the kids were going to miss Halloween otherwise. I couldn't let that happen." Her voice sounded hurt when she spoke.

"What does it matter to you?"

"Kids deserve to have fun and make memories. It's better when they can make them with their family, but as long as they aren't made to suffer, to cry, to feel ignored, to think that they're not as important." She was lecturing me now. "As long as I was able to make them happy, that was enough for me."

"But why did it matter to you so much? It was just one Halloween, there will be lots of others for them."

"You don't know that. I never had a single Halloween growing up. I never went trick-or-treating, I never went to a Halloween party, I never dressed up. I never celebrated at all." Her words confused me. Why would she not have celebrated? Everyone else in the pack did.

"Why didn't you?" I asked, perplexed.

"Grandfather never let me associate with anyone in the pack. I literally never met any pack member outside my family until I went to college."

Her words actually made me sad for a moment, and it made sense why she was so intent on having the party for the kids tonight. This was special for them, but it was special for her too. Noah had told me that their Grandfather had been exceedingly strict with her, but I didn't know it was that bad.

"Just, clear it with me next time." I told her, my anger seeping away. "I would have approved of the party. It was for the pack after all. And it would help make the women and children accept you more."

"You've been so against me since the beginning, and you told me to stay away from you unless we were leaving on pack business or having pack meetings, so I didn't think you would want to hear it." She told me. She was right, so I had dug my own hole with this one.

"Next time, I will listen if it has to do with the house. I don't want any more surprises. Send Vincent if you have to." I told her. "He seems very comfortable plotting with you."

"He didn't plot, he just helped where I asked him to."

"What's the difference?"

"He didn't plan anything, he just followed orders."

"Fine, nitpick." I grumbled. "I'm leaving, goodnight." I left the room, this time not running away and not slamming the door but leaving semi-peacefully.

That girl is going to be the death of me, I swear. I need to watch myself. And I need to keep my wolf under control. He's about to lose his mind.

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Chapter 37 - Trinity-Preparing For The First Trip

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Trinity

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It was nearly time for my trip with Reece. I was nervous, because I didn't know how to be alone with him. Just the two of us. I knew he would act like his normal (asshole) Alpha self, and that would make me act like my typical grouchy, sarcastic self. Yeah, this was going to be fun. NOT!

The nerves continued nonstop all week, almost reaching a fever pitch. That is until Vincent asked me on Thursday if I was ready for the trip we were taking.

"You're going too?" I asked him, confused.

"No one told you?" He asked me, the shock clear on his face.

"No, no one told me anyone was coming with us."

"It would be best for you to have a guard with you, for when the Alpha is in his meeting or if you wish to explore the area a little." He spoke so matter-of-factly, like I should have known this. I was so relieved I could have kissed him in that moment.

"I am definitely ready and looking forward to it." I told him. Now. I added mentally.

I had meant it too. It would be easier to travel with Reece if Vincent were with us. I'm very certain Vincent would keep us in check, making it so we didn't kill each other while trying to spread the joyous news of our mating. I mean, what could possible have gone wrong? No, I'm more than happy with the arrangements now. Thank you, Vincent. I kept saying inside my head all day long.

We were staying overnight apparently, but just one. So, I was packing my bag now. It's Friday afternoon, and we would be leaving shortly when Reece returned from a meeting at the office.

Hmm. I know I am only going for one night, but Aunt Eve always told me to be prepared. Going for one night, pack for two. You never know if you're going to mess up an outfit or get delayed. You need to have the extra clothes just in case. So, I followed her advice. Best not to chance things now. My luck, I would end up spilling something all over myself.

My bag was packed, and I was waiting in the front hall with Vincent. Reece had gotten home a little while ago and we were now just waiting on him. I was nervous, but excited. I knew things were going to be tense and awkward still, but I would still be seeing new people and places.

Noah was taking some much-needed time off with Nikki since he wasn't needed for the night. It seemed several pack members were all trying to use this trip of ours to wind down since the Alpha was going to be gone.

As the excitement and nerves were both growing, my tension was at its max. I was basically rambling nonstop to Vincent while waiting in the hall when he got a phone call and excused himself. Great, now I'm all alone. I thought to myself. I just hoped he would get back before Reece came down. I did not need that kind of pent up frustration for the trip. I wanted to have a good time this weekend.

I got my wish. Vincent came back almost immediately, looking distressed.

"What's wrong Vincent?" I asked him, worried that something had happened.

"Heather might be going into early labor. She's not due for another few weeks." He confessed, still staring at his phone. "Is she alright? Will the baby be alright?" I genuinely cared for Vincent and Heather. They were some of the nicest people I had ever met. I didn't want anything happening to their baby.

"She is on her way to see the pack hospital now, to have things checked. They want to keep her overnight, just to make sure." His voice was full of concern for his wife and child. He clearly didn't know what to do. Werewolf

pregnancies only lasted six months, so going into labor nearly a month early could mean that something was very wrong. Then again it could also mean that they had just been wrong on conception dates, but that was unlikely with modern technology and wolf senses. He clearly wanted to be there with his mate.

"Go Vincent." I told him.

"But, Luna, what about the-?" He started, but I cut him off.

"Your mate is more important right now. Go, that's an order." I told him firmly. He smiled at me gratefully.

"Thank you, Trinity." He said, hugging me quickly before running out of the house. He forgot his bag. Oh well, he would just have to come back for it later.

"Now, to break the news to a certain someone. I'm sure he's bound to be grumpy about it." I groaned as I walked up the stairs. No need to rush, this was going to be

painful enough.

When I got to the south wing of the fourth floor, I could tell that Reece was not in his room. He was, however, further down the hall in his mother's room. I was walking toward the door when I heard his voice.

"I'm going to be gone tonight and most of tomorrow, Mom, so I won't be back to talk to you until late tomorrow night, after I'm done working." His voice was gentler than I had ever heard it. "I have to go visit the other packs, it's that time of year again. But I need to start early this time. I need to introduce my mate to them. Have I told you about her yet?" His voice held none of the anger and frustration I was used to hearing from him. It was odd, but I couldn't stop listening.

"She's younger than me, just over six years, I think. Pretty, in a different way than the rest of the pack. And she's smart, according to her cousin at least. But she doesn't have a wolf. I'm worried that she will not be strong enough to protect herself if she needs to. That she can't protect the pack. I don't know what the Goddess was thinking pairing us together." Some of his words made me happy, others infuriated me.

"I just don't want to see anyone in the pack get hurt, Mom, including her. It's my responsibility to protect everyone. And now, I have to find a way to protect someone who can't even help protect them self. What am I going to do?"

What's with this man? I can so protect myself. Doesn't he know that I have been training to fight since I was a little girl? I first learned to use a sword when I was four. Dude's gonna have to learn a lesson. I said sarcastically to myself.

I didn't want him to know that I had heard him talking, so I tried to sneak back down to his room. When I got there, I knocked on his door loudly and called out to him.

"Reece, I need to talk to you." I heard him stand up down the hall and turned toward him as he opened the door.

"What?" He snapped at me as soon as he was in the hall.

"Oh, I didn't know you were down there." I lied, trying to look shocked. You were nicer a minute ago, talking to your mom. I thought to myself. Are you a momma's boy?

But that wasn't fair, his mother was in a bad state for a long time. I know she was a sore spot for him.

"What do you need, Little Bunny?" He asked me, I swear he uses that name just to make me mad.

"Well, I have a bit of bad news." I told him. He raised an eyebrow in curiosity then looked at the floor sighing.

"Fine, come in." He opened his door and went into his room. I stood there, nervously for a moment, not sure if I wanted to go into his room. "Are you coming or not?" He growled from inside. I took a breath to steady myself and followed him in.

His room was set up a lot like mine. The color scheme was done in dark green and dark wood. The number and type of furniture were the same, but the style was different. My room had looked a little more feminine from the get-go, but his definitely looked masculine. There were fewer intricate carvings in the wood, the dark wood stain just brought out the natural pattern in the wood itself instead.

The rooms were about the same size, and aside from the color scheme and design style they looked like the exact same room. At least I was being treated fairly in that aspect. He went to sit on the sofa in the sitting area, lounging into the corner.

He sat with his right arm flung across the back of the sofa, right leg bent with his knee pressed up against the back of the cushions. He was turned with his back to the corner so he could face me.

"Sit." He ordered.

"Where?" I asked, looking for a chair or another piece of furniture.

"Are you too good for the couch?" He asked me.

"No, I just didn't think you wanted me to sit with you." I told him honestly.

"You need to get over this aversion, we are going to be in other packs, they must think that we are mated."

"And whose fault is it that I have an aversion to you?" I snapped at him with a hint of a growl in my voice. He just glared at me.

"I'm fully aware. Be that as it may, we need to learn to put up with each other." He said, surprisingly not getting angry at my outburst.

"I know." I told him, letting my anger deflate as I sat apprehensively onto the sofa.

"So, what is the problem?" He asked, getting straight to the point.

"Heather is on her way to the pack hospital. They think she may be having the baby early. She isn't due for almost a month." I told him.

"Do they know what's happening?" He asked, I could hear the concern in his voice.

"Vincent didn't have that information yet." I told him.

"Where is Vincent now?"

"I told him to go. He needs to be with his mate at a time like this." I saw the surprise on his face.

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Chapter 38 - Reece-A Slight Change In Plans

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Reece

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I was surprised when Little Bunny called out to me when I was talking to mom, but she never willingly came to me, so I knew it had to be important.

"Reece, I need to talk to you." Her voice sounded nervous but still strong.

"What?" I snapped when I went out to the hall. I was worried she had heard my earlier conversation.

"Oh, I didn't know you were down there." She looked tense.

"What do you need, Little Bunny?"

"Well, I have a bit of bad news." She clearly didn't want to tell me what was going on. I raised an eyebrow in suspicion before looking at the floor sighing.

"Fine, come in." I opened my door and invited her in. She seemed nervous, like she wasn't going to come in at first. She really was scared of me, good. "Are you coming or not?" I growled from inside. She took a breath and followed me in.

I flopped into the corner of the couch and watched her flounder, looking around the room for somewhere to sit.

Was it that bad sitting next to me?

"Sit." I told her, that got her to talk at least.

"Where?" She asked.

"Are you too good for the couch?"

"No, I just didn't think you wanted me to sit with you."
She seemed embarrassed.

"You need to get over this aversion, we are going to be in other packs, they must think that we are mated." They would never buy it if she couldn't even sit next to me.

"And whose fault is it that I have an aversion to you?"
She snapped at me with a hint of a growl in her voice. I just glared at her in defeat.

"I'm fully aware. Be that as it may, we need to learn to put up with each other." I tried to be calm with her tonight, usually I just yelled and growled at her, and the desire and habit to do so was warring with me still.

"I know." She deflated and sat apprehensively onto the couch.

"So, what is the problem?" I asked, getting straight to the point.

"Heather is on her way to the pack hospital. They think she may be having the baby early. She isn't due for almost a month."

"Do they know what's happening?" I was worried for Heather the minute Little Bunny had told me what was going on. Vincent was one of my best warriors, and I considered him a friend. He had also been very vital in keeping the new Luna happy and under control.

"Vincent didn't have that information yet." I sensed a but in her words.

"Where is Vincent now?" I asked.

"I told him to go. He needs to be with his mate at a time like this." That shocked me. I know she would have

preferred to have Vincent with us, of all people, but she sent him away.

"That was a wise decision."

"Are you saying I'm incapable of being wise?" She asked, annoyed.

"No, just that you have made unwise decisions in the past." I told her.

"Yeah, I'm looking at one." She snapped. I growled at that. I didn't like that she considered me an unwise choice. I was not putting myself in that category, and as much as I wish I could have a different mate, a different Luna. I never considered that taking her was unwise because I knew I had no other choice. I just didn't accept it on a personal level, that was different. "Anyone ever call you Cujo because you growl so much?" She asked me, sarcasm all but physically dripping from the words. I fought the urge to growl again.

"Why do you insist on calling me the names of different fictional dogs?" I demanded.

"Why do you insist on calling me Little Bunny?" She countered.

"It's amusing."

"Right back at you Scooby Doo."

"What was that one for?" I asked.

"Well, I could say it's because you're asking questions trying to be a detective, but the real answer is, because I wanted to make a rhyme." I laughed.

I think it was the first time I had laughed in front of her, I hadn't intended to do it, but I couldn't help it. I was laughing and not just chuckling at her. She was shocked at first then she also laughed lightly. Her laugh was cute, like music.

Not bells tinkling or ringing or anything like that. It's

hard to describe. It sounded like normal laughter, but when I heard it, it felt like I was listening to soft, sweet, happy music. It made my wolf stand at attention, but he was a good boy and just sniffed the air, not trying to push things at the moment.

When the laughs between us ended, and I took a deep breath to settle myself, I continued the conversation.

"So, we need to find a replacement, and fast."

"That's right." She agreed.

"I will call Noah and ask him-." But she interrupted me before I could finish.

"No can do, he took Nikki to the cabin for the weekend." She told me.

"That's right, I had forgotten. What about David?" I asked her, I knew she was comfortable with him as well.

"We can give him a call." She agreed.

I pulled out my phone and called the warrior, but there was no answer. He had better have a good reason for ignoring my call. I was not about to call my Beta and ask for his help. My Beta had not been my choice, it had been those meddling old fools who had forced my cousin on me. I didn't think that my spineless twit of a cousin had enough brains to be a Beta. So, who did that leave me with?

"I can call Jeremy or Leslie." I saw the revulsion on her face and wondered which one that face was for.

"Is there anyone else you trust?" She asked me, did she not like either of them?

"Is there a problem with my warriors?" I asked her. She looked uncomfortable. "Fine, you can answer that later. And to answer your question, no, no one that I would trust to go on the trip with us. I was in the middle of having them trained. I hadn't been able to focus on training the warriors, as much as I would have liked, I was too busy running too many things." I told her, letting her know that I clearly expect her to do her fair share.

"So, what, we reschedule?" She asked me, confused by the situation.

"We can't, we have to go."

"Then what do we do?"

"We go alone, just the two of us." I declared. I swear, her face froze, and she looked like I told her I was going to kill her puppy. "We simply cannot reschedule."

"I understand." She frowned, nodding her head. She may have understood, but she clearly didn't accept it. What am I going to do with her?

I grabbed my bag, which was already packed, and left the room with her. I led the way down the stairs, so I didn't have to see the disappointment on her face. I know she feared me, I wanted that, counted on it, but I was no disappointment to anyone.

I grabbed her bag and marched quickly off down the hall, forcing her to jog to keep up. I was going to show her that she was lucky to be chosen as the Luna. That even though she was Luna in name only, she was still one of the luckiest women in the pack.

I walked past most of the cars, coming to a stop in front of the brand-new Portofino M I had purchased earlier this year. I rarely ever drove it, and I wasn't even sure why I had gotten it. But now I want to show off a bit. The Italian sports car was usually much too flashy for the roads around here, and for me really, but maybe she would like it.

I threw the bags in the small trunk and had the passenger door opened for her before she had even caught up to me.

"Get in." I told her trying to soften my voice. The look on her face was one of pure shock. The car probably took her breath away.

"We're taking this?" She asked.

"It's just the two of us now, we don't need anything

bigger." I smirked at her. She sighed and got into the car. I shut her door and walked around to get in. She had buckled and was ready.

I started the car, the roar of the engine reminding me, partly, of why I had bought the car in the first place. I revved the engine a few times, reveling in the glorious sound and grinning to myself. I shifted the car into drive and started down the large, long driveway. I sped through the compound and out of the gate in no time at all.

This trip we were going on was to visit a cousin of mine. One I wish I could have traded for Caleb growing up. Riley grew up in a different pack and I only ever saw him on visits, but he was a hell of a lot better than Caleb, that's for sure. We would be staying at Riley's Alpha house tonight and then visiting a fealty pack tomorrow morning before going home. This would be a quick trip, thankfully.

I pulled the car onto the freeway, wanting to open it up a bit. It was Friday night, most people were already home from work, so the roads were pretty empty, thankfully. I was able to let the engine roar as I sped up on the empty highway.

"Ugh!" I heard my little bunny scoff next to me.

"Something wrong?"

"No, not really. Just seeing that most men truly are the same."

"What's that supposed to mean?" I asked her.

"Could you be more predictable with this ostentatious death trap of yours?" She snorted. "Seriously, men are their toys."

"Hmm. So, you don't like the car?" I asked her. That's a first. All the women who had seen it had completely adored it.

"Not really, it's too much. I mean, don't get me wrong, it's sharp and I can appreciate its beauty, but I would much rather have a car that stands out a little less." That threw me through a loop.

"You're not like other girls, are you?" I asked her.

"You still hadn't figured that out yet Marmaduke?" She asked, calling me yet another ridiculous dog name.

"I'm still learning. And I'm not like the men you know." I told her.

"Really? Well I guess that's true in a way. Unless I compare you to my grandfather. My cousins and uncle were all very nice. Grandfather not so much. The men I've met since have varied, so I guess you are like half of them." That kind of hurt me personally. Also to know that someone so close to her had treated her so bad for so long.

"You'll see, I'm one of a kind, I am the Alpha after all." I chuckled.

"Yeah, which means you're more conceited." She retorted with a laugh.

"No, just more confident." I countered.

Oddly enough, conversation continued easily like this until we got to Riley's. It took about an hour and a half to get there. It wasn't far, but Riley and I were always too busy to see each other regularly.

Thankfully, we were both still in a good mood when we got there, it would be easier to pretend to be a proper couple that way.

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Chapter 39 - Reece-Azure River Pack

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Reece

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It was a bit after nine when I pulled the car to a stop outside the Azure River Pack Alpha House. It was the house that my cousin Riley had been raised in and lived in still. Like me, he took charge of his pack seven years ago, we both lost our fathers in the same battle. He was lucky enough to still have the former Luna, his mother, there to help him transition into the role. My Aunt was stronger than my mother, that or my mother just loved my father more and his loss was harder on her.

I had no sooner shut off the engine than Riley came running out of the house.

"Reece!" He yelled, giving me a bear hug like he's always done since we were kids. He's two years older than me but you'd never know it based on the way he acts.

"Hey Ri." I smiled hugging him back. He was my best friend growing up. Between the two of us, we convinced our fathers to make monthly visits just so we could spend more time with one another. But that was in a simpler time.

"So, where is this new sister of mine?" He asked just as Little Bunny was getting out of the car without waiting for anyone to open her door. I should work on training her too. She needed to wait for someone to open doors for her, pull out her chair, things like that. That wasn't me being chivalrous. No, she's the Luna now, people need to treat her a certain way, and she needs to learn to let them.

I walked around the car and slipped my arm around her shoulders, putting a smile on my face as I did so. I hoped she would understand my gesture as me saying Play along Little Bunny.

"Riley, this is my mate, Trinity." I smiled down at her. She was smiling sweetly at Riley and playing the ever devoted and loving mate properly as she had slid her arms around my waist hugging me gently but firmly. My wolf was standing at attention, panting in my ears just from her touch. Down boy. I snapped at him and told him to calm down.

"It's a pleasure to meet you Trinity, I'm Riley, the Alpha of the Azure River pack and Reece's cousin. But

I've always considered him to be more like a brother, since we were both only children, he was the closest thing I had to a brother." Riley introduced himself with a big grin.

"Hello, it's wonderful to meet you." She smiled brightly, the light of which looked like it nearly blinded Riley.

"She's absolutely gorgeous Reece, I have absolutely no clue what she sees in you." He said pointedly. To my horror Little Bunny laughed at his remark which set Riley laughing hysterically. "Oh, she's going to be fun. Shall we go inside so I can introduce you to everyone?" He held out a hand to her. She slid her hands off of me and took his hand instead as they started walking. My wolf and I both growled simultaneously.

Without thinking much about it, I reached out and took her hand from his and held it firmly in my own. To lock her in place I put my arm around her shoulder. She was my mate, she was supposed to hold my hand, not his. She looked up at me perplexed while Riley just laughed at us both.

"Look at you, being all jealous, I never thought I'd

see the day." He smiled at me. I wasn't jealous, I just had to put on all appearances. "I'm not jealous." I grumbled. "Not of you, that's for sure." Little Bunny was still looking confused and unsure of the situation, but she didn't fight me off, good.

When we got inside I nearly roared. I did growl low under my breath. Riley had done something he shouldn't have. He had gathered a large number of his pack members in the house, and the moment we went inside confetti was dropped and shouts and cheers rang out.

"Congratulations!"

"Way to go Reece!"

"Cheers to the happy couple!"

"To the Alpha and Luna!" I heard so many different voices yell out to me at once that it nearly gave me a headache. It did, however, piss me off.

"Allow us to celebrate with you tonight." Riley said, grinning like a fool. This explains why he had come running outside when we got here. This was an ambush, and since I was in comfortable, familiar territory I had let my guard down. Damn that meddling cousin of mine.

I saw Riley's mate coming up to him. She seemed to be expecting again. This would make his second pup. He had found his mate four years ago. According to him, he was the happiest man alive with his mate and a little one. I would never have that. That thought was depressing.

Riley's pack was smaller than my own, which is why our packs had a long-lasting treaty. They only have about one third of the pack members that we did, meaning if someone tried to invade their lands, or if they were to go to war with another pack, that pack would actually be attacking me. Riley was a good Alpha to his people, I would never doubt that, but they didn't have enough people to protect themselves. That's why we always visited as a kid, to strengthen their lands and borders. These people were also my people, making them Little Bunny's people too, something I would need to fully explain to her later.

We were forced to be the center of the party. Everyone was coming to introduce themselves to us.

Everyone was eager to meet my new mate and introduce themselves to the new Luna that governed over them. I could tell that she was uncomfortable with all the attention, even though Little Bunny did good. She smiled through the whole thing and handled herself like a true Luna. She just might have what it takes to be there for the people. If only she had a wolf, then she would be strong enough to take care of herself and the pack.

It was after all the introductions were done that the low music playing was cut off and I heard Riley's voice ring out. I had a bad feeling.

"Welcome everyone and thank you for joining us in welcoming the new Luna of the Red Springs pack and my cousin Reece's new mate. I'm happy for you man. You know that I think of you as a bother, so I thank you for giving me a beautiful sister-in-law who will now grace us all with beautiful children who will hopefully call me Uncle Ri." He exclaimed, laughing. I noticed the slight blush form on my Bunny's face, it was funny what affected her and what didn't.

"Now, I would like to ask you to grant a selfish request of mine. I was not there for your mate announcement. I didn't get to see any of the typical firsts. I would like to see some here, they will be your

firsts here." Riley was saying with a huge grin on his face. Yup, I was definitely getting a really bad feeling, and the Little Bunny was looking more and more like her namesake every second.

"Yes!" Echoed throughout the room.

"Now, Reece, dear cousin and brother from another mother, please have your first dance in this territory with your mate."

"Dance, dance, dance." The people in the room chanted after his request. I looked down into my mates terrified eyes, the question clear on my face. She sighed, lowering her eyes momentarily, then looked at me with resolve and nodded her head.

"Fine, let's give them what they want." She nodded. She was at least emotionally stronger than I thought.

"Fine." I said, turning to look at Riley with a stern look.

"Excellent. Does the lady have a song request?" He asked. She shook her head. "No, then allow us to pick one." He and his mate, Katie, put their heads together before starting the music up. I hadn't noticed at first. But everyone had completely cleared the dance floor. Little Bunny and I were now alone on the floor.

I didn't know the song that started, but I could tell that she did, by the look in her eyes.

"You say you'll be down in five." The song started with light piano music and someone snapping their fingers in a slow rhythm. "The smell of your perfume is floatin' down the stairs." I took her left hand and pulled her close, wrapping my other hand around her waist. I knew she had had dance lessons as a kid, so she should be able to keep up, even though we had never danced together before.

I started to slowly spin her around the floor, staring into her eyes as we went. The tempo was picking up slightly as the song went along.

"I thank god you can read my mind, cause when you

look at me with those eyes, I'm speechless." The song seemed to be a love song, a man singing his devotion to his lover. In a normal mate bond this would be perfect, but for us it didn't fit. But I had to play the part, as did she.

If you find any errors (broken links, non-standard content, etc..), Please let us know < report chapter > so we can fix it as soon as possible.

Chapter 40 - Both-The First.....

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Reece

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We moved around the room. I spun her around a few times. But mostly, I held her close staring into her eyes, as we moved gently around the floor. I was looking into her eyes closer and more intently than I had ever really done before. I noticed that she didn't just have that

bright sky-blue color, there was also a dark blue ring inside that, and yet inside that was a thin golden ring around the pupil. She had a triple iris.

"Kiss her!" I heard Riley yell at me. I glared at him, but it was too late. The chanting had started.

"Kiss her, kiss her, kiss her!"

I looked at her, hoping she knew that I wished I didn't have to do this, but we had to play along. I took my hand from hers and slid it up her arm and to the back of her head. I tilted her head back into my palm and leaning down I placed my lips on hers.

I had intended it to be a quick chaste kiss, but my wolf took control for a moment and with a slight growl I pressed against her mouth a little harder than I had intended. She gasped, either from the feel of my mouth on hers or from the unexpected intensity.

I took advantage of her gasp. I slid my tongue into her

slightly open mouth, forcing it open further. The taste of her exploded on my tongue. It was like eating her scent. I could taste warm, freshly baked apple pie one second. The next second, I could taste the air before a thunderstorm. The ozone and slight electrical charge that filled the air right before the storm started.

I used my grip on the back of her head and her lower back to pull her closer to me and up onto her toes. I felt her hands grip my shirt tightly, I wasn't sure if it was with fear or desire. I didn't care. At that moment my wolf was ruling me, and I couldn't stop myself.

I heard applause and whistling explode in the room around us. The sound brought me back to my senses. With a growl I let her go abruptly. So abruptly that she nearly fell, and I had to reach out to steady her.

"I'm glad you stopped there, man, we don't have any sprinklers installed in case of fire." Riley said laughing. I glared at him. It was not that great of a kiss. I tried to convince myself as my wolf called me insane.

The party continued on for a little while longer, but Riley and I had business we needed to discuss, so I asked Little Bunny to stay put right where she was while I was gone.

She promised she would, so I accompanied Riley to his office upstairs. This Alpha House was not as large as my own. So, I wouldn't be that far away.

"I was surprised when I saw that you have a mate that you truly care about now." Riley commented when we were inside. I wasn't going to correct him. He was one of the people I wanted to convince the most. He didn't need to know the truth. But I really didn't know why he thought I cared about her so much.

"You know how it is." I joked with him.

"Yeah, I just never thought you would." He joked with me. "Try not to blow it, alright man."

~~

Trinity

~~

I was beyond shocked when I got to this new territory

and found out they were throwing us a mate party. I guess it was kind of like an engagement party. Most of the people in the pack run by Reece's cousin were here. And it was overwhelming to be introduced to them so soon.

Then, his cousin said he had to see our firsts, wanting to see our first dance in his territory. Well little did he know that it would be our first dance ever. Reece was a surprisingly good dancer. He took my hand and started moving us around the floor in perfect beat as Speechless played over the speakers. He was staring at me intently as I stared back, like he was memorizing my face or something.

The next thing I knew, they were chanting for him to kiss me. This was too much. We had never kissed, I had never kissed anyone ever. Reece and I were never meant to kiss. And here we were expected to do so in front of all of them. I couldn't do it. But Reece ignored my distress as he slid his hand up my arm and to the back of my head. He pulled me to him as he leaned down and kissed me.

His lips pressed against mine. Hot and unyielding. What surprised me though, wasn't the pressure or intensity of his kiss. It was the intense electrical shock that seemed to flow through my whole body as he kissed me hard. I gasped as the shock ran through me.

He took my gasp as an invitation. His tongue slid into my mouth, conquering it for his own. His tongue slid across mine and I felt a fire blaze deep within me. He moved his tongue around my mouth as if he were trying to eat me, starting at my mouth. I thought of Little Red Riding Hood momentarily, and just what it would be like to be eaten by this particular big bad wolf.

I grabbed his shirt to hold on as he lifted me onto my toes. I was terrified by the fire leaping inside of me, it felt like it was going to burn me from the inside out. But my body was very excited at the feel of his mouth on mine. If I had a wolf, she would have been howling at that moment. I imagined what it would sound like.

I could hear the whistling and cheering around us. That brought me back to my senses. And judging by how quickly Reece let me go, it brought him back to his just as fast. I could see heat in his eyes, but there was anger clear on his face as well. He was mad, and it almost seemed like it was directed at me.

Not long after the kiss, Reece and Riley needed to go discuss their business in the office. I was ordered to not leave the spot where I stood. I promised him, not wanting to receive the brunt of his anger from before.

Not long after Reece left, I was surrounded by people. Several females from this pack came to talk to me.

"That sure was something, Luna." One pretty girl about my age said.

"I thought I was going to melt just watching." Another said as she fanned her face. I blushed at their words.

"You're one lucky girl." I saw a very pretty girl say as she looked at me with envy. "We all had hoped that Alpha Reece would have to come here to find a mate." She sneered while laughing.

"Yeah, I just lucked out." I laughed nervously.

"Alright, give her space ladies." Katie, Riley's mate, said as she came to my rescue. Katie was pregnant, not as far along as Heather, but seeing her made me think of Vincent and their baby. I was worried about them all.

"Excuse, I need to make a call." I mumbled, excusing myself from the group. Reece would never know I left if I made it back before him.

I walked to the entry hall by the front door and then out into the night. I wanted privacy for this call, Vincent's business was not their business. When I was outside and leaning against Reece's stupidly expensive car, I pulled out my phone and opened my contact list. Vincent was at the top since I needed to call him to escort me frequently, I pressed his name and waited while the phone rang. He answered on the fourth ring.

"Hello Luna, is something wrong?" His voice was filled with concern for me when he should have been focusing on Heather.

"No, everything is fine. Reece is in a meeting and I was worried about you and Heather. Truth be told, the Luna of

this pack is expecting as well, and she made me think of you two. I hope I am not intruding."

"No, you're not intruding. I am happy that you were thinking of us. Heather is resting. They have managed to stop the contractions for now. They do not know what caused them, but as long as she takes it easy from now on, she should have no problems. As long as she makes it another two weeks the doctors will have no worries."

"That is great to hear." I told him. I was so happy and relieved to hear that. Things should hopefully be alright. I heard a branch snap somewhere in the trees near the house. It was nowhere near me, so I paid it no mind.

"Luna, if you don't mind me asking, besides calling me, what are you doing while you are waiting for the Alpha?" He asked, concern once again in his voice.

"I was talking to the pack members, but then I thought of you, so I stepped out for a moment."

"Outside?"

"Yeah." I answered him.

"Alone?"

"It's just for a few minutes. I'll be back before Reece even knows I left." I told him. "I didn't think that the members of this pack needed to know your business. It's your personal matter after—."

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Chapter 41 - Reece-What Happened To Little Bunny???

~~

Trinity

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I never got to finish my sentence. Someone had come up behind me and placed a hand over my mouth so tightly that it hurt. I couldn't even scream. An arm wrapped around my upper body, locking my arms in place and lifting me off the ground. In the commotion my phone fell to the ground and was shattered when someone's foot came crashing down on top of it.

I tried to bite the hand holding my mouth even as I kicked my feet frantically behind me to try and hit the man who had a hold of me. My feet made contact in several places. I felt the give of soft flesh and the cracking of what felt like bone at different times that I kicked him. He grunted and yelled in pain several times.

Finally, my attacker dropped me. I landed on all fours. Spinning as I stood, I kicked out, kicking where I estimated his face should be. I made contact and felt the shattering of bone.

"God damn it, help me with her will you." He growled through pain before he spat blood onto the ground. I sensed movement, but it was too late. Two sets of hands grabbed me from behind.

"Tie her up." The one I had gotten free of groaned through his pain.

These men were not wolves, but I did not know why they were here or what they wanted with me. I could tell that they were not human. There was something different about their smell that confused me.

"Can we use-." One of them began.

"No, human methods only." The one who tried to get me first snapped. "Don't give them another way to track us."

I started flailing again, trying to get free. I could not let them tie me up. If they did, they would take me away from here to who knows where.

I was kicking and snapping at them with my teeth at every chance I got. They were getting frustrated. I was not going to go down easy.

"We're running out of time." One of them groaned.

"Oh hell, watch out." A Different one of them hissed. I didn't know what he was planning or what he was going to do. He came near me, his awkward scent making me want to sneeze. I sensed him lift an arm and then suddenly I felt an intense pain in the side of my head. That was the last thing I knew before everything went black.

~~

Reece

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I had only been in my meeting with Riley for about twenty minutes when my phone rang. I ignored it, silencing it without even looking at the screen as I continued my conversation that was about forty percent business and sixty percent him grilling me on my new mate with a smile on his face.

"Don't you love having a mate? It's the best feeling in the world for me man." He was saying.

"I'm still adjusting, we both-." My phone rang again.

I looked and saw that it was Vincent calling. My heart sank seeing his name. I hoped it wasn't bad news. I ignored the call again. I would call him back later.

"You will see man. Having your mate around is the best. Her scent will calm you down when you need it. Excite you when things are too calm. You will feel her presence and she will always be exactly what you need, no matter the situation." He smiled at me, the love for his mate clear on his face.

"And when you finally have your first pup together, it will make you feel like you're on top of the world." He continued. My phone rang again. It was Vincent again. I pulled it out, expecting to hear the worst about his mate and pup.

"Vincent! I'm in a meeting right now, I will call you back later." I said curtly. I did not want to have this conversation with him in front of Riley.

"Alpha!" He yelled, interrupting me.

"What Vincent?"

"Something's wrong with the Luna."

"No, she's downstairs at the party." I told him. "She's fine."

"No, she's not, Sir!" He yelled. "She just called me to ask about Heather and the baby. Afterwards, I asked her where she was because it was so quiet on her end and she had said you were in a meeting."

"Quiet? Where was she? She didn't listen to me." I growled. "I told her not to leave that spot."

"She went outside."

"ALONE!" I snarled.

"Yes Sir, and as I was talking to her, she was cut off mid sentence. Then the phone cut off completely a few seconds later, but I clearly heard the sound of a struggle."

"Dammit." I was on my feet and running out of the room already. "Why couldn't she stay put? Why can't she just listen to me for once?"

"Reece, what's wrong?" Riley asked as he caught up to me, running at my heels.

"Something happened to my mate!" I snapped at him.

"What? How is that possible?" He ran ahead of me to speak to someone.

I ran to where I had left my mate, Little Bunny was not there. I followed her scent to the front door and out into the night. I could smell blood instantly. I followed her scent to the car. It was strong here. She must have been standing here when she was attacked.

I could smell blood here, yet it wasn't hers. But there was something off about the scent of the other person. I couldn't make out what their scent was. It was as if their scent had faded to near nothing. Their blood was easy enough to smell at least.

"Little Bunny managed to fight a little I see." I smiled to myself as I bent down. I found her phone where it had fallen on the ground. It had been smashed with a boot print clearly visible on the screen.

I looked at the ground, trying to get a visual of what happened. The man had come up behind her while she was on the phone. If even I had a hard time detecting his scent, then she would have as well. But she should have heard him coming at least. But she was on the phone, and she was distracted by the party.

"Dammit Little Bunny, why didn't you listen to me and stay inside? When I said stay put, I never thought you would get attacked, I just didn't want to have to find you after the meeting." I growled through tightly clenched teeth.

"Reece!" Riley was running toward me.

"Wait." I held up a hand to stop him. "I'm still checking the tracks."

"What happened?" He asked me.

"From what Vincent told me and what the tracks show, she was attacked by what looks like three men. She fought them off as good as she could for a while, but they managed to take her."

"Who were they?"

"I can't get a read on their scent, it seems off somehow." I growled again.

"Are they wolves?" He asked, anger in his voice.

"No, not wolves, and they don't smell human either."

"Magic users?"

"Probably. I think they're using a concealment spell on themselves."

"What the hell are those dirty Warlocks doing in my territory?" Riley snarled.

"That's what I want to find out." I told him. "Trinity managed to fight them for a while before they took her, but we have to hurry. There are three types of blood here. Two are from her attackers and one is hers." Anger filled me and I was ready to rip someone apart.

"Do you think she is alright?" He asked, apprehension filling his voice.

"I don't know." I snapped, as I finally tracked which direction the boot prints were moving. Their muted scents were partially obscuring hers. I could still get traces of her though, which was more than I got from them.

I locked my eyes on the path and took off running in

that direction, jumping mid stride to change forms. Landing the next second on four feet instead of two. I ran as fast as I could, following the faint traces of her scent along the trail they had taken. I was breathing heavy already, mostly from anger. I had to fight not to lose the trail, but I wouldn't give up. They would pay for taking what was mine.

Don't worry Little Bunny, I'm on my way.

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Chapter 42 - Both-Save Little Bunny

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Trinity

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My head was pounding, and I felt disoriented. I didn't know why at first. But then I realized that I was hanging over something, like how Reece had thrown me over his shoulder. But this time the person was not taking as much care. They were being rough, and it showed.

My stomach was laying across someone's shoulder just like it had Reece's, but it was pressing against it in a way that made their shoulder dig in uncomfortably. I could barely breathe. And whoever this person was they were running fast. The constant movement up and down was like a stabbing pain to my gut with every step they took.

I came to my senses, shaking the last of the fog from my head. I remembered what had happened. The attack, the struggle, the searing pain in my head, then everything going black. They had been trying to tie me up, but I was fighting them too much. Apparently, they had given up the idea on tying me when they knocked me unconscious. They clearly didn't expect me to wake up so soon.

I would need to get away, and quick. If I could just get to my feet, I could run away. I was part wolf, so I was bound to be faster than them. I noticed they were going up a hill and had noticeably slowed. This was my chance.

I grabbed a fist full of the man's hair, yanking it back and giving myself leverage, all the while lifting myself (with the use of my grip on his hair) and bringing my knee crashing up into his throat. His grip on me loosened, I dropped and rolled to the side, he fell to his knees gasping and choking for air. I got to my feet and made a run back toward the Alpha house, but the man's scream had alerted the others too quickly.

I felt a hand grab me by my hair and pull hard. I cried out, involuntarily, as I was yanked off my feet. I fell backwards and landed with a crashing thud on the forest floor. The breath rushed out of me as I was momentarily dazed. I lost the precious time I needed to escape.

"You should have just kept still." One of the men said through clenched teeth. I saw two of them approaching me. The other was just struggling to his feet. I scrambled backwards, trying to put some distance between us.

"Stay away from me." I demanded.

"Or what?" The man who had spoken earlier asked. He was right. I couldn't do much. I could fight, and I would. But it would most likely end the same as before. But I still had to try.

I couldn't take my eyes off of them to form a plan. I could only feel around in my surroundings for anything that could help me. My hand bumped into a large stick hidden under the leaf strewn ground. I closed my hand around it, halting my retreat and putting a pathetic look on my face, like I was frightened.

"That's right, just give up." The man spoke again, and he lunged at me. I swung out with the large branch as hard and fast as I could. It caught him hard across the face. He yelled in pain and frustration.

"Why won't you just stop you little bitch?" He screamed at me. The other two were lunging at me now. I swung again and hit one across the back of the head, and the other across the face on my back swing, breaking his nose. I could smell that all three of them were bleeding now. And all three were noticeably angry.

The three of them leapt at me at the same time. I tried to swing at them as quickly as I could, but I wasn't fast

enough. They all lunged simultaneously. Two of them landed on my arms and pinned me down. The other landed on my legs, he leaned forward and he placed his hands on either side of my head.

"We're supposed to take you back with us, but you're being a bit of a handful. Perhaps we need to make you more compliant." He whispered in my ear.

"Get off of me." I yelled at him. "Don't touch me." I spat the words in his face.

I heard the sound of a wolf snarling in the distance, and I instantly knew who it was. I was happy to hear it, but I didn't think he would come for me. But it was probably only because he had to pretend that we were a proper couple while we were here.

"Reece." I breathed his name in a sigh of relief.

"God damn it, we're out of time." One of them snapped, releasing me. I felt a rush of relief as they let go of me.

"But we will be back for you." Another laughed as he stood.

"Here's a parting gift." The one whose nose I broke said as he kicked me hard in the side of the head, right where they had hit me earlier. I cried out in pain and saw bright stars flash before my eyes, but I managed to stay conscious as I watched them run off.

~~

Reece

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I was following the trail. I knew I was getting closer to them as Little Bunny's scent was getting a little stronger. I heard a yell still a little off in the distance. A man's cry of pain. Little Bunny must be awake and on the offense again. Then I heard the sound of her cry out in pain. I snarled. My wolf didn't like them hurting our mate.

I couldn't hear anything the voices were saying yet, but

I could hear the angry tones from the men and my Little Bunny. There was the sound of another scuffle, the men crying out in pain and the fresh scent of blood, none of it hers. Way to go Devil Bunny.

Then I heard her scream something that made my blood boil.

"Get off me! Don't touch me!" Hands off! My wolf screamed. No one touches what's mine, even if I don't use it, it's mine. Leave her alone. I snarled out loud at the sound of her screaming those words, knowing all too well what would make her say them.

I heard them now, their voices were close enough to be clear.

"Reece." She sighed my name in relief.

"God damn it, we're out of time."

"But we will be back for you."

"Here's a parting gift." When the last one said this, I was close enough to see through the trees now. He had been laying somewhat on top of her, which infuriated me. When he stood up, he kicked her hard in the side of the head with his boot. She cried out in pain.

I put on a burst of speed and tried to catch up to them. I noticed she had risen to her knees and was watching them leave. She didn't seem to have the energy to get to her feet. I was torn between going after them and stopping to help her. I had never been torn like that before. But my duty was to my pack and she was part of my pack. I would send Riley's men after the Warlocks.

It took me another minute to get to her, running all out and weaving around the obstacles in my way. She didn't even look at me, she just continued to watch the direction they had left in. I was worried she was in shock.

I shifted, back to my human self, while crouching right next to her. She still didn't look at me.

"Are you alright Little Bunny?" I asked her. I knew that blow to the head had been a bad one, and she was more susceptible to injury than I was. She didn't answer. She continued to act like I wasn't even there. "Little Bunny,

are you OK?" I asked her, trying to get her attention. She still ignored me. Fearing that she might have a head injury I knelt lower and moved to look her in the face.

I could see her eyes now. For the first time since I found her in the woods tonight. I had looked at her from the side when I spoke the first two times, so I hadn't seen her eyes. But now I was looking. And what I saw almost made me gasp. I was glad I was the first one to find her.

Trinity's eyes were glowing. The bright sky blue was glowing almost white now, the inner blue ring was shining like a sapphire and the gold ring looked metallic and reflective. The inner two circles were turning to the left and right, alternatingly. Half or full turns one way then they would switch back. It was almost like a camera lens permanently trying to autofocus and zoom at the same time. I had never seen anything like it before.

"Trinity? What's going on?" I asked her, shocked.

"They're going to get away if we don't hurry." She

yelled.

"They've already gotten away." I told her, they were long gone, and we couldn't track their scent.

"No, they haven't, they're right there." She said pointing somewhere in the trees. "They're about eighteen-hundred meters that way." She added.

"You can still see them?" I asked her.

"You can't?" She sounded confused.

"No."

"Then follow their scent, it's a little weird, and it makes me sneeze, but I'm sure you guys can get it better than me." She sighed, further confusing me.

"Trinity, we can't smell them at all." I told her. She finally blinked and broke eye contact with whatever she was focusing on. She looked so confused, but she also looked tired and hurt.

"What do you mean you can't smell them?" She asked me.

"None of us here can smell them, only you. It's like they were hiding their scent and it was hiding yours too."

"What?" She looked shocked. "So, I'm the only one? Further proof I don't belong". For some reason that made her look depressed.

"At least you can smell them when they're trying to hide, be on your guard next time." She nodded. "More importantly," I started, letting anger fill my voice, "why the hell did you leave that spot. I told you to stay put." I growled at her. I could see the defiance fill her eyes. She was preparing to argue.

"Look, Mighty Dog," she was gearing up for an argument as she was slowly getting to her feet. "I don't ne--." She slumped toward the ground and I caught her as she fell.

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content, etc..), Please let us know < report chapter > so we can fix it as soon as possible.

Chapter 43 - Reece-Finally, Little Bunny Is Safe. Right?

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Reece

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Just as I caught her, Riley and the others came into the clearing. Riley and one of the others had shifted, they had taken to searching the surrounding areas in pairs, using human and wolf senses to make sure nothing was missed. Riley shifted back.

"How is she?" He asked me and I lifted her up into my arms.

"She's been through a lot, and she's beaten up. I need to get her back to the house." I told him. "The men who

took her left going that way. They have about a mile and half head start, maybe two miles now. They were heading south east probably toward the highway."

"Deek, Nick, Cole track them as best as you can. Her scent may linger with them, follow that if you can." Riley told his men. They nodded and ran into the woods. "I will head back to the house and prepare a room for her. I am sorry, Reece, this should not have happened. This is my fault."

"No, it's mine. I left her alone. I didn't come prepared. And none of us thought this would happen."

I held Little Bunny in my arms, cradled against my chest. She wasn't just asleep like last time. No, this time she was unconscious and was not likely to wake up and catch me carrying her. Which was probably a good thing, since I was stark naked at the moment and she would probably take offense and have some problem with that.

I carried her swiftly, getting to the house in no time. Still, Riley had gotten there first as he had run in his wolf

form. He was waiting in the forest with a set of clothes for me to put on. I had to make a choice, set the bunny on the ground or let him hold her while I got dressed. I set her gently on the ground, propped against a tree.

Once I was dressed, I lifted her into my arms again, doing so I heard her groan. She was in pain, and hearing that made my wolf snarl.

I carried her into the house and laid her on the bed in the room that Riley had gotten ready. I had not told him or anyone in his pack that she didn't have a wolf. I didn't want rumors spreading and following her everywhere. But I needed to tell him now.

"Riley, I need to talk to you. Privately." I implored him. He cleared the room, leaving just Little Bunny, myself, and Riley.

"What is it Reece?" He asked me, looking worried.

"There is something I need to tell you, about Trinity." I looked at him, with a pleading look.

"What's wrong?" He was fearing the worst, I could tell.

"I don't want what I am about to tell you to leave this room, I do not want it to become public knowledge in your pack."

"You have my word, brother." He promised, looking at me intently.

"Trinity, is not like the other pack members, she is not like you and I."

"Meaning?"

"She does not have a wolf."

"How can that be?" He asked, confusion written all over his face.

"I don't know exactly. But her mother was a wolf, I know that for a fact."

"And her father?" He questioned.

"No one knows." His eyes widened in response to my words.

"How could no one know?"

"Her mother either did not know or was afraid to tell anyone. Or somehow manipulated into not telling." I told him. I was starting to have some thoughts concerning her lineage, I wondered if I was anywhere near the truth.

"Do you think he was a human?"

"No, most human and wolf half breeds still end up with a wolf, just a weaker one."

"Do you have any theories?"

"Just one." I said. "But I don't know if I want to say it

just yet."

"Fair enough. I won't push you Reece. What do you need from me right now?" He asked me, never once pressuring me to give more.

"I want a pack doctor to look at her. Do you have one you can trust?"

"We only have one pack doctor. She's an OK person, but I don't know if I can reach her on such short notice." He admitted, and that annoyed me.

"Then I will call one from home and tell them to hurry."

"Alright."

I sent word to have my most trusted doctor sent over. He worked in the hospital in the city, and since I said it was an emergency and I was willing to pay out of my ass for the cost, I told him to take the helicopter to get here. I also called Vincent while I waited. I knew he would be worried sick as he had gotten cut short from both me and

his Luna. He answered after only half a ring.

"Is she alright?" He demanded the second he answered the phone. He had clearly been pacing with the phone, waiting for my call.

"I found her, and she is resting. I am waiting for a pack doctor from the city to get here to check her out." I answered him obligingly.

"Oh Goddess, is she hurt bad?" He still wasn't satisfied.

"She has been hit in the head a few times, and she is unconscious. I think that might have more to do with the spent energy and the adrenaline leaving her body than anything, but only time, and the doctor, will tell."

"I'm so sorry, Alpha, I should have gone with you. I should not have left her earlier this evening."

"You did as you were ordered to do. I would have told you to go as well. None of us would have expected this to happen. This is a pack we have a treaty with, and she

was not attacked by wolves."

"Wait, what?" He seemed shocked by my words. "Then who was she attacked by?" He asked, confused.

"Warlocks."

"WHAT!" He shouted into my ear. I growled at him and he got his tone under control. "What do Warlocks want with the Luna?"

"I don't know, but I intend to find out." I told him.

"We still have our other meeting, which will have to be pushed back to a later time in the day or until Sunday. I will keep you all posted. But when we get back, she is to be watched more carefully at all times."

"Yes sir."

"Oh, and Vincent."

"Yes, Sir?"

"Why does she seem to have a problem with Leslie and Jeremy?" I asked him. If anyone would know it would be Vincent.

"Well." He seemed uncomfortable, like he didn't know if he should tell me or wait until the Luna told me.

"Answer me." I told him.

"As for Jeremy, he just makes her feel like he hates her. And Leslie, well the night you marked the Luna, he made her feel very uncomfortable." He told me in a weak voice.

"Uncomfortable how?" I asked him. He went on to detail everything that Leslie had said and done the night of the marking, which made me understand why Little Bunny had shown an aversion to him ever since. Well, someone's going to find himself getting punished.

"Thank you for the information, Vincent, it was very enlightening."

"You're welcome, Sir." He sounded spent and exhausted.

"Get some sleep." I told him.

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Trinity

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I could hear Reece talking, but it sounded fuzzy. My head was killing me. I had a feeling that if I opened my eyes any light I saw would be like knives to my brain. I tried to shift slightly and groaned.

"Are you awake?" I heard Reece clearly this time.

"Not really." I answered in a muffled voice.

"How are you feeling?"

"Like my head is about to explode." I told him, which felt accurate to me.

"I have a doctor on their way. He should be here any minute now." He told me.

"Does he carry a pharmacy?" I asked sarcastically.

"I didn't ask." He chuckled.

"Ugh, if he doesn't, he's fired." I growled with deadly seriousness.

A few minutes later there was a light knock on the door, the sound of which was still too loud for my head. A man who appeared to be in his early forties came in carrying a dark blue duffle bag. He was dressed in a casual business suit and looked nice enough.

"Hey Griffin, I need you to check her out." Reece told him, pointing

to me. Reece started detailing everything that had happened tonight, my head hurt so bad I spaced it out.

If you find any errors (broken links, non-standard content, etc..), Please let us know < report chapter > so we can fix it as soon as possible.

Chapter 44 - Both-A Burden

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Reece

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Little Bunny wasn't looking so good. After I told Griffin what she had been through, he went over and started examining her. She winced and cried out several times. My wolf didn't like that one bit. It proved that her head was in bad shape.

"It would be best if I could get a scan, but I'm guessing that's not an option right now?" Griffin said looking at me.

"Do you believe there is something majorly wrong?" I asked him.

"I can't be certain, but things might get worse if there is."

"I just want to take a pain pill and rest." Little Bunny grumbled.

"And if you have a concussion and never wake up?" I asked her.

"Well, at least the pain would be gone." She quipped. I growled at her. "Oh, drop it. If things get worse, then bring the helicopter back and fly me to the hospital, if I get better on my own then all's well that ends well." She sounded annoyed.

"Fine. Have it your way." I told her.

"If you have problems with balance or vision, I want you in the hospital ASAP, do you understand me?" Griffin told her.

"Sure, whatever." She told him.

"I'm serious. Agree or I don't give you the good stuff." He demanded

holding up a bottle whose label I couldn't see.

"Fine, I promise, I will go to the hospital immediately if anything gets worse." She sighed. "Cross my heart." She promised, making the motion. "Now please, make my head feel better."

"Fine." Griffin laughed as he took out a syringe, filling it. "You're going to go back to sleep for the night."

"That's fine with me." She held out her arm for him.

Once the meds were administered and my Little Bunny was sound asleep, I walked Griffin out, telling him to keep this to himself. It was an order, and he was forced to obey.

I was standing in the hall by the door when Riley called me.

"Reece?"

"Yeah." I frowned, turning to him.

"I'm about to watch the security footage from tonight, I was waiting for you, so are you coming?"

"Yeah, I want to see what happened." I nodded, following him to the security room that housed the video cameras. It looked a lot like the one at my Alpha house, only fewer monitors as this estate was smaller.

We watched as the scene unfolded before us. There had been a sound off in the trees, but that was in front of her, so she was not suspicious for something behind her. The man who snuck up behind her had done so without her noticing. But she managed to get free and was fighting him off pretty well.

Just as I thought she was doing great, the other two ambushed her from behind, pinning her arms to her sides. Even then she was not giving up. She kicked and bit as much as she could. She was bound and determined to get free. She did manage to bloody two of them after all. But they quickly grew frustrated and one of the men lifted his arm, in it I saw a metal pipe. He brought it crashing down on the side of her head with great force.

"That's how they got her." I noted.

"She's a fighter that's for sure." Riley praised.

"Yeah, but if she had a wolf, she would have gotten away no problem. She's too weak to be my Luna." I snapped, slipping back to my typical attitude.

"REECE!" Riley yelled at me.

"It's the truth." I snapped at him. "Can't you see how much of a disaster tonight was just because the Goddess gave me a mate with no wolf?"

"But can't you see how much worse it could have been? Think about how much farther they would have gotten if she wasn't able to fight. Or what they could have done to her or you in return."

"Would they be targeting her if she wasn't the Luna?" I asked him. "Being a Luna with no wolf is just a danger to her and my wolf pack." The anger and frustration in my voice was reaching its breaking point. I stormed out of the room.

~~

Trinity

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I woke the next day feeling mostly better. My head still hurt but not quite as bad. I could get out of the bed I was laying in without feeling like I was going to die or wanting to vomit, so it was a definite improvement. Someone had put my bag in here, it was on the table near the window.

I was getting my stuff, and hoping to find a shower, when the door opened.

"You're up?" Reece asked.

"Yeah, I'm feeling better." I told him. "I wanted to shower and change. I'm sure we need to leave as well."

"Yes, we need to hurry. The bathroom is through there." He pointed. "But before you go, I want to talk to you for a moment."

"Alright." I frowned at him, I could feel his tension, something was wrong. We were standing by the window, Reece looking out over the front yard, away from me.

"What happened last night will not happen again." He seemed tense.

"I'm sorry. I will not leave when you've asked me to stay put again."

"That's not what I meant." He said impatiently.

"Then what is?"

"I could mention so many aspects." He murmured, turning to look at me. "The dance for one. I won't allow that to happen again, ever."

"That's fine, I found it awkward."

"The kiss, it was never supposed to happen in the first place."

"Agreed. I didn't expect it nor want it to happen. I didn't want my first kiss forced on me like that." I noticed his eyes widen for a fraction of a second.

"And lastly, I will not save you again. You will either save yourself, or not put yourself into such a situation like that ever again." Those words surprised me. "If you require assistance after today, call one of your guards." He added.

"I'm sorry I was such a burden to you." I told him, looking down.

"You're more than a burden." He groaned, causing me to look up at him, his eyes were filled with anger and other dark emotions. "I hate you." He snapped, my heart shattered in that instant.

I had known he would never love me, but I had hoped for a level of civility. For mutual respect at least. And maybe, just maybe, affection might grow over time. I knew I was already developing feelings for him. I couldn't help it. But he would never return them. Even then, I kept myself from crying.

"I understand." Was all I said.

"Now, finish getting ready for the day." He snarled at me in anger before he left the room.

I went into the bathroom to shower. I had intended it to be quick, but things were different now. I sat there, on the floor of the shower, with the hot water falling on my head. I didn't know what was water and what was tears as I sat there and cried.

I cried until the hot water ran out completely. I continued to cry while I dried myself off and get dressed. I cried until I had no more tears left in me to cry. It was both more and less than I expected. I cried for nearly an hour, which was longer than I had ever cried before. But I couldn't believe that was all the tears I could muster for my mate.

When I pressed a cold cloth to my face to soothe the red, swollen skin around my eyes, I didn't even feel like crying when I thought about Reece. Smacking him upside his big Alpha head, yes, but crying, nope.

I don't think the feelings I was developing would go away so quickly. They were aided by the mate bond after all. But maybe, eventually, I could manage to look at him with an empty, apathetic feeling. I could hope at least. Dammit, why did he have to go and kiss me last night, that had made my heart and body all confused.

Reece was upset when he finally saw me.

"You took way too long." He snapped at me. He didn't comment about my red eyes, so either he didn't notice, or my makeup job had done the trick. I was glad I decided to pack the little bag after all. I just shrugged my shoulders and ignored him. I didn't want to talk to him yet, we would have to play the happy Alpha couple later.

He sped along the highway and we made it to the next pack within forty-five minutes. This pack was just as small as the last and paid fealty to ours. It meant that they didn't actually have an Alpha. They had a Prime Beta. It was like the Alpha of a pack, and functioned as one in Reece's absence, but they never truly had the same power over the pack members as the Alpha did. And his mate had no official role among the pack, but she did help with all the women and children still. The trip here didn't take long.

If you find any errors (broken links, non-standard content, etc..), Please let us know < report chapter > so we can fix it as soon as possible.

Chapter 45 - Trinity-Heartbroken

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Trinity

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Reece met with the Prime Beta, telling me to sit in the dining room with the Prime Beta's mate and not move. I thought about ignoring him and leaving the dining room, he was a jerk and didn't deserve me listening to him, but that would just make things harder on me. So, I stayed put. I would make his life hell when we were at home. On the road, people had to see us in a certain light.

When the meeting was over, and it was time to leave I couldn't be happier. I went out to the car and got in, ignoring him all the while. I heard him telling them that I was still feeling tired from the incident last night, which he had told them a little about to explain our tardiness.

We drove home in silence, because I ignored Reece's every attempt to talk to me. Once we were back to the estate, I retreated to my room and locked the door. I didn't want to see him more than necessary right now. I know it will get better eventually, but right now, just the sight of him was too painful.

As soon as Vincent picked me up for classes Monday morning, he knew something was wrong. But I refused to elaborate. I think he just assumed it was the trauma of the weekend and ultimately blamed

himself. I couldn't tell him what was really bothering me, but I did try telling him that it wasn't his fault. I don't think he believed me at all.

Juniper didn't know about the events of the weekend, and she could tell right away that something was wrong.

"Spill it." She told me with no preamble or greeting.

"What?" I asked her.

"Whatever has you so down in the dumps." She told me.

"It's nothing, really."

"I'll believe that when I become the next Alpha myself. News flash, that will never happen." Her tone was firm, no hint of humor in the joke she just told.

"Seriously Trinity, you look like hell." Paul told me.

"Gee, thanks Paul." I snapped at him.

"You can tell us what's wrong Trinity." Cedar added. I just shook my head no, fighting back the tears, apparently, I had more to cry over him than I thought I had. I turned and ran into the bathroom that was just down the hall. I heard all four of them call my name and two pairs of feet chase me.

"Trinity?" Juniper called as she came into the bathroom. Checking which stall I was currently hiding in. "What the hell is the matter with you?"

"Just leave me alone and let me finish crying this out. Once all the tears are done, I will be able to talk about it clinically." I told her through sobs.

"Does it have anything to do with the trip this past weekend?" She guessed, she knew I had gone away, but she doesn't know anything that happened. I ignored her question. "Bingo." She said intuiting the non-response to mean yes as she always did.

"Does it also have something to do with a certain tall, sexy Alpha?"

"Just drop it." I told her.

"Two for two I see. What did he do to you?" She asked me. She knew that Reece and I weren't on the greatest of terms, but that we were at least civil when others were around.

"Juniper." I pleaded with her.

"Look, whatever it is, it's major, otherwise I would leave you be. But this is affecting you so much that you're having a breakdown. I'm trying to help you, because I'm your friend, I'm here for you, and I love you." She said. Those three words. Something I wish I could hear a mate say to me one day, but that was never going to happen. I would never hear a man tell me that now. Not ever. Because I was mated to a man that hated me. I cried harder.

"Trinity." She called out, pushing the door open with sheer force and looking at me with pure worry written on her face.

"I'm sorry Juniper." I cried, feeling so pathetic in that moment.

"Girl, you got nothing to feel sorry for. You just need to tell me what

he did to you, so I can decide if I'm going to go right to my death by trying to murder my own Alpha."

"I'll tell you, but just leave it be after that alright." I told her.

"That depends."

"Promise me." I told her again.

"Fine, I promise." She finally gave in.

I nodded and told her everything. From the call Vincent got to the moment Reece said he hated me. She sat there listening with rapt attention. Anger was slowly building behind her eyes. First it was at the three men who had taken me. And she was happy Reece saved me. But the moment I told her what he said to me, her face contorted with rage.

"What the HELL is that ASSHOLE thinking?" Her voice thundered throughout the room.

"What?" I heard Paul ask from outside.

"How could he do that? How could he say that to you? How could he treat you like that?" She was livid. "I swear I'm going to kick his--."

"No, you promised to just leave it be." I told her. "I've known all along that I am a mate in name only. But I had thought we might have a relationship grow out of mutual respect eventually, or something. But I see now that it's not going to happen."

"You were ok with that?" She asked me.

"I didn't agree to it before becoming Luna, no. But he didn't tell me before I became Luna, so I had no choice."

"So, he tricked you into this? How can he ignore the pull of the mate bond? Are you sure it's even a mate bond?" She asked me.

"I'm sure. I've seen how it affects him, and it affects me too. It's real, but he just doesn't care. He doesn't want me. He would rather have nothing than a wolfless girl like me." I told her.

"That man needs a wake up call." She snapped.

"Don't worry, eventually, things will get easier, and I never truly

wanted a mate either. So, this works out best, I don't have to have a true mate and I get all the other benefits of having a mate."

"Yeah, and the heartache." She sighed, hugging me tight.

We left the bathroom shortly after. I had washed my face and was calmer, but I didn't feel up to classes today. We would just get the assignments from someone else and make them up later. Instead, Vincent offered to take me to get ice cream.

"Why ice cream?" I asked him, perplexed.

"It always cheers Heather up." He smiled sheepishly.

"Yeah, let's all go get ice cream." Juniper smiled. So, it was decided.

Vincent took us to Heather's favorite shop. It was a quaint little parlor on a side street in the city. They had just opened for the day so they weren't busy yet.

"Vincent, nice to see you. Who're all these with you?" The old man asked.

"Hey Eddie." He called. "Trinity, this is my Uncle Eddie, Eddie, this is our Luna, Trinity, and her friends, Juniper, Paul and Cedar." Eddie's eyes had gone wide at the word Luna.

"My goodness, but our new Luna sure is a pretty one, that Alpha is a lucky man." I tried not to let my eyes darken at his mention of Reece. "I take it Vincent here brought you for some of the best homemade ice cream in the whole city?" He asked, making me smile. Eddie was nice, just like Vincent was.

"That's right, what do you recommend?" I asked walking to the counter. Eddie went through the list of all his flavors, which there were a lot. He had all the traditional ones that he could buy, but there were also the three-dozen special, homemade flavors he had invented. They all sounded good. Unable to choose, I had Eddie pick for me. He gave me a bowl with several sample sized scoops so I could try quite a few.

"Come back and we will give you another variety. We will keep it up until you try them all." He told me with a smile.

"Thank you." I nodded, taking the bowl. When I turned around, I saw that Juniper and the guys were all talking, their heads held together. I had a feeling she was telling them everything. When they turned

around, all three of the guys had a look that was a cross of pity and anger, even Vincent. Yup, she told them.

"Juniper!" I whined at her.

"Sorry Trinity, they were worried about you as well."

"Astro." Paul cried, coming over and hugging me tight just like Carter would do.

"Trin." Cedar added, joining the hug. Vincent just stood there looking sad, like he wished he had known what had been going on, but that he couldn't do anything against the Alpha. His hands were tied, but he cared about me, same as Noah.

We ate our ice cream and tried to have a good time. But everyone kept looking at me with worry filled eyes. It was hard for me to enjoy the ice cream. I barely even noticed the flavors. It felt like a waste, really.

Vincent drove me home in near silence. Just before we got home. He started apologizing again.

"I'm sorry Luna. So very sorry."

"For what Vincent?" I asked him.

"That I wasn't there for you. Not just this weekend, but this entire time. I didn't know what you were going through."

"Obviously. That's because I didn't tell you. It's my problem, no one else's."

"Luna." He cried out, sadness filling his voice.

"I won't let it get to me. Today was hard, because of this weekend, but it will make me stronger in the end. Just be patient for me, alright." I smiled at him.

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Chapter 46 - Trinity- Seeing Double And What I Think Of Reece

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Trinity

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Noah visited me that night. The look in his eyes told me he knew what happened over the weekend, but he had no idea of anything else. He had David and another man I'd never met with him.

Noah ignored the formalities he usually tried to show at the estate, he came right over to me and wrapped his arms around me tightly.

"Trin, I'm so sorry you were hurt, but I am so happy you're ok." He squeezed me tight like he was trying to make sure I was real, that I was still here.

"I'm fine Noah." I soothed, hugging him back as tight as I could. At that moment I was just happy to have a member of my family there with me.

"Mom has been beside herself. Dad has been pacing nonstop. And Carter is livid. They will come here themselves if I don't let them know

you're safe." He squeezed me tighter still. "Nikki and I were both worried about you as well, so expect her to bombard you sometime soon."

"I love you, all of you guys." I felt like crying again, but I couldn't, not with the strange man here that I didn't know.

I gently pulled away from Noah, breaking the hug that I wanted to continue.

"Who is this, Noah?" I asked him.

"Oh, yes, let me introduce you." He composed himself while gesturing the men forward. "Obviously you know David already. This man here is Shane, he will be joining David and Vincent as your guards."

"Nice to meet you." I greeted him. I hoped he would be better than the last ones. Jeremy didn't make me feel weird like Leslie, but he seemed to hate me. And Leslie, well, he was nice at first but ended up creeping me out.

"It's a pleasure." Shane smiled, bowing his head slightly. He looked to be about my age, and he had a kind smile on his face. He was just over six feet tall and looked like he worked out quite often. He wasn't overly handsome, about average but he had some very interesting features. He had gray eyes and hair that looked to be a gray, almost silver, color. His wolf was bound to be interesting. Just then there was a knock on the door.

"Ahh, there is the other guard that will be joining you as well." Noah declared walking to the door. I watched as he went to the door and pulled it open. The man standing at the door was identical to the man standing in front of me.

"Either I'm seeing double or you're twins." I said with a sarcastic tone and a grin on my face. "That or someone slipped me some double mint." I cracked the bad joke and got no laughter. "Tough crowd." I mumbled, that however did get a laugh from David, Shane, and his as of yet unnamed brother.

"Stick to your day job Trinity." Noah joked, laughing at me.

"I don't have a day job. I'm a student, remember." I laughed. "That and I'm the Luna."

"Yeah, well, learn all you can cause you suck as a comedian." Noah

laughed.

"Oh, hardy-har-har, so funny. That's coming from the man with almost a negative sense of humor." My retort earned me laughter from the other three men, and we all got a glare from Noah.

"That's almost too true, Trinity." David said between his fits of laughter.

"My job requires me to be serious, it's not my fault." Noah snapped. I laughed at him.

"Is it always like this?" The newcomer asked.

"Don't look at me I just got here." Shane shook his head.

"Nope, this is a first for me, but it's quite the show isn't." David answered them.

"Enough!" Noah growled. "Let us move on. Trinity, this is indeed

Shane's twin brother, Shawn."

So, normal names for this set of twins, got it. I noted to myself. Juniper had told me she thought her mom was a bit of a hippie wannabe and therefore gave her and her brother hippie like names in her opinion. I didn't think it was hippie like, just fitting for the name trends in our current world.

"Nice to meet you Shawn, and I will apologize in advance if I mix you up. I'm sure you act different as you are completely different people, but until I know you well enough, I will probably mix you up a few times." I knew it was inevitable, so I thought it best to just apologize for it now.

"No worries Luna, it happens all the time." Shane laughed, I only know this because he was here first and was the one wearing a blue shirt. Shawn came in wearing a red shirt.

I didn't see or talk to Reece again all week. Not until it was time for us to go to the next set of pack introductions. I was called to his office early Saturday morning before we left. I went in, alone, and saw that he was alone as well. I was nervous, but I refused to let it show. We were still at home, so I didn't have to pretend anything right now.

"Are you prepared to leave?" He asked as soon as the door shut,

without even looking at me.

"Yes." I said curtly.

"I expect you to be as convincing as you were last time. Can you manage that?" He asked, still looking at his desk.

"I don't know, I guess that depends on you, doesn't it?"

"What's that supposed to mean?" He looked confused as he finally looked up, questioning my meaning.

"I'm saying it depends on if you can manage to not be an ass the entire time. If you don't talk the way you are now. If you can behave yourself Fido, then so can I." He growled loudly as I slipped back to his favorite pet name with a grin on my face.

"Are you trying to piss me off Little Bunny?" He asked, sneering at me with the name he knew I hated.

"No more than you're trying to piss me off, sweetheart." I countered batting my eyes and giving him an evil smile. He looked visibly more upset than he was before.

"You better get this out of your system now, because this attitude will not be allowed while we are in other territories."

"I can get it out until my heart's content, got a baseball bat?" I gave him an angelic smile.

"You really are an Evil Bunny, aren't you?"

"Only where you're concerned?" I snapped at him.

"As long as no one else in the pack, or any other pack sees this attitude I don't care. Got it, nobody outside you and I are to know how things really are between us. Is that clear?"

"Crystal. As long as you know that anytime I'm alone with you I'm going to make what I think of you be known."

"What you think of me. And what exactly do you think of me?" Oh, I couldn't believe he was asking me that.

"You're an egotistical, self-centered, high-handed brute with an ice-cold heart and the emotional maturity of a mayfly."

"Ouch. Don't hold back on my account, keep going." He pretended to be hurt.

"I think you believe you're more special than you are just because you're the alpha. I think you expect me to fall at your feet and worship you or fawn all over you like all the pack bimbos, but that's never going to happen, and deep down that pisses you off. And you didn't get to have things go your way so now you're basically having an eternal tantrum and taking your frustrations out on me. Well fine. If you get to take it out on me, I'm going to take my frustrations at your attitude out on you. Just fair warning, be prepared because I am just getting warmed up and things will only get worse from here on out." I ranted at him until I was out of breath. I was taking slow deep breaths to calm myself while glaring at him. He was looking at me like he was bored, he didn't even have the decency to be annoyed by my rant.

"Finished yet?" He asked me.

"Yeah."

"Good. We will be leaving in twenty minutes. Please do your best to

convince them, the same as last time, I will play the part the same as before." He seemed so unfazed, what an annoying JERK!

Vincent was joining us on the trip this time. He was trying to appear as unfazed as possible, but I know he was worried about Heather. I just hoped nothing happened during the trip, he could make it back if something happened to her, but then that would leave me alone with Reece again.

We took an SUV, one that I had not seen when in the garage before. It was large and afforded us lots of personal space. Reece was driving again. I think he liked driving, it must be a control thing. Vincent was in the front with him, and I was in the back reading a book, glad that I didn't have to try to keep up a conversation.

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Chapter 47 - Trinity-Black Moon Pack

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Trinity

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We apparently had a busy schedule this weekend. It was just after eight when we left, we would be visiting three fealty packs that bordered ours. After that we would be visiting a pack that we had no treaty or fealty with.

According to Vincent, these were the packs we had to be wary of. They owed us nothing and tensions were often high between our packs. I would need to watch my surroundings the entire time I was there.

The fealty pack meetings went just as they did before. Reece met with the Prime Beta, while I waited in the dining area getting to know his mate. Only this time, Vincent was standing behind me like an attendant in some feudal war drama. He said that a proper bodyguard had to be standing, which I guess was true, but it was awkward. He never stood in class because it would look out of place and it wouldn't have been allowed.

I was just happy that things were going smoothly. It was easy to be the loving show couple with Reece for these fealty packs, because we spent so little time there. We literally just introduced me, they already knew Reece, then he pretended like he didn't want to leave me but had

to for the meeting, making me promise to wait for him. Then the Prime Beta's wife would gush about how lucky I was and how they were happy to finally have a Luna. I just needed to pretend to be embarrassed and give smiles and the occasional answers in response. We left as soon as the meetings were over.

All three fealty meetings passed in a blur. I couldn't even tell you which house belonged to which or what their mates looked like. I simply didn't pay enough attention. I will meet them again and try to remember them then.

It was a while after sunset when we got to the last pack house for the day. Their pack was about the same size as ours, but they had significantly less territory than we did. Their land directly bordered ours, just like the Azure River Pack did, but they had apparently lost a territory battle a long time ago and ended up losing a lot of their land to other packs. Because of that, they have been jealous of the larger packs for a long time, including ours.

We were supposed to stay here overnight, same as we did at Riley's Alpha house, but I didn't know if that was a good idea, and I hadn't even gotten out of the car yet. I could, however, see about a dozen people stand outside their alpha house waiting for us when we arrived. That made me nervous.

"Reece, how are you, young man?" A man asked as soon as Reece opened his door. He looked like he was in his mid-thirties with bright blond hair and eyes that were such a dark green they almost looked black when I first saw them.

Reece opened my door for me, he had told me that as Luna I was expected to have people treat me like this. And while we were on these trips, he had to do it. I took the hand he held out for me and immediately felt Reece pull me into his side, wrapping an arm around my back.

"I'm wonderful Stanley, and how have you been?" He asked with just the slightest hint of annoyance. Stanley's eyes widened when he saw me, I'm guessing he had not expected that Reece was telling the truth about having a mate, or that Reece just hadn't mentioned me.

"My, I thought this was just going to be another negotiation. Who might this be?" The man asked. Well, that answered that question, Reece hadn't told him that he was mated.

"This is my mate, and the Luna of my pack." Reece announced.

"Trinity, this is Stanley, Alpha of the Black Moon Pack." He introduced us while looking at me.

"Well, then I guess congratulations is in order. You should have told me in advance. I do not have a suitable room ready for you to stay in." Stanley sighed, his voice full of fake apologies. I could tell Reece and Stanley did not get along.

"No worries, we will stay elsewhere tonight. Considering how late it was already, and that it would take us at least three hours, or more, to drive home, add to that the length of the meeting time, I didn't want to fathom how late it would be if we drove home tonight. But I didn't know where he planned for us to sleep tonight.

"Well, come inside. Tell us all about your mate. Then we can get to business." Stanley interrupted my thoughts. His voice for some reason sent chills through my body, and not the good kind. He made me feel like I had bugs crawling on me. Something about him was off, but I just couldn't figure it out. Most likely, it was just because he didn't like Reece, and as much as my mate annoyed me, my bond with him didn't let me like people who were his enemies or trying to do him harm.

We went into the house and were taken to a grand dining hall. The men who had been standing with the Alpha outside all followed and stood stationed around the room. Stanley called in a maid and ordered her to set two more place settings at the table as we were seated.

"Our guest tonight seems to have brought his new Luna and another pack member along with him." The maid set the dishes in front of us and smiled before leaving the room.

"Reece leaned down, stroking my hair and pretending to kiss my ear, but he was actually whispering to me.

"Do not eat anything they give you. Trust no one here." I nodded but hid it in a small giggle like his kiss had tickled me. He seemed to have understood as he pulled away from me.

Stanley was watching us and smiled when Reece pulled his mouth away from my ear.

"You seem to have found yourself a beauty." Stanley smirked while leering at me, my skin crawled again.

"Yes, she is very beautiful isn't she." Reece agreed, squeezing me with his arm around my shoulder.

"Wherever did you find such a lovely girl?" Stanley asked Reece but didn't take his eyes off of me. I was almost ready to deal with Reece at

his worst if it meant getting away from this creep.

"She's been hiding in my pack this whole time."

"Really, who would have thought."

The maid came in with the food then. I knew I wouldn't be eating any of it, but I was happy for the distraction at least, or so I thought. Stanley still didn't take his eyes off of me. His leering stare felt like it was boring into my skin and leaving a permanent mark. I just wanted to get out of here.

"It's a shame you have to leave, I'm sure we can ready something for you during the meeting, Reece. There will be no need for you to stay anywhere else." His words made me stiffen. Reece still had his arm around me protectively, so he felt the tension in my body.

"No, I must insist that we go elsewhere. I'm sure you remember how things were when you were newly mated, Stanley." Reece mocked with a hint of finality.

"Well, I do happen to remember those wild days." He laughed. "If you insist, then I will not push it, but the offer still stands."

I pushed the food on the plate around but didn't actually eat. When Stanley commented, I simply told him I was tired from the long day. He smiled at that, like he thought it was a good thing. Halfway through the supposed meal, Reece stood, declaring it was time that he and Stanley got on with business. The two of them left with just over half of the guards following them.

Vincent and I were left behind with only four of the guards remaining. Not one of them had said a word yet. They hadn't even looked directly at me since I had arrived, which was a relief since their alpha had done nothing but leer at me.

But things seemed to change the minute Reece and Stanley left.

"Your alpha better agree to the terms this time. This is getting ridiculous." One of the guards, a man with a dark tan and brown hair and eyes spoke with an angry tone. "I'm getting sick of having to deal with these constant meetings." He added.

"Our alpha is not interested in an exchange of territories." Vincent stated in a flat tone.

"Hmph! Your pack has more land than it needs." Another guard said, this one pale with yellow eyes and light brown hair.

"Lands were decided generations ago, it is no fault of ours that your previous Alpha made poor decisions." Vincent kept his voice flat again as he responded but I could tell he was not happy having to respond to these men.

"Your alpha will give up something." The biggest of the men said, he was standing by the door Reece had left through and was glaring at us with black eyes that set in his light brown skin. "He can pay with his land, his life, or his Luna, he can pick, or we can." He added, giving me a particularly nasty look.

"You will not lay a finger on the Luna." Vincent growled at him.

"Is that a challenge?" The man asked with a smile.

"It's a fact." Vincent answered as he tensed his body in preparation to either fight or run. I knew that against this many men I would not be much help, but I would fight them off as best as I could. I looked around the room to see if there was something I could use as a weapon just in case.

"You think you could stop us all by yourself?" The last man said as he took a slinking step toward the table. He had an olive complexion and hazel eyes, but he was the first werewolf I had ever seen with a shaved head.

"I will, or I'd die trying." Vincent declared proudly. My eyes went wide. I did not want him dying right now. Not with a baby on the way and a mate and two small children at home.

"Seems like the Luna has little faith in you." The yellow eyed man laughed as he mistook my apprehension. I glared at him.

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Chapter 48 - Trinity-Black Moon Pack Part 2

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Trinity

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Vincent leaned into me slightly and whispered, the words were barely audible to me, so I know the guards didn't hear them.

"When I grab your hand, you run with me out of here. Got it." I nodded just slightly so he would know I heard him.

"Trying to convince her that you're worthy of her trust. It's too late for that. Your pack will go down, soon enough. It would be better for you all if your alpha didn't make it so hard on all of you." The man with the black eyes taunted.

"You don't know who you're messing with." I snapped at him. I was meaning that they didn't know Reece, but they took it the wrong way.

"You think you're someone so special?" Hazel eyes sneered.

"HA, that's a laugh, you're a pathetically weak female, no use for anything but a roll in the sack and having pups." My blood boiled at these words. I just wanted to make them shut their mouths. They were pissing me off more than anything, more than Reece ever had and that was saying something.

"You really think that's all a Luna is good for?" I asked him, getting to my feet. "You think women can't be strong, huh? That's a laugh. Most men are the weakest people I know, and that's saying something. You want to try shutting your damn mouths and thinking with that thing between your ears for half a minute. Then you might not cause people so many problems. You might not find yourselves in so much trouble. You might not leave your alpha in a position where he's going to need to clean up after your bullshit. Goddess but you're stupid." I ranted at them.

All four men were glaring at me in disbelief when I was done yelling at them. I knew I shouldn't have done it, but I just lost control. I couldn't help it. Vincent was staring at me as well, shock all over his face.

"Who do you think you are?" Brown eyes growled.

"I'm a Luna, which is much better than an omega like you!" I yelled at him.

"How did you know I'm an omega?" He seemed shocked that I knew. Honestly, I couldn't explain how I knew he was an omega, the lowest

ranked wolf possible. But just by looking at them I could just sense what rank they all were, and relatively how strong they all were. Perhaps it was an added benefit of being a Luna.

"You reek of weakness, and your low status is plain to see with your lack of tact." I ridiculed him.

"You little-."

"I wouldn't finish that sentence if I were you." I heard a familiar deep, smooth voice growl from near the door, cutting off the man who had been talking. "Vincent, the meeting is over. We're leaving." Reece growled stalking into the room and grabbing my hand. "Let's go, Trinity." He growled at.

I didn't say a word, as he pulled me out of the room. I just glared over my shoulder one last time as I tried to literally push my thoughts, my negative emotions towards them, into the room. I saw the man nearest me fall over just as I rounded the corner. I was so shocked at what I had just seen that I had to fight back my laughter.

"What? Is there something you find just so damn funny right now?" Reece snarled as he pulled the door of the SUV open and shoved me inside.

"Yes, actually there is." I laughed as he slid in the driver's seat. "One of those idiots closest to me was so unnerved by us leaving that he literally fell over right before we rounded the corner." I finally let out the laughter I was holding in.

"What?" Vincent asked in disbelief.

"I'm serious, the last thing I saw was that idiot with the green eyes falling over. He wasn't even moving. It was funny. I'm sorry, but at least I held the laughter in until we got out here. Give me a little bit of credit for that." I tried to make them see the merit in my accomplishment.

Reece and Vincent just looked at each other, worry and confusion on Vincent's face, a knowing expression on Reece's. They seemed to think that something was off about the situation but wasn't going to tell me about it. I didn't care right now. I was just happy to be away from them.

"The meeting ended much sooner than I expected, Sir, did something happen?" Vincent asked.

"Yeah, we heard the commotion. That and I was done listening to his stupid baseless demands. And I was tired of looking at that pathetic face." I snickered. I was feeling better than I had been for a long time. I felt like when I released my frustrated rant on those morons, I let out all the negative emotions I was feeling.

"Are things going to be alright between our packs?" Vincent wondered.

"Probably not, we will probably have a fight to keep our lands safe and boundaries intact." Reece sounded somber. I didn't want to have my mood brought down, but I knew I needed to be serious.

"Are they strong enough to take us on?" I asked.

"If it were just the primary pack, then they might stand a chance, maybe. But we have the additional support of the fealty packs and the treaty packs that will lend us aid." He answered without even grumbling to me, which was surprising.

"But you don't expect them to play fair, do you?" I demanded.

"Not in the least." He replied.

Reece drove us to a hotel that was about an hour away from the Alpha House we had just left. He said it was still technically in Stanley's territory, but we were on the fringe and in the border city now and that it was unlikely that they'd try anything. I still didn't trust it.

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Chapter 49 - Trinity-A Night With Reece

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Trinity

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He took us to a very nice, very expensive hotel. And apparently, he had made a reservation. He had already planned on us staying here.

"It was supposed to be later when we got here. But I'm mentally

exhausted right now, so I need some sleep before driving home." He yawned as we pulled in. I watched as a parking valet came to get the keys.

Reece once again opened my door for me, not letting anyone touch the door but him. Vincent grabbed the three bags from the back of the SUV and followed us inside. Reece was still putting on his loving mate act even though no one was around to see it. I guessed that he thought there might be pack members here at the hotel as well.

I had never been in a hotel this expensive before, but its splendor paled in comparison to the estate. It was beautiful, for certain. But the estate was old and majestic yet beautifully maintained and perfectly modernized all at the same time. Had I not been living in the Alpha house the past month or so I would have thought this was the most beautiful place I had ever been in.

"Reservation for Gray." Reece informed the clerk when he had reached the concierge desk. The man behind the large ornately decorated wooden desk was a wolf and tensed when he saw Reece.

"Yes Sir, one moment." The man prepared everything without another word from Reece, he returned with the paperwork to be signed

and two thin leather pocketbooks with the room keys in them. He moved a few things around to make it more convenient for Reece, then explained which room was which.

"Here you are, Mr. Gray, this room is the single on the fourteenth floor, number 1433, and this here is the suite you booked, on the twenty-fifth floor, number 2501." He handed the leather books over. "Enjoy your evening, Sir." He looked terrified of Reece, as if he had had a bad experience with him before. Knowing Reece, he probably did.

We were on our way to the elevator when I held my hand out for the key card for my room. Reece looked puzzled.

"What?" He asked me, perplexed.

"I need the key to my room. How else will I get in?" I asked him, acting as if he were slow for a moment. Reece just raised his eyebrows and took the keys for room 1433. Finally, he understands. I thought to myself.

"Here's your room key Vincent." He smiled, handing the leather book for 1433 to Vincent. My eyes opened in shock and horror and the realization hit me just as the elevator doors shut in front of my face.

Oh my goddess. He expects me to sleep in the same room as him. Holy shit! What does he think is going to happen? My inner thoughts were revving up to the level of full on panic when I heard the ding and Vincent's gentle voice.

"Have a good night Alpha, Luna, I will see you in the morning." He stepped off the elevator. No, not my last safety net. Not the only thing keeping me safe right now. Don't leave me alone with him dammit! I growled in my head. But it was no use, he was gone, and the doors shut once again.

Reece didn't say anything for the rest of the ride to the twenty-fifth floor, which turned out to be the top floor. When I heard the doors ding again. I saw that there were only two rooms up here. 2501 and 2502. They each took up half of the floor. One room each to the left and right a large window wall directly in front of the elevator.

Reece stepped off the elevator and into the hall, I almost stayed behind, afraid to follow. But I knew he would be upset if I didn't go with him, not that it mattered, but there were other wolves here in the hotel, so I couldn't cause that big of a scene, yet. I reluctantly got off the elevator and followed him into the hall.

He stalked down the hall and leaned sideways against the door, staring at me. He slowly pulled the key from its leather holder and pushed it into the lock, all the while looking at me. When he heard the click of the lock disengage, he turned the handle and slowly opened the door.

I was getting more and more nervous by the second, it seemed like he was trying to be seductive. The next thing I knew he swept me up and held me in a bridal carry and walked into the room. I heard him push the door shut with his foot, the click of the door felt ominous.

The room was set up like an apartment, there was a living room that we had entered after the entry hall. He walked over and set me on the sofa before flopping onto the chair across from me.

"You should see your face Little Bunny." He laughed.

"What's that supposed to mean?" I asked him.

"It means you look so scared and your face is so red, that instead of the white rabbit I usually imagine you to be you now look like the Devil Bunny I've sometimes called you." He chuckled at his own words.

"I'm glad you're enjoying yourself." I glared at him.

"It was entertaining, I must admit. When you thought you were going to be staying in a different room, I had to mess with you somehow."

"And why is that?" I demanded. I just had to know his reasoning.

"Because I knew that if you thought I was going to try anything that you would be nervous or scared as hell." He laughed leaning forward toward me as he spoke.

"Of course I would be, I didn't bring my knife with me." I told him. He looked perplexed. "I told you, it was going to be mutual, or you'd lose something, didn't I. And it'd probably be a little hard to bite it off." I said smiling at him evilly. He jerked in surprise or fear at my words. I laughed near hysterically at how my words caused him to blush a deep red. "Ha ha, look at that blush, Clifford! Now I know where they found the big red dog."

"Stop it, it's not funny." He snapped.

"Stop messing with me and I'll stop messing with you, at least for

tonight." I offered holding out my hand in a peace offering.

"Fine, deal." He agreed, shaking my hand with his much larger hand engulfing mine completely. "But I will have you one day, Little Bunny, that's a promise." He growled.

"Not if I have anything to say about it." I countered.

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Chapter 50 - Trinity-More Spaced Out Than Usual

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Trinity

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I was glad to be back from that particular trip. We only had one more that I had to go on, apparently. After this weekend Reece would

continue to go to his annual meetings without me. My introductions would be finished, and I would no longer need to attend them. Thank the Goddess.

Vincent was currently sitting next to me, dragging me out of one of my daydreams. I only really daydreamed in my English Composition class, Professor Thompson's voice just helped to lull me into a stupor.

"Trinity." I could vaguely hear him hissing at me. "Trinity, wake up." I didn't think I was actually asleep, why would he be telling me to wake up? "Luna." He growled harshly in a whisper. I jerked at the sound of my title being used somewhere so public. I blinked my eyes in confusion and he was glaring at me.

"Nice of you to join the land of the living." Professor Thompson sneered standing next to me.

"I'm sorry." I said automatically as I turned with a start and looked at her apologetically.

"Does my class bore you?" She asked me.

"No, not in the least, I just haven't gotten much sleep lately." I told her. Which. that was kind of true. I've been stressing so much about the

other packs, the stuff to do with Reece, and just my life in general, that over this last month and a half since I moved in with Reece I have been getting a lot less sleep.

She leaned down and growled next to my ear. "You may have an alpha for a mate, but he can't protect you forever, take care to pay attention to what's around you." Her voice was harsh, and her words were ominous. I had never been this close to Professor Thompson, so I had not noticed that she was a wolf until just now. There were so many in this class that their scents simply overlapped, but with her so close it was easy for me to smell her now.

My eyes went wide at her perceived threat. I didn't know if she was part of my pack or not, I only knew her from class. I would have to ask the others later.

Class was over shortly after that tense moment. It was my second and last class for the day, so I would be able to leave campus and relax. I couldn't focus on school until the last of the meetings was over. It was driving me insane. And with what just happened it was like adding fuel to the fire.

"Why don't we get some lunch?" I heard Vincent say as we were

leaving the room.

"Sounds good to me." I agreed. I was actually pretty hungry and some time away from the house where I didn't have to think about Reece, the meetings, or being Luna would probably do me some good.

"Are you free for lunch?" He turned to ask my three friends as they came out of the room behind us.

"Paul and I can't, we have stuff to do." Cedar declined.

"I'll go." Juniper smiled happily. "This makes it so that I don't have to sit and watch them play macho men." She turned her back on them and grabbed my arm. "Bye guys." She didn't look back at them as she dragged me out of the building, Vincent following us close behind.

"So, what are they off to do?" I asked her.

"They're auditioning for a martial arts tournament. It's not very fair of them, considering, but whatever." She said laughing. "They want to prove they know how to fight, then they plan to either join the pack warriors or the police academy." She finished telling me their plans.

"Both of them?" I asked, surprised.

"Yeah, it's funny, Cedar and I are the twins, but him and Paul are the ones who are so much alike. So, he finally has someone to do all his annoying stuff with." She seemed so happy talking about them.

The three of us went to my favorite little diner, Franny's Kitchen. Franny has been running the place for so long that she could change the name to Granny's Kitchen, and it wouldn't be a lie. I found the place as soon as I started school in August, and I loved it immediately. Her food was delicious home-style family food. Stuff you loved to eat and couldn't get enough of.

Franny's was a welcoming and happy place. She ran the place with her family, and everyone was just as sweet as she was. I loved coming here, especially when I was in a bad mood. It always helped to cheer me up.

We sat in a booth in the back. Juniper sat across from me and Vincent next to me with me on the inside of the booth. We ordered our food; I got a half order pot roast and a chicken pot pie. I was hungry, and the food was really good. While we waited, we chatted about random useless things. That is until Juniper asked how things were between Reece and me.

"Not much has changed." I tried to be evasive.

"Things haven't gotten any better? I thought they must have since you slept together at the hotel." Vincent just had to go and let that little tidbit out.

"OH MY GODDESS! Trinity, you didn't tell me about that." Juniper looked at me with hopeful eyes, eager for a story.

"There's nothing to tell." I countered.

"I'm not buying that. You slept together, how is that nothing?"

"We slept in the same hotel room. We didn't sleep together." I saw the look of confusion on her face.

"In the same bed?" She asked, still trying to hold on to a scrap of debauchery in my failing love life.

"Nope, it was a suite. So, there were two separate bedrooms for us. He did try to have a little fun and mess with me on the way to the room though."

"Fun? What kind of fun?" She asked, hopefully.

"He was being intentionally suggestive just to scare and annoy me. But I told him nothing will happen unless it's mutual otherwise he's going to lose something." I said with all seriousness. Juniper and Vincent both laughed at my words.

"Oh, I bet he just loved that." Vincent laughed. He was such a nice guy, but right now he was laughing almost maniacally. But it suited him still, it made him look a little younger and twice as handsome.

"Well, when I reminded him about that fact in the hotel and threatened to remove things through certain means he did blush."

"NO!" Juniper gasped. "You actually made the alpha blush?"

"Now I've heard it all." They were both laughing again. It was all really helping me to get past the uneasy feelings and stress I had been having lately.

"I hate to eat and run, but I've gotta go meet the guys. I'll see you tomorrow Trin, love you." Juniper told me as we leaned across the table

and gave each other a quick hug after lunch.

"I'll see you tomorrow." I told her then watched as she walked out of the restaurant.

"Want to get dessert before we leave?" Vincent asked me as soon Juniper was gone.

"Tempting, very tempting, but I'm stuffed. And I get the feeling you're trying to make me feel better for some reason." I looked up at him suspiciously.

"Is it that obvious?" He asked sheepishly.

"You're a really nice guy Vincent, so it might normally be a little hard to tell, but you're trying a little harder than usual."

"I've only suggested lunch and dessert." He laughed.

"I know, but it's all the little things too."

"I just want you to be happy and safe Luna." He looked so sincere as he spoke.

"You're one of my biggest allies, and one of my best friends Vincent."

"I'm very happy you feel that way." He smiled.

"I just feel bad for you." I told him, looking down at the table.

"Why? There's nothing for you to feel sorry for."

"You're being forced to spend almost all of your time with a person ten years younger than you. You're being forced to go through college again. And you have to spend your time with my friends too. You never get to do what you want to do." To my surprise Vincent laughed at me.

"Trinity, you have it all wrong. Ok, here's how I see it. I have the privilege of being the personal guard of my Luna, a very high honor that was given to me. And I never went to college, so now I'm getting a free education by guarding you. And your friends are great, and what does it matter that you're all younger than I am, we can share our perspectives and help each other learn and see things differently. I'm happy, so don't

be sorry."

"You really are too nice." I smiled tearfully at him.

"Too nice, or just nice enough." He joked. "Come on, let's get you back to the estate." He stood and gestured for me to do the same. When we walked out into the midafternoon light, even the mid-November chill or the threat of impending snow wasn't enough to bring my mood down.

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Chapter 51 - Trinity-Attacked Again

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Trinity

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We were walking back to the car at the university chatting and

laughing. We had parked in the back today like usual, I didn't mind the walk and it meant not fighting for a space with the humans near the building. We were almost to the car when I sensed that someone was running right toward us.

"Luna." Vincent shouted, grabbing me around my waist and spinning around and moving me out of the way. We took off running back toward the buildings we had just left. It was just now that I started paying attention, we were the only people in the area. That was unusual but not impossible. Most people would be in class or attending clubs or sports. I can't believe we didn't notice though.

As we ran toward the nearest building, Performing Arts I think it was, I noticed that there was more than one pursuer. And these weren't just people chasing us. They were wolves. They had to be from another pack or rogues. But what were they doing on our territory? And why are they attacking me? Vincent spun me out of the way again, changing direction to avoid the new threat.

"Stay behind me." Vincent growled. "I'm going to have to shift." He said through clenched teeth. I sensed a third person coming at us then. Could this get any worse? I thought as the first wolf made to attack us again. But the new arrival did not come toward me and Vincent. No, they went after the charging wolf, smacking into him and knocking him off course.

I could smell the newcomer now. I knew the scent. I had smelt it that morning.

"Professor Thompson" I asked confused. She turned to look at me with the bright green eyes I had grown accustomed to seeing over the last few months. "Watch out." I cried out as the second wolf charged her. Vincent charged him at the same time Professor Thompson did. They crushed the wolf between them, knocking him unconscious.

The first wolf still hadn't given up, he was slinking around the other two trying to get to me without them noticing. I watched him move out of the corner of my eye, letting him think I hadn't noticed. The moment he made his move I kicked off from a car and used it to propel myself away from him. He skidded to a halt and doubled back, coming at me again.

This time I timed his run with a backflip, just like grandfather's tutors had taught me. I caught him in the jaw, just as I planned. I sent his head flying backward with such force that, combined with his forward momentum, his wound up doing an almost backflip as well. I heard him roar in pain and frustration when I hit him.

Once he finished his flip, he was already scrambling to his feet, ready

for another assault. That's when we heard them, the sound of at least half a dozen more rogues that were very close by. Someone had engineered this whole event. They had deliberately cleared this particular parking lot and waited for us to return. It was an ambush.

"Luna, we need to run." Vincent growled, grabbing my hand and running toward town. He knew the rogues were less likely to follow us wherever the humans were. He pulled me along behind him as he ran as fast as he could. I was faster than a human, but he was still faster than me and I couldn't keep up with his speed.

"We need to keep going." He told me.

"I know, I'm just not as fast as you. I'm sorry Vincent."

"Come on." He snapped, pulling me again, this time lifting me up into his arms to carry me.

"This will just slow you down!" I protested.

"No, this is fine." He continued running, not decreasing his speed at all.

The car we had been trying to get to was now abandoned. I mentally calculated how far it was from here to the compound, and how long it would take us to run there.

The sound of snarling wolves interrupted my thoughts, I looked over Vincent's shoulder, worried for Professor Thompson. I didn't see her. She must have gotten away, that was good.

Vincent and I had made it back to town, not far from where the diner was.

"Is there somewhere in the city you consider safe? Or someone you can trust that you would be willing to go to?" Vincent asked, setting me down at a corner just a block away from Franny's.

"The only person I know who lives in the city is Juniper, and I'm not sure if she's home. I don't know anywhere else well enough. We could go back to Franny's but it's bound to be mostly empty. If we're looking for a crowd, I'd suggest the mall." I was answering his question but also musing at the same time. We needed a crowd of people to disappear until it was safe to get home.

"Then I would say the mall is the best. The sheer number of people there will help hide our scents somewhat, but it will also likely be so full of humans that they will not show themselves in wolf forms. Come on,

let's go." He took my hand again and pulled me along.

Vincent, for all his nice guy personality, was quite assertive when it came down to doing his job. It was a different side of him to see, but he seemed so cool. He reminded me of how I used to look up to my cousins when we were kids. As he pulled me along behind him, he pulled out his phone and pressed a number without me seeing who he was calling.

"I need you to get the others together and get down here now." He growled into the phone. I heard a muffled voice answer but couldn't make out what they were saying. "Don't give me any of your games right now David, there are at least half a dozen rogues in town, and already they've tried attacking the Luna.

"What." David must have yelled because I heard that clearly. Before the muffled voice continued.

"Bring the twins and the other two. We'll be at the mall, the smell should help mask her, hopefully." I heard the muffled voice once again. "Trinity where exactly is the mall?"

"You don't know? I thought you did because you just started walking. We're not far, thankfully. It's close to the university, just about a mile that way still." I told him, pointing. Vincent nodded.

"Close to the university. About five miles north, follow Chancellor Blvd, we will be waiting for your call." After that he hung up and continued pulling me in the direction of the mall.

We were sitting at the fountains in the middle of the mall, there were no large stalls or walls blocking the view of the fountains which made it the perfect vantage point. We weren't here to shop, and I had no desire to. My heart was still thumping loudly in my chest from the adrenaline.

"Are you alright Luna?" Vincent asked me with a concerned tone.

"I'm fine. Just got a little over excited earlier." I smiled at him.

"I'm sorry I didn't do more to protect you." He looked depressed. "I was going to shift, but we were aided by your professor. Then when I realized there were so many, I knew that the odds were stacked against me. I could probably handle them myself, and possibly survive. There's no telling for certain though because I don't know how they fight. But I wanted to prioritize your safety over all else."

"And I'm happy you did." I tried consoling him. "I would have fought them off too, but I know that with as many as there was, we would have most likely lost. And it would have been my fault. So, I'm happy you thought to protect me over fighting them."

"We've done nothing but apologize to each other today." He laughed at my words.

"Well, maybe we should make this the last time for a little while." I laughed as well. We lapsed back into silence.

As I sat there in silence, looking over my section of the mall trying to spot any enemies coming our way, I smelled a wolf coming right toward me. A wolf I would know anywhere. I had not expected him to come. His sweet, spicy, and robust scent of chocolate, cinnamon, and coffee followed by the smell of the forest. I would know it anywhere. I tensed visibly as soon as I noticed it.

"Is something wrong Luna?" Vincent asked when he noticed my distress.

"Well, I've got company." I told him quietly. He looked worried, thinking I had spotted an enemy.

"Let's go." Reece growled the order out as soon he and the others got to the fountain.

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Chapter 52 - Trinity-A Prisoner Again

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Trinity

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"How did you know where we were?" I asked him. This made Reece smirk for some reason. He leaned forward, putting a hand on either side of me on the edge of the fountain where I was sitting. He brought his face down close to mine before putting his nose into my hair.

"I could have tracked your mark, but just like I'm sure you noticed my scent as soon as I was in the mall, I was able to track you by yours." He growled into my ear.

"So, coming here would not have hidden us from the people that were after us?" I asked him.

"No, it would hide you from them, just not me." He grinned. "Your smell is stronger to me than anyone else's as I'm sure mine is stronger to you." I just nodded to him, there was no reason not to.

I noticed then who all had arrived with Reece. Behind him was David, Shane, and Shawn, the rest of my guards. On his left was Noah, and on his right was Carter. There was no one else in the world who could make me feel safer than those here. Reece included. I knew how strong he was, and the others had sworn to protect me. Noah and Carter, my family, would always protect me, and I loved them for that.

"Come on." Reece said to me. "Vincent, you, David and those two, search the area, find at least one of those rogues if you can. I want to know why there were rogues on my land going after my Luna." He growled.

"Yes, Sir.

"Carter, I want you to follow us in one of the cars up to the estate, if there are no problems, drive back down here to drive some of them back home. Noah, same to you, but you lead us back." He commanded. His words spun for a moment in my head before clicking. There were seven people here besides me. Reece had just given orders to six of them. That left two. Me and him. Oh Goddess, we're going to be alone again.

We walked back the way Vincent and I had come into the building. Back along the trail Reece had apparently followed. I watched as all four of my guards dispersed, then as Carter and Noah went to separate vehicles. Reece was walking to the car. It was a car I had never seen before, it was still expensive, but way less expensive than his Ferrari he had driven before. This was a Shelby Mustang.

"Another new car?" I asked him curiously, mostly to distract myself from having to be alone with him again.

"Well, someone doesn't like my ostentatious sports car, so I got a much less gaudy muscle car." He spoke sarcastically. "So, stop complaining." He added.

"But isn't it a little gratuitous to have so many cars?"

"Not when I let my staff use them too." He retorted.

"Fair enough."

Reece held the door opened for me like always before going around and sliding in behind the wheel. He drove us back to the estate in silence. I could see Noah driving ahead of us, and when I turned in my seat, I saw Carter, a serious look on his face, following behind.

I could tell that something was about to change. But I refused to pay it any mind. I didn't want to listen to it, not yet.

"Come to my office." Reece told me as soon as we got back home. Yeah, something was definitely about to change.

"Alright." I agreed, sensing the tension in the air. I watched as my cousins drove back down the driveway, wishing they would be there to act as a buffer for us.

I followed him silently through the house until we got to his office. He opened the door and waved me in ahead of him, pulling the door shut with a snap behind him. I was about to take my usual seat when he stopped me.

"Sit here." He indicated one of the armchairs near the sofa. This was to be an informal discussion then. I went where he directed me. I know I was going to lose my cool, probably sooner than I wanted to, but I would hold it in for now. He sat in the far corner of the sofa next to my chair, lounging leisurely yet looking anything but relaxed.

"What exactly happened today, Little Bunny?" He asked me, his voice full of annoyance.

"I thought you were already informed, Vincent told David everything." I told him.

"I want to hear it from you." He growled.

"Fine." I snapped then took a deep breath to steady myself. "I went to class with Vincent as usual. After-."

"Anything happen during class?" He asked me knowingly. I glared at him.

"Why do you ask?"

"I need to know everything." He smirked at me.

"My first class went fine, I spaced out in my second."

"Same as usual?" He laughed. I growled at him.

"And you would know that how?"

"You think I'm not told what happens when you're not here?"

"Of course, you are." I sighed. "Yes, I spaced out like usual. And Vincent had to get my attention when my professor noticed my lack of attention. That was the first time I was ever close enough to her to notice she was a wolf. I've never seen her in our pack, but I've hardly met everyone in our pack. So, I don't know if she is one of ours or not."

"She is not from our pack, she is actually from Riley's pack, she lives

in between the packs so she can commute for work purposes. She is an ally."

"I know that now. After class Vincent, Juniper and I went to lunch at Franny's Kitchen, after we ate Juniper went back to meet Paul and Cedar while Vincent and I went back to the car. On our way back we were attacked by a man in his wolf form. Vincent moved to get me out of there immediately but there was another wolf attacking us as well."

"What happened then?"

"That is when my professor came. She helped protect us. I would like to thank her."

"I hear you had to defend yourself personally, what happened?"

"One of the wolves circled around. I just jumped out of the way, then kicked him in the jaw, that's all."

"Hmm." He seemed annoyed by my quick explanation. "How did you come to be at the mall when there were only two attackers?"

"At least half a dozen more were howling in the distance, they were

coming to back up the others."

"So, you would have been outnumbered eight to two."

"Three." I corrected him.

"You're not supposed to be fighting." He growled at me.

"Why, haven't I proven that I know how to protect myself?"

"You don't have a wolf, so you cannot fight against one."

"That's crap!" I snapped at him. "I have been training to fight for almost fifteen years, you misogynistic ass."

"I don't care. You're not as strong as a wolf and you know it."

"That doesn't mean that I can't defend myself in the event that I am attacked. Don't you think that it would be best to have every advantage possible."

"My number one priority is to keep my pack safe. And whether I like it or not, my pack needs you alive."

"All the more reason for me to protect myself."

"Out of the question." He snapped.

"You're unbelievable." I couldn't understand his reasoning at all.

"I don't care what you have to say, end of discussion." He said firmly.
"And you're done with school." His growling words broke my heart.
"Temporarily."

"I'm almost done with the semester. Let me finish it at least." I begged him.

"I can't risk you being attacked again."

"So, I'm just going to lose all the work I put in this semester?" I could feel the tears stinging the back of my eyes.

"I'll work something out so you can still sit your exams. But you cannot go to class anymore until we get this rogue situation under control."

"How long?" I asked him.

"I don't know." He looked apathetic as he spoke. My control broke and the tears I was holding back started to fall.

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Chapter 53 - Reece-Facing Noah's Wrath

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Reece

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I could see the tears streaming down her face. I knew she was heartbroken and that she blamed me. But I just could not risk another attack. If she was attacked once while at the university, she could be attacked again. I just wish I knew what these rogues thought they could get from me by going after my mate.

I'm beginning to think that I have a mole in my office somewhere. Someone giving information to my enemies. I don't know if all the attacks on Trinity are linked or not, but they're starting to pile up and I'd be a fool to ignore them.

The first attack I thought had just been a case of wrong place and wrong time. And I was tempted to still think that. But it almost seemed like the rogue went right after her. Could she have been the target or was she just the first person that he came across that was alone?

Then there was the attack by the Warlocks. There was only one way they would know when I would be there, and that my mate would be with me. Someone had to tell them. But who in my inner circle was the mole? Who was trying to help my enemies get rid of me?

And now, these wolves, be they from another pack or rogues, were clearly trying to attack her directly. She was their target, no doubt about it. Someone was after me and they were trying to use my Luna to get to me.

I had distanced myself from her even more than I had already been, to protect her. I need her alive to protect my pack. I don't intend to let her get close to me, anyway. But if staying distant protects her then that is all for the best. Then I don't run the risk of her betraying me like women usually do.

If I can protect my pack and her by staying away, staying distant, then that is what I am going to do. I just wish I didn't have to be here to watch her cry. I am not good with watching women be emotional. All the times I've seen women cry and beg for things they thought I should give them, only to turn nasty and hateful. Women were spiteful, I wouldn't let myself get pulled in by her though. I wouldn't let it happen.

I sat silently watching as the tears spilled down her cheeks when I told her she was not going back to the university for a while. She looked devastated, which was probably an act. She didn't even try to wipe the tears away. But she didn't look at me either.

Suddenly, as if realizing what was happening, that she was crying in front of me. Little Bunny turned her head and blushed. Embarrassed she got to her feet and stammered.

"I'll be in my room." Her voice trembling. She ran out of the room and slammed the door behind her. I was shocked. She didn't yell at me. She didn't beg me for anything. She didn't blame me for anything. I was at a loss. What was going on?

After a few minutes of quiet contemplation there was a knock on my door. The scent told me it was Noah.

"Come in." I called out to him. The door flew open and Noah strode in with a cloud of fury surrounding him. "Looks like things didn't go very well." I growled.

"When Vincent and the others went back to investigate the rogues were gone. Their scents still lingered, but there was no sign of them anywhere."

"None of them?"

"No." I growled at him, even knowing it wasn't his fault. I couldn't stop the frustration and anger from overflowing.

"What are these people after?"

"I wish I knew, Reece."

"What do they think they can accomplish? How is attacking my mate going to get them my territory?" My blood was boiling. Whoever was pulling the strings and manipulating the circumstances here was going to have to deal with me soon enough. I will find them eventually.

"How is Trinity?" Noah asked. "How is she holding up after today?" I know what he wanted to hear from me. That I had done my job as a mate and comforted her. That I was being the ever-doting lover that people thought I was, that I wish I could be. But I can't. This lifestyle was not safe for Trinity, she would not survive if I was too close to her.

And if I was soft on her and let her get close to me, it would ruin me and those around me, just like it did to my father and my Uncle Nolan seven years ago. Mate bond or not, she had no wolf which meant she was incapable of being the devoted, once in a lifetime mate that we were all told to expect.

"She's in her room. She is not very happy with me right now." I told him.

"What did you do?" He asked me with a cynical look on his face.

"I told her she couldn't go back to class for a while. At least until the rogue issue is taken care of." I didn't like telling her that, I know it broke her heart, and I truly thought that she would make a good lawyer, Goddess knows she loves to argue enough to be one.

"She will understand, it will just take her time to process it all."

"I know." I grimaced at him.

"You don't look very happy yourself Reece." The somber look on Noah's face told me everything I needed to know. I wasn't hiding anything from him like I thought I was. Might as well be honest then.

I got up and started pacing the room before beginning to speak.

"I have been keeping her at bay for a while now." I told him.

"What! Why in Goddess's name would you do that?" He yelled.

"Several reasons really. First and foremost, to protect her. Look at the

facts Noah, she has been attacked three times since finding out that we were mates. Do you think that it's all been a coincidence?" Noah raised a hand and ran it through his hair nervously, I don't think he has really thought about it as much as I had. The look of pure shock on his face just helped to complete the look.

"Second, Noah, is that I never wanted a mate in the first place, and I still can't believe that the Goddess chose someone without a wolf who can't feel the bond in its true strength and power. She will never match me at anything. She and I will never click. So, I've rejected her."

"You've what?" I saw Noah's eyes darken. I had never once seen Noah angry with me. He had always chosen his duty to the pack, to me, over everything else.

"I told her she was a mate in name only, that we will never be more than two people forced together. We will eventually share a bed to have a child and carry on the family line, but until then, she was nothing to me. And I told her I hated her." I finished while looking away from him. I didn't want to see the disgust on his face when he heard the last of what I had to say.

I heard him get to his feet, and I heard his footsteps, but he never said a word. I turned to look at him when I knew he was close to me. I knew he was going to yell at me, in Trinity's place, as he should. He was like her brother after all.

As soon as I turned to look at him, his fist smashed into the left side of my face. Had I been a weaker man, it would have knocked me off my feet. But I did feel the bone in my cheek crack under the pressure of his fist.

"What the hell is the matter with you?!" He snarled. "What kind of man says that to his mate?" He was angrier than I even predicted.

"In part, I did it to protect her." I told him.

"In what messed up way is being an asshole going to protect her?"

"Because she's already been attacked so many times, Noah, imagine how much worse it would be if I openly showed my affection for her constantly. Or if people thought we were closer than we are. Someone is after me, after my position, and they think they can use her to get to me. So I'm pushing her away to save her."

"Even if it means pushing her so far away that she never trusts you again?" Noah's fury was making it hard to understand him.

"If that's what it takes to keep her alive, then yes. My pack needs a Luna."

"Our pack needs an Alpha and Luna that are united. How do you not see that?" He asked me incredulously. "I can't believe you." Noah ran both his hands through his hair roughly, displacing his usually perfectly styled hair. He then stomped to the door and stormed out, slamming it behind him, leaving without another word.

That could have gone better. I thought to myself. I really just wanted to protect everyone. My pack. My Luna. And even myself. Why was it so hard to make sure that no one got hurt?

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Chapter 54 - Trinity-Visiting The Previous Luna

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Trinity

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I had to remind myself for the millionth time that Reece was doing what he thought was best. Even though he was a misogynistic overgrown cave dog that thought I couldn't help protect myself. I knew deep down that he was right though. That who ever attacked us before could come back. That next time I might not get away or someone I care about might get hurt. I knew it all, but that didn't make it any easier.

Once the shock and heartache of having no life finally settled, I had to figure out what I was going to do now. And Reece had said he would try to work out a way for me to still sit my exams, he'd worked some miracles already so he might just pull it off.

A thought struck me. I had told Noah I only had two jobs going for me right now, student and Luna. Well, I couldn't do one of them right now, so I guess I better do the other. Some of my jobs as a Luna included managing disputes between the females in the pack, handling social gatherings, and making sure the women and children were provided for in any way.

So, going off those duties, I thought it was best to try and get some of the pack to trust me as the Luna more, and build my rapport. I couldn't go to class, fine, then I was going to work on being the Luna. But I just

don't know how to go about doing that.

I wish I had someone to help me learn to be the Luna. Someone I could ask questions of. I'm sure Katie had it easier because Riley's mom was still alive and could help her transition into the role. I guess Reece's mom was still technically alive as well, but I couldn't ask her anything.

The thought of her sitting up there, alone most of the time made my heart hurt. I knew that Reece talked to her, but no one else did. I'm not even sure if her maid or doctor did.

Just then I had a sudden idea. Reece was gone for the day on another one of his meetings, the last of which I was supposed to go on but was now banned from. So, I knew what I was going to do. I'm going to visit his mom. I thought to myself. I knew she wouldn't be able to talk back to me, but if I was her, I would want someone to talk to me as often as they could.

I didn't want to let anyone know I was there, but Reece would probably smell my scent and figure it out anyway, so it really didn't matter. I crept slowly down the hall while no one was around. I knew that Abigail and Peter were downstairs, but I never knew exactly who would be in the house at any given time.

I made it down the hall and to her room with no incident and slipped in as quietly as I could, shutting the door silently behind me. I thought the room would be dark and dreary, but it was actually bright and open. The curtains open and let in lots of natural lights.

I saw her then, sitting in a rocking chair next to the window. She was wearing a loose-fitting white nightgown. With the light shining on her golden-brown hair and reflecting off her pale nearly translucent skin she almost looked like an angel, or a ghost, sitting there. She definitely didn't look real.

I walked closer to her, nervous and afraid that she would choose now to wake up and catch me. But she didn't move or make a sound at all. I pulled a chair in front of her and sat, looking her in the face. She was beautiful. Even withered away as she was. I could see how beautiful she was and how much Reece loved his mother.

It was clear that she had been a beautiful woman when she was younger. But having spent seven years in this catatonic state she had wasted away. She looked thin and frail. Weakened by the years of mental imprisonment.

I just wanted to help her, to make her better. Not just for her sake, but for Reece's too. Seeing her like this for so long had to be hard on him. It broke my heart thinking about it. Even with how angry he could make me sometimes I couldn't bring myself to hate him outright. He was a great alpha after all, and only seemed to be a jerk to me.

I didn't know what to do or say, so I just started talking at random.

"Hello Luna, or former Luna, you don't know me but I'm Reece's mate. I'm the new Luna of the pack. And boy, do I wish you were here to help me." I sighed looking at her beautiful face full of soft features.

"You have an amazing son." I continued, I didn't want to lie to her, but I wasn't going to tell her the truly terrible things either. Just in case she could hear me. "He's been doing a great job running the pack. Everyone loves him. He's strong, and fair, and smart when it comes to keeping the pack safe and running properly." All these things were true. He was excellent at his job.

"And he's handsome too. So very handsome. Probably more handsome than one man has the right to be. And believe me, he knows how good he looks. He's probably used that to his advantage far too many times." I laughed to myself, thinking about how he must have acted in the past.

"But I know he is hurting too. I know he misses you. Your absence has hurt him so much, but he would never admit it. He's too proud and stubborn for that. Instead, he holds it all in, bottling up everything until it gets to be too much." I could feel my heart aching. I knew how he must feel, bottling up the emotions. I had done that for years too.

"I wish you could get better." I implored as I grabbed her hand gently, rubbing my thumb along her knuckles. "I wish you could be there for him. To see the man that he has become. To help support him where I'm failing him. To give him whatever it is he needs that I lack." I poured my heart and soul into those words, I truly wished she would wake up for Reece's sake. Not my own selfish need for a Luna tutor, but for Reece's.

I sat there with her for a little while longer. I told her about all the worries I had about being the Luna. About what I wanted to do. How I wished that people would trust me more so it would be easier. After a couple hours I figured I should leave before anyone found me in the room.

I snuck back out of the room and made it down the hall to my own once again. I was amazed that I had not been caught at all. I knew Reece would come ask me later what I had been doing there, but I would deal with that when the time came.

The most important thing was, I knew what I wanted to do with all my free time now. I wanted to start bringing groups of women and children here to spend time with them. To have some sort of events on a weekly basis, or even a few times a week. I needed to build my rapport with them. I needed to get them to trust me as their new Luna. Most still didn't know anything about me except that I didn't have a wolf.

It was almost Thanksgiving, just five days away now. I could have a big feast for everyone, but that would take too much time to prepare and it was too last minute. But I could just have women and children come in small groups for different activities. That would help to get everyone to know me and trust me somewhat.

I could run arts and crafts for different groups of kids. We could do hikes in the woods for others. There was an endless list of things we could do to get the kids involved. And eventually I would need to do something to get just the women involved. There were a lot of women who didn't have young children after all.

Reece never came and asked me why I had been in to see his mother, though I know he noticed. The only reaction he gave was an intense glare on Sunday morning at breakfast, but he never said a word. What was more exciting that happened on Sunday was Vincent calling to tell me that Heather had gone into labor, they were going to have the baby

that day.

Reece refused to let me go see Heather in the hospital, so I had to wait until she was recovered, and the baby was able to come visit me instead. But I was so excited for them that I went online and ordered a big bouquet of flowers to be sent to her. And then I went and ordered a few things for the baby. I couldn't help myself.

Vincent called later that day to let me know that they had another little girl, and they were naming her Faith. I was touched because that was my middle name. I didn't know if they chose it because of me or not, but I was still happy. Now they had Conner, Renea, and Faith.

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Chapter 55 - Trinity-A Ghost On The Fourth Floor

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Trinity

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David was taking over for Vincent for a little while, so Vincent could spend time with his family. So, he was with us on that Tuesday during an afternoon arts and crafts event when we heard a maid scream from somewhere upstairs.

We were on the second floor in one of the spare sitting rooms so we would be out of the way. There were about half a dozen kids and their mothers, me, Juniper and David. We heard the bloodcurdling scream coming from somewhere above us.

"What was that?" One of the moms exclaimed as the kids all started to look frightened.

"I'm sure it's nothing to worry about." I told her. "I'll go check it out."

"No, Luna, I will." David countered.

"We will." I corrected him.

"But Luna-"

"David, we're in the house, I'm sure it was nothing major." I told him firmly. "You and I will go together."

"Yes, Luna." He conceded.

We left the room together, assuring the others we would be back soon. David and I headed straight for the stairs. The first thing we noticed was the sound of footsteps running toward us. David stepped in front of me protectively. Then we noticed it was just Julie, one of the housekeepers. She looked terrified.

"Julie, what happened?" I asked her, concerned for her safety.

"There's a ghost on the fourth floor." She squeaked, completely frightened by whatever she saw. She didn't pause more than a moment before she continued to run away. David and I looked at each other incredulously.

"Do you buy that?" He asked me.

"Not for a second." I answered. Then I had a thought. Did she go into

the room with Reece's mom? "She might have gone into a certain room though. Reece's mother is up there, she's catatonic and I thought she looked like a ghost or an angel when I saw her." I told him.

"You saw her?" He asked me in disbelief. "I can't believe he took you in there, he never lets anyone in there." I didn't respond to his question.

David and I continued up the stairs steadily. We had just reached the landing when we heard someone stomping up the stairs behind us. I paused and turned around, already knowing who it was.

"Alpha?" David asked in surprise. I remained silent.

"Why are you up here?" He demanded.

"Julie said she saw someone." David told him nervously.

"Go away." He growled.

"Reece?" We heard a very weak voice call his name.

The three of us turned in unison. I don't know what they felt or

noticed first. But for me, I thought I was seeing a ghost collapse on the floor. But I knew who it was. Reece's mother was leaning weakly against the wall, barely able to support herself.

"Mom!" Reece gasped in shock as he ran over to her. I followed him halfway down the hall and watched as he supported her in his arms. "Mom, you're awake." He blurted, clearly in shock.

"Reece, my son, my boy, you've grown so much." She cried putting her hand to his face gently. I could see tears glistening in her eyes as I felt my heart both melting and breaking at the sight of the scene.

"How are you awake, Mom? What happened? This is like a miracle." I could see pure joy on his face, pure happiness. I was overjoyed to see that he was so happy right now.

"I have been lost, Reece. Lost for so long. I'm sorry I wasn't there for you, so very sorry. Please, don't hate me." She was nearly crying now as she held her son's face in her small frail hands.

"No, Mom, I could never hate you. Never." He was crying now. The tears flowing slowly down his cheeks. It was a moment that I didn't

think I should see.

I turned around slowly and crept away. I didn't think Reece would notice.

"Where are you going?" He asked me.

"There is a room full of women and children on the second floor that are waiting for me to return. Don't worry, I won't tell them anything about this." I told him, smiling softly.

"You? I know you. I've heard your voice." Reece's mother called out to me.

"No, we've never met before Ma'am." I told her.

"I was so certain. I feel like I know your voice." She said looking confused.

"Perhaps I just have a common voice." I told her. "I'm going now." I sighed looking at Reece.

I returned to the sitting room and rejoined my crafts group. They were scared and nervous about what had happened. I assured them that there was nothing to be scared of.

"Someone just saw something that scared them, it happens to us all from time to time. Everything is fine." I told them gently. Everything calmed down and the event ended without incident. All in all, it was an exhausting day.

I didn't know what to make of what had happened. I was happy that Reece had his mother back, but what had caused it? Surely it had not been me going to visit her. And if it was, if that was all it took, just one visitor, how would that affect Reece? How would he feel knowing that just having someone sit there and talk to his mother, was honestly all it took to wake her up? I didn't know how he was going to react to that.

But I would soon find out.

I had decided to skip dinner that night. I was too nervous to see Reece but I didn't know how he would react to me eating in my room, so I skipped it altogether. He didn't like that at all.

Right after the start of dinner I could smell Reece coming down my hallway, his footsteps stomping loudly, echoing off the walls. He was angry with me. When he reached my door, he pounded on it fiercely,

not bothering to say anything. I knew it was him, so I simply told him to come in, I was surprised he didn't just storm in to begin with.

"You're avoiding me again I see." He snapped as he slammed my door shut. I sighed.

"Can you not slam that so hard, or you might break something." I took a steadying breath before continuing. "And I'm not avoiding you, I just wasn't hungry." My stomach chose that moment to betray me, growling so loud that I know he heard it. He raised an eyebrow at me quizzically.

"Really?" He asked.

"I wasn't before, but I am now." I amended.

"Uh huh. What happened? I know you went to see my mother the other day, and now she is awake. What did you do?" He demanded as he stalked closed to me, backing me up against the wall.

"What do you mean? I didn't do anything to her." I was shocked by his accusations. I hadn't done anything.

"Then explain it to me. How did my mother, who has been catatonic

for seven years, wake up only three days after you went to see her?"

"I don't know what you expect me to say. I don't even know what you think I could have done. All I did was go and talk to her."

"Talk? That's all?"

"That's all."

"What did you tell her?" He asked me. I blushed crimson and looked away from him.

"Tell me Little Bunny!" He growled at me.

"I told her you were a great man, and I wished she could be there to see it." I snapped at him, nearly yelling in his face. "I told her you were a great alpha, fair and good. I told her you were handsome and that you knew it. And that you missed her, a lot." When I finished, I was nearly in tears, I didn't want to tell him everything because I was embarrassed to admit it to him.

I saw the shock in his eyes at hearing my confession. At knowing exactly what I had said. Learning what I said about him to his mother, and probably others, surprised him.

"All I did was wish that she could wake up and be there for you. Because I thought you really needed that in your life. There's something you need, something I can't give you. I wished that she would wake up and be there for you in a way I will never be able to. I can't comfort you. I can't mend whatever broke you so long ago. But maybe your mother can." I cried looking at the floor.

He backed away from me. He continued to back away until he was halfway across the room. Then he turned and was at the door before I knew it. Just before he pulled the door open, I heard him whisper in a soft voice.

"I'm sorry." Then he was gone.

I collapsed on the floor and cried. I didn't know why. He had done nothing to me. He hadn't even accused me of anything, really. But I felt so heartbroken and hurt at his words for some reason. I just sat there, crying for several minutes.

I wanted things to improve. I wanted things to get better. But he just didn't want that with me. But he never would. Why did he have to treat

me this way? Why couldn't we just be civil at least?

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Chapter 56 - Trinity-Hiking With Pack Cubs

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Reece

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I heard her, on the other side of the door. I could hear her sobbing, and I knew that I had caused it. I didn't know why I had gone there in anger. I was happy that my mother was awake. But I was frightened.

I knew that my Little Bunny had gone to see Mom on Saturday while I was gone. Her scent was very strong, and it was all over the room. It had seeped into the whole room. I had known that she knew about Mom, but I had no idea why she had gone to see her.

I said nothing about it though. I took a wait and see approach. I wanted to see if she would confess to me that she had been there, knowing that I knew about it, anyway. She had to know. But she never said anything, so I didn't either.

Then, when I came back inside today, I saw Julie running down the stairs in a panic. When I asked her what had happened, she rambled something about a ghost on the fourth floor. That shocked me, Julie was never supposed to go into Mom's room. Then I caught something about the ghost being in the hall. I bolted and ran up the stairs as fast as I could.

To my horror, David and Little Bunny were already up there. Apparently, Julie had screamed loudly when she saw whatever scared her. I was about to make them leave when someone called me in a weak voice. That was when I noticed Mom for the first time.

Mom was leaning against the wall, barely able to stand up. I could see she was about to fall down so I rushed to support her. I couldn't believe my eyes. And then to make matters worse, my mother who had been sick for so long, started begging me for forgiveness, like she had chosen this path.

My heart ached just listening to her ask me to forgive her. I couldn't stop the tears. They were from the joy of seeing her awake, and the heartache of knowing she blamed herself for everything.

I saw Little Bunny trying to leave then and asked where she was going.

"There is a room full of women and children on the second floor that are waiting for me to return. Don't worry, I won't tell them anything about this." She whispered, smiling nervously.

"You? I know you. I've heard your voice." Mom seemed surprised to hear Little Bunny talk.

"No, we've never met before Ma'am."

"I was so certain. I feel like I know your voice." Mom looked confused.

"Perhaps I just have a common voice. I'm going now." Little Bunny looked at me once more before fleeing the hallway.

How was I not supposed to be suspicious of her after that? It was like she was trying to hide something. She didn't want me or Mom to see her there.

I don't know what is going on. But I'm beginning to suspect that Little Bunny isn't just what she seems. Something else is going on here, with her, with me, with everything.

~~

Trinity

~~

I felt like things between Reece and I were just getting more and more tense. But I couldn't help the feelings growing inside of me. I hadn't spent enough time with him that I could say I was in love with him, but my body wanted me to. And my heart was telling me crazy things too. My brain was the only rational organ I had left. Too bad we often forget to use it when we need to.

The only upside was that he tended to be such a jerk when I was around him that I couldn't stop myself from being sarcastic and snarky to him. He just naturally brought it out of me. That meant I didn't

embarrass myself by being all lovey-dovey towards him all while he hated me.

I was continuing to have events at the estate for the women and children. I had even had some women only events that were kid free. They loved them as it gave them an excuse to get away and relax. I wanted to focus on being a better Luna.

Reece's Mom, Lila, was really nice. She was giving me advice and helping me out where she could. But she needed to get her strength back, so she needed to rest often and couldn't do anything too strenuous yet.

I wanted some fresh air. I had been cooped up inside the house for almost three weeks now and it was already a week into December. If I didn't get out and get air and exercise now, then I would miss my chance before the snow fell. So, I decided to take a group of kids on a hike.

Most of the kids were still really young, though still really rambunctious. All the older kids were still in school so I had decided that the preschoolers would like going on a hike. A group of about five moms, myself, and a dozen kids went out in the morning.

My plan for the day had been to hike up the mountain to a clearing I knew of. It overlooked the river at the base of the mountain and was pretty flat at that spot, so it was perfect for the picnic I wanted to have for lunch. After lunch the kids could go on a scavenger hunt and look for treasures to take home. My thought had been that all the treasures could be used to make a Christmas ornament.

Everything was going perfect. It was a beautiful day, clear with not a cloud in the sky. The picnic was perfect, and the kids were having a great time. I was happy that everything was going so well.

After lunch, when we started the scavenger hunt, all the kids were excited. Well, all but one. Dillon Bagley just didn't want to do it. He wanted to stay there and watch everyone else as they looked for their treasures. I knew he would regret it later, so I was looking for his scavenger hunt items for him while keeping an eye on him where he sat.

I could hear everyone laughing and having fun. It was a wonderful day, and I couldn't have been happier, as their Luna, as I watched them enjoying themselves.

Then I noticed the scent in the air.

I could smell a wolf coming our way, and he was coming fast. First, I could smell just one wolf, then there were several others. Among them I could smell Reece, his scent the strongest of them all. But I also noticed Noah's. There were other familiar scents as well, but not ones I knew the names for.

I didn't know what was going on. I didn't know if Reece knew we were out here. Or if this situation was dangerous.

"Everyone, get back to the house, NOW." I commanded. The women heard me and started gathering the children to get them back to the estate.

I noticed movement then. A wolf running all out, right in our direction. I could see a large group following him, chasing him. My guess, another rogue had made it onto our territory, and they were bound and determined to catch him.

Oh Goddess no! I said to myself as I noticed where the wolf was running. If he didn't change course, he would run right into Dillon. The little boy, only four years old, had seen the big wolf coming his way and was frightened. He knew it was someone he had never seen before. He was frozen in place, standing where he had been able to look over the

forest below the mountain before we all had noticed the commotion.

I didn't stop to think. My instincts took over. I ran toward Dillon as fast as I could. I was no more than fifty yards away from him. But the big wolf was closing in fast.

"Please, Goddess, let me save him in time." I prayed. "Please." I put on a burst of speed, pouring my all into running as fast as I could. I didn't know if I would make it in time.

I felt my hands push Dillon just in time. He went sprawling to the side and out of the path of the wolf that had been bearing down on him.

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Chapter 57 - Reece-Little Bunny, Over The Edge

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Reece

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We were chasing the last of the rogues through the woods. There had been almost a dozen of them this time. They were determined to get onto my land and get something. I had a feeling I knew what. They were trying to make it to my house, to my Luna, to my mate.

We had eliminated almost all of them. But this one had stayed back and out of the fighting when it started so that he could break away and make a run for it when we were all distracted. Well, that wasn't going to work on me. I chased after him immediately. Noah, Henry, and Will followed suit.

We had chased him up into the mountains. Almost to the house. He was faster than most, but I was gaining on him and he knew it. I could hear his growling wolf voice as he snarled at me.

"Why are you so fast? You can't be fast and strong." He was upset. He would not make it to his goal, and he knew it.

That was when I smelled them. Little Bunny, and a group of others. She must have taken some kids out in the mountains because it was a nice day. This couldn't get any worse. I had to catch him before he got to

her.

Then things did get worse. The crazy rogue I was chasing, the one I was just about to catch, was making a beeline for a cub from my pack.

"No!" I snarled at him. "Leave that boy alone."

"I can't get what I was sent to fetch, so I'm going to hurt you another way." He sneered at me.

"Leave him alone." I howled at him.

That was when I saw movement. I knew instantly what it was. I would never mistake her for anything else, I've only been watching her everyday for the last two months now. Little Bunny was running toward the boy. I knew what she was trying to do. She wanted to save the boy. She was too selfless for her own good sometimes.

I watched in horror as she pushed the little boy to the side, he was safe. But she had reached him just in time. The crazy rogue slammed into her, the body no longer being where he had anticipated he jaws missed

when biting down.

It seemed to happen in slow motion. I could have sworn she was falling so slowly that I would get to her in no time at all. But I still had to watch in horror as she went over the edge.

The slow motion seemed to stop as soon as she was out of sight. I knew she was falling to whatever lay below. I could already smell the sharp scent of her blood filling my nose.

The others and I caught up to the rogue then. Henry and Will latched onto him immediately, but I didn't stop. I leapt over the edge after my Little Bunny. I instantly saw where the blood had started. I couldn't tell what she had hit to cause the bleed, but I knew she was hurt, and badly by the look of all the smears of blood that led down the mountain.

I ran as fast as I could down the rocky slope, but I couldn't see her anywhere. My heart sank as my eyes locked onto the river at the base of the slope. If she was nowhere in sight, she had to have fallen into the water. If I didn't get to her in time, if she was unconscious, I didn't want to finish that thought. I pushed myself to run harder.

I dove into the water. It was cold even to me with my wolf metabolism. I could smell her just slightly down stream. I searched for her frantically.

Finally, I found her. She had been caught on a large rock, her face under the water and blood seeping from a wound on the side of her head. I roared in anger as I shifted back to my human form and pulled her to me.

She wasn't breathing. Oh Goddess but she wasn't breathing. I laid her down on the riverbank, pressing my lips to hers, breathing for her. I followed that with chest compressions. I repeated this process over and over.

"Breathe!" I whispered loudly as I pulled my mouth from hers. "Dammit Little Bunny, breath. Don't die on me." I begged her as I went to breathe for her again.

I felt her body jerk then as she tried to take a breath. The water in her lungs was being expelled.

"Oh thank Goddess." I exclaimed as I rolled her onto her side, thumping her back to help get the water out. She took a few shaking breaths, gasping for air, before she settled into a shallower, yet wheezy, breathing.

"Thank you." I cried over and over. "Thank you for not dying." I held her in my arms, holding her close to my chest.

I felt her body begin to shiver. First slow, then fast hard shakes. She was freezing. The water was cold, and the air was colder. She needed to warm up fast.

I lifted her into my arms and carried her back to the house as quickly as I could. I cradled her to my chest as I went, hoping my body temperature would help warm her somewhat. It took me five minutes to get her back home, but that was longer than I wanted to leave her outside.

I ran through the door, not caring that I was naked and might scare the staff. I yelled for Noah to call Griffin then meet me in her room with some fresh clothes for me. I could hear Noah's footsteps moving right behind me before he overtook me on the stairs and hurried to my room.

I made it to Little Bunny's room and laid her gently on the bed. Wanting to stop the blood I ran to the bathroom and grabbed a handful of towels. I was back at her side almost instantly, pressing a cloth gently against the wound that was still seeping blood.

"Here." Noah snapped thrusting a handful of clothes at me. "The rogue is in the basement, detained, along with two of the others from the city." Noah growled. He had taken charge of the prisoner personally, and if unchecked might kill the man for what he did to his cousin.

"Good, I plan to interrogate him later."

"Not without me you won't." He snarled.

"Fine by me." I took the clothes and got dressed. I didn't need to sit there naked anymore, just in case she woke up. But her stillness was beginning to worry me.

"Is she going to be alright?" Noah asked the question that was on my mind.

"She'd better be." Anger boiled throughout my body.

I was dressed and pressing a warm wet washcloth to her head when Griffin came storming into the room. He didn't pause and wait to be given permission. Given the circumstances, I was content with his attitude.

"What happened?" He demanded as soon as he saw her lying motionless on the bed.

"She was pushed off a mountain, hit her head, and nearly drowned." I summed it up for him quickly.

"For crying out loud, Reece, what's going on around here?" He asked me.

"Someone is after my territory, and they think going after my mate is the only way to do it."

"Are you serious?" He looked doubtful. "Someone needs to protect her."

"She was at the estate, the rogue made it too far in." I confessed, feeling pathetic.

I watched as he checked the wound on her head.

"It's already starting to close up, but if she keeps getting head injuries like this, I am going to demand a scan of her head. Faster healing or not, there could still be permanent damage."

"We can go now." I conceded. "I want to make sure she is alright."

"I'm more concerned about hypothermia right now. We need to warm her up." He said, looking over his shoulder at me.

"What about her head?" I asked him, concerned about the bleeding.

"The blood flow has almost stopped, I'll bandage it, it might need to be changed once or twice but it will be mostly gone in a few days."

"That's good." I sighed in relief.

"How are we going to warm her up?" Noah asked.

"Well, I doubt you have any heated blankets, and I'm reluctant to use hot water, taking her out would just lower her temperature again." Griffin looked serious as he contemplated what to do.

"Then what?" I wondered. "Just pile on blankets?"

"That's an option, though less effective. She needs warmth. Her body isn't warm enough to create warmth under the blankets. So, she needs someone else warm under there with her." He finished looking at me.

"What?" I asked in disbelief. "You mean me?" I was trying to ward off his stern glare. I could see Noah looking at me with a monstrously angry look as well.

"You are her mate, who else would do it." I sighed at his words.

"Fine, I'll do it." Noah growled at me when I said this. He still hasn't forgiven me completely for what had happened. He was doing his job like usual, but he had not acted like my friend once since the day he had punched me. I didn't blame him.

"Just go Noah, you've got an interrogation to get to." I encouraged him.

"Behave yourself." He snapped at me as he left the room.

"Make sure her temp is back to normal before you leave her. She will most likely sleep until the morning, perhaps longer. Her body has a lot to recover from."

"Alright." I told him.

I watched as Noah and Griffin left the room before nervously turning back toward her bed. She would kill me if she knew what I was about to do. But I had no choice. I walked slowly to the side of the bed furthest from her before I pulled back her comforter and spread it over us both. I pulled her body in close to mine and I could instantly feel how cold she was.

I stayed like that, with her cuddled against me, for at least two hours. Resisting sleep and trying to ignore where I was and who I was with. The sooner I could get out of there the better, no need for her to wake up and have yet another reason to hate me.

I could tell her temperature had regulated, but she had begun to have a nightmare. Tossing her head from side to side and moaning slightly. I didn't know if she was in pain or if it was in response to the dream. I rubbed small circles on her back gently, just long enough for her to calm down. Once she was settled, I slipped out of the bed and rearranged the comforter around her before quietly leaving the room. With luck she would never know that I had been where I was.

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Chapter 58 - Trinity-After The Fall, Real Or Dream?

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Trinity

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I had felt my body falling over the cliff, and some thirty feet or more below, my head smashed into the rocky side of the mountain. That was the last thing I remember clearly for a while. I had tidbits, bits and pieces here and there, but I didn't know if they were real or dreams.

For one, I dreamt that Reece pulled me out of some water and gave me CPR, but I know that didn't happen. I remembered, or dreamt, a lot about Reece. Most likely because he had been there right before I fell, I knew he was close by. I even thought I could smell him once, but it was fading now.

I was starting to wake up. I could tell that. I had an intense headache unlike anything I had ever had before. And I felt dirty, like I hadn't

showered in days. I could smell another wolf in the room, my anxiety momentarily rising, but then I just noticed that it was Noah.

Noah must've noticed that I was waking up. I heard him move from his chair and rush to the side of the bed.

"Trinity?" He sighed, relief was clear in his voice. "Trinity are you awake now?" He asked me.

"Noah?" I tried to talk like normal, but my throat ached from being dry. Not to mention it felt like I had the entire river pour in and then out of my throat.

"Oh thank the Goddess, Trinity, you're finally awake." He sighed in relief. "If you didn't wake by this afternoon, the doctor was going to send an ambulance to take you to the hospital."

"How long have I been out?" I fought through the pain that gripped my throat to force the words out.

"Almost three days." He seemed so upset as he spoke. I could see his

eyes darting side to side before he looked back at me again. "I was worried you would never wake up Trinity."

"I'm sorry Noah, I just couldn't let him hurt the boy. I moved without thinking."

"I know Trin, I know how you are. But we've all been so scared." He hugged me then, pulling me into his arms. The movement sent a jolt of pain through my head causing me to cry out. "Are you alright?" His voice rushed out in a panic.

"I just have a really bad headache." I groaned.

"Griffin did say that would probably happen." I watched as he rose as walked toward the table. "Here, take these." He told me, handing me three pills and a glass of water. "Griffin said these would help."

"Thank you." I immediately popped the pills into my mouth and swallowed them. The water was a relief to my dry throat, so I finished the glass before handing it back to him.

"Thank you for saving me Noah, I would probably be dead if it wasn't for you." I told him, trying to convey how thankful I was to have him.

"Trinity, I'm not the one who saved you." He denied it adamantly. "Why do you think it was me?"

"You were there. I know you were there. I smelled your scent."

"But I wasn't the only one there." I was confused, but he didn't say anymore.

"Noah, who saved me?" I asked him, I didn't know who it could have been, of the people that had been there. Maybe one of the pack females had saved me.

"Trinity, who do you think would save you?"

"I don't know Noah. You were the only one I thought would." His face fell then, like he was heartbroken.

"He was telling the truth, he's caused this." He mumbled to himself.

"What?" I asked.

"Trinity, Reece is the one who saved you." Noah's words shocked me to my core.

"No! There's no way. He said he would never save me again after the attack by the Warlocks."

"That ass hat." Noah snarled. He rarely acted like this. "Look Trinity, I know he has said a lot of hurtful things to you."

"How?" I interrupted him. "How do you know? I Never told you."

"He told me, and I punched him in the face for it."

"What?!" I could not believe what he had just told me. "He told you? And you punched him?" I asked him, my voice cynical.

"I've always put my pack duties above everything Trinity, but I couldn't let that slide. I couldn't let him do that to you and get away with it."

"Noah." I was so touched by his words, tears formed in my eyes. "Thank

you."

"I love you Trinity, you're my family, and I won't let him mistreat you like that."

"They were only words but thank you Noah."

"Anyway, as I was saying, Reece is the one who saved you. He saw you go over the edge and didn't stop. The rest of us apprehended the rogue but Reece leapt right off the cliff after you without even a moment's hesitation. He landed on the slope and ran down after you then pulled you out of the water. He gave you CPR and carried you back to the house."

"It wasn't a dream." I whispered to myself.

"What?"

"Nothing."

"I know he's said somethings, Trinity. But just so you know, he was trying to keep you at bay to protect you. Because from day one of finding out you were his mate you were attacked by a rogue, it could

have been a coincidence, but it might not have been."

"How is rejecting me and hating me protecting me?" I snapped at him.

"That's exactly what I asked him, but he really thought he was doing what was best. I think maybe you guys need to talk, a lot, about everything."

"I don't think that man is capable of talking. Not to me anyway. It always ends in an argument." I thought of our last discussion. I had actively worked to avoid him ever since he accused me of doing something to his mother. I couldn't stand to be in the same room with him most of the time, and when I had to be, I simply ignored his existence.

"Make an effort, or things will never get better."

"I'll try." I resigned myself. I didn't know what my future might hold, but I was more confused now than when I first woke up.

I was tired and weak for a few days. Juniper, Paul, and Cedar came to visit me in my room while I was recovering. Aunt Eve and Uncle Wesley came as well, with Nikki in tow. Carter was apparently working for the Alpha now and was away on business. Noah said he made the decision

after I came to live here with Reece. He didn't want me left without an ally fully on my side.

I was also visited by Vincent and Heather. They brought baby Faith to see me. She was almost a month old now, and this was the first time I was seeing her. She was adorably chubby, wrinkled, and had the cutest little pink cheeks. She was a perfectly healthy little baby. I could tell that Heather and Vincent were very proud.

"Luna, how are you feeling?" Vincent asked me very seriously during the visit.

"I'm fine Vincent, no need to worry."

"Don't tell me not to worry." He snapped at me frustratedly. "Trinity, you almost died. Don't take risks like that ever again." He looked furious with me.

"I was not going to let a child die right in front of me."

"I understand that, I do, but you just need to protect yourself better."

He resigned. "And always take a guard with you, please." I promised, somewhat.

"I will try to take one with me, almost everywhere I go, from now on." He glared at me. "That's the best I can do for now, Vincent."

We spent the rest of their visit talking about the baby and everything that had changed for them so far. I had insisted on changing the subject and not talking about my life anymore. I wanted to be cheered up.

Later, Lila visited me as well. She was concerned that I was taking so long to recover. She told me that Reece was acting strangely. He had been a lot more reserved and leaving the house less over the days that I had been recovering. If he could get out of leaving entirely, he would.

"I'm worried about him." She told me with a voice full of concern and sadness. "I just came back to him, just got back myself, and now I feel like I'm losing him again."

"I'm sorry Lila, I really am, but I don't know what I can do. He won't listen to me even if I talk to him. He doesn't like me, he doesn't want me around, he hates me."

"Honey, I'm sure he doesn't hate you." Her voice was soothing and

placating as she tried to settle the issue, but she needed to know the truth now.

"He does, he told me so himself." She gasped, placing a hand over her mouth and heart at the same time, her eyes wide in shock. My words had clearly surprised her.

"Trinity, sweetie, tell me you're joking." She begged.

"I wish I was, but he told me he would never accept me, and he hated me. It's all true." I saw the pain in her eyes at that.

"Honey I'm so sorry." Lila was so distressed at what her son had done. She didn't stay long after that, I think she was uncomfortable with what I had told her.

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Chapter 59 - Reece-Explained

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Reece

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After I slipped out of my Little Bunny's room that night, I immediately went to see Noah. I wanted to know what our friends in the basement had to say for themselves.

"Did you behave yourself?" He had asked me.

"Did you really think I wouldn't?" I countered. "Of course, I did. I held her to keep her warm. She had a nightmare once but settled down. Her temp is normal now. You can check on her soon."

"Good." He continued to glare at me. "Did you keep your hands to yourself?"

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"You know what it means. You rejected her. I don't want you pawing all over her."

"She is still my mate Noah. I have every right."

"You have no right until she gives it to you."

"I know that." I sighed, conceding to his words. "She has told me the same thing by the way. She threatened to remove something if I didn't have her permission." Noah laughed at that and I couldn't help but laugh with him.

"Good, she's a strong girl, and stubborn."

"I'm learning that."

I learned from Noah that none of our prisoners were talking. No matter what Noah did or said. Looks like they needed a little push from the alpha to persuade them. I stalked to the basement and went into the room with the man that had pushed my Little Bunny over the edge of the cliff.

"Do you want to explain yourself now, or do I need to get creative?" I asked him. The man had the audacity to glare at me.

"You won't frighten me. You will never learn anything from me about our mission."

"Creative it is." I grinned at him. "I'm going to show you what happens to anyone who hurts my mate."

His screams echoed throughout the room for the next hour. I made sure not to kill him, otherwise I could do whatever I wanted. He would heal, eventually.

I had just snapped his thigh bone, an excruciatingly painful injury that would only take him an hour or so to heal. His agonizing cries of pains reverberating around me were like music to my ears.

"Who are you working for?" I growled at him again. "Why are all of you working together?"

"Go to hell, you pathetic low life." The rogue was crying in front of me.

"You're not going anywhere until you tell me." I told him.

"I'm not saying a word."

This process went on for hours with him and the other prisoners. We never learned anything. We continued interrogating them over the next few days and still, nothing. I was getting frustrated.

And to add to the frustration. It had been three days and my Little Bunny was still not awake. My anxiety was growing with each passing hour that she didn't wake up. Griffin had only said she would sleep until the morning, maybe a little longer. He didn't say anything about three days.

Even Griffin was worried about her. He gave a deadline. If she doesn't wake by that time, he will send an ambulance to bring her to the hospital. We were all worried, even my mother. The pack was about to lose another Luna. How could I let this happen?

I'd been in a bit of a stupor this whole time as well and I knew it. I couldn't help it. I was just too worried. That's why I was currently pacing my office and staring out my window instead of working when Noah walked in without knocking.

"Noah?" My heart sank. He had been sitting with my Little Bunny almost this whole time. "Is something wrong?"



"You would know if you went to see her yourself." He didn't look happy at all. Something bad must have happened.

"Is she alright? Did something happen?" My heart ached, and I felt like a bucket of ice water had just been dumped down my spine. Noah sighed causing my stomach to drop. I sank into the chair at my desk.

"She's fine." He finally told me. "She's awake." It felt like a balloon had just inflated inside my chest.

"Oh thank Goddess." I sighed so quietly he couldn't hear me.

"I told her the two of you need to talk." He glared at me. "About everything."

"She won't want to talk to me."

"I told her that you're the one who saved her. She didn't believe me. She didn't think there was any way you would save her. You need to stop pushing her away." He lectured me.

"I know. The attacks are not stopping even without me near her. And I

don't know what's going to happen next."

Noah continued to lecture me on what I should do when it comes to my Little Bunny. But I didn't know if she would ever let me near her again. And I was nervous. I had kept her at bay to protect her, and myself. I didn't want to let her in.

I had built walls, thick high walls, around my heart to protect myself from ever getting hurt and having the same problems that had nearly destroyed my pack and Riley's pack. I didn't want to let her destroy those walls I had built. She was so unlike the other women I had met, that I had been with, that I knew she could do it. She would worm her way in and tear them down until I was soft and exposed, vulnerable to her every touch, to her every word, to her.

I was still avoiding her room. I had yet to go check on her, though I thought about it all the time. I wanted to see her. To see for myself that she was awake and safe. To even have her yell at me again. Hell, I'd even take her calling me Fido or Benji again, just to know that she was back to her old self. But I couldn't bring myself to take that last step. Not yet.

That's when mom came to see me. I was holed up in the music room tuning the piano. I had neglected the thing for so long that it was nearly impossible to play right now. She knew I wouldn't leave it until I was done, unless she made me so mad that I couldn't control it. I sat there

and listened to her lecturing me.

"What in the world have you been doing?" She yelled at me as soon as she came into the room.

"I'm tuning this damn thing." I told her as I worked my way up the row of keys, I had just finished with middle 'C', halfway done.

"I meant with your mate. The story that she just told me. Honestly Reece." She snapped at me. I groaned knowing all too well what she must have heard.

"I have no excuse good enough, but I have my reasons for why I thought it was best." I told her.

"I don't care what you thought. There is nothing on this planet that should make a man, an Alpha, say those words to his mate. Do you understand me? What you did was wrong on so many levels."

"You don't understand Mom, I-."

"No Reece, you don't understand. That girl is your mate. Don't you see. She is your mate and will love you forever if you only give her a chance.

But if you push her away like this, she will hate you with every fiber of her being. And she will hate herself, because she will still want to love you because of the bond you share."

"But she doesn't have a wolf Mom, the bond won't make her love me." I looked away from her, hiding the pain in my eyes.

"What makes you think that?" She demanded, her voice roaring in the room.

"Only wolves can be bonded, only wolves can be dedicated, only wolves can be true mates."

"Now, I know I've been lost for the last seven years, but boy I know I raised you better than that. What gave you the idea that only wolves can be true mates? Why is it you think that only someone with a wolf can be dedicated? She was born and raised as pack, she is pack, she may not change into a wolf, but she is wolf enough."

"But look at what happened to dad and Uncle Nolan, they died because a woman who wasn't a real wolf betrayed the man who loved her. They died because she was a spy for an enemy pack and used Steven for their

own personal gain, I can't trust someone that can't form a true mate bond with me."

I watched my mother then as she threw her hands up in frustration. She paced away from me and over to the window, strumming her fingers across the harp as she went. I remember when I was little, I used to love watching her play the harp. It seemed so magical to me. It was why I wanted to learn to play so many different instruments.

"Reece, you know that Steven and Mandy didn't have a mate bond right. Steven had never met his mate, but he fell in love with Mandy and wanted to be with her, bond or no bond."

"What are you saying?" I could feel the shock coursing through the air, almost like a pulse beating against me, I didn't know anything about what she was saying.

"Most people in the pack didn't know, I guess. But no, Steven fell in love with Mandy on his trips to her family's pack. As you know she was human, fully human. Her father was a member of the Black Moon Pack, but her mother was human. She was not fortunate enough to be like the other half wolf-half human children that are born. She was not simply a weaker wolf. She was a human. But as she was born in the pack, they raised her in the pack."

"I knew she was human yes, she was no wolf, but I had assumed there had been a mate bonding but that she simply didn't feel it like we do."

"No, Reece, there never was. Steven was nearly thirty, and he was lonely. He wanted a mate, and he fell in love with a beautiful woman. She said and did everything just right to get him to trust her and fall for her. But they never had a mate bond. Steven said he didn't care. He loved her and wanted to be with her, traditions be damned."

"But I was right though, she was just using him."

"Yes, but it was not because she didn't have a wolf, it was because she was a bad person. Don't you get it Reece?"

"She was far from the only bad woman out there, Mom."

"What happened to you?"

"When I first became alpha, so many people thought I was too young. There were many men in the pack that tried to manipulate me. Most directly, some by sending women my way. They would try to sweet talk their way in, worm their way into the house to control things. But I never let any of them. Any woman I was with was taken elsewhere." I told her firmly, making sure she knew I never brought those women

home.

"Those women were never allowed here at all. And when I refused to give them what they were after, when they were done prostrating and prostituting themselves for whoever sent them, when they failed, they turned ugly, nasty and mean." I remember those women clearly, those evil, vile, succubus like women.

"And as time went on almost every woman who tried to get a chance at my bed was the same way. They would degrade themselves. Flaunt their bodies for all to see. Act like their only worth was sex. And when they got the sex, and nothing else, they turned into vile demonic creatures barely resembling the women from before."

"With power comes the power seekers. That will always be true. I am sorry you had to deal with that on your own. And I am sorry I was not here to help you with your women troubles. I wish I could have helped you talk through it all, to stop you from getting to this point where you seem to have so much hatred built up." My mother looked at me with eyes full of sorrow.

"It's not your fault mom." I tried to comfort her, but I was still awkward with her. In my mind my mother was a shell of a woman who sat in a

room all day. Not this woman who stood here lecturing me.

"Oh, but it is, Reece. I wasn't strong enough to survive your father's death. The sight of it, the feeling of having his bond ripped away from me, it broke me."

"Mom." I said as I wrapped my arms around her.

"You're so much like your father, mostly with how stubborn you are."  
She laughed at me.

"Mom, what made you wake up?" I asked her, she hadn't told me yet, and I wanted to know, now more than ever.

"I heard a voice calling out to me. Telling me to come see you Reece."

"What voice?"

"Trinity's." I knew she was going to say that.

"Mom." I swallowed hard, a lump forming in my throat as I pulled away from her. "There's something I want to tell you, about who I think



Trinity's real father might be." I was nervous to tell her about my suspicions. I didn't know if I was right yet, but I had to tell her.

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## Chapter 60 - Trinity-Trying To Say Thanks

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Trinity

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After sleeping for three days and resting in bed for another two I was more than ready to get up. Which was why I had gotten up with the sun. I had changed my clothes recently, with the help of Aunt Eve and Nikki since everyone was treating me like I would break if I moved, but what I needed more than anything was a shower. Or a bath. Yeah, I think a nice long soak in my pool sized bath would be great, and just what the doctor ordered. Or what he should have.

An hour later, and a million times cleaner, I was dressed and ready to be somewhere other than my room. I went to breakfast, expecting to see Lila and Reece, but only the former was there. Reece was once again nowhere in sight. He truly was avoiding me.

I had wanted to thank him for saving me. He said he was never going to do it again, but Noah told me he didn't even hesitate before rescuing me. I didn't understand him. Was it because it happened when I was right in front of him? Was it because there were other pack members around? That seemed likely. He couldn't afford to lose face in front of everyone.

After eating the breakfast that Abigail made, 'special for you' as she told me, I had intended to go read in the solarium, but it had started snowing at some point this morning and it was now too dark to read in there. Bummer. Looks like the library would have to suffice.

I was on my way to the library when I heard a sound I didn't usually hear at the house. There was a soft, soothing music coming from the room down the hall opposite of the library. It was a piano. But who could be playing it?

I followed the sound of the music. It was so lovely I had to see if it was

someone on a recording or if they were playing right now. Then I noticed the scent, Reece was down this way? Was he the one playing the music?

The door to the music room stood open just a crack, letting the beautiful notes slip out into the hall. Reece was sitting at the piano, his eyes loosely shut, as if he had been following the music in his mind, or heart, rather than on the paper sitting in front of him. I watched as his hands danced beautifully across the keys. I hadn't played the piano since I've been here. Actually, I hadn't played it in years.

"Are you going to come in, or are you going to stand there all day, Little Bunny?" I growled at his use of the name that I hate, but I pushed the door open further and walked into the room, just barely into it.

"I didn't mean to spy on you, you just caught me off guard." I told him.

"I caught you off guard? You were the one watching me." He laughed.

"Yeah, I didn't expect to hear you playing the piano. It's the first time I've heard it since I've been here."

"I just tuned it. I haven't played it in a long time." He looked longingly around the room.

"It sounds great for being neglected, usually you'd need to tune it several times to get a sound like that out of a neglected piano." I was inadvertently lecturing him, trying to tell him something he mostly likely already knew. His eyes went wide.

"You play Little Bunny?"

"Grandfather insisted." I told him. "I can play the piano, among other instruments. Once you learn piano, they're all that much easier. It's the building block of all music after all. Or so Grandfather used to say." Oh Goddess., I was rambling. I had wanted to thank him, but now I didn't know how to be around him. We had avoided each other for most of the last month, and now it was just plain weird. UGH!

"What all can you play?" He asked me. It seemed like he was making a conscious effort to be civil toward me.

"Piano, violin, cello, oboe, and flute are my best, I dabbled in others. Then I also taught myself guitar and drums."

"Taught yourself?" He asked, an eyebrow raised in question at my words.

"Grandfather had this notion that I had to know the classics, that it would somehow make me more appealing as a future mate, a better wife or something. I don't know his reasonings really, he was always coming up with strange rules for me. So, I taught myself the guitar and drums as an act of rebellion." I didn't know why I was being so honest with him. Maybe it had to do with the fact that he had yet to act like a jerk to me today.

"Ahaha!" He laughed, long and hard, at my words. He seemed to think it was hilarious.

"Is it that funny?" I asked nervously.

"Yeah, it is. It proves you've been this stubborn forever, and it's not just me that brings it out." He laughed again, this time at his words.

"Well, to be fair, I think it's stubborn mules, I mean men, that brings it out of me." I joked back. It was actually kind of fun right now. I just had a feeling it wasn't going to last.

He stopped laughing and looked at me, a serious look coming over his

face. See I knew it wasn't going to last.

"Can we talk, Little Bunny?" His voice was strangely devoid of the anger I thought would be filling it. I nodded my head.

"That was kind of what I wanted. I thought I was going to see you at breakfast." I could feel the nerves now, ricocheting around inside of me. I just need to thank him and go before he could get mad at me. Don't let this turn into something horrible right now. I tried giving myself a mental pep-talk.

Reece went over to sit on the bench seat next to the window, I sat across from him on a piano stool. Reece looked out the window before looking at me. I could see that he was tired, rings of exhaustion were forming under his eyes.

"How is your head?" He asked me, his face as blank as he could get it. I couldn't tell if he was angry or not.

"I'm better, I didn't need to sit in bed for two days."

"It's good you're better but you don't know that it wasn't the resting that made you better. It was better to be safe than sorry."

"Is there something specific that you need to talk about, Reece?" I felt like Reece was avoiding whatever topic it was he wanted to talk to me about.

"It's not easy for me to talk to you like this, so give me a break, alright." He looked at me self-consciously. "Look, I'm not going to apologize for what I've already done, it would be pointless. But moving forward I will attempt to not ostracize you so much." He looked so uncomfortable that it almost made me laugh.

"So sincere." I snickered. He glared at me.

"I'm trying here, alright. What are you doing about it?" He stood up and walked back toward the piano in anger.

"You're right, I'm not trying anything yet. But can you blame me?" I couldn't help the sarcastic tone of voice from creeping back in like usual.

"You're right." He growled back at me. "Why should we bother at all?"

"You're the one that's always treated me like this." I yelled. "You're the

one who hates me, you're the one that never wanted me around, the one that told me that I wasn't good enough. So, excuse me if I am reluctant to accept what you're trying to say now."

"You're right. I've said it all. You're my mate in name only. I reject you. I don't want you. I hate you." His teeth were clenched, and his eyes were narrowed, it was clear that he didn't want to be anywhere near me. Why was he trying to force himself to be nice to me when he hated the sight of me? It made no sense to me at all.

"I can't do this right now." He snapped before he turned and stormed out of the room. The door to the music room was left standing wide open. I had wanted to thank him for saving me, but never got the chance. I had wanted to mend bridges, and now I felt like I had just burned them even more. Why did he have to be such a jerk? Why did he have to hate me so much?

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Reece

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"Well, that didn't go according to plan." I growled as I slammed my bedroom door. "Why does she have to be so damn difficult?"

I wanted to apologize to her. I wanted to explain to her why I had said those rude things to her before. I wanted to tell her that I was wrong. Why couldn't I do that?

Will I ever be able to fix this? Will she ever forgive me? Will we ever be proper mates now with the mistakes that I've made? Have I ruined our lives forever?

I have a feeling I am destined to be miserable and frustrated for the rest of my life now. She drives me insane. She drives my wolf wild. I just don't know what to do anymore.

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Chapter 61 - Trinity-A Chat With Lila

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Trinity

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Later, after my failed meeting with Reece, I was finally reading in the library, but I just couldn't concentrate on any of the stories I tried to read. I was upset about my conversation with Reece that morning. And to top it off, Noah came to tell me that Reece hadn't yet managed to get my exam situation figured out, so I was about to fail all my classes. Great.

I was aimlessly looking through the books trying to find something interesting to read and trying to identify some of the other books as quite a few didn't have covers on them. I had just picked up what looked like a journal on a shelf by the far window when a picture fell out of it.

I didn't recognize the people in the picture at all. It showed a man and a young boy, about ten years old, playing guitars together. They were smiling happily at each other. The boy had black hair and honey-colored eyes. The man had black hair and bright yellow eyes.

The more I looked at the picture, the more I felt like I knew who they

were, but I would have to ask Lila if I was right. I went looking for her and found her on the third floor. She had turned a sitting room into an art studio for herself. I have a feeling that Reece had gotten rid of every trace of his parents from the house because their memories were painful for him, but Lila was going to bring those memories back.

"Hi Lila." I called out to her.

"Hi there, Trinity, sweetie. How are you?" She asked as soon as I came into the room, she acted like she hadn't just seen me at breakfast.

"I found something that I wanted to ask you about." I told her.

"Really? What's that?" She seemed excited.

I showed Lila the picture, it had been folded and was badly creased across the middle, but it was clear that whoever had kept it in the book had done so with love. The book that had looked like a journal had been empty, so I wasn't able to get any clues from it.

"Oh my, look how young Reece is." She cooed as she touched the boy's face in the picture. "He was always so handsome. Don't you think so?" She looked up at me with a happy smile and tears brimming in her eyes. I knew that's who it was, and the man must be his father.

"He was definitely a handsome little boy." I agreed. "Is the man with him your husband?" I asked.

"You didn't know?" She asked, me confused.

"No, I was never really allowed out, unless it was a mandatory thing I never went to meetings. And usually my family kept me hidden at the back. I had never actually seen the previous alpha. It was purely coincidental that I had seen Reece's face prior to forming the mate bond." I looked at the floor in shame as I confessed how my Grandfather had forced me to be raised.

"That's a shame." She seemed saddened. "My husband was a kind and gentle man. He would not have liked the way you were treated."

"We can't change the past."

"No, but we can stop it from being repeated."

"What are you talking about?" I asked her.

"No one should treat you, or anyone else in the pack, like that." She seemed angry, did she and the former alpha not know how people in the pack viewed me when I was growing up? Or was I mostly ignored until I was old enough to be a topic of discussion? The previous alpha died when I was eleven, so maybe most of the pack didn't know much about me then. I wasn't even old enough to start trying to get my wolf at that time, so it was possible they didn't know.

"Trinity, have you talked to my thick headed son yet?" Lila asked me, her voice changing from saddened ponderings of the past to annoyance. Was she angry at me too, or at Reece?

"We tried to talk to each other earlier, it didn't go well."

"Was he mean again?" She asked as if she expected this.

"Not really, I'm sorry to say that I let my typical response to him come out, but I think it's become a defense mechanism to him now. I can't help it. Plus, he acts like a jerk so much that it's just natural for me." I told her. "I'm afraid I was a bit too snarky with him." To my surprise she laughed.

"That's fine, he needs someone to humble him, he's been holding himself too high for so long, do me a favor and knock him a little lower will you. Once you think he's fallen enough, come talk to me, I have something I want to tell you."

"Can't you just tell me now?" I asked her, curious as to what it was.

"No, I think it best to wait. But just know, he's not all bad." Her knowing smile seemed a little devious at the moment. I didn't know what she was hiding, but I was definitely curious.

Christmas was coming up. I hadn't even thought about it until just now. But I only have about two weeks. I shouldn't be heartless and ignore him, I needed to get him something. The problem was, I couldn't go to the store to pick anything out. So, I was stuck shopping for him, and everyone, online.

I had already picked out gifts for Aunt Eve, Uncle Wesley, Carter, Noah, Nikki and Grandfather, which were the usual crowd. New to my shopping list this year was Juniper, Paul, Cedar, Vincent and his family, David, not to mention Shane and Shawn. Then there was everyone at

the estate. I needed to shop for Lila, Abigail, Peter, get something small for the rotating housekeepers, and of course Reece. I had never had to shop for so many people in my life.

Most people were easy, I knew what types of things they wanted because I had either spent my entire life around them or they were open and friendly, so they were easy to understand. The only person who was hard to shop for was Reece.

"UURRGHH!" I screamed in frustration as I tried to think of what to get the jerk that seemed to have everything and wanted nothing to do with me.

I had figured out almost everyone's gifts in no time at all. But here I was spending hours trying to figure out what to get that jerk. Most of what I knew about him had to do with his personality, which sucked.

"What do you get a man with a superiority complex that hates you?" I asked myself. "I can't make myself invisible, which is probably all he would want from me." I was talking to myself, that's how mad he was making me. I growled to myself as I continued to look at what to get him.

I started to think about What Lila had said earlier. She said he wasn't all bad. I guess she might be right. He saved my life twice now. And he

had managed a few conversations with me that didn't end in disaster, or that didn't go south because of him. He wasn't the only one to blame here.

Then I remembered the picture that I had seen. I remembered how happy he had looked in it, and I realized that I hadn't seen a single guitar in the music room. Did he get rid of them when his father died? Would he get mad if I got him a new one? Would he be fine with a memory of his father now that his mother was back?

I had a plan, I just hoped it didn't backfire on me. I started looking for the items I wanted to order. This plan needed two things to make it work. But I wanted to get him something else too, just in case they didn't go over very well.

In the course of my searching I found a watch set that looked like it would be perfect for him. It was masculine and screamed alpha to me. The band was made mostly of platinum but with a line of black gold in the middle. The face of the watch was platinum ringed in black gold. Instead of digits for the numbers, they had small black spinel stones embedded in the face of the watch beneath the crystal. The constant contrast of black and platinum was mesmerizing to me that I just felt drawn to it. It also came with a matching bracelet, it was a thick, army style id type bracelet, best of all, I could put an inscription on it, but I would do so on the bottom not the top.



I had 'Alpha' engraved onto the watch for him. As for the bracelet, well that inscription read 'Reece "FIDO" Gray'. I just knew he would love it. There was one other gift he was going to get. I just hoped I didn't laugh too hard when I gave it to him. This last one was how I was going to start letting him know I might forgive him, if he was willing to try to behave himself and start over with me. I couldn't wait for Christmas now.

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## Chapter 62 - Trinity-Reece Sees My Unfinished Mark

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Trinity

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I didn't have to wait long to talk to Reece again. Two days later, I had just accepted a delivery of gifts that I needed to wrap for Christmas, I ran into Reece on the stairs.

"What's all that Little Bunny?" He looked at the many, many packages in my arms.

"Christmas presents." I answered without looking at him or stopping.

"Seriously, you're doing this again?" He complained?

"What exactly am I doing Reece?" I asked as I struggled to hold on to all the packages in my arms. They weren't heavy, not for someone with enhanced strength. No, my issue was the fact that I was smaller than people like Reece. I had smaller arms and hands than he did. I'm sure he would have no problem carrying them all, but I was struggling.

"You're ignoring me again." He sounded petulant. "What gives? Is this becoming a hobby of yours?" I couldn't see him as I had already moved past him, but I could hear him coming up behind me.

"I'm not ignoring you. I answered you, didn't I?" I wanted to laugh at the absurdity of him in that moment, but I just didn't have the opportunity, my precariously perched piled chose that moment to

topple over. "No! Dammit!" I growled the two words in quick succession before they could fall as I watched them unbalance.

The next thing I saw was Reece's arms reaching around me from behind, grabbing the stack of boxes and bags that had begun to spill. He kept them all from falling with ease.

"Why did you order so much?" He snapped, but he didn't really sound upset, he sounded like he was laughing at me.

"My list of people to shop for got a lot bigger this year. Since I have met a lot of new people. Before I have only ever shopped for my family and no one else, this is the first time I have shopped for someone other than them." Being this honest with him, I could feel the blood rushing to my face, I looked to the floor trying to hide my embarrassment. Why did I have to be so pathetic, so different from everyone else?

"Let me help." He said. Without waiting for an answer, he lifted most of the pile up and over my head. I looked over my shoulder in awe and I saw him holding them easily as he stared at me apathetically. "What?" He asked me as if I was the one that had done something strange. "Let's go." He was acting like I asked for his help and was now wasting his time. Don't snap at him, he's helping me. I had to remind myself three times before taking a deep breath and walking the rest of the way to my room.

Reece didn't wait for me to invite him in, he just went inside and walked over to the table by my desk, setting the packages down before turning to me.

"Who all did you buy for?" He looked like a little kid trying to see if they were getting a toy too.

"My family, my friends, my guards, the staff, your mother." I told him, waiting to see the look on his face when I didn't mention his name.

"Hmm, should have known you wouldn't get anything for me." He frowned looking at the pile.

"Oh, yours was delivered yesterday." This was true, as they had been picked up from three very specific stores in town by Juniper. There was another one on its way, possibly in the pile there, but that wasn't an important one. I noticed the shock and slight excitement as it flitted across his face, it was kind of cute to see him acting like a normal person for once.

"Really?" I nodded my head. "What did you get me?" He grinned.

"Now why would I tell you that?" Laughing, I glared at him and went to start sorting the packages. They were all ones I had ordered from the same website, he most likely had one in this mix, but he wouldn't realize it even if he saw it.

"So, you're just a tease, huh?" His voice was suddenly right next me, his breath tickling my ear as it stirred the hairs that had come loose from the ponytail that I had pulled it all into. I shivered at the feeling but refused to give in.

"Not in the least. It's not teasing if you dangle a treat in front of a puppy when training it, isn't that what you're supposed to do. Dangle the reward so they want to follow their orders and behave?" I fought the urge to shiver again and refused to turn my head and look at him.

"Keep calling me a dog, and I'll show just how much of a dog I really am." He whispered in my ear, it was both seductive and playful and I could hear a laugh in his voice.

"Actually, I called you a puppy." I giggled turning my head just a little to the right so I could see the slightest edges of his face. I had turned more than I had intended, and I saw the heated look in his eyes, the sight of which shocked me and scared me just a little.

"Huh! Hey, Little Bunny, what's up with your mark?" He asked me. I had never noticed that Reece hadn't seen my mate mark since the day he had bitten me. I immediately put my hand up and covered my mark. The collar of the thin, black, long sleeved, cloth jacket I was wearing must have shifted enough for him to see my neck and shoulder more clearly.

My mark still hadn't fully formed, even after over two months. I was beyond embarrassed by the incomplete mark. And to add to my humiliation, the state of the mark left it unsightly. It was currently a larger than average pack seal surrounded by nothing more than a giant gray cloud. Unless the gray cloud was Reece's personal twist on the mark like every man had something special that they left on their mate. Maybe Reece Gray left his in the form of a giant gray cloud, and maybe his mark was larger because he was the alpha. I just didn't know.

"Let me see it." He demanded pulling my hand gently away from my neck.

"I don't think it ever finished." I told him sadly.

"It doesn't look like it, does it?" He agreed, tracing the crest with his finger.

"Stop!" I demanded as I took a small step away from him. I knew we were having a decent conversation, and that my overreaction could very well set us back again, but I wasn't ready for him to touch me so intimately. I had let him be suggestive, let him whisper into my ear, but he hadn't actually touched me then.

"What's the matter?" He looked confused when I turned to look him in the eyes, I almost felt like I could see a small amount of pain hidden in his eyes.

"I'm not a toy for you to play with whenever you feel like." I told him. I know he was trying to force himself to be nice to me, and I knew his end goal here. But I will not be an outlet for someone who hates me. "I will not be your outlet Reece. If you want satisfaction, then go get it from yourself. I told you, you're not getting anything from me. Not unless it was a mutual thing." He was confused as he looked at me.

"I was only looking at your mark." He smirked like I had the wrong idea.

"Yeah, and you were intentionally suggestive. And you can look at the mark without touching it."

"What's the matter with you? We were actually getting along just fine for once." He seemed sad as he said this last part, like he wanted it to go on.

"But I know I am nothing more than a distraction to you Reece. You have nothing, or no one, better to distract you right now so you chose me to fill that role. But I won't be that kind of distraction for someone who hates me." I could feel the tears stinging the back of my eyes.

Why was I about to cry? I asked myself, even though I already knew the answer. Ever since day one, I had been slowly falling in love with him, even with what he had said to me. I couldn't help it, my body made it happen, the mate bond, everything that bound us drew me to him. I just wished he felt a fraction of what I felt for him. I was already so in love with him.

And let's not add the attraction to that. Oh Goddess, the attraction. I could set a forest fire with the heat of the attraction I had for him. But he felt nothing but hatred, animosity, and apathy. That was always clear by the way he looked at me.

"Fine, I'll be leaving." He sighed in a resigned voice. Hanging his head in defeat as he left the room without another word. I felt a little better when he was gone, but I also felt lonely the minute he was gone.



"Why does he have to hate me?" I sobbed to myself after he left.

\*~\*~\*~THE NEXT CHAPTER IS THIS SAME SCENE FROM REECE'S POV  
SKIP IF YOU ARE NOT INTERESTED IN SEEING THE SAME SCENE FROM  
ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE. YOU WILL GAIN WHAT HE WAS THINKING  
DURING THIS EXCHANGE~\*~\*~\*

If you find any errors ( broken links, non-standard content, etc.. ), Please  
let us know < report chapter > so we can fix it as soon as possible.

Chapter 63 - Reece-I'm Trying, Why Does She Hate Me?

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Reece

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I had thought my Little Bunny was ignoring me in the hall, but as she  
pointed out she did answer me. I realized she was just trying to hurry

before the boxes and bags that had been delivered toppled out of her arms. I would never understand why they would insist on delivering their stuff in so many different packages.

"What's all that Little Bunny?" She nearly jumped when I called out to her.

"Christmas presents." She spoke but never paused or looked at me, or did anything besides continue walking.

"Seriously, you're doing this again?"

"What exactly am I doing Reece?"

"You're ignoring me again. What gives? Is this becoming a hobby of yours?" I could see the annoyance on her face as I spoke to her.

"I'm not ignoring you. I answered you, didn't I?"

"No! Dammit!" I heard her cry out and noticed all the packages were about to fall.

I went up the last two steps separating us and put my arms around her and steadied everything that she was holding.

"Why did you order so much?" My voice held a mocking, joking edge to it as I asked her.

"My list of people to shop for got a lot bigger this year. Since I have met a lot of new people. Before I have only ever shopped for my family and no one else, this is the first time I have shopped for someone other than them." She blushed, I always forgot how much her Grandfather had kept her hidden from people. She had never gotten the chance to buy a present for anyone except her family, that was sad, which meant no one but them had ever gotten her a gift.

"Let me help." I lifted most of the pile up and over her head before she could protest. She looked at me holding them easily as if I were some sort of alien. "What? Let's go." I was nervous having her watch me, so I just continued up the stairs.

When my Little Bunny got to her room and opened the door I went in without hesitation, putting the load of packages on her table and turned to look at her playfully.

"Who all did you buy for?" I was genuinely curious about her answer to this question. I admit I wanted to know what she would get me for Christmas.

"My family, my friends, my guards, the staff, your mother." She never said my name, that was to be expected.

"Hmm, should have known you wouldn't get anything for me."

"Oh, yours was delivered yesterday." Shocked, I felt excitement as it flitted through me.

"Really? What did you get me?"

"Now why would I tell you that?" Laughing, she looked at me playfully and went to start sorting the packages.

"So, you're just a tease, huh?" I whispered into her ear and watched as she shivered.

"Not in the least. It's not teasing if you dangle a treat in front of a puppy when training it, isn't that what you're supposed to do. Dangle

the reward so they want to follow their orders and behave?" She was calling me a dog again, but I was still calling her Little Bunny that I know she hated.

"Keep calling me a dog, and I'll show just how much of a dog I really am." I whispered in her ear again, it was both seductive and playful and even I could hear the laugh in my voice.

"Actually, I called you a puppy." She giggled sweetly and turned her head just a little to the right so I could see the edges of the mate mark I had left on her.

"Huh! Hey, Little Bunny, what's up with your mark?" I had never actually gone to see it after I bit her. I remembered the night I left the mark quite vividly. She was the most beautiful woman I had seen in a really long time. She looked like the moon walking among us. And when I pulled her toward me and buried my face in her neck, scenting her and biting her, it drove me wild.

It looked like the mark still hadn't fully formed, even after over two months. It currently looked like a larger than average pack seal surrounded by nothing more than a giant gray cloud. Unless the gray cloud was my personal twist on the mark.

"Let me see it."

"I don't think it ever finished." Her voice was dripping with sorrow.

"It doesn't look like it, does it?" I traced the crest with my finger as I spoke.

"Stop!" She demanded taking a small step away from me.

"What's the matter?" I couldn't stop the pain from filling my eyes at her reaction.

"I'm not a toy for you to play with whenever you feel like. I will not be your outlet Reece. If you want satisfaction, then go get it from yourself. I told you, you're not getting anything from me. Not unless it was a mutual thing.

"I was only looking at your mark." I tried to play off her words.

"Yeah, and you were intentionally suggestive. And you can look at the mark without touching it."

"What's the matter with you? We were actually getting along just fine for once." I had been hopeful that we might finally be moving beyond all the fighting.

"But I know I am nothing more than a distraction to you Reece. You have nothing, or no one, better to distract you right now so you chose me to fill that role. But I won't be that kind of distraction for someone who hates me." I could feel her words like a knife to my gut and my heart.

"Fine, I'll be leaving." I sighed. I hung my head in defeat as I left the room without another word.

"Why does he have to hate me?" I heard her sob after I left the room.

"I wish we could talk, Little Bunny." My voice cracked as I whispered, like tears threatened me as well.

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## Chapter 64 - Trinity-A Visit From Carter

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Trinity

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After Reece left, I started wrapping presents. I had all but one gift now, but that one needed a little more time to get ready, so I knew not to expect it yet. I wrapped all the presents for my family first, because I had gotten them things that I knew they would like and was really happy with those presents. Then, as I started on the gifts for my friends, there was a knock on my door.

"Trinity?" It was Carter. I hadn't seen him in so long. I was so glad I had already wrapped his presents. I bolted to my feet and ran to the door. When I flung it open and saw him there, I threw my arms around him, happy to finally see him after so long.

"Carter!" I squealed. "Oh Goddess, I missed you. Where have you



been?" I asked him when I stepped away and beamed at him.

"Around, I had some errands to run." He was smiling at me. "I missed you too Trin." He was a sight for sore eyes. He was my partner in crime, my closest confidant, my best friend growing up, and ever since I moved in with Reece, I have barely seen him. He used to be the rock in the family for me. My protector, my healer, he was whatever I needed.

"Jeez Carter, I leave to become Luna and you ignore your favorite cousin." I joked with him and I stepped aside so he could come into the room.

"Favorite?" He put his hand on his chin as if contemplating.

"I'm your only cousin." I snapped at him.

"So, you win by default, but isn't that just as bad as a loss."

"Absolutely not, a win is a win, it doesn't matter how you got it unless you cheated. If you cheated, then it's a loss and you suck." He laughed at my playful banter just like he always did.

"How are you feeling? I heard you were in bad shape." He asked, looking at my head with wary eyes.

"I'm fine, no worries."

Carter followed me over to the table I had been wrapping presents at. I sat down and continued with the gift I had left off on. It was an art supply kit for Juniper, I had also gotten her an easel and some canvases.

Juniper was an artist at heart, but she was taking most of the prerequisite classes that I was, but we had different career plans in mind. She wanted to be a social worker or child therapist. She hadn't decided completely yet. But she had to do some criminal law study to be a good social worker. Or that's what she believed. I think it mostly had to do with the fact that Paul wanted to be a cop and was taking the criminology class.

"You got a lot of gifts here Trin." He seemed so shocked looking at them all. "Why do you have baby and kid toys here?"

"For Vincent's kids of course." That should have been obvious, but he might not know that I was so friendly with my guards that I would buy them gifts.

"Who all did you get gifts for?"

"Well, there's the family of course, then friends, guards, and staff. Not to mention Reece and his Mom. I also bought for Heather, Conner, Renea, and Faith, Vincent's family because I know them and consider Vincent such a good friend."

"Your guard is your friend?" He was shocked to hear this.

"Is that so wrong?" I seemed shocked by his response. "Why is it so weird that I am friends with him? He is a nice person. And his mate is a wonderful, caring woman. And they named their baby Faith, whether that was after me or not I don't care, she's special."

"Just because her name is your middle name?" He asked me, laughing loudly.

"Shut up Carter." I snapped. He instantly stopped laughing and stood up straight.

"Damn, that Luna stuff is powerful." He growled, sounding serious.

"Oops." It was my turn to laugh now, I hadn't meant it as a command, but apparently wolf laws didn't care.

"Don't oops me. You can't give me a command like that and then laugh at me." He was only pretending to be mad. I knew because I could hear the laughter in his voice as he pretended to growl at me.

"That was actually hilarious." We continued to laugh at each other for a minute while I quickly wrapped another present.

"So, I have something to tell you."

"What's that?" I asked him curiously, looking up through a spill of hair that had fallen out of my ponytail during my laughing fit.

"Well two things really. First, the Alpha has managed to get you approved to sit your exams, but only if you do them on Saturday." He had a big grin on his face.

"OH MY GODDESS! REALLY?" I basically screamed as I jumped to my feet and hugged him again.

"Thank you, thank you, thank you." I told him and literally jumped for joy. "I am so glad I won't have to fail all four classes."

"You're going to be taking them all consecutively. It will be you and a test proctor in the room. There will be a dozen guards, minimum, stationed around the building. One guard at each entrance, and the others scattered to look like casual bystanders."

"Wow, so serious." I said jokingly.

"Don't joke about this Trinity!" He snapped at me. "You were attacked last time you were there, and you've nearly died twice. This is no laughing matter. And in each of those attacks you were the one they were after. The Alpha still doesn't know how they plan to use you against him, but he knows they want to either hurt, kidnap, or kill you. Don't take your situation so lightly." Carter was madder than I had ever seen him before.

"I know Carter, I'm just so happy right now that nothing is going to sound like I am taking it seriously." I told him. It was the truth, but it wasn't enough for him, he was still mad. He continued to glare at me uncomfortably.

"I'm just so glad that I will get to start new classes next semester." I was still on my happy cloud, ignoring Carter's bad mood as best as I could until he calmed down.

"Yes, but not the way you think." He popped my happy cloud, forcing me to look at him with confusion.

"What?" I snapped at him.

"You can take classes next semester, but you have to take them remotely for right now."

"NO!" I growled at him.

"It's not up to me Trinity, those are orders from the Alpha himself. He says he will get this situation cleared up as fast as he can, but to please work remotely for this one semester until he knows that everything is safe."

"Why did I have to go and mate with him?" I roared. "My life has been turned upside-down and it will never go back. I want my life back Carter."

"I'm sorry Trin."

"So, was that the second thing you had to tell me?" I asked him halfheartedly.

"No, the second thing had nothing to do with you or your little problems." He sounded annoyed now, like he wanted to tell me something but didn't know how to do it.

"What's wrong Carter?" I was afraid there was going to be more bad news.

"I found my mate." He smiled, but he sounded really upset about it.

"That's wonderful news Carter." I smiled at him.

"No, it's not. She's in the enemy pack I was sent to scout." He looked so dejected as he spoke, like the world was going to implode upon itself and we were all going to die before he could get his mate.

"I can't go anywhere near her. I can't tell her who I really am, where I'm really from, or anything. If I did, they would know that Reece sent me to spy on them all." He tried to smile through the pain he felt as he looked at me.

"Carter." My heart broke, and I cried the tears he was fighting back for him. "We will work something out. Maybe we can convince her to leave that pack and join us." I tried to sooth him.

"I don't think she will, she's the Alpha's daughter." I gasped at his words.

"Carter." I sighed.

I wanted to talk for a little while longer, but Carter was suddenly in a hurry to leave.

"Wait, Carter." I called out to him. "Take these." I had packed all the gifts for him, Aunt Eve and Uncle Wesley into a large green bag. He could take them and put them under the tree.

"Don't you want to deliver them yourself?" He still looked depressed.



"I can't go anywhere, not until the exams that is." I reminded him with a sad smile.

"You really haven't left the house in a month?" It must have been a shock to him to learn that.

"Nope, except for going up into the mountains and forest, and I can't do that anymore."

"We will find whoever is responsible for all of this Trin, we will get your life back to normal." He declared firmly.

"That ship has sailed, Carter, it will never be normal again."

"You're probably right." He agreed. Everyone who knew me, seeing the direction my life had taken, would agree that my life was never going to be normal again.

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Chapter 65 - Both-Awkward

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Trinity

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I watched Carter leave, a bittersweet feeling deep inside of me. I was happy to have seen him, and happy to be continuing school, but I felt so bad for him right now. I wanted to help him somehow. Maybe I could figure something out. Eventually.

Right now, however, I was just still so happy about what Carter had told me. I was excited for my exams, and glad that I had kept up on my assignments, thanks to all my friends. I wanted to thank Reece. I needed to tell him how happy this made me. And I had never thanked him for saving me last time either.

Just then I caught his scent. I didn't know if he was leaving or going back to his room. I had to hurry. I ran down the hall as fast as I could and was at the top of the stairs and the connecting hallway before I knew it. I saw him, walking toward his room, his tall broad back facing me and growing smaller the farther he went down the hall.

Without thinking I ran after him.

"Reece!" I yelled when I was nearly to him. He was already turning before I called out to him, undoubtedly alerted by the sound of my running footsteps and my scent.

"Little Bunny?" He asked me confused to see me running toward him. I leapt the last step and threw my arms around his waist, not caring that I had just thrown a fit about him touching me.

"Thank you."

"What's this about?" He asked confused, his hands held up as if he didn't know what to do. He was clearly not in 'the mood' right now because he was even more hesitant to touch me than usual. It was completely different to how he usually acted when he was being his typical suggestive self. That's fine, I just wanted to thank him, I wasn't after anything more.

"I just wanted to say thank you." I told him as I pulled away. Seeing him there made me want to laugh. But I didn't, that would have started another fight. He had both his hands held at about chest level, palms out, almost like he was facing down a criminal with guns drawn. It looked like the typical movie "freeze" pose, And the shock on his face.

"Thank me for what?" His sense of what was normal must be coming back because he was getting his voice under control, he was talking in his usual clipped tone of voice.

"For working out my situation with the university. I know it must have been difficult. And I've been meaning to tell you thank you for saving my life. I just hadn't gotten around to it because we always ended up in arguments." I was giving him what I hoped was a thankful smile. I could see his eyes darkening. I was wearing his patience down. I should leave before he gets mad at me.

"I need to go. I have more things to do now than I originally thought." I smiled at him again. I nodded my head and ran off, smiling happily. "I'll see you at breakfast."

~~

Reece

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I could smell her the moment she opened her bedroom door. She was there with another man. I had to calm my wolf by telling him that I would settle it all soon and locking him in a mental cage just to stop him from taking over. I knew the man with her was her cousin Carter. I had had a quick meeting with him earlier after all. I knew he was going to come here. But my wolf was still jealous.

Soon after that I passed Carter on the stairs, he gave me the cursory bow and mumbled. "Alpha." He was a good man, but he was completely on my Little Bunny's side. If push came to shove, I knew that he would choose to help her over the pack. He loved his cousin and was fiercely loyal to her. Honestly, that made me happy. She needed more allies on her side.

I was almost to my door when I turned around. I had heard her feet running down the hall, but at first, I thought she might have just been chasing after Carter. I thought he might have forgotten something. But her footsteps chased me down the hallway, and her scent grew stronger. As I was turning around, I heard her call my name.

"Reece!" It was enough to stop me in my tracks. The sight of her running toward me so happily. I didn't know what to think.

"Little Bunny?" I asked confused, just as she threw her arms around my waist, slamming into me with such force that I was rocked backward momentarily.

"Thank you." Her voice was soft as she spoke the words, squeezing me.

"What's this all about?" I asked her, confused. I held my hands up above her, not knowing where to put them. I wanted to hug her back, but after what happened earlier today, I didn't know if I should.

"I just wanted to say thank you." She repeated her words she had said once already, but I didn't know what she was thanking me for.

"Thank me for what?" I tried to remain calm, to make myself sound neutral. She pulled away and continued.

"For working out my situation with the university. I know it must have been difficult. And I've been meaning to tell you thank you for saving my life. I just hadn't gotten around to it because we always ended up in arguments."

I couldn't believe my ears. She wasn't acting like the Little Bunny I had grown used to. But the sound of her voice, the feel of her body when it was pressed against me, it made my wolf pant in my ears and beg for more.

"I need to go. I have more things to do now than I originally thought. I'll see you at breakfast." She spun around and ran back down the hall while I stood there, still dazed. Come back! My wolf whined in my head after she left. What am I supposed to do when she does things like this? First, she told me off for touching her, then she literally ran into my arms and hugged me. I was so confused. But maybe it was possible to move past all the things that had happened between us. I smiled thinking this as I finally walked into my room.

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Chapter 66 - Reece-Little Bunny's Exam Day

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Reece

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Today is going to be a long day. Little Bunny is taking her exams, so we had to be prepared in the event that someone tried anything. I had almost two dozen pack warriors at the ready. They would switch out and rotate who guarded the building and who would be searching the surrounding area.

I was advised to let the warriors handle everything today. That they would report back to me when everything was all over. They told me it would be best not to allow the enemy access to me if they were truly after my position. I refused. I was alpha around here and I would protect what was mine. Be that my pack, my land, my mate or myself. It was all up to me to protect.

I was also beginning to wonder if those that were after my Little Bunny were doing so to go after me or if they were after her directly. I was beginning to think she was the intended target. I don't think she was supposed to get hurt so badly during any of the events. No, my suspicions are telling me they're trying to get to her for something specific, and I intend to find out what that is, and soon.

I didn't want her to know that I was going to be close by, so I had Vincent and David ride with Little Bunny to the university. I was going to be overseeing the entire operation, running the command and following up on any scent trails personally. I would not let anyone slip



between my fingers this time.

It was just before eight in the morning when she went into the building. And we could already smell that wolves had been scouting the area. The trails weren't fresh, they had most likely scouted sometime earlier in the week.

My men had been informed of this mission on Wednesday, only three days in advance. The elders knew about it on Tuesday. I had been given the go ahead from the Dean on Monday. So, the leak came from either the school, the elders, or someone in my inner circle. I needed to find out who was actively working against me and make them pay. They would suffer as much as they had made my Little Bunny suffer.

Four guards began tracing all the old trails. They said there was nothing new for them to report, that was both reassuring and disappointing. I would prefer this day to go smoothly, with no problems for her.

But I knew that things weren't going to go that way. I had only just thought those words when my phone vibrated in my pocket. Looking at the screen I saw that it was Kenneth, he was one of those tracking the old trails.

"What do you got for me?" I asked him curtly.

"I'm sorry Alpha, but something funny is happening to these trails." He sounded nervous as he was saying this. Like he thought I might be upset with him. In truth I was pissed, but not at him.

"Funny? Explain Kenneth." I demanded. My voice held more of an edge than it normally did.

"Well, the smell keeps fading in and out when it gets out to a certain point." His voice was definitely nervous now. He was speaking in as few words as possible.

"Like they're hard to smell at all?" I asked. I knew exactly what he was meaning.

"Yes, Alpha Sir." His voice seemed clipped.

"I'll be right there." I told him.

After getting his location I drove out to where he and another warrior were waiting for me. I had smelled the scent trails near the school, so I

knew what these wolves had smelled like. Getting out I could still smell them partially. But as I walked closer to the men that were standing, waiting for me, I noticed the smell fading in and out.

The smell didn't disappear altogether, not like how it did with the Warlocks last time. But it was enough to make it hard to follow. We were far enough out of the city now that I didn't have to worry about passersby coming up at any moment. The edge of the forest was just in front of us.

"Try to find out everywhere they went in the city. I want to know everything they touched if you can. I will follow this the best I can." I told them. "And tell the guards at the school to be extra alert. Whoever might try to attack could have the aid of Warlocks, we will not be able to detect their scent." I saw their eyes go wide at my warning.

"Warlocks?" Kenneth exclaimed.

"Is that why their scent is hard to track, Alpha?" Brian, one of my newest and youngest warriors asked. I nodded in response to his question as I started to unbutton my shirt, I was already walking toward the trees.

"I expect all of you to stay alert. I want no harm to come to the Luna today." I glared at them. They would know better than to disobey me.

"Yes, Sir." They saluted me. The salutes were a bit much, this wasn't the army, but at least they were more respectful than others.

Once I was in the trees, and had my clothes off, I shifted into my wolf form. The feeling of being in this other form, wearing a different skin, was so freeing. I dug my claws into the dirt, savoring the feeling of the cold, snowy ground pressed against my paws.

I raised my head to the sky with my eyes closed and searched for the scent I was trying to track. I found just the slightest trace of it nearby. It was getting harder to track the farther away from the city we went. There was definitely something strange going on here.

Why would Warlocks be working with these wolves? Are they rogues or from a pack? Are they trying to get to me, or did they want my Little Bunny?

I had begun to suspect something about my Little Bunny, but I didn't know if it were true, and there was no one I could ask to confirm if it were true or not. No one in the pack knew who her father was. Her mother had never told anyone, but did she truly know? I'm beginning to think she didn't even know anything happened until she was surprised with the baby. But with her mother dead I couldn't ask her.

There had just been somethings that made me wonder. Like how Little Bunny's eyes had looked in the forest the day she had been attacked, they seemed to be tracking the Warlocks with little trouble until I broke her concentration. It was like she could see past all the trees and through the night itself to see them. Then there was the color of her eyes themselves.

Most wolves would have green, yellow, gold, brown, or hazel eyes. There were the rare one with blue eyes, but they were the wolf equivalent of an albino. They were typically born with white, silver, or very light blond hair to go with the blue eyes. And Little Bunny had not just sky-blue eyes, but also sapphire and gold in them as well.

The triple iris, while unique and beautiful, was definitely not a wolf trait. Was she half human? Was she half warlock? Or was she something else? I just didn't know how to answer that question but I have more questions than answers right now.

I was tracking the scent of the wolves slowly, moving with great care

so that I didn't lose it completely. That made me think about how she had been able to smell them too. She was the only one among us that was able to smell them. She said their scent was weird and made her sneeze, but she was able to smell it when we couldn't. I bet she could follow this scent. I laughed to myself.

I hit on a new trail among the other trails, something that didn't fade like the others. This smell shouldn't be here at all. I could smell my beta. My cousin Caleb had been in this area, and recently. I followed the trail. What had he been doing here? He was not among those that I included in this guard mission, though he did know of it. Goddess, but I hated having that twit as my beta. I growled in my mind. If it turns out he had any part of this whole plot, he is going to pay.

Caleb's scent continued heading in the direction of the estate. He hadn't been there since Tuesday, but this trail was fresher than that. What was he up to? I would be finding that out soon enough. I heard a distressed howl coming back from the direction I had just come. I turned and ran back.

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Chapter 67 - Reece-An Injured Wolf Means Lockdown For The Luna

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Reece

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The howl was female, we only had two female wolves with us today, Sarah and Lisa, they were supposed to be guarding the building unless they had already done the first switch. I raced through the trees until I came across the she-wolf that had howled.

She was lying on her side, blood seeping from a series of gashes in her left flank. I could see her pain as she tried to keep her eyes from quivering. She didn't want us to think she was weaker because she was a woman, and crying would make her seem weak.

"What's happened?" I asked in what passed for speech when in wolf form.

"An intruder tried to make it past me, but I stopped him. He no doubt thought I would be easy because I was female. He learned otherwise." I could hear pride in the series of yips, growls, grunts, and barks she

spoke with.

"Where is he now?" I asked, this was what I needed to know the most. "Did he get away?"

"I'm sorry Alpha, he did get away. But I did injure him as well, he should be bleeding." She was eyeing the ground as she talked.

"You did good." I told her. "See to it she is looked after." I commanded before following the slight traces of blood and paw prints from the enemy wolf.

I had followed the trail for nearly six miles. The blood was less frequent, he was healing, but I had his scent and prints. I needed to find him. I needed to know why he was after my mate.

But then I hit it. It was like a barrier, but instead of stopping me in my tracks, or making me bounce back off of it, it seemed to cut off my senses. Or at least lessen them. I couldn't smell the wolf anymore at all. I could barely see the prints on the ground. I couldn't even hear my own breathing, ragged as it was from anger, running, and now frustration. Something wasn't right here.

There was definitely a powerful Warlock close by. Someone much



stronger than the ones from before. This one was the true enemy. He was the one I needed to find.

"Go back." A voice rumbled in the air around me.

"What is it you want with me?" I demanded.

"I don't even know who you are, wolf." The voice seemed to be speaking through the air, not like there was a person near me at all.

"I am the Alpha of this area." I growled.

"Well, Alpha wolf, I don't need you." The voice chided.

"Then what are you after?"

"I think you know that." The voice, whoever he was, chuckled.

"You want my mate?"

"Why not? You don't want her." He seemed to be pleased with

himself.

"You can't have her." I screamed at him.

"I will get whatever I want, and you can't stop me." I could feel the pressure in the air intensifying. He was trying to suffocate me.

"I will stop you." I yelled at him once more before I turned around and ran back toward town. I heard the voice chuckling as I left. He thinks he won, just because I am leaving. Let's see him fight me face to face. I thought.

I went back to where I had left my clothes and shifted back. I wanted to go check on the she-wolf who had been hurt. I was sure it had been Lisa, but I wasn't positive. Today had given me a lot to think about.

If the man who spoke earlier was the mastermind behind all of this, then they weren't after me, they were after my mate. But why? What could they possibly want from her? I would find out sooner or later. But it was looking like today would be her last time out of the estate for a while.

I was dressed and had driven to where they had taken the injured she-wolf all while lost in thought. I had been right. Lisa was the one who had been hurt. She was doing better now. Just shifting was enough to take care of most of her injuries. There was nothing left but bright pink scars now. In another hour they would fade to nothing but white scars. They would look years old by the end of the day.

"Is everything alright, Alpha?" Vincent asked me when I went to check on how things were going at the university.

"Just thinking." I answered him. "How have things been here?" I asked him. My Little Bunny's four primary guards had all insisted on staying at the doors all day. They said that other than a quick break, if needed, they would guard the doors all day. I was proud of all four of them in that moment.

"No problems, Sir. I know there have been issues elsewhere, but it has not reached us here. The Luna knows nothing of what has happened." Vincent was a good family man, but when it came to his job as a warrior, he was also one of the most capable we had. He was extremely loyal, highly dedicated, and he could think quickly on his feet if he needed to. I was glad I chose him for her.

"Good, I don't want her to know about anything that happened

today. Not yet anyway." I praised his efforts in keeping her safe.

"Might I ask why you're keeping it from her? She would likely not be very happy were she to find out." He offered me his advice.

"Yeah, I gather she wouldn't be." I laughed. "But today is looking like it will be her last day out for a long time. And you know how she will respond to that too, I'm sure." I watched as he grimaced at the thought.

"Not pleasantly." He admitted.

"Exactly."

"Might I offer some advice, Sir?" Shane, one of the twin guards said as he came walking over. He had apparently heard our conversation.

"You should not have left your post." I growled at him.

"I put someone else on the door for just a moment." He smiled sheepishly.

"Fine, go ahead." I snapped. "Say what you wanted to."

"If tonight is to be the Luna's last night out for a while, you should make it as special for her as you can." He smiled as he spoke.

"What do you mean?" I asked him.

"Come on, Alpha, you're a man that knows how to treat a lady, aren't you?" He joked with me.

"I most definitely know how to treat a lady and show them a good time. But are you suggesting I take her out when the city isn't safe for her right now?" I growled.

"The entire city isn't completely off limits, is it?" He asked. "There are some places that are safer than others. For instance, Gina's dress shop is completely run and staffed by wolves. And then there's Lawrence's restaurant over on Mountainview Pass, Kaleidoscope. It's five star, top rated, and beautiful inside. Added perk, is it's also staffed at least fifty percent by wolves, including those at the door. A few calls and you could have things set up to enjoy a quiet night with your mate and not have to worry."

I had to admit, he was very convincing as he spoke. And he was right too. I knew of the places he was talking about. Little Bunny definitely

deserved one last hurrah before going back into confinement. I hated making her stay inside like that, but she needed to be safe. And I could just tell her it was for having completed her exams. But I would still want someone to watch the restaurant from outside, in case anyone tried anything.

"Shane, what are you and your brother doing tonight?" I smirked.

I had everything set and ready long before my Little Bunny was due to come out of the building. The twins were going to guard us from a distance tonight. And I would take my mate on our very first date ever. I was getting nervous. She could respond in many different ways.

I didn't have to wait too much longer for her to come out. She was smart and had kept up on her work even when I forbade her from going to class. The result meant she finished her exams with four hours to spare. We had plenty of time left for the day, but I was glad that we would get done sooner, this way we wouldn't be out that late. No need to push fate, with the other wolves or her.

They told me they heard her coming, so I got into position near the door she was likely to come out of. Vincent greeted her with a smile and asked how she had done.

"Well, I will know soon, but I'm sure I did alright." She smiled back at him. My wolf growled at the idea of another man being on the receiving end of that smile.

I Walked slowly toward them, as was the plan, and noticed when she realized I was there.

"Reece?" She was surprised. "What are you doing here?" She asked me.

"Well, these guys have been here all day, I thought I would check up on them. Looks like I got here just as you got done." I smile at her. "Come on, let's not block the door." I motioned for her to follow me. Her and Vincent both followed after me until we were under the shade of a nearby tree.

"How did you do?" I asked her.

"Fine, I think." She seemed nervous now.

"Good. Well, since I'm here let's go celebrate you passing your classes by having dinner together." I told her.

"It's a little early for dinner, and I'm not dressed for it." She tried to avoid the invitation, looking me up and down. I had gone home to change into a black Armani suit with a dark green silk shirt. The sun, just an hour away from setting, was glinting off my black leather shoes. I didn't ruin the look with a coat, I didn't need one right now anyway, I wouldn't need a coat unless it was somewhere below 0°F outside.

"Well, we can get you ready for dinner then." I smiled, taking a few steps closer to her. She took a step back.

"I don't know." She avoided me again.

"Come on now, you don't want to make me look bad in front of everyone do you?" I asked, causing her to look around. It was then that she noticed that the other three guards had joined us as well.

"Go on Luna, you deserve to have some fun." Shane urged her.

"Yeah, you've been cooped up for a while." Shawn added.



"You should just enjoy it." David told her. Finally, she looked at Vincent.

"Go on Trinity, it will be alright." He encouraged her. I had a feeling he knew more than the others did, but his words seemed to be what she needed to crack. She turned to me and nodded.

"Alright, I am a bit hungry after all."

"Good." I said, taking her hand and pulling her toward me. "Shall we get you ready?" She tried to turn back to the others. "You gentlemen can go about whatever other business you might have." I called over my shoulder.

"Yes, Sir." I heard all four of them answer me.

"Where are we going?" She asked me. She looked confused and worried at the same time as I walked her toward the parking lot.

"To get ready for dinner."

"So, back to the estate?" She wondered.

"Nope, if I took you there, you'd likely try to get out of going to dinner."

"I would not." She insisted. "Probably." She added. I laughed at her words. "You seem to be in a good mood today." She commented.

"Really? That's the last thing I thought I would hear today, actually. Today did not go as I thought it would."

"Did you have a busy day as well?" She inquired.

"You can say that. I was chasing down leads all day." I said evasively.

"Hmm." She hummed as if she might have caught my meaning.

We were almost to the car now. Today I had no choice but to drive the Portofino. I knew she didn't like the Ferrari because it was ostentatious, but all the other cars were currently in use by members of the staff. I heard her scoff as I opened the door for her.

"All the others are in use." I told her as she sat down.

"Or you just wanted to look important while wearing that sharp suit of yours." She laughed at me.

I shut her door and walked around to slide into the driver's seat. The engine roaring to life drew the attention of several men, and quite a few women, on the campus. I could partly see why she didn't like the car. She wasn't used to all the attention. Well, we would have to get her used to getting all the attention from now on, wouldn't we?

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## Chapter 68 - Reece-Gina's Boutique

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Reece

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I drove her uptown to Gina's boutique. They were expecting us. I had called earlier in the day and told them what I wanted. She had all the measurements for my Little Bunny and knew what color would suit her best.

"Where are we?" She asked when I pulled the car to a stop in front of the beautiful, upscale shop.

"This is Gina's place." I told her. "She makes the dresses for the ceremonies, but she also has her own shop."

"I didn't know that." She said smiling at the storefront. She always looked so radiant when she smiled genuinely

like that.

I walked around the car and opened the door for her. I was glad to see that she was learning to wait for me to do that for her. She took my hand and let me help her out of the car. She must have known that if we were going somewhere with wolves, so we would have to keep up appearances. That made me happy too.

As soon as I escorted her into the shop we were greeted by Gina and her staff. This was a full-service shop. There weren't just dresses for sale here. You could also purchase shoes and accessories. And there was a place to get hair and makeup to match. This was truly a good choice. I would have to thank Shane later.

"Welcome, Alpha and Luna, we are honored for your visit." Gina smiled as she inclined her head.

"It's nice to see you again Gina." Little Bunny greeted the woman like a friend.

"I have a dress picked out for you already, Luna, please try it on." Gina implored her.

"How did you get one ready so soon?" She asked.

"I called ahead and told her we would be coming." I admitted.

"How did you know I would agree to have dinner with you?" My Little Bunny was smiling at me with a hint of an evil smirk.

"I hoped." I smiled back at her in return. She giggled, making my wolf wag his tail.

Gina took her to the back of the shop then to try on the dress. It was apparently almost perfectly sized to fit her and according to the staff, the best color choice possible. I would be the judge of that. I didn't want to brag, but I had a pretty good sense of fashion myself.

A little while later Gina brought her out. They had dressed my Little Bunny in a midnight-blue strapless dress. It was cut low enough that it showed an ample

amount of her milky white cleavage. It was corseted, accentuating how small she really was. The skirt of the dress flared out a little, but it wasn't like a gown. It was more like several layers of silk and whatever the sheer material they had used combined with the way it was cut and sewn together. It looked like the skirt would twirl out around her if she were to spin, but it also went all the way down to her ankles. She was wearing matching midnight-blue stilettos with three-inch heels. They would close the distance between us a little.

"What do you think, Alpha?" Gina asked me. It took a minute for me to get my wolf to shut up then another minute to unstick my tongue to allow me to speak.

"You look beautiful." I choked out in as even of a tone as I could manage. I saw the smile of satisfaction on Gina's face, but for some reason my Little Bunny looked sad.

"Come on now, Luna, let's get you ready." Gina directed as she led my Little Bunny to a chair in the back.

They were there for a while. I decided to walk around the shop as I waited. There was some laughter at first, and some tense voices as well. I stopped listening pretty

quickly, but as I was looking at the diamond earrings in the case next to the counter, I heard something that caught me off guard.

"What's the point in all this?" Little Bunny asked.

"Why would you ask that, Luna?" Gina seemed as shocked by her question as I was.

"There's no point to it anyway." She sounded so sad, why was my Little Bunny so sad?

"I'm sure the Alpha would argue against that." Gina laughed.

"He's the reason I say there is no point."

"What? I don't understand Luna?" Neither do I Gina, so please keep probing. I thought to myself.



"You heard him when he saw me. He's always so apathetic when it comes to me. He could barely find it in himself to answer how I looked. And he seemed so mad." I was floored by what she said but Gina just laughed.

"Luna, you don't have much experience with men, do you?" She asked her. I wanted to growl that she better not, but that would make me a hypocrite, I had been with more women than I should have been.

"Not a lot, no." She admitted. Oh thank Goddess, thank you Little Bunny. I thought.

"Well, the Alpha wasn't mad honey, he was stunned. He didn't remember how to talk for a minute. And I'm betting he had to rein his wolf in too." Gina was spot on of course.

"I doubt that." Little Bunny wasn't convinced. I know it was my fault. I still had a lot to make up for. The thought made my chest ache and my sense of self hate grow even more.

"You just wait and see." Gina told her.

I stopped listening at that. I didn't want to hear anymore. Not to mention it sounded like they were almost done with her hair and makeup. The staff had apparently already picked out her accessories for the night, so I had nothing left to do but to pay for everything.

I was waiting near the front of the shop when they came out from the back. They had curled her hair and pinned the top of it back, they left a few strands down to frame her face, and the rest of her hair cascaded down her back.

She was wearing a black silk evening wrap draped over her shoulders, that mixed with her long dark hair laying on her shoulders hid most of the skin that was exposed, including the incomplete mark. Her makeup was once again simple, with light eye makeup and a hinting of color on the lips, but her complexion was so naturally beautiful that she didn't need the makeup as it was.

I walked to her slowly, giving myself more time to take

in the view, before I reached my hand out toward her.

"Gorgeous." I whispered as I kissed the back of her hand. I was trying to reassure her of how lovely I thought she really was, but I could see the skepticism in her eyes. She just wasn't going to trust me. "Thank you, Gina." I said before leading my Little Bunny out of the shop.

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Chapter 69 - Reece-Dinner And 'Dessert'

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Reece

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"Where are we going now?" She asked me apprehensively.

"To dinner of course." I told her.

"But dinner where?" She questioned me.

"Kaleidoscope." I answered.

"What!" She exclaimed. "That place is way too much."  
She seemed stressed out.

"It's owned by a pack member by the name of  
Lawrence."

"Oh, I get it now."

"Get what?" I asked her.

"We're only going to places owned by pack members. Is  
that a pride thing or something to do with me?" She was  
figuring it out.

"If pride had something to do with it, it would limit

where I bought a lot of other things."

"So, it is about me." She snapped.

"Can we talk about it over dinner?" I pleaded as I pulled the car to a stop at the restaurant, a valet was already coming to open our doors.

"Fine." She consented.

We were seated right away, to the groans and glares of many people who were waiting near the door. I had the staff take them all a drink and some appetizers on me to appease them. I didn't need a scene starting right now. Lawrence had also been informed of our impending arrival, so we were told that the Chef had prepared a special menu just for us, if we would be so kind to accept. We had no objections. So, the wine and water were delivered along with an hors d'oeuvres while we waited.

"Alright, why the pack only businesses tonight?" She asked as soon as the waiter had left the table. I watched as she took a bite of the hors d'oeuvres and saw the satisfaction spread across her face. I took a bite of the food as well before I answered.

"I wanted the extra security it would provide." I answered her honestly.

"For me or for you?" She looked at me skeptically. I raised an eyebrow, confused. "Are you worried someone might try to hurt me, or are you worried that I might bite you if there isn't a pack member around to keep me from misbehaving?" She smirked. I could tell the last part was a joke, but she had taken me completely by surprise that I couldn't help the laugh that escaped.

"If I said it was for both would that be bad?" I asked her. She smiled and giggled lightly, turning her head and looking up at me through her eyelashes. I don't think she knew how seductive she could be at times.

"It would be more honest than I expected, that's for sure." She giggled again. Her laughter always sounded like music to me.

"But, in all honesty Little Bunny, I chose pack

businesses because, Goddess forbid, if something were to happen there would be extra help around if I needed it. I'm sure I could handle whatever came our way, but just in case you know."

"Oh yes, you big strong man, you protect woman." She spoke in a chopped, caveman style voice.

"I'm serious Trinity, I am Alpha for a reason you know." I told her.

"Yeah, because your dad was Alpha." She laughed.

"No, not just because my father was Alpha. If I wasn't strong enough, then I would never have been given the title. We like to keep the title in the family, yes that's true, but if the heir is not strong enough, we admit that and give it to whoever is strong enough."

"I didn't know that." She admitted.

"I noticed." I snapped at her. "I am more than capable of fighting off most, if not any, threat that comes after you. The rogue that hurt you last time only managed it

because he had such a head start on me. But I was about to catch him. I only needed ten more seconds to stop him, but I didn't have that time and that pissed me off." I was explaining something to her that I both wanted her to know and I never wanted to tell her.

"Is that why you refused to come see me while I was recovering? And why you blamed yourself? And I know you blamed me as well."

"I never blamed you." I said automatically.

"What?"

"You were performing your duties. Taking women and children out for that hike was a good idea, you didn't know that was going to happen. And you were trying to save that boy, which you did. If you had half a second more, you would have been in the clear as well, but we all ran out of time. I should have stopped him sooner."

"Why are you saying all this?" She asked me, confused.



"You need to know the truth."

"Well, while you're on your truth kick, why did you save me?" She asked. Our soup had been delivered now, and we were slowly eating that while we talked.

"I didn't even stop to think about it. I just leapt over the edge. I could only think 'don't let her be dead'."

"Why? Wouldn't it be better for you to find a different mate?"

"We only get one mate." I glared at her.

"Has anyone ever tried finding a second mate?"

"No, because that's not how we wolves are. Do you want a different mate?" I asked her, angered by her words.

"I'm not the one who rejected my mate."

"Liar." I snapped at her. "You tried to run away from me multiple times, you told me you didn't choose me either and complained about being stuck with me."

"Yeah well, I was scared when I tried to run away. I didn't know what was happening at first, and I only tried to run once after learning you were my mate but everyone was putting a lot of information on me and nothing was going to be the same again. Also, I said all that after you rejected me." She argued.

"What if I had never rejected you?" I asked her curiously.

"We will never know, will we. Since you did reject me, and you do hate me and want nothing to do with me in that way." She was never going to forget those words I said.

"Well, hypothetically?" I asked.

"I don't know." She answered uncertainly.

"Hmm." I was curious about her answer.

We continued through the meal steadily. Each dish was better than the previous one. The inside of the restaurant added to the magical feel of being here. I noticed my Little Bunny looking all around. The restaurant was bright, highly decorated, with a glass ceiling that had been cut into kaleidoscope patterns. They had even used stained glass in the ceiling as well. The ceiling was several layers thick, so it even looked like a real kaleidoscope. Even with all its uniqueness, it was extremely elegant.

After the tense conversation we had been having, my Little Bunny worked hard to keep us to lighter subjects. We talked about the upcoming holiday. She apparently loved Christmas. I was glad that I had gone all out with having the staff decorate this year, it had mostly been for Mom's return, but it worked for my Little Bunny too.

We talked about what classes she wanted to take next now that her exams were done. But she adamantly refused to let us talk about anything truly personal. What I was truly thankful for though, was that we didn't argue at all. Not even the tense moment we had already made it through could be counted as an argument. It was our best conversation to date.

After dessert and a few more sips of wine, stuffed full with six courses of food, I walked her back to the car that a valet had brought back up for us. The light easy conversation continued all the way home.

I opened her door and helped her out like usual. I was working on being the perfect gentleman for her. I walked her to the elevator, knowing she wouldn't want to take the stairs in the stilettos she was wearing. I had wrapped my arm around her waist like I did when we were on our visits to the other packs. The move seemed so natural to me that I didn't question it.

I could feel the tension growing between us. Ever since we got back to the house. I didn't know if she could feel it or if she understood it, but it was driving me, and my wolf, insane. As soon as we were in the elevator and the doors closed, it was like the tension snapped.

I leaned down and buried my nose in her hair, inhaling her scent deeply.

"What are you doing?" She asked, stunned.

"Mmm, contemplating having seconds for dessert." I practically purred at her.

"What." She was shocked by my words. Her mouth was slightly open in awe. I took advantage of that.

I pressed my lips to hers, sliding my tongue past her open lips and flicking it against hers. She squealed in surprise, jumping at the feeling at first. She put her hands on my chest, almost like she thought about pushing me away or pulling me toward her, but she couldn't decide so she just left her hands there pressed against me.

I growled at the feel of her lips, the taste of her on my tongue. The flavor of her exploded into my mouth, apples, vanilla, spices, it was better than eating the apple pie she smelled like. And the danger of the taste of ozone that chased the taste of pie into my mouth, like I could get struck by lightning while devouring her kiss, it was exciting.

With my hand at the nape of her neck and another on

her waist I pulled her body toward mine, but she stumbled with the unfamiliar shoes she was wearing. She pushed me away then, looking at me with lust mixed with fear. I know my eyes must have been full of only lust, a burning desire to have her, but she didn't know how much I needed her right now. The elevator doors chose that moment to ding open on the fourth floor.

"I won't be your plaything, Reece, or a distraction. I won't have any of this unless things are mutual between us." She was almost in tears for some reason before she ran off the elevator, bolting for her room.

"Don't you know they are?" I growled quietly to the empty elevator before going back to my room and taking a really long cold shower.

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Chapter 70 - Trinity-Christmas Part 1

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Trinity

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The dinner date with Reece was a total surprise. I didn't expect it at all. But I enjoyed myself, probably more than I should have. But it turns out he was only after one thing. Why can't we get closer, get to know each other, without him wanting to move in that direction? I don't want to be a distraction to him, just a plaything to him to use when he sees fit.

The bad thing is, it was really hard for me to turn him down, my body wants him. My heart tells me I love him. But I know that I don't know him enough for that. I need a better connection with him, something more than just fate telling me he's the one. I need him to tell me I'm the one for him. I need to know that he accepts me and that he won't find solace in anyone else. But will I ever get that?

I sincerely hope so. I hope that we can have more nights like Saturday. More nights where we talk and get

closer. More time where we just enjoy each other's time.

Tomorrow is Christmas. That was one thing for me to look forward to. I was wrapping the last gift I needed to put under the tree. I loved how elaborately the house had been decorated. I don't know if it was like this all the time or not, but it was wonderful.

The whole house had been covered in lights so just staring at its twinkling beauty was enough to make me smile. The tree that had been brought in and placed in the great room, the main living room, was massive. It had to be at least twelve feet tall and it was decorated with lights, ribbon, bulbs, tinsel, the whole works. There were little animal ornaments covered in gold and silver that decorated the tree as well. And at the very top, instead of a star or an angel, there was a full moon glowing atop the tree.

A giant train track had been set up that went up and around the tree, circled the room, and came back to circle the base of the tree. All around the track, at different points, pieces of a miniature Christmas village had been set up. Little houses, a church, shops, Santa's village, it



even had trees painted with a frosting of snow. Twinkling lights lined the train tracks and followed the village as well. There had been white fluff put around all the little houses to look like snow.

There were snowmen scattered throughout the house. Sometimes in groups like a family, sometimes standing alone. Stars and snowflake patterns had been hung from the ceiling in shining silver and gold. There was a miniature Santa with a sleigh and his reindeer strung up in the entry hall, he looked like he was flying to deliver the gifts to everyone.

Stockings had been hung by the beautiful fireplace. They all looked brand new compared to the little village pieces. There were three stockings in all. One each for Lila, Reece, and myself. Being included without asking was enough to make me smile. At least whoever had decorated considered me part of the household.

There were small traces all throughout the bottom floor of the house. Wreaths, tinsel, garland, mistletoe, poinsettia plants. All the traditional decorations. It was like walking into a Christmas movie taking place at a castle or at least a rich person's house. Well, this place could be a castle, and Reece was obscenely rich, so I guess that was fitting.

There were small traces of decorations upstairs as well. Garland and ribbons decorated every banister in the house. Some lights here and there, and mistletoe hung sporadically. But nothing much had happened elsewhere on the higher floors. I took it upon myself to decorate my room and hallway slightly, no one said I couldn't.

I put lights up in my room, around every window, around the fireplace, and made a small canopy of lights above the whole room. I put snowmen, reindeer, Santa, and anything I could think of up and down the hall. It was only going to be for a short time, but I wanted to see these things to make me happy. The two weeks that I got to see them was magical to me.

I had been trying to avoid thinking about Christmas morning. It would be my first without my family. I was sure it was going to be emotional for me, but I would have to get over it somehow. I had to grow up, and I wasn't going to be alone after all. I would have Lila, and Reece I suppose. But who knows if he would behave himself?

I was both looking forward to the morning and dreading it at the same time. Only time will tell me how it would go. I just had to face it as best as I could.

I woke early on Christmas morning. I was nervous, and I wanted to be ready for the day. I took a quick shower and dressed nicely. I decided to wear a midnight-blue skirt that came to my knees, it was simple, no extra designs or fluff, but it was pretty and quite comfortable. I paired it with a white silk shirt and gold jewelry. The look was simple but looked classy.

When I went downstairs, I had expected to eat breakfast first. That's how things had always been done when I was growing up. So, it took me by surprise when Reece called out to me.

"Where are you going Little Bunny?" He sounded confused yet amused at the same time.

"To breakfast." I told him, bewildered.

"Don't you want to open gifts first?" He asked me, a slight smirk on his face.

"Before we eat?" I asked.

"Is it that strange?"

"It's different for me, I always opened them after." I informed him.

"Hmm, well let's not wait. I want us all to open them before we eat." He smiled at me.

"Alright." I was glad I had brought his last gift down last night instead of waiting until this morning.

"Come on you two." Lila called out from the other room. I smiled at her eager voice.

"Let's go." Reece said, holding his hand out toward me. I didn't take his hand but walked next to him, he placed his hand lightly on my right hip and he walked beside me.

As soon as we entered the room, there was a bright flash of light.

"Memories." Lila said once I could see again. She had a camera in her hand.

"Mom!" Reece growled.

"What? It's your first Christmas together, someone needs to take pictures." She smiled happily.

"It's not that special is it?" I asked her.

"Are you kidding? It's very special, this is the first of many Christmases together but there will never be anything like the first one." She was so happy that I just didn't want to burst her bubble. I just don't think Reece and I will ever have happy memories.

"If you say so." Reece grimaced. Clearly, he didn't think things would be happy either.

We started passing out gifts. Lila wanted to go first, so she handed us all of the ones she bought for us.

"I might have gone a little overboard." She smiled happily as she handed us gift after gift. "I just couldn't help myself."

"This is way too much Lila." I told her as she handed me my tenth present.

"Nonsense, you're the first daughter I ever got to buy a gift for, I am so excited." I could feel that excitement too. It just made me feel weird, getting a gift from someone that wasn't my family. Reece and I looked at each other and laughed nervously as our embarrassment kept growing along with the piles.

"Go on, open them." Lila insisted.

I did as she instructed and was stunned at the array of gifts. Lila had gotten me a beautiful, and delicate looking, gold watch. Several different outfits. There were books she thought I would enjoy. A violin to replace the one that had gone missing from the music room. And a bottle of perfume with a soft vanilla scent.

"That perfume is developed by a wolf, so the smell is not too strong. It won't affect a wolf's sense of smell." She was smiling happily. "And I know how much Reece loves the smell of vanilla." She added mischievously.

"Mother." He said embarrassed.

"What, you do." She giggled.

"Just be quiet." Reece put his head in his hands and groaned. I laughed.

"Thank you for everything, Lila. They were all wonderful gifts."

"It was my pleasure dear. I am so happy to have you here to shop for.

"Alright, let's move on." Reece cleared his throat loudly before he spoke. "Shall we give you all your gifts first, Mom, it would only be fair." He grinned at her.

"No, you should exchange each other's first." She countered. I was not in a hurry to give Reece his gifts, so I backed him up.

"No, I think we should give you your gifts, Lila." I smiled at her sweetly and she caved.

"Oh, alright. Fine, hand them over." She laughed, holding her hands out.

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Chapter 71 - Trinity-Christmas Part 2

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Trinity

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Reece gave his mother a handful of presents, less than what she had given us, but still not small. I had only gotten Lila three things, but I didn't know what she would want. I felt embarrassed now. She proceeded to open the gifts, first Reece's and then mine. I had gotten her a lovely locket that was a perfect circle, it looked like a full moon, and on the back was a wolf paw print with the words, Thank you Lila, Love Trinity, engraved on the back. I had also gotten her a book, one I thought should be in the library but was missing. And the last present, was a collage of restored photos I found in storage after talking to her that day. I had them sent out and restored to their original beauty and arranged in a collage. The pictures had her, Reece, and the former Alpha at various stages.

"Oh, Collin." She sighed as she looked at the pictures.  
"Trinity, this is lovely, thank you so much."

"I'm glad you like it." I told her, smiling in relief.

"I love it. I have been missing his face so much." She was nearly in tears.

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean to make you cry."

"They're happy tears." She told me. "Don't be sad."

Once she wiped away her tears, she said it was time for Reece and me to exchange our gifts. I turned to look at him, nervous and apprehensive. What would he think? What is he going to say about the gifts that I got him? Only time will tell. I took a deep breath to settle my nerves and got his gifts.

I gave him the gifts that I thought of after talking to his mom first. He opened the first of the two, it was the largest of his gifts. I noticed the shock on his face, and the heartache. It was a guitar. A classic. And it looked almost exactly like the one in the picture of him and his father. He didn't say anything, but he opened the other gift that went with it. I had also had the picture of him and his father restored. Their smiling faces looked as if the picture had been taken recently with a digital camera instead of over a decade ago. It was no longer creased, now it was set lovingly inside a beautiful frame so he could display how much he loved his father.

Reece looked at me in awe, his face not hiding how shocked he was for once.

"When did you do this?" He asked me.

"After I was done recovering, and we had our argument. I found this picture in the library and talked to your mom about you and your dad." I was scared to tell him, I thought he would be upset about it all. "I know you don't have reminders about your parents around the house. I thought it was hard with them both gone, but I thought, maybe, with your mom back you would be fine with having the pictures up again."

"Little Bunny." He sighed, the emotion in his voice clear. Before I knew it, he had hugged me, not tight, but gently. "Thank you." He whispered to me softly. I was glad I had done this for him.

After composing himself, Reece handed me my first gift.

"Alright, time for you to open one." He said. It was a thin box about the size of his hand. When I unwrapped it I found a jewelry set inside. There was a pendant in the shape of a wolf's paw, and it was covered in tiny diamonds. There were matching earrings, also in the shape of paws. And lastly there was a bracelet that

looked like a path of walking paw prints, it would look like a wolf walked around my wrist when I wore it. They were all stunningly beautiful, and obviously expensive.

"They're gorgeous." I said honestly.

"Good, I'm glad you like them. Knowing your tendency to hate over the top things I thought you might not like them." He laughed nervously.

"I don't hate them, not really, I just think it gets to be a little too much sometimes." I smiled at him. "But I really do love them." I admitted.

"Here, your next one." I said, trying to hide my giggle. He noticed and raised his eyebrows.

"Why are you laughing?"

"I'm enjoying myself." I told him, trying to hide my true agenda for the day.

"Uh huh." He looked at the package nervously before he started to unwrap it.

He opened the watch set I had bought him. The platinum and black gold looked even better in person than it did when I ordered it online. The military style ID bracelet was masculine enough that he should be able to wear it no problem. He took the watch out and looked at it.

"This is really nice, Little Bunny." He commented. "This is actually perfect. I could use this all the time, since it would go with everything."

"That's great." I smirked. That's when he turned the watch over.

"Oh, it's engraved." He noted. "Alpha, that's simple." He commented as he picked up the bracelet. "Is this engraved too?" He asked looking over the bracelet. He didn't see anything on the top, but he flipped it over and I noticed his eyes go wide. I almost lost it then, my laughter was fighting to be let out.

"You think you're funny, don't you?" He asked me, a growl in his voice. I laughed, long and loud.

"Don't you like it?" I asked him. "I had your name put on it."

"That's not my name and you know it."

"Aww, but I went through the trouble of having it engraved just for you."

"I'm glad you did something like this though, it means I don't feel as bad about this." He said handing me another small box.

"What's this?"

"Open it." He demanded with an evil glint in his eyes.

I opened the long thin box. Inside was a beautiful charm bracelet with an engraved nameplate in the middle. I picked it up and looked at the charms. There was a carrot, a rabbit's foot, and a bunny. And on the

nameplate were the words Little Bunny.

"You jerk." I laughed at him.

"Right back at you." He snapped playfully.

"I'm not a bunny."

"And I'm not Fido." We were laughing near hysterically after that, Lila watching us with a smile on her face.

"Fine, I got one more for you, big guy." I smiled at him playfully. "You're going to love it."

"Yeah, I have one more for you too, depending on what this last one is, I might just say you deserve it too." I growled playfully.

"Here." I was trying to keep my laughter from bursting out of me again as I handed him the last box. It was similar in size to the last one he had handed me. When he opened it, he yelled out.

"Oh, come on, you've got to be kidding me." He was laughing harder than before.

"Read it, read it." I insisted between laughs. He picked up the silver dog collar, it was a choke chain, and read the tag that was attached. It said "FIDO" in big bold letters.

"You're a brat."

"It's so I can yank your chain when you get out of hand." I laughed. Lila, who had been watching us in silence this whole time, finally laughed.

"That's perfect." She laughed. "Isn't she the greatest Reece?" She asked him.

"Oh, just the best. And now I don't feel so bad giving her the last gift I have either." He smirked.

"I don't see anything else for me to open." I told him,



looking around.

"You need to follow me." He said grabbing me by the hand and pulling me behind him.

"Where are we going?"

"You'll see." He chuckled.

He dragged me through the house and out into the garage. There sat a car I had never seen there before. It was a brand-new Jeep Cherokee with red and gold ribbons on it. The vanity plate on the front read LTTL BNNY.

"That is so not funny." I snapped at him. "There was no need to get another car."

"This is the least conspicuous car we have now. And it's all for you, Little Bunny."

"That plate is coming off at least."

"Not a chance." He laughed.

"You're so mean." I growled at him.

"Takes one to know one." He laughed at me.

It was a fun day. I hadn't expected to enjoy my Christmas without my family this much, but it was great so far. After Reece showed me the car, we had our breakfast. Abigail went all out and prepared an amazing meal and was already preparing dinner.

Just after noon my family, all of them, came to celebrate with us. I was able to give the rest of them their gifts. From Noah and Nikki, to Aunt Eve and the others, even Grandfather came. They all enjoyed their gifts, and I was happy with what they gave me. And for once Grandfather was not being overly strict and cruel to me. He did disappear with Reece briefly but there was nothing that brought the mood down.

Juniper, Cedar, and Paul joined us shortly after my family got there. We exchanged our gifts. I was happier than I thought I had any right to be. Everyone decided to join us for dinner, which I think was planned long in

advance. It was the perfect end to the day.

We were just seeing them all off as a group when Lila squealed.

"Ooooh, Finally."

"What?" I asked her, confused.

"I have been waiting for the two of you to end up under one of the mistletoe bunches for the last week at least, and it finally happened." She was smiling like a loon, but I just looked up at it like it was a bomb.

"Oooohhh." I heard Aunt Eve and Nikki coo.

"Go on then." Grandfather encouraged. Uncle Wesley smiled at me. Everyone else, just stared at me, trying to gage my reaction. I couldn't say no, not with my family here. Reece seemed uncertain about whether he should make his move as well, so I initiated.

I gripped Reece's jacket and pulled him toward me. He

looked shocked, stunned into immobility. Even while standing on my tiptoes I was unable to reach him unless he bent down. I tugged him again, pulling him a little closer. Finally, with him close enough, I place my lips lightly onto his. This broke him out of his stupor, he put his hands on my hips and kissed me back.

The kiss was quick but heated. We broke apart after just a moment, but the heat from his lips remained on mine.

"Oh my." Aunt Eve gushed.

"Well." Nikki added.

Carter cleared his throat, drawing our attention back to the group.

"Sorry." I blushed.

"It was just a kiss, nothing to be sorry about." Lila said.

"Yeah, don't worry about it." Juniper was looking at me, her inquisitive eyes boring into me. I predict a barrage of messages soon.

"We'll be going now." Carter declared as he opened the door.

"Goodbye everyone, I love you." I heard a chorus of "love you too"s before they all left the house.

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Chapter 72 - Trinity-The Last Full Moon Meeting Of The Year

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Trinity

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Things were slowly getting better with Reece. I didn't get to see him all the time, with his busy schedule, but with the holiday season he had a lot of free time. The day after Christmas I was called to his office to have a meeting with him and Michael, the elder. I knew it was for the upcoming full moon meeting. I would have thought they would have had this meeting already, since it was only three days away now.

When I walked in, the first thing I noticed was that my usual chair was gone. Well not gone really, just moved. It was sitting on the other side of Reece's desk, just a few feet away from his. I wonder if the Elders didn't like the distance that he was keeping between us.

"Trinity, my dear Luna, how are you child?" Michael asked me in his typical over the top condescending way. I know he didn't mean anything about it, but had I had a wolf my hackles would rise from hearing it every time.

"Hello Michael, I'm doing well, and how are you?" I asked him as he leaned in for a slight hug. When he pulled away, I noticed an angry look in Reece's eyes. I took my seat and sat quietly beside my mate.

"Now, we can discuss what will happen during the full moon this month." Michael smiled happily.

"Do I truly need to be here?" I asked him, a little miffed by the situation. "It's not like I can be there, anyway." My voice held an edge I had not intended it to, my anger was stronger than I thought. I didn't want to be cooped up anymore, but I knew why I was staying inside. I truly didn't want to have anything else happen to me.

"What do you mean you can't go?" Michael asked me, perplexed.

"With everything that has happened lately, we feel it is best for her to not go anywhere for the time being." Reece answered for me. I lowered my head in depression.

"Ahh, yes, I do understand that." Michael's voice gave off an understanding tone as he eyed me sadly. "I'm truly sorry my dear. Perhaps we should have left you out of the meeting." He added.

"It's fine. Eventually I would need to attend every meeting anyway, right?" I asked him, forcing a smile.

"Yes, that's right dear, you will."

"So, what is the plan for this month?" I asked them, trying to lighten the mood somewhat.

"Well, it is nearly the end of the month, so therefore the end of the year. We traditionally have a bonfire as the moon for December is called the cold moon, along with the oak moon and the long nights moon. We typically try to burn at least some oak during the bonfire, but it's mostly staving off the long and cold night with the fire. This year though, I would like to make it a bit of a pre New Year's party for the pack."

"This gathering is purely voluntary right? They're not required to attend."

"That's right, they will come if they choose to, which a lot decide to skip it because they're home with their family this time of year." Reece answered for me.



"Alright, so what kind of turn out will there be, do you think?"

"It's hard to know, but we will prepare for more than the usual, just to be safe. That has been the plan in the past." I nodded my head.

"Looks like you've got it all worked out." I told them, the regret at not being included seeping into my voice.

"Well, since we know what will be going on, I will relay the information." Michael said as he stood and left the room alone. I was about to follow him when Reece called out to me.

"Wait, Little Bunny." I sat back down and looked at him, confused.

"Yes?" I asked him.

"About the night of the full moon?" He started but

seemed hesitant.

"What about it?"

"Will you have dinner with me?" He finally managed.

"Don't we always eat dinner together?" I asked him, confused.

"I mean, just the two of us." I noticed his embarrassment. He was trying to force himself here. Apparently between his mom, the elders, and possibly Noah, they were forcing him to be a better mate to me. Well, we could hope that it would get better during this time.

"Alright." I agreed, not sure what to expect.

"Really?" He sounded shocked at first, but then broke out into the biggest grin I've ever seen on his face before. "Wonderful. I will meet you after I greet the pack at the gathering."

"Wait, you're going to leave the gathering?" Shock filled my voice.

"It's not an important event, and you can't be there this year. I don't want you to be alone."

"I've never been to any of them before." I admitted.

"I guessed at much." He frowned. "I don't know why your Grandfather was so hard on you, but I'm sorry things were so tough for you."

"It's fine, aside from the pack related stuff, my life was great. My family was the best I could ask for. And I never knew my mother or father so I can't miss them." I tried to pretend like it didn't bother me, but I felt the stinging of tears in my eyes.

"Little Bunny?" He seemed to be asking me if I was alright with those words as he came closer and gently wrapped his arms around me. "We both have scars from our pasts. Let's help each other overcome them, eventually." He whispered so quietly that I barely heard him.

"Reece?" I asked him, confused. He shook his head as if to say no before kissing me softly on top of my head.

He pulled away from me after that. Sadness and regret filling his eyes. I was sure the regret had been for being so close to me, getting emotional with me.

"I have another meeting soon, Little Bunny, but I will see you at dinner." He smiled sadly before holding a hand out to help me to my feet. He kissed the back of my hand gently before letting me go. I left, confused and uncertain about what had just happened and my feelings.

Over the next three days I was needlessly nervous around Reece. I didn't know the real reason why he had asked me to have dinner with him. It surprised me when I found out that he was going to skip the gathering to come back and spend time with me. But he could just be bored with all the routine. Maybe he wasn't going to stop until he had conquered his conquest. I just didn't know what to think, but my body wanted to turn to a puddle whenever he was around.

On a positive note I was fully registered for my classes

for the next semester now. I had passed all my classes with near perfect scores, thanks to my friends passing along the assignments. I was lucky to have them, and I couldn't wait to finally get to go to class with them again.

I had Juniper come over the day before my dinner with Reece. I wanted her to help me pick out something to wear.

"You're going on a date?" She asked me incredulously.

"We're having dinner, but I don't know where." I admitted.

"Is this your first date?" She was in super excited inquisitive mode now.

"No, we had one last weekend." I confessed to her.

"What?" She gasped. "Why am I just hearing about this now?" She demanded.

"Well, it was right before Christmas and the same day as my exams, so I kind of just forgot to mention it."

"You forgot? Oh, come on, this is major. Girl you need to tell me these things." I laughed at her intensity. "Tell me everything that happened." She insisted.

I obliged. I told her everything that had happened after I left the test room. From when Reece showed up to ask me to dinner, to getting my dress, and then the meal. I told her how, though awkward at times, we didn't argue at all. And how he finished the night with a kiss that I was not prepared for. When I was done, her mouth was hanging open in shock.

"Oh my Goddess." She breathed. "Girl, what are you going to do if he tries that again?"

"I don't know. Oh Goddess, why does he only want me for sex? Why can't he fall in love with me?" I asked of no one in particular and I grabbed my head in frustration.

"Do you love him?" Juniper seemed surprised by my

question and already guessed my meaning.

"I can't help it. The bond made me like him already, and he's not a bad guy."

"Trinity! Look at what the asshole has said to you." She yelled at me.

"I know, but he's a great alpha to the pack, he's fair, and when he's not intentionally being a jerk to me, he can be really nice."

"You're making excuses for him." She accused.

"I can't help but notice it. I live with him. I see how he is with everyone. And, not to mention, he has saved my life multiple times."

"Hero syndrome or what do they call it." She put a finger to her chin as she thought. "Stockholm syndrome, that's what you've got."

"That's when you fall in love with your kidnapper." I

laughed at her.

"Florence Nightingale Syndrome?" She asked.

"Nope, that's falling in love with your health care worker." I was laughing so hard at her trying to discredit my emotions that I was not feeling stressed anymore.

"Fine, if there is no syndrome where you fall in love with your rescuer simply because they saved you then I'm making one, you have Trinity Syndrome." She pointed at me when she declared this.

"Why name it after me? Shouldn't it be his fault?"

"Reece Syndrome?" She asked. "Doesn't have the same ring to it, besides anything with him is likely never to bring you peace."

"No peace?" I snickered. "No Reece Syndrome, then I get no peace, or pieces." I started laughing so hard I couldn't sit up.



"Oh Goddess, Trinity, never talk to me about Reece's pieces. No, wait, scratch that. Tell me everything about them. That man is hot." She was blushing and laughing so hard I could hardly understand a word she said.

"I haven't even seen Reece's pieces yet, so shut up." I blushed. I knew my face had to be crimson with how embarrassed I felt.

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## Chapter 73 - Trinity-Dinner With Reece

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Trinity

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Somehow, we managed to settle down long enough for

me to pick an outfit for the night of the full moon. I didn't know what he had planned, but I didn't think it was going to be another fancy restaurant. Even he said that last week was kind of a special occasion because I was going to be trapped at home for a long time. So, I had a feeling we would be staying home, but Juniper didn't agree with me.

I had selected a pair of jeans that were so dark blue they almost looked black, but they were also low riders and showed an ample amount of my hips, this was Juniper's insistence. She had told me I needed to show some skin, never mind that it was the end of December. 'Not like you'll get cold anyway' she had played off the wintry weather.

I paired them with a sky-blue halter top that left everything from my belly button down bare. Over that I would wear a black denim jacket that was so dark the silver buttons seemed to shine. I thought the entire outfit was too flirty, but that was reining Juniper in a lot from what she had originally planned. I really did want to get to know Reece more before I slept with him, but Juniper seemed to be in a hurry for me to get him into my pants.

The long awaited (dreaded) night arrived. I took the time to do my hair a little different than usual. I did two

small yet elaborate braids, one down each side of my head, then pulled the hair until the braid was loose and the twists looked bigger. I left a little of my bangs to hang in my face before pulling the braids and remaining hair back into a low ponytail. It wasn't super fancy, but I thought it would go well with what I was wearing tonight.

After my hair was done, I did my light make-up. Just a dusting up shadow on my eyes, mascara, and some lipstick. When I looked in the mirror, I didn't really recognize myself. I never dressed like this. Reece was going to think I was being stupid if I went out there like this. I looked at the clock, it was just after seven, if I hurried, I could pick something else.

That's when I heard the knock on my door.

"Little Bunny?" Reece called from the door. Crap, I had been too focused on getting ready. I hadn't been paying attention. I didn't notice his scent coming down the hall.

"Coming." I answered. Oh Goddess, I don't have time to change now. I opened the door slowly, nervously. I

saw him standing there dressed in a pair of dark jeans and a light green t-shirt with a black leather jacket over it. We almost matched, and it made me want to laugh.

"You really do like the color green, don't you?" I asked him.

"I could say the same with you and blue." He commented as he tugged lightly on the lacey front of my halter top. The slight tug helped pull me toward him and made my breasts strain against the shirt, my eyes went wide.

"Well, blue is my favorite color. Just like I'm guessing green is yours."

"It used to be, but I'm really starting to like blue." He smirked at me causing me to look away as I blushed. He chuckled slightly before continuing. "Are you ready to go have dinner?" He asked me.

"Yeah, just let me grab my shoes." I said. I hadn't put them on yet when I opened the door for him.

I walked over to sit on the bed, my shoe choice for the night was sitting next to it on the floor. I had chosen boots, but not ones meant for warmth or hiking. These boots had a modest heel, at least compared to those stilettos, of only an inch and a half. I leaned forward and pulled them on, up and over the jeans, all the way to my knees. I could feel his eyes on me as I moved, but I didn't look at him, I didn't need that distraction.

When I stood and looked back at him, his honey golden eyes looked nearly amber now with whatever emotion he was hiding at the moment. Usually when his eyes darkened like that he was mad at me, but he's the one that asked me out, even though I know it was probably suggested by someone else.

"Ready?" He asked me again.

"Yup." I nodded my head. He held his hand out toward me like he had done before and this time I took it. He seemed satisfied, smiling as he wrapped his arm around my waist.

"Stairs or elevator?" He asked me as we walked out of my room.

"Stairs." I answered quickly, too quickly, he looked at me and laughed.

"I'm not going to attack you every time we're in the elevator." He smiled darkly. "I'm not an animal."

"Oh, you're not? And here I thought you were the puppy that I was trying to train." I giggled. He grinned even wider.

"Does that mean I get to act like a bad dog, so you have to train me more." I couldn't tell if he was joking or not and just looked at him. "Hmmm, that was an interesting response. Don't worry, I will behave myself." His evil smile turned into an angelic one. I didn't trust it one bit.

He didn't take me to the garage, so I was right that we weren't going out to dinner. Where he took me was the solarium.

"Dinner under the stars." He said smiling. I saw that there had been a small table brought into the room and covered with a white tablecloth. There was a delicious looking meal waiting for us that was clearly made by Abigail. Candles were lit on the table and around the room, the soft glowing light gave off a beautifully romantic atmosphere.

"This looks lovely." I smiled at him as he walked to the table and pulled out a chair for me.

"Won't you have a seat, mia amata?" His smile was radiant and charming, and almost enough to draw me in to get lost forever.

"Italian?" I looked at him quizzically.

"So, you speak it as well?" He smiled sheepishly.

"It was one of the many languages Grandfather insisted on me learning, so yes ragazzo amante, I speak it as well."

"Lover boy?" He grinned. "Is that how you see me?"

"Well, Fido is already Italian, I could have called you cucciolo, but I didn't think you'd like that."

"No, piccolo coniglietto, I wouldn't."

"Don't call me a bunny." He laughed at my pouty face.

"And remember that I am no puppy." He growled playfully.

I took the seat he offered me. His hands lingered momentarily on my shoulders after he helped push my chair in. He sat across from me, the candles flickering against his honeyed complexion made him look mysterious.

The dinner was delicious. Juicy steaks prepared so they had just the right amount of pink left. Roasted potatoes with parmesan and garlic. Grilled asparagus crisped and caramelized just slightly. There was a Caesar salad and breadsticks to go with it as well.

Reece poured us both a glass of red wine.



"What are you doing?" I asked him.

"Having dinner with you." He said sarcastically.

"I'm only eighteen, I'm not old enough to drink that." I reminded him.

"I won't tell if you don't." He joked.

"Honestly, you're such a bad influence." I joked with him as I took the glass of wine. I had tried some before, taste-testing with my cousin when we were growing up. Carter and I wanted to see what all the fuss was about it. It was alright, but not my favorite. Hopefully that changed sometime over the last eight years.

This wine was sweet, not too overpowering, which made it easy to drink.

"How is it?" He asked me.

"Better than the one I tried when I was eleven." I told him. He raised an eyebrow. "I was curious." I laughed.

"Looks like I need to keep an eye on you, if you do whatever makes you curious." His innuendo was not lost on me.

"Heel Fido." I snapped. "I don't 'do' whatever makes me curious." He laughed.

"Fine, but I am curious as to what does interest you."

"Why?" His curiosity confused me. Why was he so interested in me?

"You intrigue me. You never do what I expect you to do. Just when I think I have you figured out you do the opposite of what I expect you to do."

"So, I'm nothing more than a curiosity? Something for you to explore, figure out, play with for a bit then get bored with?"

"Why do you do that?" He asked me.

"Do what?"

"Assume the worst of everything I say."

"Maybe because I've been given plenty of reasons to think that way about you." I countered.

"But can't you see that I have been trying to apologize and make it up to you?" He almost seemed like he was pleading with me.

"Not really."

"What is it going to take to make you believe what I say?" He demanded.

"I don't know, Reece. I just don't know yet."

"I'm going to keep trying." His voice sounded sincere,

and I truly hoped he was.

"I hope so." I said quietly.

We ate our dinner, and Reece brought out a small cake for dessert. It was a carrot cake, which was my favorite. I thought about asking how he knew, but I was certain Noah or Carter told him, or more likely Abigail, about my preferences. The meal was excellent, the conversation and atmosphere, not so much.

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Chapter 74 - Trinity-Under The Stars

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Trinity

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I thought the night would be over once we were done eating, I didn't know what else Reece could have in mind. So, when he pulled my chair out for me and asked me to walk with him, I was skeptical at first but joined him.

Reece wrapped his arm around my waist like he usually did when we walked together. He led me outside and into the night. We walked silently through the trees. The stars were just bright enough to illuminate the path so we could see without having to use the sight granted to us by the Goddess.

It didn't take us long to reach the destination that Reece had in mind. It was not far from the house but was in the opposite direction of the gathering. There was a clearing in the trees that opened up into a small alcove in the rocky side of the mountain. It was crescent shaped faced out toward the edge of the cliffs and over the trees below. Reece had a blanket laid out in the middle of the alcove and a thermos sitting nearby.

"I thought we could watch the stars and see the full moon together." He smiled confidently as he pulled me into the center of the clearing.

"Why are you being so different? Why are you treating me like this? Did Noah say something to you?" I needed to know. I couldn't live with not understanding anymore. "Or did the Elders tell you not to have so much distance between us anymore?"

"What are you talking about?" He looked genuinely confused with his brows creased and his head turned to the side, I didn't want to tell him how puppy like it looked.

"Who made you change your mind?" I asked him.

"Would you believe me if I said you? And that I knew everything all along."

"Your hot and cold attitude is giving me a headache, and maybe even whiplash."

"Can we just start over Little Bunny?" He pleaded. "Let's start this all from the beginning. Tonight will be our new first, everything before today doesn't matter."

"Alright, let's try. It will be better than constantly fighting."

"Good." He smiled so brightly that it warmed me even from a distance. "Come on, watch the stars with me, please." His hand was held out toward me again, this time I took his hand willingly and let him pull me to him.

Reece pulled me down with him as he sat, setting me between his thighs and resting me against his chest and wrapping his arms around me.

"Is this alright, Little Bunny?" He asked me.

"For now." I told him, my voice betraying how nervous I was with a slight trembling and a squeak near the end. I heard him chuckle at the sound as he settled me more firmly against him.

We watched the stars, talking about nonsense things for so long that I lost track of the time. He asked me about my childhood and told me about his.

"So, you never went to school?" He asked me, shocked.

"Nope, Grandfather didn't want me to embarrass him, so I was homeschooled. Noah and Carter went to school like normal though."

"That had to suck. I knew Noah went to school, he was my best friend growing up, would be now too if he wasn't so mad at me."

"That's your own fault, not mine." I laughed. "I didn't tell him anything. I didn't say anything to any of my family."

"But you did tell your friends?" He questioned me.

"More like Juniper the super sleuth figured it out on her own."

"Vincent knows too, doesn't he?"



"He was there the day Juniper was asking me about everything, and while I was ordering ice cream, she told all three of the guys."

"So, you didn't tell them I was a jerk just to spite me?" He asked.

"No, and I told Juniper to not be mad at you. Even recently she was trying to convince me you're the bad guy but-." I stopped myself, thinking about what I was about to say.

"But what?" He asked me, I could hear the curiosity in his voice.

"No, it's nothing." I evaded.

"Don't think you can do that. You've got to tell me now." He implored me. "Come on." He squeezed me with his large, muscular arms.

"Nope, not saying." I refused firmly.

"Tease." He said as he buried his face into my neck, we were both laughing but the feel of him against my skin, his lips just inches away from where he marked me. I shivered.

"Cold?" He asked, tightening his hold once more but not moving his face. The feeling of his breath moving against my skin as he breathed just that one word made me squirm, my body was beyond shivering now.

"N-n-no." I stammered.

"Hmm." His humming sent a jolt vibrating through my whole body.

Reece took his right arm off of me, bringing it between us. He moved my hair out of the way, the little bit that had come loose to fall down onto my shoulder.

"You're unique, Trinity, you know that don't you?" He whispered into my ear. "You're beautiful, smart, funny, stubborn. You're my little bunny." His breath was getting

closer and closer until finally I felt his lips touch gently against my mark. I shivered again and gasped at the feel of his tender kiss.

"You drive me wild, Little Bunny." His whispered voice was nearly a growl as said the words. I felt his tongue press against my mark then, the pressure against it, of my body knowing it was him pressing against it, made my mind go blank.

He lapped at the mark before biting it gently. I gasped at the feeling of it. He turned my head to the side, forcing me to face him. He pressed a gentle kiss to my lips and when I didn't pull away, he pressed it further, sliding his tongue into my mouth. His kiss grew more frantic, more hungry. His tongue probed and searched the inside of my mouth like he was discovering a new land. He turned me in his arm then, pulling me onto his lap and wrapping his arms around me and deepening the kiss. I felt his groan as he pushed me against him. He nipped at my bottom lip before pulling away.

He was about to bury his face in my neck again when I came to my senses.

"NO!" I cried. "We can't." I pushed away from him and

got shakily to my feet. I could see the fire, the hunger in his eyes. But I could also see the pain of my rejection in his eyes.

"Why not?" He asked me. "I wouldn't have gone too far, not out here."

"I need to know that we feel the same way about each other first Reece, I don't want to just be another notch." I sobbed. I wanted him. I really did. My heart wanted him. My body needed him. But my mind would not let me be with him until I knew how he felt.

I ran. I couldn't help it. I turned around and ran back toward the house. I could hear him calling after me.

"Little Bunny?" His voice sounded hurt. "Trinity!" He called after me again and again, but I just ran back home, back to my room. I wanted him, and if I stayed, I would give in before knowing if he accepted me or not, before knowing if he loved me or not.

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## Chapter 75 - Reece-New Years Plans

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Reece

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I needed to find a way to change her mind. I needed to convince her that I was wrong when I said those things before. The look on my Little Bunny's face when she ran away crushed me. I never wanted to see that look again.

After she left me, sitting there in the clearing, I was at a loss. I didn't know what to do. What I did know, no

what I needed, was a cold shower, or a dip in the river. I needed to cool my head, and other things.

I only have a few days of vacation left before life gets busy again, so I want to spend as much time with her as I can. But I was going to need to keep my hands to myself or I was likely to ruin things again. I wanted my Little Bunny to know that I was serious about her. That I didn't hate her. I never did. I never could.

I made my way home from the clearing alone, following her scent to make sure that she went straight home. I followed her scent all the way to her door. I heard her inside, that made me feel better. I knew she was safe.

"I'm sorry, Little Bunny." I whispered outside her door before turning to walk back to my room.

I was looking forward to seeing her at breakfast the next morning. I wanted to make things better between us. So, when I saw her sitting there talking with my mom when I walked in, I couldn't stop my wolf from jumping

around happily at the sight of her. I smiled at his excitement and joy for our mate.

"Good morning, sweetie." Mom said as I sat across from her, putting myself next to my scrumptious little mate.

"Morning, Mom." I told her. "Good morning, Little Bunny." I smiled at my timid little mate.

"G-good morning, Reece." She stammered as she looked at me.

"Don't tell me you guys are fighting?" Mom asked me.

"Not at all." I denied with a smile. It was the truth, we hadn't fought at all, things were just weird between us still.

"Hmmm." Mom didn't seem convinced.

We ate our breakfast mostly in silence, only talking about random things when Mom got an interesting idea.

Most didn't interest my Little Bunny too much, not until we were almost done eating.

"I was talking with Gwen the other day at the store. She was telling me how all the pack females are finding it hard to get things done anymore, there is no good place to take the kids now that there is no Phi in the pack." Mom just seemed to be rambling on, but it caught Bunny's attention.

"You know what would be a good idea." She said with a bright smile on her face. "We should have a pack daycare, at least a couple days a week, maybe not every day but enough that it gives the mothers in the pack time to do their stuff kid free."

"That is such a thoughtful idea." Mom was smiling brightly. It really was a good idea. There used to be people in the pack that took it upon themselves to watch the pack pups and cubs, but once they got too old, no one ever stepped up to take their place.

"We can hold it here, we would need to work things out, but I think most females would love it."



"I think they would too, what about you, Reece, do you like the idea?" Mom asked me.

"I think it would be a very popular idea among the pack females."

"So, you don't like the idea." My Little Bunny looked crushed.

"I never said that. I think it is a good idea, and that the pack mothers would like the idea." I backpedaled.

"Then you should have said you liked it the first time you were asked. I swear, men never know how to answer a single question." Mom reprimanded me.

"But I was giving my approval, I said it sounded like something the females would like. I didn't say it was a bad idea."

"But you didn't say it was a good idea, no one will

understand you if you don't say it."

"Fine." Little Bunny chose that moment to laugh, her bright smile and crinkled eyes showed how funny she thought this situation was. "Are you laughing at me?" I asked her.

"N-no." She stammered as she tried to stifle the laughter, but it was no use, she laughed even harder.

"You are, you're laughing at me."

"I can't help it, you're being told off like a little kid. It's funny."

"I'll show you a little kid." I growled suggestively. She gasped and stopped laughing at once. The look of shock on her face made me laugh in her place. "I'm kidding."

"Jerk." She snapped at me, but I saw the smile on her face.

"Fine, I'll admit it, I'm a jerk. I just can't help playing with my Little Bunny." I wiggled my eyebrows at her, both her and mom laughed at that. It was a fun end to our breakfast.

Tomorrow was New Year's Eve, and there was only one place I wanted to spend it. Beside my mate. Wherever that might be. I was hoping she would agree to spending the evening with me, if I promised to be a good boy and keep my hands to myself. I could always fantasize and hope for later, I'd get no where if I didn't start getting her used to the idea of us being together. But just the sight of her, the smell of her, was enough to drive my wolf crazy with need. I had to keep him firmly under control for a little while longer. I could hear him whining at me when I thought those words.

I found my Little Bunny in the music room around lunch that day. I heard her playing the violin that Mom had given her for Christmas. The music was soft and sweet. She had been taught well, she played like a professional. I would expect nothing less of her with how her Grandfather had decided to raise her.

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## Chapter 76 - Reece-A Talk With Little Bunny's Grandfather

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Reece

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I had taken her Grandfather aside and talked to him on Christmas. I wanted to know why he had treated her the way he did. Why he seemed to hate his only granddaughter so much. What he told me had actually surprised me, but I thought what he had to say should come from him and not me. Little Bunny deserved that explanation too, but it wasn't mine to give.

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Little Bunny was lost in conversation with her friends and family, but for some reason her Grandfather was only watching from a distance.

"Mr. Whitton, can I have a word with you?" I seemed to have caught him off guard, he looked nervous momentarily before answering.

"Yes, I guess it is about time we have a conversation. You are mated to my only granddaughter after all." The man was acting as if he cared about her, as if he hadn't made her miserable her whole life.

The old man got to his feet quickly and easily, a movement I would have thought him incapable of at his advanced age. I never knew why my father's beta had been so much older than him, why he had chosen this man in particular. Mr. Whitton was in his mid-sixties, but my father, if he were alive, would only be as old as Little Bunny's uncle, maybe a little older, so why was his beta almost twenty years his senior.

I led the old man into a room down the hall, I didn't want to be overheard. He knew there was something I wanted to talk to him about, but I think his mind was heading in the wrong direction. As soon as the door was shut behind us, he started talking.

"I know that girl is a handful, and most likely difficult to deal with at times, but I have made certain she knows how to be a proper wife in a high-ranking family. I never dreamed she would mate with you, Alpha, but I assure you she will live up to your standards. Just let me know if she needs a reminder of the lessons she learned as a child." My blood boiled and my wolf snarled upon hearing his words.

"And what lessons might those be?" I asked him. He seemed shocked.

"Why, etiquette and proper behavior befitting a woman of her rank, and what is expected of her." He was perplexed by my intensity when I asked the question, that was clear, but what he didn't seem to grasp was that he was the cause for it. The old man simply put his head in his hand and shook it, clearly frustrated.

"She has been behaving improperly for a Luna, hasn't

she? I assure you that is not how I raised her. She should know better. That stupid girl." I couldn't stop the growl then, my wolf and I both growled at the same time. This man was insulting my mate and I would not have it.

"I don't know why you think you can talk about my mate like that." I spoke through my clenched teeth.

"I don't follow you, young man. Aren't you upset because she has not been behaving as you expected?" He had the self-awareness to look nervous now.

"No, that is not why I am upset." I hissed. "I am upset because I want to know why you treated her so horribly. Why you acted like she was any different from your other grandchildren?" I glared at him.

"I did not treat her horribly. Is that what she told you?" He shouted.

"No, she has said little about her childhood, as of yet. But Noah and Carter have told me plenty. I have learned a few things from Trinity, but she never spoke of you negatively."

"The boys said I was cruel to her?" His eyes widened in shock, the sadness in his eyes was clear to see.

"They said you showed her no love and made up ridiculous excuses to not let her be seen by anyone for as long as you could."

"That is utterly ridiculous. I love my granddaughter very much. I was just intent on not repeating my mistakes." He fervently defended himself.

"Then why did you hide her away from everyone? Why did she not make a single friend outside of that family until she went to college?"

"I didn't want to repeat my mistakes." He bellowed, his face immediately turning red after he shouted the words.

"What mistakes?" He looked shocked, like he didn't know how to answer that at first. I watched as he paled then crumpled onto the couch behind him. This man that



I had only ever seen standing tall and at full attention, or sitting up straight to look perfectly poised, was now huddled nearly in a ball as he held his face in his hands.

"I didn't want to lose her. I didn't want her to leave me the same way Lily left. I couldn't bear it if I had to live through that again."

"I don't follow you." The confusion was leaking into my voice as I watched this once tall and proud man nearly begin to weep before me.

"My daughter is gone forever. Lost to me. And she will never come back." He was looking at me now, his pitiful eyes filled with unshed tears. "I failed as a father. I didn't have my daughter ready for the world. Whatever happened to her that weekend, those two days she went missing, I know she wasn't at her friend's house, and she didn't remember it at all either. It was like the time didn't exist for her. It was just gone. But then, we found out she was pregnant. That was what broke her the most. People always thought it was the rumors, but it was the thought of being pregnant with no memory of how it happened."

"So, are you saying she was drugged and raped?" I

asked him in disbelief.

"I don't know if it was drugs, but something was done to her, and she didn't get pregnant willingly. Everyone always assumed my anger at the time was directed at my daughter, specifically because she didn't tell me who the father was. No, it was directed at whoever hurt my baby girl, and that I would never get my chance at revenge." His anger and sorrow were mixing now, his face and eyes red but there was a determined set in his jaw and brows.

"So why treat Trinity so bad, why make her miserable?"

"I didn't know she was miserable. I just didn't want to chance that she would be taken from me as well. I don't know who her father is, but who's to say he won't come back for her some day? He knows what he did. He knows he made a child with my little girl. What was stopping him from snatching my granddaughter like he snatched my daughter?" He had been scared for her this whole time? It just didn't make sense.

I saw that the anger was winning out over the sadness in his eyes, his voice was growing stronger now.

"Maybe I should have done things a little different. Maybe I should have explained things to her. But I love my granddaughter, with every fiber of my being. And I will do whatever I can to make her life better. That's why I made sure she had the best education possible. That's why she had all the knowledge needed for being the perfect wife. But, unlike my daughter, Trinity knows how to defend herself."

"Carter says as soon as Trinity turned eighteen you cut her off, no more fighting instructors, no more tutors, you paid for her college education but that was it."

"Trinity was desperate to get out on her own, and the instructors I had teaching her to fight had nothing more to teach her. She had learned all she could from them. But I knew she would find someone else to train her, she's resourceful and determined."

"So, you risked her going to college at eighteen but not going to public school her whole life?"

"She would not have settled for staying home, I'm sure

you've learned she is a stubborn girl. Did you know she even taught herself to play contemporary instruments when I only got her classical instructors?"

"Yeah, actually I did. She said she learned drums and guitar just to spite you." To my surprise the old man laughed, a hearty full belly laugh that looked strange on a man so tall and still athletic that he barely had a belly.

"You see, young man, she is stubborn. If I didn't agree to let her go, I am certain that she would have run away. I made sure that she went to a school with a heavy wolf influence though, so I could inquire about her. I was happy when I learned that she had made friends. And I laughed when I found out she daydreams in class, I'm afraid her education was of a higher standard than most high schools, so she is a bit advanced."

"Yeah, her guard told me she liked to zone out in classes she finds too easy." This conversation was definitely not going how I thought it was supposed to go. "You know, Mr. Whitton, there is someone who you should be telling all this to."

"You mean I should tell Trinity?" He asked me.

"Yes. If you truly did what you did out of love, and fear, then she deserves to know."

"Can't you tell her for me." He asked, nerves clear in his shaking voice and wavering eyes.

"No, this is something that will be best coming from you." The old man sighed before he looked at me, a pitiful look on his face.

"You're probably right." He smirked. "I will tell her, soon. Not today but soon." He smiled ruefully.

"I will hold you to it." I assured him.

We returned to the Christmas party after that conversation. Little Bunny seemed to have noticed our absence, but she never said anything. Thankfully, the rest of the evening went smoothly.

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Little Bunny needed to know what her Grandfather had said, but it wasn't my place to say anything. But I could try to make her future a happier one than she thought she was going to get. I could make up for my mistakes and be there for my mate, protect her the best that I could.

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## Chapter 77 - Reece-New Year's Date With Little Bunny

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Reece

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I wanted to stand there, enjoying the sound of the music, but I also wanted to go in there and see my Little Bunny. Would she be willing to play music with me sometime? I would love to produce beautiful music with

her,

I pushed the door open, and my Little Bunny didn't even pause in her strokes when she spoke to me.

"I was wondering how long it would take you to come in, is there a problem Snoopy?"

"Snoopy? That's a new one." I told her, a smile on my face.

"Well, you're snooping on me aren't you." I laughed, she was funny and quick on the uptake.

"I'm not snooping, I wanted to talk to you." She stopped playing the music, the last notes of which reverberated solemnly in my ears before they died.

"What did you want to talk about?"

"Your playing was lovely."

"Thank you, but I'm pretty sure that's not what you came here to tell me." She grinned lopsidedly, the half-smile raising one cheek making her look sweeter than I had anticipated.

"No, but your playing distracted me. Can you really blame me?" I asked sheepishly, I was embarrassed and didn't know why. I could feel my palms sweating, my heart rate rising. I wanted this conversation to go right.

"I'm glad you liked it, now, what do you need Reece?" She looked at me full on, a look of skepticism in her eyes and a wary set to her shoulders and jaw. She was nervous too.

"Will you have dinner with me again tomorrow?" I saw the shock register on her face, chased by the embarrassment as her eyes widened and her cheeks flushed. Her mouth opened in an attempt to speak but nothing came out, she just stood there, rooted to the spot unable to say a word.

"I promise, I will be on my best behavior. My hands will



be kept to myself. Nothing will happen unless it's mutual, right?" I reminded her of her words, her promised threat to me. "I will not do anything to make you uncomfortable." I added.

"Why?" She asked me. That one word felt like it could be the knife that finished me off.

"Because I have to return to my normal schedule soon. This holiday and the subsequent weekend are the end of my vacation."

"That's nice and all, but that doesn't answer my question. Why do you want to have dinner with me?" She still didn't trust me yet.

"I want us to get to know each other. I want us to learn to trust each other, to start over." She narrowed her eyes at me, like she thought I was plotting something. Her lack of trust and confidence in me was painful, but I only have myself to blame.

"Alright." She finally said. "We can have dinner." I smiled, grinned really. I couldn't help it. She was giving me another shot. Goddess knows I could have blown it

completely long ago, and she didn't have to give me a chance at all.

"Good, that makes me so happy. Thank you, Little Bunny. I will see you for a late dinner tomorrow around nine, will that work for you?"

"Why so late?" She asked me warily.

"I have a few things to do tomorrow during the day, so we have to push things back until the evening. But I promise, I will make things perfect. Do you have a preference for dinner?"

"I'm assuming Abigail will be cooking?" She asked me.

"That or we can order out. Anything you want." She actually thought about it for a moment, lost in thought momentarily, before she answered me.

"No, it's fine. I don't need anything in particular." The

smile she gave me then looked forced. She clearly wanted something specific, but she felt she shouldn't ask. "I'm going to get back to playing, I'm out of practice." She turned away and raised the instrument again.

I watched her for a moment as she rested the violin under her chin and placed the fingers of her left hand on the strings. The bow, held lightly in her right hand, gently began to move back and forth. She was playing Mozart's Violin Concerto NO. 3, and it sounded beautiful.

I left her then, the music following me out of the room. The notes chased me down the hall. I was happy, happier than I probably should have been. Given our track record, I knew something was bound to go wrong, but if I kept trying, things would get better. Right?

I went to her room to 'pick her up' just like I had done the other day. I knocked gently on the door and called out to her. I secretly hoped I would get to watch as she bent forward to put on her shoes again. The halter top she wore last time didn't leave much to the imagination, and the view was quite pleasant as she leaned forward. I remember having to tie my wolf up and gag him at the sight of her breasts straining against that top.

She opened the door quickly, and unfortunately, she was fully ready to go, shoes included. I couldn't help but feel a little disappointed at having missed out. Oh well, I got to see her still, and she hadn't disappointed me with her choice in clothes.

This time, instead of blue, she was wearing a deep wine-red colored dress. It was simple in its style, but it was beautiful and flattering on her. It stopped just above her knees, and it appeared to be made out of silk. The cut was low but not obscenely so. The straps went up and over her shoulders like a halter top, but there was also a set of thin straps criss-crossing three times across the back of the dress, which was cut very low.

I wanted her the moment I saw her. The color made her look like her skin was glowing. Her hair was done in beautiful cascading curls, for once she hadn't pulled it back at all. The amount of skin she was showing was so alluring and seductive that I needed to fight for control. I felt my palms itch, and a tightening in my jeans, when I could finally have her I would savor the moment.

I swallowed hard, fighting past the lump in my throat.

"Shall we go?" I asked her as I held my hand out

toward her.

"Yes." She smiled at me sweetly, testing the tenuous control I had over my wolf. I took her hand and walked toward the stairs. She was wearing a pair of strappy heels, but these heels were far from excessive so she should manage them just fine.

I led her down just two flights of stairs to the second floor. She was not expecting this. She turned to look at me with a perplexed look, but she said nothing. We continued on in silence until we got to the library.

I pushed the door open, allowing her to see the inside and the changes that had been made for tonight. A candlelit table for two, a roaring fire in the hearth, a serving cart with the food covered. I heard her sharp intake of breath as she gasped, I didn't know if it was at the sight of the romantic scene I was trying to create or the smell of the special meal I had prepared.

"Reece, is that-?" She stopped, unable to finish. She could tell what I had prepared. I think that was probably the most surprising thing of the night for her. If what Noah told me was true, then I had gotten my Little Bunny's favorite of favorites. I grinned.

"How? How did you do this? How did you?" She was surprised, but I could see how happy she was.

"I asked Noah. I could tell you wanted to ask for something yesterday. I don't know if it was this or not. But I decided to ask what a good choice would be for tonight."

"Is it from where I think it is?" She was looking at me hopeful.

"See for yourself." I said as I led her over to the cart of food.

I took the lid off the tray and there was an array of white take-out containers bearing red Chinese lettering and playful looking panda bear.

"Lucky Panda's Garden?" She exclaimed happily. "Oh Goddess, I haven't had this in months."

"You can order take out still you know. You don't have to eat in every night. And it would be nice to give Abigail a night or two off from time to time." I smiled at how happy she looked.

"I just didn't know if it would really be acceptable to have this here."

"Why wouldn't it?" I asked her, confused.

"Well, think about it, we're always eating the food here but the one time you took me out it was to a super fancy restaurant. I just get the feeling that take out Chinese food would not be welcomed in a house like this."

"That's ridiculous. Yeah, we live in a big fancy house, but we're still just people."

"That's easy for you to say, but to me it feels like a completely different world." She was looking nervous now, that was not what I wanted.

"That was never my intention. I wanted you to be

comfortable here from the start. I asked your cousin your preferences. I chose your room because he said you liked the color blue. I had the staff learn some of your food and drink choices, all so you would transition easier. I didn't want you to stress out."

"I think stressing was going to be inevitable. I was moving into a new home with no warning. It was a scary thought."

"Did you find me that scary?" I asked her, a hint of sadness in my voice.

"There were times I was afraid, but more so because I don't, or didn't, know much about you. But mostly, it was because I was afraid of the changes, and the choice being taken away from me."

"I'm sorry, but you know we don't get to choose our mates. The Goddess picks them for us, we simply need to accept that and let the bliss that follows be ours." I smiled seductively at her.

"Yeah, except my mate told me he didn't want me, that he rejected me, and that he hated me." I saw the pain in



her eyes. It was raw and open. Even now she was hurting every time she thought about those words.

"I'm sorry Little Bunny, I never should have said any of that to you. I was wrong." I regretted those words, from day one I regretted them. I just needed to make her understand that. "That's why I want to start over. I want us to pretend that never happened."

"I'm willing to try, that's all I can promise you."

"That's all that I can hope for."

We sat down to dinner then. My Little Bunny looked elated to see the food I had in store for her. We had chicken chop suey, General Tso's chicken, Chinese rib tips, wonton soup, egg rolls, fried rice, and white rice. I got everything that Noah said she loved the most. I had never seen her eyes look as big as they did then.

We talked about different things, typical date topics and get to know you questions. We were enjoying ourselves. I couldn't be happier with how the dinner was going. I kept it calm and didn't try to rush anything. I was letting everything happen naturally tonight.

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## Chapter 78 - Reece-Ringing In The New Year

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Reece

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When we were done with dinner, sipping our drinks and laughing together, I asked her if she was willing to accompany me to the music room. She didn't seem nervous, and thankfully she agreed right away. Taking her hand like I was becoming accustomed to doing, I helped her to her feet before lightly placing my hand on her hip and escorting her down the hall.

We had spent an hour laughing, talking, and getting to

know each other over dinner, so it was after ten when we got to the music room. I was hoping that she might play something for me, and I something for her. And I had a stereo system set up so we could choose to listen if we wanted to dance instead of play.

She didn't seem skeptical or nervous, scared or angry, when we got to our destination. I saw that as a plus. She was smiling happily as she looked around the room for something that might be different.

"I see there is a fire in here today as well." She noted when we entered the room.

"I felt it would be fitting, it is winter after all."

"Do you often get cold?" She asked me jokingly.

"No, but especially not when I'm with you." I grinned at her playfully.

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"Just that you're warm and by association I feel warmer as well."

"Hmmm." She looked at me in disbelief. "I think you should just stick with you don't get cold." I laughed.

"Would you like to play something with me?"

"Time for games now?" She asked.

"No. That's not. I didn't mean." I stammered until she started laughing.

"It's fine. I know what you meant, just calm down." She was giggling at me, at my embarrassment.

"You like playing these games with me, don't you?"

"You're fun to mess with, I can't help it. As long as we're not arguing, you're fun to be around." Those words made me happier than I could describe. I felt as if I had just floated off the floor and was bouncing off the ceiling, bobbing around like a buoy.

"I love being with you. You're fun, intriguing, interesting. I'm definitely never bored when I'm with you."

"Not to mention things are bound to be exciting around me." She joked.

"I could do without some of that excitement." I sighed.

"You and me both."

I left her where she stood and sat at the piano. I looked at her with what I hoped was a warm and loving gaze as I beckoned her over.

"Come on, choose an instrument and play with me." She grinned at my word choice, an eyebrow raised, and a laugh barely suppressed.

"What kind of music do you want to play?"

"Well, I guess that depends on you, and what instrument you choose."

"Do you only play the piano and guitar?"

"No, I can play others as well." I answered her with a confident smirk.

"So, we're not limited to just one choice here." I smiled at her words.

"No, we can mix it up."

She went to the violin first and began playing the opening bars of Melodie for violin and piano by Tchaikovsky. The notes were hauntingly beautiful. I started in with the piano part, not missing a beat. I saw the smile on her face when she saw I knew the song as well.

"Did you think I didn't know this one?" I asked her with a laugh in my voice.

"I didn't know, but I hoped you knew it." She laughed as well. We finished the song together grinning like kids.

"What next?" She asked, excitement bubbled within her making her glow. I looked around the room and thought of the instruments she had told me she could play. I went to the oboe, and after some mild prep work, and thanking myself for preparing the instruments all in advance, I started to play another song. The first two bars were all she needed before she had the flute ready to go. We played Echo Duet, it didn't have the same history, and it didn't sound nearly as romantic as Melodie, but it was fun and seeing the happiness on my mate's face was enough for me.

We continued this for over an hour. We would each choose an instrument and a song trying to stump the other. We played songs that were new and old, songs that were classical and contemporary. We even played songs we had heard on the radio, though without having learned them before, those didn't turn out so well on anything other than the piano and guitar.

Little Bunny's musical skill was amazing. She played each instrument with the same amount of passion. I was glad that music was something that we could share. And when we played "A Million Dreams" with her on the piano and me on the guitar, she sang the lyrics. The sound of her voice, singing the word to only me, my heart nearly stopped. It went beyond beautiful, I didn't know if it was just me and my mate bond or not, but I could listen to her sing for the rest of my life and be a happy man. The sound of it even helped to soothe my overeager wolf.

It was nearly midnight, somewhere around eleven-forty-five when I asked her if she would dance with me instead of playing more music. She agreed almost instantly. We put on a random playlist and let the music take us.

The first song was upbeat with a fast tempo. I cared less about the lyrics or the song itself than I did about the feel of her in my hands, in my arms, pressed against my chest. We smiled at each other as we danced, song after song.

I had nearly lost track of time when, during a slow song, I noticed it was just a minute or two until midnight. I danced her toward the balcony and grinned as I opened the door.



"What are you doing?" She asked, her smile didn't fade.

"You'll see." I teased.

We only had to wait another few seconds before she saw what I had planned for her. We were facing out toward the compound, down the mountain. Now, in the sky between us and the houses was a massive fireworks display. I had never done this before, I could play it off as wanting to celebrate the pack, but I just wanted to surprise my mate and see her smile. The fireworks started to explode just at the stroke of midnight.

"So beautiful." She sighed as I held her in my arms, our dance completely forgotten.

"Happy New Year, Little Bunny." I smiled at her sweetly. She looked up at with me those innocent eyes that had earned her that nickname.

"I've never seen the pack do fireworks before." She said excitedly.

"We've never done them before now." I told her.

"What makes this year special?" She wondered.

"You." I saw her blush. My answer had embarrassed her.

"This is too much." She tried to downplay her role in the pack, in my life.

"No, it's not enough, but it's what I can do." She looked a little uncomfortable with the attention but still smiled.

"Thank you, Reece."

"Can I ask for something, Little Bunny?"

"What?"

"Can I give you a New Year's kiss? I promise it will be a small one." I almost begged her. She looked down for just a moment before she shifted her head just a little, looking at me through her lashes again.

"Yes." She nodded as she spoke.

I lowered my head even as she raised up onto her toes. I steadied her with my hands on her hips. Gently, ever so gently, I pressed my lips to hers. The kiss was chaste and quick, but that didn't stop the desire from sparking in my wolf. He was now howling nearly nonstop inside my head, begging me to claim her. But I couldn't, not yet, now was not the time. I pulled away reluctantly, keeping to my promise to be on my best behavior.

"Happy New Year." I told her again, I noticed the darkening in her eyes, the hunger that was growing in her just the same as it was growing in me. If only I could get her to trust me.

"Happy New Year, Reece." She smiled sweetly as she said the words.

We finished watching the fireworks with her in my

arms. She never once tried to pull away. When the display was over, I knew better than to push my luck and decided to walk her back to her room. I noticed she wore a contented smile the whole way there, that made both me and my wolf want to growl in satisfaction.

When we were outside her door, I kissed her hand gently but with a definite passion in my eyes. I know she saw that passion, but she also knows I did nothing inappropriate. If I was lucky, We would get over this hurdle soon.

"Good night, Little Bunny." I smiled at her.

"Good night." She disappeared into her room, as soon as she was out of sight I put on the biggest, most likely goofiest, grin I had ever worn. I couldn't have asked for this night to have gone any better. I sauntered back to my room, just barely managing to stop myself from whistling a jaunty tune as I went.

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## Chapter 79 - Trinity-Family Movie Time

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Trinity

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I was giddy for the next few days. I honestly didn't think that my New Year's date with Reece would go so well. Maybe it's true what they say, third time's the charm. But we didn't argue, fight, or end on an awkward note at all. And the only kiss I got was a quick, though still not entirely innocent, New Year's kiss.

All Reece did was press his lips to mine gently, and oh so briefly, but I felt like my entire body had caught on fire the moment his hands touched my hips to hold me steady. I let him hold me in his arms that night while we watched the fireworks. It was simple, but deeply romantic.

And I saw the passionate fire in his eyes when he said

goodnight. I know exactly what he was trying to tell me. He wanted me. I don't know if it was just once or forever as he has yet to tell me how he feels about me. Does he still hate me? Does he still reject me? Has he moved beyond that so he can approve of me now? Will he ever love me? These are things I need to know before I can give into the desire that has been building inside of me. That has been building between us.

I know he said he regretted telling me he rejects me and hates me, but he might just regret saying it. He didn't say anything about it not being true. And if it was, and still is, true, then I don't know if I could ever bring myself to be with him. It would be next to crazy to have sex with a man who hates you, wouldn't it?

On Friday night Lila wanted to watch a movie together, as a family. The three of us gathered in the first floor living room with bowls of popcorn and our drinks as we settled in to watch the romcom she had picked out.

"Movies sure have changed a lot over the last seven years, but a romantic comedy will always be just that underneath." She was smiling happily as she settled

herself more comfortably into the sofa. She had her feet tucked up underneath her with a pillow lying on the arm next to her as she rested her head.

I was sitting between Lila and Reece, and even though the sofa was very large, I was somehow sitting very close to Reece. We had decided on the same kind of popcorn, or make that a lack of decision, we both wanted butter, cheese, and caramel corn. I hadn't known about Reece, but I liked to eat a piece of each all at once, the mix of flavors was scrumptious.

Reece ate it the same way, sort of. Where I took one piece of each methodically, he took a handful of everything and popped it all into his mouth at once. Men truly did behave differently than us women. Such animals. I giggled at the thought as I watched him eat his popcorn.

"Is something funny, Little Bunny." He had been using that name constantly, he rarely ever said my name. But where he used to say the name to sound mocking and annoy me, he now sounded like he was just saying my name but that my name was really Little Bunny. I was growing used to it, but I couldn't let him know that. I had to argue every now and then, it wouldn't change anything, anyway.

"Don't call me Bunny, Fido." I snapped at him playfully, a joyous smirk on my face.

"You know I hate that name." He said, but he didn't look upset at all. It had been a long time since he had actually gotten upset when I called him Fido. We giggled at each other for a minute before he asked his question again. "But seriously Little Bunny, is something funny?"

"I was just thinking about the difference in the way we eat our popcorn. We may eat the same kind, but we are definitely different creatures." I smiled at him.

"Of course, we are, I'm a man and you're a sweet little rabbit."

"You mean I'm a bunny and you're a dog?" I asked him playfully.

"Woof, woof." He pretended to bark, and I nearly lost it, I had to fight back my laughter.



"Shhhhh!" Lila vehemently shushed us, and I really did laugh when I saw her face.

Reece and I behaved ourselves after that, we watched the movie in silence, except I missed the end of it. I think I was just so tired from my exciting week that I had that I lacked sleep. The next thing I knew I woke up in my bed. I could only guess that Reece had carried me there, and the thought made me blush, just thinking about him holding me in his arms.

That got me thinking. This wasn't the first time that Reece had carried me. He carried me back to Riley's pack house when I was unconscious, and back to our house when I was unconscious. He threw me over his shoulder and carried me back to my room, and then there was the time I was in the library reading, then I dreamt Reece had hugged me before I woke up in my bed. I'm pretty sure he carried me then too.

And, Oh Goddess, when he carried when at Riley's and here when I was unconscious, he had been in his wolf form just before them. That means he had to change to carry me. That meant he must have been... he must have been... he must have been naked when he carried me. Oh

Goddess, why was it taking me until right now to realize that?

I could feel that my face was bright red, the heat coming off my face could probably rival the sun. I was mortified. I had even looked at him in the forest when he was naked, but I was disoriented from what he had said and my head injury, so I don't remember a single thing. And here I had told Juniper I never saw Reece's pieces, maybe I did and just don't remember. I do vaguely remember his chest though, smooth, tan, and muscular. He was like the perfect man, when it came to his body, anyway. I almost became a drooling mess just thinking about it.

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Chapter 80 - Trinity-An Existential Crisis

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Trinity

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I thought with Reece going back to his usual schedule on Monday, that I should do something too. Yeah, I would be starting classes soon, but they were all online and from what I had been told about them, I could study on my schedule most of the time. So, that left me with plenty of time to still do some Luna work.

I wanted to go see Lila so we could discuss the pack daycare idea I had. She seemed to love it when we talked about it last week. She hadn't been at breakfast today, which was a rushed one with Reece needing to leave early. But thankfully, it wasn't awkward, unless you counted the fact that when I looked at him, I subconsciously tried to see through his clothes so I could see his chest underneath. He had been curious as to why I blushed randomly, but I think I played it off pretty well.

Lila was in her room when I knocked on her door.

"Come in." She invited me. I pushed the door open and remembered the first time I had come here, when I had

found her sitting in the chair near the window. The sun shining on her making her glow like an angel, or a ghost.

"Hi Trinity, how is your morning?" She asked me. It was closer to noon, so the morning was almost over now. I saw that Lila was once again sitting in the chair she had been in last time, the curtains open, sun shining just like last time. The only difference was that she was awake. But I had such a strong memory of when I had seen her last time, the emotions I had felt that day. I remember how I was pleading for her to be able to see Reece, and to be there for him in the ways that I couldn't be.

"Is everything alright?" She worried.

"Yeah, I was just remembering the last time I was here." I smiled at her sadly.

"What do you mean?"

"When you were still, you know?" I replied sheepishly.

"I didn't know you came to visit me when I was lost." She smiled happily. "You should have told me, that

makes me happy."

"It was only once. I had only been here for a short time when you woke up. I'm glad you did too, Reece needed you."

"I think Reece needs you more than me." She offered, but I just shook my head in refusal of her words.

"He would much rather have you or someone else there to help him." I denied sadly.

"Why do you think that?" Lila seemed upset.

"It's what I told you when I came to see you that day too." I looked at her and tried to smile, but I couldn't force the motion to make it happen.

"When I came here, while you were 'lost' I said that I wished you were here to support him, to give him whatever it was he needed that I lacked. And that I wished you could see the wonderful man he had become."

"I remember that." Her voice was full of awe, shock covered her face.

"What? How do you remember that?"

"I don't know. I remember that I was lost in the dark somewhere. I had gotten lost the night my husband died. I remember that night clearly. I remember going with him, his beta, my husband's brother and his mate, and my cousin Steven, and some other pack members. It wasn't supposed to be a fight. We had been planning to sign a treaty between our packs, but when we got there, it was an ambush. I remember watching my husband die in front of me, then getting hit in the head by something really hard. The next thing I knew I was walking in the darkness. There was never any relief from that darkness."

"So, you weren't really catatonic?" I was shocked, what had really happened to her?

"I don't know what to call what happened to me. I know that once in a while I would hear things. I heard

Reece's voice. Only his voice for so long. He would tell me what was going on in his life. Sometimes he would talk about things that were good with a voice full of pride. Other times he might vent angrily. Often, he would tell me what he couldn't tell others, his voice full of the tears he probably never shed."

"I'm sure you were his solace in this crazy life he leads." I gave her a comforting smile as I walked closer to her and took her hand.

"I hope I was." She smiled as she looked at my hand. "But you know, I remember your touch as well. I remember when I heard your voice, I felt someone touch my hand. I looked down toward my hand, or where I knew it would be in the darkness, and what I saw then was a thin white line attached to my palm. It was the first thing I had seen in that darkness, ever."

"What was it?" I wondered.

"It was you, Trinity. It was you guiding me back. You wanted me to come save my son. You begged me to come back, you took my hand and guided me home." Lila was crying now, tears silently flowed down her cheeks.

"I don't understand, Lila. How could I do that? How could I guide you back?"

"You're our Luna." She told me as if that explained it all.

"That doesn't mean I should be able to do something like that."

"But you're special. Reece has told me so as well. He has said how you're not like the others."

"Yeah, because I don't have a wolf, not because I'm someone that can do something like that." I vehemently denied.

"Are you sure about that?" She asked me with a confident smile. "I told you when I first woke, I knew your voice. That's because I kept hearing your words the entire time that I followed that light back to my consciousness. I followed you, Trinity. You brought me home because you're special."



Lila's words shocked me to my core. I stood there frozen while her hand slipped from mine and I stared at nothing. A buzzing sound started in the back of my head, drowning out all other sounds. I vaguely registered Lila standing in a rush with a worried look.

"Tri..ty" I heard her words, but they were chopped. "Are.....k?" I still couldn't make out what she was saying to me. I felt her hands on my shoulders before I fell into a chair.

Everything that she was saying. Everything that had happened to me. The time in the woods when I could smell the warlocks and Reece couldn't. When I could see them somehow and he couldn't. How I never got a wolf like everyone else. All the things that marked me as different from everyone else, it was all coming back to me at once.

If I didn't have the clear indicators of being part of the pack. Part wolf at least. The hearing and the extra senses. The strength and speed. Having to obey the alpha's commands. Then there's being mated to a wolf. If it wasn't for all of these, I would think I wasn't part of the pack at all, that I should be exiled, that I didn't belong here.

But what exactly am I? Where exactly do I belong? Who am I really? These are things I wanted answered but was never likely to find out.

"Trinity, are you ok?" I heard Lila this time, she was holding my hands and looking at me with fear in her eyes.

"I-I-I'm f-fine." I stuttered.

"What happened?" She asked me, not convinced by my attempt to reassure her.

"I think I just had a bit of an existential crisis, that's all." I tried to smile at her.

"Trinity, sweetie, what is going on with you?"

"I don't think I belong here. I don't belong with Reece, and he knows it. The whole pack knows it, that's why so

many people still don't accept me."

"That's crap." She snapped at me. "You're his mate. You belong wherever he is."

"But I don't. I don't have a wolf. I'm not strong enough for him or the pack. I'm not good enough for him."

"Where is this coming from, Trinity? Why are you saying this?"

"He's said it himself, Lila. He has told me I'm not allowed to fight because I don't have a wolf and therefore, I'm not strong enough, even though I have been trained to fight for years. He has told me he doesn't want me as a mate, that I was a weak little girl with no wolf, and I would just drag him down. He told me he hates me."

I was hyperventilating by the time I was done. Remembering the two different nights that Reece told me these words was like tearing my heart out of my chest. I was so in love with him now that I knew there was no chance for my heart to be spared. I now understood though. I knew why he rejected me, why he didn't want

me. And I don't even blame him now. I wasn't one of them, and I never would be. I couldn't stop the tears from falling. They fell, unhindered, down my cheeks.

"Oh, sweetheart." Lila soothed as she hugged me tight to her chest. I tried to stop crying, but the silent tears turned into sobbing. I had not cried over his words since the day I told Juniper about what had happened. Not like this anyway, not since I cried in the bathroom.

"Shh." Lila shushed me. "It's alright Trinity. You have it all wrong."

"No, I don't. He told me all this himself, didn't you hear me?" I implored her.

"I know sweetie. I heard you. But there is something you don't know."

"It doesn't matter. He doesn't love me, and he never will." I wiped the tears from my face as I spoke. "I can't be with someone who doesn't love me."

"Honey, can I tell you something?" Lila asked me as

she pulled a chair closer so she could sit next to me. I nodded. "Reece told me something, something that you need to know. I probably should have told you sooner, but I wanted you to put him in his place a few more times before I told you."

"What are you talking about?" I asked her as I tilted my head in confusion. Lila sighed as if she was about to say something that was difficult.

"Do you remember when we talked about all of this before. After you got hurt?" I nodded to answer her. "Well, the first thing I did after that was go and yell at my son. I couldn't believe what an idiot he had been, and how cruel he had been to you."

"You didn't need to say anything to him, Lila. Things are fine the way they are."

"No, I had to say something. And I am glad I did." She smiled at me as she sat up straight in her chair. "You see, Reece explained a few things to me, and I was able to clear a few things up for him."

"What do you mean?" I was more confused now than when she started.

"Reece had a terrible misconception about the past. And he also told me why he wanted to keep you at bay."

"I don't think it matters anymore." I sighed. "We will never be true mates."

"Please, listen to me." She begged me. "He thought that you would never be able to truly bond with him, being that you have no wolf. He thought that he would end up loving you so much more than you could ever love him because he didn't think you could truly feel the mate bond."

"That's insane, if I can form the mate bond, then I can feel it. I don't know how it feels for him, but for me, for me it's like being near the other half of my soul, my heart. I love him more every day whether I want to or not. I want to be near him all the time, to know that he is safe and happy, but I know that I can't have that. I know that if I were to be near him, he would not be happy, and potentially he wouldn't be safe with the people trying to

get to me. I am nothing but poison to him."

"Wait, wait and listen, please." She pleaded. "Reece thought that a man he once knew, Steven, my cousin, had mated with a human woman born into a wolf pack. She was human yes, but he was not truly mated. She tricked him, made him fall in love with her. He got so deep into it that he said he didn't care that there was no mate bond, and he was going to be with her forever. But she was not in love with him. She betrayed him. She was the reason my husband and brother-in-law died. She was the reason I was lost to Reece for all those years." I was in shock upon hearing all this.

"He thought that they had mated, but that she was incapable of feeling the bond like a wolf. He didn't know the truth. Steven hadn't told many people the truth, after all."

"So, he thought I was going to betray him too?" I cried. "He thought that little of me?"

"He was broken, Trinity, you have to understand that. He didn't know the truth and was hurting." Her words broke my heart, but not for what Reece had thought of me, for what he must have been feeling.

"There was something else he told me as well. After he became Alpha, there were people who tried to manipulate him to use his power. They sent women to use him. He learned to not trust women at all. He built walls around his heart to protect himself. He was afraid to let you in. He would never tell you this himself, but he was scared."

"I understand." I told her as I got to my feet. I had a lot to think about now. "I can understand why he said what he did. Why he has never trusted me and why he rejects me."

"But sweetheart, he doesn't reject you." She tried to convince me.

"I will believe that when he tells me that himself." I smiled at her sadly before I left the room. I never got the chance to talk about the daycare like I wanted. I would try again later.

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## Chapter 81 - Reece-Another Lecture From Mom

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Reece

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Life was getting busy again. I didn't get to see Mom or my Little Bunny all that much lately. I had been back to work a little over a week and spent almost every day at the office until very late. I did know that Mom and Little Bunny had decided on how they wanted to run the daycare they had thought of. I was brought some paperwork on the idea they had, and it really was a good plan.

They were going to take on some more help, apparently my Little Bunny had convinced her Aunt Eve to help as well. They would offer daycare services on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. I was initially confused about it not just being Monday, Wednesday, and Friday which I

thought made more sense, but it appears that my Little Bunny wanted to give parents a weekend day that they could be kid free as well.

It wouldn't be for long, and it would be early, but this way it would count as a date opportunity for them. My mate was truly generous and kind to others. She was also going to be at all the sessions unless she had business with me elsewhere. And until we got this issue with rogues and warlocks taken care of, she couldn't go with me anywhere. I truly regretted that.

I had gotten home from the office just after dinnertime and went straight to my home office. Things were busy right now as I was in the middle of a major acquisition at the moment. My company dealt with lots of minor firms. Almost any industry that wolves could want to work in needed to have a way to keep us a secret from the humans. Not just us either but the other supernaturals as well.

So, it was with that manner of thinking that my family started this business four generations ago. In a way, we are a supernatural management firm. But what we do is

make ourselves so powerful, so well known that no other company can turn us down. We have ties with medicine, research, securities, sports and entertainment. You name it and we probably have a wolf working in that field.

My pack would have remained small and relatively powerless, like all the others around us, if we hadn't done something to raise us up. We have wolves that come to us from all over the world looking for help. They don't want help in our little patch of the world, but in theirs. The beauty of the situation though, is that we are powerful enough to make it happen.

The empire left to me by my father when he died, that so many people thought was just going to collapse because I was too young and inexperienced, has only risen higher than anyone ever predicted.

Yes, I might have only been eighteen, but I was already a sophomore in college at the time, working on my business degree. I continued to work and go to school, and I did so while making sure that not a single person in my company had to worry about their future.

Did I have help? Yeah, sure I did. Who doesn't get help from time to time? But I made certain that I was able to

do what I needed to, eventually. I made sure I was the boss, the Alpha, the President, that everyone needed me to be.

That's why I was handling this new business personally. Major things like this always went through me. This company was a major security firm in LA. They handled all the high-profile bodyguard work. Their issue was poor management skills. Even though they were known as the best they were struggling just to get by. That's where I come in. I had wolves from all over the world who would love to work in LA, and this company was another step to help them. It was a win-win.

I would be flying out to meet with them in just under two weeks. I was going to have a series of meetings with their current management, I needed to know if they were trustworthy or not, if I needed to clean house in the administration when we took over. Things like that we needed to meet with them in person for, sniff them out so to speak.

I had mountains of paperwork to go through. I was having each member of their staff investigated and

thoroughly vetted so I knew if they were up to our high standards or not. I didn't take on riffraff, that wasn't my style at all.

But all this work was making me tired. I think it had to do with the fact that I couldn't see my Little Bunny. I had grown used to spending a lot of time around her during my vacation, so I wanted her by my side. But until this current business was over, I was working mainly from the corporate office and not my home office so I couldn't make up an excuse to call her to me. My wolf whined like crazy all day long while I was trying to work, making it take even longer.

I heard the sound of soft, feminine footsteps coming down the hall. My wolf was momentarily elated at the sound, until the scent reached my nose. Mom was coming toward my office, my hopes fell, and my wolf whined. I felt guilty for being so disappointed, but I couldn't help it.

Mom came right in without knocking.

"So, you are still alive. I was worried that you might be dead, or a vampire, since I hadn't seen you in so long." She joked with me as she sat in the chair across from me at my desk.

"I know, but it's been crazy lately." I sighed, exhausted from so many consecutive late nights in a row. I even worked straight through this past weekend.

"You're not alone anymore Reece, you can't throw yourself into your work nonstop." She lectured me.

"I know, but I have a major situation right now. Once this is done, I will have more time to spend with you."

"I'm not talking about me." She snapped at me angrily.

"What?" I was confused. "I thought you were mad because I wasn't home to spend time with you now that you were awake."

"I'm talking about your mate, Reece."

"What about Trinity? She hasn't seemed any different lately."

"How would you know? You haven't been around to see

anything." She was angrier than I had seen her in a long time.

"Has she said something to you?" I asked worried about my Little Bunny.

"Reece." She shook her head at me. "If only you knew how she feels, what she thinks."

"What?" I was not liking how this conversation was going.

"Sweetheart, she still thinks you hate her. She's justified to herself the reasons why you rejected her and nothing I said to her was enough to make her think otherwise."

"What? How could she still think that? Haven't I been showing her, proving to her that I don't hate her?" I was so confused. "I have been trying to be there, and show her that I want her, not just physically, but her to be there with me. But now that I think about it, she kept asking me who was making me spend time with her. Like she didn't think I would be near her willingly." I sighed dejectedly. "Mom, how do I fix this?"

"Have you talked to her?" She asked me.

"Yes, we have talked a lot. We got to know a lot about each other on our dates. All three of them went well enough. The last one went great. How could she possibly think like that still?" I shook my head. "I know she thinks I want her just for sex, that's why I behaved myself perfectly last time, to show her that I wanted her and not just her body."

"Have you ever told her that you don't hate her? Have you told her you don't reject her and never truly did?"

"I told her that I regretted saying those things." I answer.

"Was that all you said?" Mom asked me. "You didn't say anything like I don't hate you, or I accept you as a true mate?"

"Well, no. Not in those words. But I told her I regretted



having told her those words." I tried to explain again, to see where I might have gone wrong.

"You idiot."

"What?" I yelled at hearing her yell at me again right now.

"Think about it. Truly think about how she might see it. You regret saying those words. That doesn't tell her that the words aren't true, just that you wish you hadn't told her. Like you think life would have been easier if you just kept your mouth shut."

"But that's not what I meant." I tried to explain it to her. "I was saying that I wish I hadn't said them because I didn't truly feel that way." Mom got up and began pacing at my words, she was clearly frustrated. I watched as she stalked toward the window behind me in her anger.

"How is she supposed to know how you feel if you didn't actually tell her?" Mom demanded.

"I thought I had made things clear with my actions and telling her my regrets. I've been trying to show her that I accept her. We've gotten closer, in more ways than one."

I was trying to figure out this mess I suddenly found myself in when I felt a sudden sharp pain on the back of my head. I hadn't expected it, so my head went flying forward several inches.

"You moron." Mom screeched. I spun around to look at her in shock and saw her holding a thick book from the shelf behind me, she had clearly used that to hit me. "How the hell do you expect her to know how you feel if you don't say anything. No wonder she thinks you just want her for sex. Getting closer in more ways than one. You've tried getting physical with her without telling her how you feel, so she doesn't trust the progress you've made at all. She's going to think she's nothing more than another notch in your belt."

"You know, she even told me refused to be just another notch for me." I chuckled without any humor. "I really have been trying, but I didn't know I had messed up so bad. How do I fix this?" I pleaded with Mom, I needed to know.

"You talk to her, explain some things to her. And for Goddess's sake Reece, keep it in your pants and your hands to yourself when you do." She was glaring at me. I hung my head in shame as I nodded.

"Alright, I will make sure I talk to her soon."

"When?" She demanded.

"Tomorrow. At breakfast." I answered.

"Fine, I will take breakfast in my room tomorrow to give you privacy. I will also tell everyone to vacate the room once you've been served." Mom was still glaring at me, she was still very angry with me.

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Chapter 82 - Reece-Finally, Things Might Be Getting Better

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Reece

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The next morning, I dreaded my walk down to breakfast. I was dragging my feet more than usual, yet surprisingly, I was still there before my Little Bunny. I had hoped that she would be here first.

I had just sat down when I heard her footsteps coming down the hall. She walked in, a slightly forced smile on her face. She looked almost as nervous as I felt. Did she know I wanted to talk? Did Mom tell her? Or was she just always this nervous around me?

She sat across from me and Abigail brought us our food almost immediately.

"Here you are." She smiled as she sat the plates in front of us.

"What about Lila?" My Little Bunny asked. "Shouldn't we wait for her?" She was so considerate.

"Mom has something to do this morning, so she won't be joining us." I told her.

"Oh." She looked worried for some reason.

We ate in silence for a few minutes. I told myself that I was just waiting for the staff to be fully out of the area. In truth, I was just nervous and didn't know how to start. After another minute or two I finally began.

"So, um, Little Bunny, can we talk for a moment?" I asked her. She had been pushing her food around her plate nervously, but the moment I spoke her head shot up, her eyes wide.

"Is something wrong?" She asked. I could hear a slight tremble in her voice that broke my heart.

"No, nothing is wrong. I just want to talk about a few things, that's all." I was trying to make things better, but this didn't seem to be helping. I hope mom was right about me talking to her like this. Mom should have been here to help explain us to each other.

"Alright." She sat her fork down and folded her hands into her lap, looking at me apprehensively. "What do you need to talk about?" I rubbed the back of my head, the memory of where Mom had hit me with that book yesterday made it throb along with my pounding heartbeat.

"Look, it's been, forcefully, brought to my attention recently, that I'm a bit of an idiot." I couldn't look her in the eyes as I spoke. I was staring somewhere off over her shoulder not focusing on anything in particular. So, it surprised me when she started to laugh at me. I looked at her then, as she spoke.

"Well, I'm not going to object." She said through the laughter. "But what about exactly?"

"You remember when I told you that I regretted saying

certain things to you." I was being evasive, but I didn't want to bring up negative thoughts and make her upset. But I watched in horror as her eyes darkened with emotions.

"Yes, I remember." Her voice was strained.

"I'm afraid I didn't make myself clear that day." I saw fear flit across her face. "Don't misunderstand me. I truly did regret saying that. I wish I never told you that I rejected you, because I don't. I never did. I'm sorry, truly sorry. Can you ever forgive me?" I was pleading with her, I needed her to understand.

"Why did you say it, if you never rejected me in the first place?" She asked me. I knew she was going to ask questions. I was prepared for it.

"Like I said, I'm an idiot. There's no simpler explanation than that. I was stupid and thought it was the only way to protect myself. But I also thought I was protecting you."

"Protecting me?" She snapped. "How could saying those things protect me? Do you know how much that hurt

me?"

"I'm sorry, I know I hurt you and I am more sorry than you can imagine." I felt her pain, all that I could see boiling in her eyes then, I felt it all. "But I thought the people that have been after you were after me and trying to get to me through you."

"So, they're actually after me then?" She wondered.

"I don't know for certain, but I think they might be."

"Why? What do they want?"

"I don't know yet." I answered her honestly, angry that I didn't have the answers.

"What would rejecting and hating me do to help me, how would it protect me?"



"I thought if I distanced myself from you more, then I wouldn't have to worry about them targeting you. I thought it would be an added way to save you."

"But that clearly would never work if we had to pretend to be a perfect match in public."

"Yeah, I know that now."

"Were there any other reasons?" She asked knowingly.

"I was afraid." I wanted to look away, to stare anywhere but at her eyes so filled with pain.

"Of me?" She sounded incredulous.

"Of getting hurt. Of hurting my pack. Of getting too close." I sighed. "Take your pick."

"Why did you think so little of me?" I heard the pain in her voice.

"It wasn't you personally. I thought little of every woman."

"Why?"

"I've had women try to use me. To try to gain status, power, wealth, whatever it is I can provide for them they have tried getting it from me by manipulation."

"And you thought I would be just like them?" She was angered by this.

"I'm sorry, Little Bunny, it was before I knew you."

"That's right." She yelled at me. "You decided all this on your own without knowing a single thing about me, except you did have my cousin to talk to. I know he didn't tell you that I was some harlot that would try to manipulate you."

"No, he told me you were sweet, kind, funny, caring,

and basically the best person ever." She kept snapping and yelling at me, and I just answered dejectedly.

"And you didn't believe him."

"He was your family. I just thought that women didn't show that side of themselves to their family. But I should have listened to him. You're not like any other woman that I've ever met."

"I'd hope not, because no one else has ever mated with you." She joked. It finally felt like this might all get better, eventually.

"I should have trusted the bond, but I was stupid. Please, forgive me." I pleaded with her again as I watched her face for clues to what she might be thinking. Her face was blank though, and I was a nervous wreck.

"Fine, you wanted to start over, like everything we had said didn't matter. I'm assuming that this was the reason. You wanted me to forget about you saying those things to me, right?"

"Yes, I did." I was hopeful after she spoke.

"We can pretend that it never happened, if you promise to never behave like that ever again."

"I promise, I won't ever push you away again."

"Then I will give you a trial period and see how things go." I felt everything crumble. I was so elated when she said we could move beyond it all, now she said it was a trial period.

"I'll never do it again." I promised her.

"I hope not." She didn't sound happy, but at least she wasn't done with me. This was a step in the right direction. Wasn't it?

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Chapter 83 - Trinity-Antagonizing A Rabid Dog/Wolf

~ ~

Trinity

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Things were going great lately. I honestly couldn't complain. We were almost done setting up for our daycare. We had chosen a few rooms on the second floor to use for playrooms and nap rooms. Everything had finally been delivered, and we had a lot of interested moms and dads who could use a break from time to time.

I had included a weekend day in our initial plan so that people could have a date day. For these families with little ones constantly around, if they didn't have a reliable sitter to use then they never got to go out, day or night. So, I knew that a lot of people would take advantage of the offer.

Our first official day of business was going to be in just over a week. We hadn't expected everything to be

delivered so soon so we had told everyone that the first day would be in February. We had just ten days now, but before all that I had my first day of the new semester on Monday and then my birthday was on Thursday the 28th, which just so happened to be the day of the full moon this year.

The last time my birthday was on the full moon was when I turned one, so I was too young for it to matter to me. It shouldn't matter to me now since I couldn't attend the pack event, but it was still exciting for me.

The January moon is the Wolf Moon, so everyone in the pack, those with wolves anyway, get together for a wolf run. I had already met with Michael, alone since Reece was busy. We discussed the event and how Reece would lead the run like always.

I had secretly hoped that he would be able to skip it to spend time with me, like he did last time, but I knew that was selfish of me, and impossible. But still, I could hope right.

I had managed to get all my books together for school, which I was excited about, but I also felt sad that I wouldn't be going with my friends. They could still visit me, which they did when they could, so all was good.

In truth, if anything was dragging me down, it was Reece. He was spending so much time at work lately that I barely saw him. Even at breakfast and dinner, he was hardly ever there. That's why I had devised a plan, and why I was secretly happy that Reece had forced me to study digitally this semester.

Earlier this afternoon, I had sent Noah a message, asking him to pass a message to Reece for me. I was kind of miffed that I didn't have his information in my phone. How had I been mated to him for almost four months, living with him all this time, and not gotten his contact information? No worries, I could still get a message to him.

I had told Noah to tell him that I was going with him on the business trip. It was away from the city, away from the threat. And we were going to visit people that were neither wolves nor warlocks. It had to be the safest place for me, right?

I was looking forward to the trip because I hadn't gotten to talk to Reece in a solid week, since our awkward breakfast last week. I know it was last minute, but I knew they could manage it. It was still Friday, and we wouldn't be leaving until Sunday morning, that was plenty of time for the miracle workers known as Reece and Noah.

I was smiling happily at my closet, and the clothes that didn't even fill half of it, trying to figure out what I wanted to take with me. I may have been planning to use some time during the trip to improve things between Reece and me.

I smelled him as soon as he reached the top of the stairs.

"Oh, he's earlier than usual." I said to myself as I noted the time. It was just a little after seven. I had already eaten dinner without him because I expected him to be later. I noticed his scent was getting stronger and his footsteps were pounding down my hallway. "Hmmm." I hummed as I mused what he could possibly want.



"Little Bunny?" He called out as he knocked on my door.

"Come in, Reece." I told him. At least he's still respecting my boundaries. He opened the door and stomped in. I wondered what could have possibly made him so angry.

"What are you thinking?" He demanded of me. I quirked an eyebrow, confused.

"Well, I was thinking about my clothes just now." I told him jokingly as I looked down at myself. I realized then what I had put on after my shower, it was a pair of my skimpier pajama sets, short shorts and a tank top that stopped at my belly button. Oh well, can't change it now.

"That's not what I meant." He said looking displeased.

"Then I'm afraid I don't follow." I told him as I stepped out of my closet, shutting the door behind me.

"What's this about going with me?" He asked me

through clenched teeth. Uh oh, are we taking a step backwards?

"I haven't left in over a month Reece, and you're leaving the city. That should be far enough away from the danger, right?"

"We don't know how they're finding you." He growled. "Don't you remember how they found you at Riley's?" He was clearly upset.

"So, you're saying that you don't want me to go?"

"I'm saying it's not safe for you to go." He ran his hand through his hair in frustration.

"Reece, you need to let me out once in a while." I growled at him.

"Trinity, what don't you get? Your life is in danger." He acted like I didn't understand this. Like I wasn't the one who had to recover after those attacks. I knew this probably better than he did.

"I know that Reece, but won't getting me away from here be a better idea?" I asked him.

"Oh my Goddess." He snapped as he rubbed his face roughly. "Listen to me-." He started.

"No, you listen to me Reece. We're trying to make things better between us right. I haven't seen you in a week, since you told me you want to do just that. Here I am offering you an opportunity for us to get closer." I smiled at him, hoping it would show him that I was done fighting him off so much.

"How can you-." He started before stopping himself with a growl of frustration. "Listen to me." He said as he started to stalk closer to me, backing me up against the closet door.

"Reece-." I began before he cut me off.

"No, it's time you listen to me. I will not put you in more danger. I have been trying to keep you safe. What if I take you and we're attacked? It will be just Noah and myself there to protect you." He placed his hands on either side of my head as he got closer to me. Instead of

taking the last step and a half to the door I leaned with him. As he leaned toward me, I leaned backward until my head rested against the door. I regretted this, as it left our bodies nearly touching.

"Reece, I can help protect myself." I told him, my face just inches from his with how we were positioned.

"You're not going. I don't want you getting hurt again. I will not watch it again. If it were to happen while we are somewhere else, I cannot guarantee that I will not reveal us to the humans." I heard the fury and anger in his voice, but there were other things as well. "I will protect you. I will keep them from you. If that means I can't take you with me then so be it."

"It all comes down to you not wanting me to go with you, doesn't it?"

"Oh, trust me, that is not it. I definitely 'want you' to come with me." I felt the meaning hidden in his words. It was like he was rubbing his hands all over me as he spoke even though his hands were still on the wall.

"You...want me?" I asked him nervously and heard him growl in response. I did something then that I had never done before. Something that I never thought I would be capable of doing. I shifted my lower body, just an inch or two so it brought us together and I moved my hips very slightly side to side. "How much do you want me?"

It was like his control snapped. He pressed his lips against mine with more hunger than he had ever had before. I instantly felt the fire leap within me as I grabbed his shirt and held on for dear life. I was afraid the kiss would blow me away or burn me to a crisp, maybe both.

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CHOSEN BY FATE, REJECTED BY THE ALPHA

Chapter 84 - Reece-Losing Control! Time To Devour A Little Bunny! (Mature Rating)

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Reece

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Oh Goddess, but my control snapped. I had been trying to hold back. Trying to keep my hands off and wait until she was ready. Then my Little Bunny pushed her hips against me, against my growing erection. She was already talking suggestively, and when she pressed her body to mine, I seized her. And I couldn't even blame my wolf for it, I was the one who lost control.

I pressed my lips to her and growled in satisfaction when she gripped my shirt to pull me toward her. The heat of the kiss was burning, but I didn't care, I needed more. I needed her. I slipped my tongue into her mouth, tasting her. She was sweet, spicy, and dangerous all at the same time. My apple pie chased by a thunderstorm. I swear I could feel the hairs on the back of my neck stand up when I kissed her, the electricity was that intense.

She wrapped her arms around me then, trying to get us closer. She was kissing me back with the same level of

intensity that I was kissing her. She was growing, learning to be more open with me. That just aroused me even more.

I wrapped my arms around her, pulling her closer to me, pressing her body against mine. Everywhere she touched me burned with need. I wouldn't be able to stop tonight. I needed my Little Bunny like I needed air. More than air, because I didn't care if I took a breath between one kiss and the next.

With a growl I lifted her and held her against me. I made a very unwolf like purring sound when she wrapped her legs around my waist. Still, she didn't protest, she didn't try to stop me.

With a bit of a singular focus, I carried her over to the bed. I didn't want to fall on top of her, so I crawled to the middle with her still wrapped around me. Only when I was able to lay her gently down onto her pillow did I lean forward, pressing her into the mattress.

I pulled away from her, breaking the kiss. I heard her let

out a dissatisfied moan. Her eyes were unfocused and glazed, and they were filled with a need so intense that I could feel it pouring off her. I propped myself up onto my knees, straddling her legs as I looked down at my mate's beautiful face.

"Reece?" She called my name, spurring me into action.

I pulled my shirt up and over my head, tossing it out of sight. Her eyes went wide, and she blushed, but she sat up and put her palms against my chest. She curled her fingers slightly, just enough to scrape the tips of her nails against my skin. The rounded edges didn't scratch, they just spurred me on even more, but I stayed put for a little longer. The next thing I knew she leaned forward and pressed a kiss to my bare chest as she ran her hands down and over my abs. When I felt her soft tongue leave a tiny trail in the middle of my chest, I couldn't control myself anymore.

With a growl I grabbed the hem of her shirt. I had intended to pull it up over her head, but the material gave way and ripped straight up the middle instead. She squealed, but not in fear. I smiled in pure satisfaction as the motion had caused her to fall back against the pillows.



She wasn't wearing a bra beneath her shirt. Her ample chest was left bare and in full view for me for the first time. Her pale, milky white skin seemed to glow. The peak of each of her ample breasts were tipped with rosy pink flesh. There wasn't an imperfection in sight, at least not one that I could see. I fell forward, trying my best not to be a savage and take her too roughly. I wanted our first time to be special for her, even if it was unplanned.

I buried my face in her neck, taking in her scent with a deep breath. I pressed a kiss to her mark which made her squirm with a moan. I growled at the movement, if she didn't stay still, I wouldn't be able to take my time. I trailed kisses, down her neck to her collar bone, down her chest. I stopped when I got to her breasts.

I lapped at her, wetting the peak of her breast and making it stand firm in front of me. I pursed my lips and blew on it gently, the cold air made it tighten even more and caused her to shudder slightly.

I moved slowly across her chest, nipping gently at her

chest along the way, until I got to her other breast. I scraped my teeth across the peak gently. She moaned and squirmed, causing me to smile before I closed my mouth around the pink flesh with a purr. I rolled the small pink peak between my tongue and the roof of my mouth before biting down gently. She moaned once again. Desire was clear in the sound.

I pulled away slightly, letting her breast fall from my mouth. Moving lower, slowly, I trailed kisses along her stomach.

"Reece." She moaned my name again, impatiently.

"Shh. Don't worry Little Bunny." I soothed her when I had reached the top of her shorts. I grinned as I thought 'I had already ripped the shirt, might as well finish the job'. Grabbing the waistband I made a fist with the fabric. One quick pull later and I heard the fabric rip. After I had grabbed both pieces of fabric and tossed them aside , removing the barriers in one go.

She now lay beneath me with nothing to hinder us. She was naked in front of me for the first time. Her perfect little body laying bare for me to see spurred my desire, but I wanted to stop and look for just a few moments. I

had been dreaming about this for so long. I purred again, in satisfaction, before I leaned forward.

I pressed a kiss to her navel, lapping at it quickly before moving lower. I moved one hand lower, cupping the warmth between her legs. My fingers tickled her dark curls for just a moment before sliding past between her lips and finding the moisture buried there. I growled quietly, satisfied.

Slowly, I moved my fingers up and down, the motion caused her to buck, throwing her hips up toward my hand, then she instantly pulled away like she couldn't decide what she wanted.

"Reece." She said her moaning voice sounded more like a whimper as her need was growing stronger.

I moved steadily lower, pushing her knees apart with my shoulders.

"What're you-?" She started, but she lost the ability to

talk when I pressed my tongue against her, lapping at her, at her sweet dampness. She screamed, a high pitch whine of satisfaction. I flicked my tongue against the knot at the top of her slit. She screamed again, reaching down to grab fists full of my hair.

Gently, I pulled her hands away and held them off to the side as I continued to explore her with my tongue. I could feel the tension steadily growing in her body. She was breathing heavily. Her entire body was quivering. She was moaning in pleasure as I drove her further and further, closer to her climax.

She was close to the edge now, she was teetering, ready to be pushed over the edge into oblivion, the ecstasy of climax.

"Reece." She moaned my name again. I lapped once more at her core, a long hard stroke of my tongue.

She exploded all around me. Every inch of her body seemed to be on fire. Her core was throbbing in my mouth. Her body spasmed around me. Her screams of pleasure rent the air, echoing in the room around us as she howled, almost like a wolf.

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## Chapter 85 - Reece-Taking My Mate (Mature Rating)

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Reece

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Panting, I pulled away from her. Raising my head to stare at her as I tore at the fastening to my belt and pants. I pulled the fabric away, stripping the last of the clothes from my body in a rush. I saw that she was flushed from the chest up to her cheeks. The sight was enough to make my mouth water. I wanted to lick my way up her body just as much as I wanted to be inside her.

I decided I could still take a little time. I leaned back over her and placed my tongue just above her knee. Slowly, I licked up her inner thigh. I skirted about her core, I didn't need to be drawn there again, I was on a mission. I continued higher, lapping at her navel again. Higher, my tongue went higher, up over her ribs. I took the time to lap at each breast before continuing up her chest and to her neck. I ended once again at her mark. I pressed my tongue to it firmly causing her to squirm beneath me.

"Reece." She moaned, slightly dazed.

"It's time, Little Bunny." I whispered in her ear. She shivered.

I trailed kisses across her jaw until I got to her lips. I trapped her mouth in a deep, passionate kiss. While she was distracted, I fitted myself against her core. She gasped at the feel, looking up at me with desire and uncertainty in her eyes.

I kissed her lightly on the cheek before whispering in

her ear.

"Mine." The word came out as a low, seductive growl.

I pressed forward, pushing past her folds, braced at her entrance. I captured her mouth once more just as I drove into her.

She jerked her head to the side wincing as she gave a sharp hiss and a pained moan in quick succession. I noticed the sharp scent of blood immediately fill the air. 'Shit' She was a virgin. I should have been more gentle. I had driven into her too fast, too hard.

"Are you alright?" I asked her, afraid to hear her answer.

"I-I'll be fine." She was still wincing.

"Do you need me to stop?" I asked her, I didn't know what I would do if she said yes. I would stop, of course, I refused to hurt her. But I was beyond my limit. It was driving me crazy at this point.

"No, don't stop." She moaned. "Reece please don't stop." She said as she wrapped her arms around my neck. My Little Bunny then pressed her lips to mine in a soft tender kiss that was a perfect representation of her. Soft, sweet, and enough to drive me insane with need.

I gently pulled back, leaving just the tip inside her before I pushed forward again, slowly and gently this time. She moaned again, this time in pleasure.

"Ahh, Reece." She sighed.

I developed a steady rhythm. Starting slow and then moving faster little by little. I leaned over her, my hands gripping her backside so I could lift her into each thrust. After a few minutes she started throwing her hips into my thrusts, moaning with each motion.

Her breathing was ragged again. Her arms were wrapped around me, she was digging her nails into my back helping to give her more leverage for each thrust of her hips so she could meet with mine.

After a few moments, the pleasurable feeling of her nails digging into my back, the one of nails pressing into



the skin and maybe leaving a red mark but nothing more, was replaced by one of near pain. The once smooth, rounded nails now felt sharp and near dangerous. I was certain I could even feel blood running down my back, but I was too distracted to notice a new scent of blood among the other one already in the room.

I drew back slightly to look at her. I could see the sweat on her brow. The blush in her cheeks. The wolf stirring in her eyes.

Wait wolf?

Her eyes were shining slightly like everyone's did just before their first change, and there, in the depth of her pupil, was the shadow of a wolf fighting to get out. 'So, she has a wolf? It's just trapped.' I thought to myself as I halted momentarily in my thrusts.

"Reece?" She sounded like she was begging me. Her canine teeth, top and bottom, were slightly elongated. It wasn't like the partial change I had done when I bit her in the forest, but it was noticeable enough to tell that they

were not the teeth of a human anymore. But, somehow, she hadn't noticed.

"Reece?" She said my name again as she pulled me down, digging her nails into my flesh. The pain wasn't exactly bad, it was exciting. I was pleased knowing that she had a wolf trying to get out, that it was getting closer with the pleasure we shared. That I had to help her. I would need to keep pushing her further and further until the wolf was released.

I continued my thrusts, moving with more urgency now. Her moaning grew more intense. My name coming on her gasping breaths.

"Reece.....Reece.....Reece." Just listening to her was arousing.

I felt that familiar tingling at the base of my spine, my breathing was growing heavier, I was getting close. I could feel her clenching more tightly around me. I knew that she would come apart in my arms in another moment or two.

After a few more thrusts she screamed, bucking her hips against me. I exploded as well. We rode the wave of passion and ecstasy together. When the trembling in her body subsided, I kissed her head and pulled myself free from her. She gasped when my body parted from hers like she was lonely.

"Give me just a minute, Little Bunny." I soothed her as I rolled her over and leaned her onto a pillow. I draped my body over hers before I entered her again. She gasped and shuddered again.

"Reece?"

"I'm not nearly done with you yet." I breathed into her ear, stirring the hair at her neck and causing her to shiver.

I drove into her again and again. Faster and harder now that her body was primed and ready. She was wet, ready, and fully open, her opening was perfectly slick and willing to accept me. I thrust with a fast, hard rhythm. I felt her body getting close to the edge of orgasm again. Her moans desperate, her breathing ragged. She curled around the pillow, raising her hips higher causing her to take me just a little deeper. She screamed, long and loud, as she exploded again. Her body clenched around me, dragging me with her. I came again at the same time she did.

I took her again and again. I could see her partial changes and the wolf begging at her eyes all night. If her wolf needed this kind of night to help lure it out of hiding, I would be more than happy to oblige.

My Little Bunny finally collapsed, exhausted. Her body was spent. She moaned weakly when I pulled free of her body, a shudder ran through her. I smiled in satisfaction, as I watched her laying there with a satisfied look on her face. My wolf was happy, no longer chomping at the bit. He was instead sleeping soundly, happily.

I pressed a gentle kiss to her forehead before climbing out of the bed. I pulled my pants on and gathered the rest of my things before leaving the room as quietly as I could, heading back to my own room. It was after two in the morning, no need to wake anyone else in the house. I sank into my bed and fell asleep almost instantly, a pleased grin on my face.

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Chapter 86 - Trinity-The Morning After, So Embarrassed

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Reece

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I had an extra spring in my step when I went down to breakfast the next morning. I walked in and took my seat without saying a word.

"What's with that look?" Mom asked me.

"What look?" I deflected.

"That cat that ate the canary grin that you've got." Mom was looking at me quizzically.

"I don't know what you're talking about." I tried to sound as innocent as I could.

"Yeah, sure you don't." Mom clearly didn't believe me.

A few minutes later Abigail brought our breakfast to the table, but Little Bunny still hadn't come down.

"Where's Trinity?" Mom asked, a look of concern on her face.

"I haven't seen her." Abigail answered.

"Julie, will you go find out what is keeping her?" I asked, I wanted to see my mate before I had to leave.

"Yes, Sir." She replied before hurrying out of the room.

A few moments later, Julie returned. She looked worried and my Little Bunny was not with her.

"Julie, what's wrong?" Mom asked her.

"I'm sorry Ma'am, but the Luna isn't feeling very well today. She has asked me to bring her breakfast to her room." Julie was clearly worried about her Luna as well.

"Is she alright?" Mom asked. I was pretty sure I knew what was

wrong. I smirked to myself.

"She said she's just sore, Ma'am. Told me she should be fine later."

I was grinning as I listened. 'That's because of me.' I thought proudly. Then, as I thought about it more, I realized I might have gone a little overboard, if she was that sore today. 'That's because of me.' I thought again, this time with regret.

"What do you know?" Mom demanded of me.

"Nothing." I denied. I know I was blushing.

"Reece?" Mom growled at me.

"Oh, look at that, I'm running late. I've got to go." I got hastily to my feet and ran out of the room, my breakfast not even half eaten.

~~

Trinity

~

I was still sleeping when Julie came knocking on my door.

"Luna? Are you awake? The Alpha and Miss Lila would like you to come to breakfast." I groaned as I opened my eyes. Every inch of my body ached, not all unpleasant but a lot of it. There was an ache deep in my core that caused a flutter in my stomach every time I felt it. But the aches in my limbs, my back, and everywhere else on my body wasn't exactly comfortable.

I tried to sit up and winced in pain. My muscles ached, and I felt like I had a bad case of internal rug burn.

"Julie, I don't feel so well this morning." I told her.

"Are you alright?" She sounded worried.

"Yes, I'm just sore. I think I slept wrong or something. I will be fine later, I'm sure."

"Would you like to come down to breakfast?" Her wary voice made its way to me through the door.



"Could you bring my breakfast up to me today?" I asked her.

"Yes, Luna. I will bring it right away."

"Thank you."

I realized then that I had another problem. I was laying in bed, naked. I now had to get up and get dressed before Julie got back. I groaned again as I went to sit up, but I just bit my lip and pushed past the pain.

I looked around for my clothes from last night. I stifled a gasp that turned into a laugh when I saw my clothes. They had been reduced to nothing more than dust rags now. I vaguely remember Reece being a little overeager last night.

But this didn't help things. I needed clothes, and I needed them fast. It just hurt so much to get up. I was going to need a serious soak in the tub, or twenty.

I braced for the pain as I lifted myself off the bed. It still hurt way

more than I was expecting it to. I winced and sucked the air in sharply through my teeth.

"Ahh!" I cried out, my knees almost giving out as I tried to walk. "Goddess that hurts. I think it's a good thing he's not here right now, I'd probably hit him." I growled through the sharp pains I was feeling.

I made it to my dresser that held my unmentionables and night clothes. I was going to soak in the tub, for a long, long time soon and I didn't have a lot of time before Julie came back, so I just slid on a pair of loose yoga pants and a t-shirt. I didn't bother with a bra and panties right now, it would take too long to get them on, then back off to soak later.

I had just finished getting dressed and was making my way back to the bed when I heard two sets of footsteps coming down the hallway. Lila was coming with Julie. Oh, this was going to be embarrassing.

There was a faint knocking on the door followed by Julie's voice.

"I'm coming in now Luna, I have your breakfast." The door opened almost immediately. Julie walked in, followed by Lila.

"Trinity dear, I came to see how you're doing. What happened?" She

was saying as she walked through the door. The two of them noticed me then, hunched over and attempting to walk back to my bed.

"Luna."

"Trinity." They exclaimed at nearly the same time. "What happened dear?" Lila demanded as she rushed forward to try to help me.

"It's nothing, really." I waved them off. "I just woke up sore, that's all." I told them, it was the same thing I had said to Julie earlier.

"Luna." Julie tried to interject but couldn't, she just bowed her head and nodded. "I will put your breakfast at the table." She said. Once she had placed the tray, she excused herself from the room.

"So, why don't you tell me what really happened." Lila demanded once Julie was far enough away from the room.

"Nothing happened, I'm fine. Like I said, I'm just sore, really."

"Uh huh, and I'll believe that as soon as I believe that Reece looked as innocent as a choir boy when I saw him this morning." She snapped at me. "Did he hurt you?"

"Goddess no!" I yelled. "He wouldn't hurt me."

"Then who did? Because you don't wake up that sore without someone doing something to you." She had to know. She had to know and was just trying to make me say it.

"No one hurt me." I tried to convince her again as I went to sit at the table. That was a mistake right now, that made the pain a lot worse. I cried out again. "Ahhh!"

"Trinity." She scolded me. "I smell blood in this room." She informed me. I blushed scarlet at her words. I had grown used to the smell apparently and didn't notice it, but yes, Reece had taken my virginity so there had been blood.

"You're imagining things." I pretended not to know anything while my face went from scarlet to crimson.

"Trinity, you need to tell me what's wrong with-." She stopped mid sentence and blushed, not as red as me but still an impressive shade. "Oh!" She exclaimed as realization finally dawned on her face. I buried my face in my hands.

"This is actually good news." She said cheerfully. I looked at her, mortified. I did not want to have this conversation with her right now. "Don't give me that look. It is good news, it means you've moved past your issues." She was smiling. "And look on the bright side, for me at least, now I will eventually get grandchildren."

"LILA!" I yelled as I saw the proud look on her face. "We are so not talking about this."

After being thoroughly embarrassed by Lila, I don't think I can ever look her in the eye again, I ate my breakfast alone in my room. I had kicked Lila out for my sanity, the woman was going to make me boil my brain with how hot red my face was with shame.

I called down and asked Julie if she could change my sheets and bring me some Epsom salts so I could soak in the tub for a while. I filled the tub with the hottest water I could stand and put in the Epsom salts. After stripping off my clothes and sliding into the water I immediately let out another hiss. The water stung as soon as it touched my raw skin. I was already healing, I knew that, but that didn't stop it from hurting like hell right now.

While I sat there in the water I thought about the night before. I

could not believe what I did. I technically started everything. I knew how he would react if I did that. I knew that I was being too flirtatious, I was egging him on.

"Goddess, I can't believe I asked him how much he wanted me." I cried out as I sank further into the water, hiding myself up to my chin. "But I didn't stop him. And I know I wouldn't stop him if he were to do it again. I want him to do it again." Saying this out loud was even worse than thinking it, even though there was no one around to hear it.

I soaked in the tub until the water started to get cold. Then, I took a hot shower. I know, it was a waste of water, but it was my homeopathic remedy to help me heal. I needed something. And I really did feel better after being in the hot water for so long. I barely had any soreness left at all. It only bothered me when I made quick movement and when I first sat down.

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Chapter 87 - Trinity-Even More Visitors

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Trinity

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I had just sat down to read a book until lunch when I heard a knock at the door. I was really letting myself get distracted today.

"Come in." I said.

"Hey." Juniper called as she opened the door.

"Hey Juniper, what are you doing here?" I asked her, confused.

"Well, I tried calling you, but you didn't answer." She giggled. "But I know you can't go anywhere so I figured you would be here." She sat on the sofa next to me.

"Yeah, you probably called while I was taking a shower." I told her. "I missed you." I said leaning over to hug her. The motion caused a sharp pain, making me wince.

"Trin, what's wrong?" Juniper asked me.

"Don't worry about it." I laughed. I did not need another person interrogating me until they found out what I did.

"You got hurt again? But you've been at the estate this whole time, right? You haven't left." She sounded scared.

"Well, technically, Reece and I went a short distance away into the trees for our date on the night of the full moon. But there were enough wolves nearby that it wasn't an issue."

"So, if you didn't get hurt there, then what happened?"

"Nothing, Juniper, I didn't get hurt." I glared at her, trying to get her to understand without me needing to say anything.

"But-." She looked at me, unable to finish. She just stared at me, studying me for a moment, taking in everything that she saw. I watched as she took a quick sniff of the room as well, a deeper scenting than she had already done. I watched as her eyes went wide and a huge grin



spread across her face.

"OH MY GODDESS!" She yelled. "Trinity, oh my Goddess. Why didn't you say anything?" I blushed again.

"Why is it everyone who comes into my room can figure it out?" I asked of no one in particular.

"What do you mean?"

"Lila did the same thing. She thought I was hurt, I was in more pain then though, and she thought Reece had actually hurt me before she realized what really happened." I put my face into the book to hide my embarrassment. "Today has been one mortifying event after another." I told her.

"Girl, you should be happy. This is big." She was grinning excitedly. "When did things get so much better between you two?"

"We've been talking more, fighting less. We've talked a lot of things out and got to know each other. He also told me he never rejected me, he just wanted to keep me at bay to protect us both." She looked at me confused when she heard that last part. "Yeah, it was a long story." I laughed. "But things have gotten better. Plus, there's the mate bond

that's been drawing me to him, making me fall in love with him more and more each day whether I wanted to or not."

"Yeah, that mate bond stuff is some serious business." She smiled, no doubt remembering her own bonding experience. "So." She said suggestively while wiggling her eyebrows at me.

"So, what?" I asked her.

"So, how was it?" She grinned. "Come on, you've got to tell me. And you promised to tell me all about Reece's pieces, remember." She stuck the tip of her tongue out and bit it playfully. "Come on, Trin, give me some details here."

"I don't know what to say, it wasn't planned, it just, sort of happened."

"So, he basically jumped your bones?" She asked me, laughing.

"No, well, not really." She looked confused now. "I kind of started it." Her eyes went wide as dinner plates.

"Oh my Goddess, Trinity, you need to tell me everything." She demanded.

I did as she asked and told her every detail I could remember from the night before. Her face was red, and so was mine.

"Oh my." She was fanning her face. "You certainly lucked out in that department." She laughed. "I mean, Paul isn't bad, trust me he's great, but if he was anything like the Alpha, I think I might have already died from exhaustion." She cackled.

"I think I might." I laughed with her.

"So, how was it?"

"How was what? Being with him?" I asked, confused.

"No, it." She said, being evasive. "His pieces. You haven't told me all about Reece's pieces yet. You've only told me what you were doing with those pieces all night."

"I think it was more what those pieces were doing to me. I was definitely not the one in control."

"I don't care who was in control, I want to know details, dimensions. How was it, was he huge? How does he look naked? Does he look as good as I imagine?"

"JUNIPER!" I snapped at her. "You're married."

"So, I'm not looking, I'm asking for information for educational purposes."

"You mean imaginational purposes. You just want a good mental image."

"So, as long as it's just in my head it doesn't matter."

"You're horrible."

"No, I'm not. And I love Paul with all of my heart, that will never change, but come on girl, we've all been dying to know about the Alpha for years." I laughed at her, shaking my head in disbelief. "Trinity?" She pleaded one last time.

"He's hot as hell." I finally answered. "I don't think there's an ounce of

fat on that man's body. He is all muscle and sex, and more muscle or more sex. I don't know which. He's amazing."

"What about size, how was it?"

"I didn't look directly at it, by the time he got himself fully undressed I was a little dazed, but it definitely felt very, uh, large." I struggled to get those words out and Juniper cackled at my embarrassment.

"Trinity, you've definitely got your 'hands' full, don't you?" We both laughed at that, even though my face was on fire.

I spent the afternoon with Juniper. She stayed for lunch and kept me company until it was almost dinner, but she had to get back home. Before she left though, I gave her a warning.

"Juniper, don't tell anyone about this." I said sternly through clenched teeth. I didn't want to be embarrassed the next time I saw the guys.

"Don't worry, Trin, no need to make it an order, girl talk stays between girls."

I was prepared to have dinner alone in my room again. I hadn't

actually left my room all day and didn't plan to. But when I heard someone coming down my hall, I knew that my evening was going to be different than I had planned.

I was sitting at my table, trying to appear composed, when Reece came in. He didn't knock today. 'Is this how things are going to be from now on? He's just going to walk in without knocking now'

"Hello Reece." I said sitting up as straight in my chair as I could. I saw that he was not empty handed. "What is that?" Reece smirked.

"I thought we could have dinner together." He looked confident, and a little smug, but I couldn't help but feel a little excited that he was here. But there was also a hint of nervousness.

He was carrying a box that was filled with delicious smelling food. It smelled like comfort foods. I could smell burgers, fries, and chicken. What exactly was he planning?

"I was just planning on having dinner." I told him, letting him know that I was indeed hungry.

"Well, I gave Abigail the night off, so you would have no luck if you don't eat with me." He thought he had planned everything perfectly to force me to have dinner with him, it was kind of funny. I wanted to mess with him.

"You know, I could always go down to the kitchen and cook for myself." I smiled as I spoke the words flatly. His face fell and he faltered momentarily.

"No, but I have dinner here. We should eat together." He didn't expect me to say no and the way he responded was very cute.

"Reece, you're so adorable." I was laughing at him but he didn't seem to like that. He set the box down on the table and stalked toward me.

"You think you're funny, don't you?" He loomed over me, one hand on each of the arms of my chair as he leaned forward to bring his face closer to mine.

"Yeah, I do." I smiled happily. "Don't you think so too?" I asked him, batting my eyelashes.

"Hmmm. Funny isn't what comes to mind when I think of you." His voice rumbled into my ear as his lips moved against flesh. "Scrumptious, irresistible, unpredictable. Now those are things that come to mind when I think of you.

I hummed with pleasure as Reece pressed his lips to mine. I couldn't believe how much I had changed. How easy I was finding all this. But I really did want him, need him.

My stomach growled, loudly, right as Reece was getting into the kiss. He had just put his hand on the back of my neck to deepen it when I had to go and ruin it.

"I get the message. Dinner first, then dessert." He was smiling at me hungrily with dark passionate eyes. I used to think those eyes meant he was angry with me, but I think I had made a lot of mistakes over these last few months.

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Chapter 88 - Trinity-Take Charge (Mature Rating)



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Trinity

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I had thought that dinner would be awkward, what with the tense start and interrupted kiss. But we sat and ate the food he brought with no tension and easy conversation.

"So, why the grease trap for dinner?" I asked him.

"You don't like it?" He seemed surprised.

"I never said that, this is right up my alley. It just doesn't seem like yours"

"Why, because I'm rich?"

"Obscenely so."

"That's stereotyping, you know that right?" Reece was joking with me as he wiped his hands on a napkin. The food had been greasy, but delicious, but it just wasn't something I could imagine Reece being into with the high class food he was probably used to eating.

"I'm not trying to stereotype. But, I'm sure you're used to more expensive, and upscale foods."

"Do we typically eat that upscale food here?" He was smiling at me like he was enjoying himself.

"Well, no, not usually." He had a point now that he mentioned it. "We typically eat a lot of homestyle meals. There are some high class type meals, but I guess most are what a typical family would eat just with better quality and presentation. And much better skill. I don't think anyone can beat Abigail in the kitchen." Reece laughed at that.

"Yeah, she's the greatest, she's been cooking for my family since before I was born."

The conversation continued in this easy manner until we were done eating. It was probably the most comfortable I had ever felt around him.

But now that we were done eating I was nervous once again. I knew what he wanted. The thing is, I wanted it too.

I saw that the heat was already steadily growing in his eyes. The honeyed gold color had turned nearly amber with his desire. The sight of those darkened eyes sent a shiver throughout my body. I knew that I was in for a repeat of last night, and I was nervous, but ready for it.

I decided not to wait for him this time. I wanted to take the lead. To show him that I wasn't afraid of him. I eyed him seductively and gave him a small smile. He definitely noticed what I was trying to do.

I got slowly to my feet. The light blue slip dress I was wearing fell to my mid thigh. I walked to him, barefoot, my steps not making a sound.

Reece was watching me intently. His eyes followed every move I made, every sway of my hips as I walked the short distance to him.

I took his hand in mine, pulling him toward me. He came willingly. Getting to his feet quickly and eagerly. I pulled him with me as I backed toward the bed, I saw the grin form on his lips. Just before I felt myself reach the bed I turned slowly, pushing him to sit on the edge of the bed.

With him sitting and me standing he was the right height for me to look

him in the eyes. I pressed forward, placing myself between his thighs and putting my hands on his shoulders. Gently, I pressed my lips to his.

Reece let out a growl of pleasure when I kissed him. I felt him grab my hips firmly, his fingers biting into me. I knew that I would have bruises there later but I didn't care.

"This isn't like you, Little Bunny." Reece purred when I broke the kiss.

"It's not? Or do you just not know me that well?" I chuckled lightly as I moved my hands down to his chest. I slowly started to unbutton his shirt.

I watched hungrily as I slowly revealed his chest, one button at a time. I greedily push his shirt off his shoulders and down his arms. I could feel his muscles rippling under his skin as he shuddered from the feeling of my hands on him.

Looking at him, his chest bare for me to see, I was finally able to appreciate the visage. Last night, when I had seen him, I was a little beyond the point of appreciation. Now, I wanted to see him, to feel him, to take it all in.

I ran my hands down his chest, luxuriating in the feel of his firm muscles. The memory of what it felt like to be wrapped in those arms made me blush, but I refused to look away. I wanted to take in all the sights tonight.

Reece was watching me, waiting for my next move while I was enjoying the view. But I was inexperienced and didn't know exactly what he wanted me to do. I knew what I wanted though, and that was to see more.

Moving my eyes lower I saw that there was already a bulge in his pants. He was hard. His arousal was definitely clear for me to see. I reached for his belt buckle but he grabbed my wrist to stop me.

"Are you sure, Little Bunny? If you do this I won't be able to hold back." His voice had deepened with his desire, his eyes filled with need. He was giving me an out if I needed one, if I wanted one, but I wanted him as much as he wanted me.

"I didn't stop you last night, did I?" I assured him. "I don't intend to stop you now." I leaned forward, kissing him softly.

He dropped his hand from my wrist while I kissed him. The kiss

deepened naturally, our tongues finding each other, lapping at each other. I kissed him more fiercely than I had ever kissed him before.

While Reece busied himself with the kiss, gently cupping my cheeks in the palms of his hands as he held me to him, I sought his belt buckle. I was intent on baring all of him, I wanted to see every bit of him as he had of me. Once I had his belt unfastened, I pulled it by the buckle until it was free of his waistband. I threw it haphazardly across the room, I didn't care where it landed.

When I had his belt free, Reece broke free of our kiss and pulled away from me. I growled low in my throat at him. Reece laughed alluringly.

"Don't worry, we will continue Little Bunny." His gaze was full of passion and heat as he grinned at me. I pulled impatiently at the fastening on his designer suit pants. With a chuckle Reece leaned backward, away from me, and braced his hands on the bed. I was confused and momentarily angered until I noticed he was giving me the opportunity to pull the pants off him.

I was nervous again, but just for a moment. I wanted this, and nothing was going to stop me. I leaned over him while he was stretched away from me, and wrapped my arms around his waist. I pressed a kiss to his

chest, right between the swell of muscles. I followed that with a long, slow lap of my tongue. I felt his shuddering gasp at the feel.

While I was running my tongue up his chest, I slowly slid my hands down into the back of Reece's pants. I was embarrassed to be doing all of this, but I couldn't stop myself, it was a compulsion that was pushing me forward. That's why, when I slid my hands into his pants I gripped him, felt the firm, toned muscles of his backside. He really was made of solid muscle. Pure strength and sexual attraction.

When he felt me squeeze him he shuddered again. I dug my nails in momentarily, just because I could, he shuddered and gasped again.

I moved my hands then, grabbing the waistband of his boxers and pants, both of them at the same time. I pushed them down as I stood. When I could no longer push them out of the way I stepped away and tugged on them. The clothes came easily with him leaning back and lifting his hips off the bed.

The clothes were flung haphazardly off into the room, just the same as the belt had been. Now he lay on the bed, naked and bare for me to see. His honied complexion seemed to be shining like the sun as he laid back on the sky colored comforter. I looked over him, slowly.

I watched him smirk as I ran my eyes over him. I moved from his eyes

down. I was saving the best, scariest, for last. I have been looking at him for four months now, I knew how handsome, and drop dead sexy he was, but seeing him like this was so much more intense.

His golden eyes burned with need as he eyed me hungrily. His face was drool worthy, with a perfectly sculpted nose and jaw, not to mention high, sharp cheekbones. His prominent neck muscles swelled and flowed into the most perfectly smooth and sculpted chest I could ever imagine. Powerful arms, powerful chest, rigid abs that were already shining in the light. His abs flowed down into his perfectly sculpted hips. I followed the view and lower until I reached his groin.

I saw that he was fully aroused, standing erect, and very large. My eyes went wide when I took in the sight of him. I knew that my body could handle him, it had last night, but looking at him it was almost impossible to believe that something that big could invade my body and I'd be able to survive.

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Chapter 89 - Trinity-Reece Can't Wait (Mature Rating)



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Trinity

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I set aside my fear and stepped back toward him. Once again I positioned myself between his thighs. He was looking at me expectantly. He was anticipating what I was going to do next. Nervously, I tried to figure out what that might be, a little at a time.

I kissed him, softly and slowly, on his neck. He shuddered when I scraped my teeth along his collar bone, I found his shudders intriguing and wanted to make him repeat them. I licked his neck, scraping with my teeth again. He shuddered and growled low, but not menacingly. It was filled with longing. I bit, quick but gently, onto his neck.

While I busied myself with his neck, I moved my hands down his body once again. Rubbing along his chest and abs, then down along the top of his thighs. His legs twitched slightly in anticipation as I moved my hands to his inner thighs. I moved my hands up slowly as I moved my mouth to his

I covered his mouth with mine at the same time as I wrapped my hands

around his erection. I could barely wrap my hand around the large shaft. He moaned against my mouth when I squeezed him.

Reece pulled away from me then. He grabbed the hem of my dress and pulled it up over my head, he tossed it off in the direction of the other discarded clothes.

"At least you didn't rip this one." I said sarcastically.

"Hmm. Just wait a sec." He grinned as he grabbed the front of my panties and yanked. The silk and lace covered fabric ripped and fell away from me instantly.

His tug had pulled me toward him. I fell into his arms, which he wrapped around me and rolled us to the bed, he was on top of me. I was now naked under him, having skipped the bra when I got dressed, and he was now fully nude above me.

"I can't wait anymore, Little Bunny." He purred into my ear.

Despite his words, he didn't take me then. He kissed slowly down my

neck and across my chest. He latched onto my right breast, biting and sucking. He didn't neglect my other breast, he grabbed the mound, kneading it with his fingers with almost bruising force. I moaned in response to his touch.

"Reece." I called his name amid the moans, which only seemed to spur him on more. "Reece, please." He released my breast from his mouth with a popping sound.

"What, baby, what do you want. Tell me, anything and I will do it."

"I want you." I sighed breathlessly, my eyes shining and cheeks flushed.

"I'm getting you ready, baby, I don't want to hurt you."

"Please hurry." My whine spurred him on even more.

"I'll try." He kissed my breast before he bit down onto my peak. I scream in surprise, not expecting the slight sharp pain.

I felt Reece's hand tickling its way up my inner thigh. I squirmed from the touch but was eager to feel him as well. He danced his fingers up my thigh, slowly, until his fingers tangled into the curls at my core. He

pulled softly on the small hairs, the sensation wasn't exactly painful. Actually, when he pulled, he sent a jolt of desire pulsating through me and I moaned.

His fingers scissored up and down a few times before circling my opening. I could feel a small steady blush rising over my entire body. I felt moisture rush to my sore, dripping and waiting for him. He drove one finger into me and I called his name again.

"Reece!" I half screamed.

"Shhh." He soothed me with a pur in his voice. "We're almost there." He pulled back and drove into me with two fingers this time, stretching my opening more than I am used to. My body had recovered from his previous invasion and wasn't ready for the new assault. Now I knew why he said he was getting me ready.

He latched onto my breast again. He sucked on the peak and drove into my core in a matching rhythm. I began to moan steadily, and heat growing inside of me.

"Reece!" I called his name over and over again. "Please Reece!" I

begged again.

He pulled his hand back and released my breast with another pop.

"You're ready enough, I guess." He grinned at me as he hovered over me. He kissed me, quick, hard, and passionately, just before he fitted himself against me.

"Reece." I moan in anticipation.

"Mine." Reece whispered as he pushed past all my most intimate of barriers.

"Reece!" I called his name, wrapping my arms around his neck and clinging to him in more ways than one.

He drove into me steadily, creating a rhythm that was designed to drive me over the edge, of climax and insanity. I felt like I was coming apart in his arms, and only his arms wrapped around me was holding me together.

I called his name repeatedly as I ran my nails down his back.

"Oh, Reece." I moaned. I watched as he sat up higher and stared at my eyes, but I couldn't focus enough to see his eyes clearly, I saw his face but I couldn't make my eyes focus beyond that.

Reece seemed intent to stare at my eyes, he did the same thing the night before as well. I found his staring at my eyes so much to be embarrassing. I pulled him down toward me, so I could kiss his neck. Causing him to look away.

His skin was covered in sweat and tasted like salt on top of his chocolate, caramel, and spice flavor that I enjoyed so much. 'Mmm, salted caramel.' I said to myself. I lapped and kissed his neck. His scent and taste was intoxicating.

Reece was doing the same to me. I felt his kiss followed by his tongue on my neck where my mate mark was. I didn't care anymore that it was different than everyone else's. I am me. I have my mate. I would be who I was from now on, and no one was going to stop me. I had the attention of the most powerful, and sexiest, wolf in the pack, and I could never be bullied by anyone ever again.

I heard a low, seductive growl right before I felt Reece sink his teeth into the tender flesh where my mark was. I cried out, the gasping moan escaping me completely unbidden. On instinct, I followed Reece's lead.

Just as I felt the heat of a mating building in my neck, I licked his neck a few times before biting him. I didn't expect to bite into him like he had me, but I felt my teeth sink into his flesh. At that moment, I didn't know how to feel about it, I didn't care.

The heat I was feeling in my neck, that had slowly been building in me since he bit me, was now flowing in a circle from me to him and back again. He stayed connected at two points. He drove into me at my core over and over, driving us both closer to the edge. All the while, the heat circled, in and out of my body as it cycled around us.

His thrusts got more frantic the longer we stayed connected with our mouths, but neither of us were willing to let go. He was pounding into me, thrust after thrust, when finally my whole body began to get as hot as my neck when the heat was in me, but the heat wasn't leaving me as much now. Reece's neck and body felt as hot as mine.

Finally, he thrust one last time, sending me into oblivion. We let each other go at the same time.

"REECE!" I screamed.

"TRINITY!" He yelled at the same time. My body convulsed around his, I could feel the heat of his release inside me, I knew I should be upset about that, but I couldn't think about it yet.

Reece collapsed, rolling as he did so that I ended up on top of him. We were still joined at our cores.

"I need to pull out now." He told me. "Are you going to be alright?"

"I should be." I grimaced as I remembered the pain from this morning.

"Take a deep breath." He instructed me. I did as he said and felt him pull free of my body. I shuddered, there was a little pain, but I also felt empty without him now.

"Are you alright?" He asked.

"Just fine." I assured him as I snuggled into his chest.

"Are you tired?"

"Now, whatever gave you that idea?" I joked with him.



"Go to sleep Little Bunny."

"So you can sneak out again?"

"I promise I won't sneak away tonight. If you want me to stay, then I will."

"Good, then stay." I told him as I snuggled into him again. He wrapped his arms around me and purred.

"Goodnight, Little Bunny."

"Goodnight." I barely managed the response before I fell asleep.

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Chapter 90 - Reece-A Very Unhappy Noah

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Reece

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I woke to the sensation of holding my mate in my arms. The feeling of her soft, supple body pressed against mine. The warmth of her naked flesh pressed against my bare skin. It was enough to arouse me again. I wanted her, there was no doubting that. As much and as often as I could get her I wanted her.

But now was not the time. I had a flight to catch today and a schedule to keep. I didn't want to leave without saying anything like last time, I got the impression she wasn't very happy about that, but I was reluctant to wake her up.

I adjusted, rolling us both in the process. The move brought us face to face as she was currently using my shoulder as a pillow. I didn't want this time to end, but I had to wake her.

Gently, I pressed my lips to her forehead. Somewhere I thought wouldn't intensify my arousal for her. It didn't work, I wanted her more. I had to fight my wolf back, restraining him and myself from going any

further.

I felt her stir in my arms. Her full body stretch pressed her closer to me, squeezing her breasts against my chest. I hummed in satisfaction, the feeling was phenomenal.

"Hmm, morning already, huh?" She asked me as she fluttered her eyes.

"I'm sorry I have to wake you, but I need to leave."

"You do, do you?" She seemed playful this morning.

"I have to get to the airport. I know you're mad about having to stay behind, but-."

"Don't worry about it, I've got the start of the new semester tomorrow, and it would have only been for a couple days." She interrupted me.

"A business trip isn't what you want, maybe we can take a proper vacation soon. We can truly get away from all the trouble following

you."

"It's fine." She sounded upset, I know she was not happy but I would work hard to make it up to her.

I pulled my arm out from under her with a light tug. She sat up with me, covering herself with the sheet from the bed. I tried not to be upset that she was hiding herself from me while I looked around the room for my clothes.

Everything I had been wearing was scattered in several different directions, it took me a little while to find it all. She sat watching me the entire time. I tried not to look at her too much, seeing her would make it too hard to leave.

Once I had pulled my clothes on, though I had left my shirt unbuttoned for the sake of time, I started toward the door, but I paused to look back at her.

"As you know, I'm leaving today, but I will be back by Wednesday morning at the latest."

"I know." She looked dejected as she lowered her eyes to stare at the bed instead of me.

"Look, about what I said before."

"Now that's specific."

"Stop interrupting me, please." I implored her. "I'm talking about what I said about what we are to each other."

"REECE!" I heard Noah yelling from outside in the hallway, his voice held a biting edge of anger.

"Don't worry about it, I know this didn't mean anything. Nothing's changed, you don't have to feel guilty. I wanted it too." I could see the pain in her eyes as she spoke.

"Look, it's-."

"Reece!" Noah pounded impatiently on the door to her room. "We're running late, hurry up and get out here." He snapped angrily. 'Well, someone wasn't very happy with me right now, and I could guess why.'

"Look, I need to go, but we will talk about this when I get back, alright."

"Whatever you say." She tried to smile but couldn't, her face was filled with worry and apprehension. Did she seriously still think I didn't care about her. I would have to find a way to convince her otherwise.

"Trinity, I-" I started to speak again, but the door to her room flew open, missing me by barely an inch as it swung in front of my face.

"Reece, let's go." Noah growled. I saw my Little Bunny pull the covers more securely around her, her face flushed crimson.

"NOAH!" She screamed.

"I'm sorry Trinity, but we need to hurry or we will be late." His face was full of a murderous rage. I glared at the man, he was my best friend and my mate's cousin, but he would not be allowed to see her naked, nor would I forgive his interruptions.

"I don't think I gave you permission to barge in here." I growled menacingly at him.

"It's not your room, I don't need your permission." He countered.

"She didn't give you permission either." I snapped.

"You were taking too long. We have to go, now." He glared at me, a red hot anger was burning in his dark eyes.

"Trinity, we will talk more when I get back." I looked at her once more. The blush that crept into her cheeks also flowed down her neck and across her shoulders. The sight of her blushing skin made me want to trace the heat with my tongue, but I didn't have the time. "I will see you later." I told her.

"Bye." She squeaked out in her embarrassed state.

I stomped out of the room, pulling the door shut behind me. I led the way down the hall while he followed behind me. I could feel the anger pouring off of him in waves, the intensity of it was palpable. His feet thumped loudly against the carpeted hall, echoing in the silent house.

"I need to get dressed, give me a few minutes."

"Make it quick." I growled loudly at his words. He had been trying to

order me around ever since he barged in on me and my mate. I glared at him, but decided the conversation could wait, I was running behind already.

Ten minutes later I had freshened up and changed, and we were now in the car on the way to the airport. Noah was still angry, a furrowed brow and a scowl seemed to be the newest permanent additions to his face.

"What's your problem?" I asked him. I had let more of my anger into my words than I had intended to.

"I told you to keep your hands to yourself." He snapped at me.

"Excuse me?" His words had thrown me through a loop.

"Don't toy with her, Reece. I won't let you play with her heart. She's too nice of a girl just for you to be using her for your own sick games."

"You seem to have made up your mind about me already." I growled.

"Did you forget about the part where she is MY mate."

"No, I didn't forget, nor did I forget about you telling her she's nothing to you and you hate her." He yelled. "She's my family Reece, the only



sister I will ever have. She means a lot to me and I will not let you hurt her again."

"I have been working hard to fix my mistakes with her. The two of us have talked a lot about what happened in October and November. I have explained myself to her, I don't need to explain myself to you at all."

"Really? Because if I don't feel that you're treating her right then you'll have me to deal with."

"Do you really think you could take me on?" I inquired, my voice was full of bold superiority.

"If I couldn't handle you alone, then I would have backup. I'm sure Carter, and my parents would just have a field day if I told them how you treated her."

"Are you threatening me?"

"You bet your ass I am. You better treat her right, Reece, or I swear to

the Goddess, we will all do whatever is in our power to take you down. I don't care if we're banished for it afterward. If you ever hurt her again-."

"That's in the past, Noah. How many times do I need to tell you that?" I snapped at him.

"I will believe it when I hear it from her." He told me.

"Fine, ask her when we get back. Or better yet, ask her now. Call her, right now. Dammit Noah, I love her. I'm never going to hurt her again."

"What did you just say?" He asked me, his face was full of shock like he couldn't believe what I had just said.

"Is it that hard to believe that I love her?" I asked him, sheepishly.

"Kind of." His smirk actually hurt, he had no faith in me.

"Well, I do, and I was about to tell her when you barged into the room." I snapped at him angrily again.

"So, she doesn't know you love her?"

"I haven't told her yet, no." I told him honestly.

"You're such an asshat." He spit the curse at me through clenched teeth. "You better treat her right."

"I'll treat her like a queen, because to me, that's what she is." I smiled happily as I thought of the future I had to look forward to with my sexy little mate.

"You better not forget that, ever." He warned me one last time.

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Chapter 91 - Trinity-Caleb And Frederick

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Trinity

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'Oh my Goddess, that was embarrassing.' I couldn't believe Noah barged into my room while I was laying in bed naked after spending the night with Reece. I felt like I was going to die from the embarrassment. I was going to catch fire from the burning in my cheeks that was spreading throughout my whole body. Or I might just melt into a puddle from the heat.

"Why did he have to see me like that?" I asked my empty room.

Once the heat in my face settled slightly I decided to take a shower. I wasn't in nearly as much pain as I was the day before. He had only taken me once last night as opposed to the multiple times the night before, so getting out of bed was not a painful chore.

I walked into the bathroom in a daze. Memories from the last two nights kept creeping up at random. All through my long, hot shower I would have images of Reece's naked body pop up in my mind. The memories sent jolts of desire twisting through my core. My body wanted him back here with me already. I had hoped that this need for him would lessen after we finished the mate bond, but it only felt stronger now.

I took my time in the shower, washing slowly then letting the hot water relax the tension in my body. I hoped I would be able to clear my mind soon, I really did have classes starting tomorrow and would need to think clearly.

While I was drying myself I felt a dull ache throb through my neck. The pain brought back more memories. Reece had bitten me again, he had basically marked me again. And to make matters worse, I had bitten him as well. I didn't know why, I just did it on instinct.

I moved my hair out of the way to look at the new bite mark. I could see his teeth marks perfectly imprinted into the tender flesh at the curve of my neck and shoulder. The skin around the area was bruised, but it was already turning yellow, it was healing.

What was more surprising to me was the area around my mate mark. The pack crest had darkened, possibly from the bruising, but it wasn't as clear as it was before. But the dark cloudy area that surrounded it seemed to be just a little lighter than usual. I was probably imagining it though, wanting to hope that something was different after being with him.

Thankfully, my day was less eventful than the previous one. I didn't have

as many unannounced visitors. None to be exact. Instead, I spent my day reading my text books. I had another English Comp class with professor Thompson this semester, but I was taking some classes that were bound to be interesting this time. Violence in Society, Crime Theory, and Intro to Forensics were my other classes that went along with my last English course.

Thankfully, when I went down to the dining room Lila didn't make a big deal about me and Reece. I didn't think I could handle that embarrassment two days in a row as well as Noah barging in on us. There was only so much my heart could take for crying out loud.

My first day back to school didn't go as planned. I didn't have to attend actual classes, all my learning was done on my own time, but I wanted to have as much of a normal school day as I could for the first week at least. But I had a major issue, two of the books that were picked up for me were the wrong ones. So, I was already behind. Great.

I was planning on asking Vincent if he could run to the bookstore for me tonight, but he was off today. We had lessened his schedule to make things easier on him and Heather, I wanted him to be there for his baby, there was so much he could miss in the beginning.

I was getting frustrated, I needed to get these books but I didn't want to call Vincent on his night off. I was in the living room after hanging up the phone, neither of the twins had answered their phone when I called them.

"Ugh, what am I gonna do now?" I growled in annoyance.

"Is something wrong Luna?" I heard an elderly voice ask me with concern.

"Huh?" I looked up and saw two men standing at the door to the room. I hadn't noticed them coming. Their scents were familiar but I didn't remember seeing them before.

"You seem upset, is everything alright?" The younger of the two men asked. The younger man looked to be about Reece's age with dark orange eyes that were close to ochre. He had dirty blond hair and a tall muscular build like all the wolves, but he just barely made it to six feet it seemed. The older man had silver hair, and bright green eyes. They resembled each other, similar jawline and nose shape, but the younger man had the same cheek bones as Reece. There were other small similarities between the younger man and Reece, but nothing significant.

"Luna?" The older man called out to me, getting my attention.

"I'm sorry, I was just thinking. No nothing really wrong. Just something I need and can't get right now."

"That won't do." The older man smiled. The more I listened to him, the more I felt I had met him before. But where?

"I'm sorry, excuse my rudeness, but who are you?" The older man laughed with a gruff, gravelly voice.

"You're not rude, dear. We've only met once and I don't think you've had the chance to meet my grandson here." He smiled at me warmly before he continued. "My name is Frederick, I am one of the elders of the pack, and Reece's great uncle."

"Oh, now I remember, I met you my first night here. There was so much information I had to take in that night that I forgot who a lot of people were."

"That's understandable. You were put through a lot that day." The younger man had the same smile as Frederick. "My name is Caleb, I'm Reece's cousin, and his Beta."



"Oh, it's nice to meet you. I'm sorry we haven't gotten the chance to meet before." I shook Caleb's outstretched hand as I greeted him.

"Think nothing of it. I have been away on business off and on a lot lately, so you're not the one at fault here."

"I'm sorry to tell you though, that Reece isn't here."

"Oh, we missed him?" Frederick seemed disappointed. "Well, we could always try again tomorrow."

"No, I'm afraid he won't be back for a few days. If you want to come back Wednesday or Thursday he should be home by then."

"Really, that's a shame. I'll just have to give him a call, let him know what I found out recently." Caleb sighed.

"Have you been investigating?" I asked him, hopefully he had information that would lead to solving my problem.

"Yeah, I've been checking out some leads lately. And I found out something really important."

"Well, I hope it helps." I smiled at him.

The conversation with Frederick and Caleb was an easy going one, but for some reason I just felt off about the whole thing. But no matter the situation, I still had the same problem.

"Well, I'm going to make a few more phone calls." I told them, trying to excuse myself.

"What is it you're missing?" Caleb asked me.

"What?"

"You said you needed something but couldn't get it. What can't you get?"

"Oh, I'm missing a couple books for my college courses that started today." I answered him, but for some reason I felt embarrassed.

"We can't have that, can we?" Frederick smiled at me.

"Would you like me to get it for you?" Caleb smiled wide, showing his perfectly straight, white teeth.

"No, I couldn't impose on you. You just recently got back, after all."

"It's no problem, Luna." Caleb soothed me with his soft voice.

"If you really don't mind, I would appreciate it."

"Of course, I'm here to help you as much as my cousin."

I tried to explain to Caleb what it was I needed, and where Shane had gone wrong when he picked up my books last week, but Caleb wasn't certain he would be able to tell the difference between the books I already had, and the ones I needed.

"It's fine Caleb, I can always wait until Vincent is available." I deflated as I spoke, a defeated tone filling my voice.

"How about you come with me?" He asked, a smile spreading across his face. I was momentarily filled with anticipation, but it was quickly replaced with apprehension.

"I don't know, Reece would be angry if I left right now. You know, with everything that is going on."

"If you're not safe with the second strongest wolf in the pack, his own Beta, then who could you be safe with?" He asked, a confident look in his eyes. "Besides, it's the only way you'll make sure you get the right books." He had a good point. I needed these books, and as Reece's Beta, he should be strong enough to protect me."

"Alright, but just to the store and back."

"Of course, Luna, I wouldn't dream of taking you anywhere else that might be considered dangerous."

"Just let me go get ready." I hurried from the room so I could get shoes and a jacket from my bedroom.

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Chapter 92 - Trinity-Enemies Revealed

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Trinity

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A little while later Caleb was pulling the car into the parking lot near the campus bookstore. It was just a little after seven so I had plenty of time before they closed. Frederick had stayed behind at the house to wait for us. That left Caleb and I alone in the car. I'm not used to him yet so the ride was a little tense and awkward.

Caleb parked near the back of the empty parking lot, Vincent always did the same but usually when the lots were going to be full. Maybe it was just something that they all did. One major difference that I noticed between Caleb and the other though, was he didn't open doors like I was told to expect. Maybe that was because he wasn't a guard but instead the Beta and just wasn't used to it. Oh well, I could open them myself.

Caleb was already standing at the front of the car when I got out. He was moving fast like he was in a hurry. As soon as I shut my door behind me I sensed a shift in the air. There were others in the area, and based

on the scent, they were wolves.

"Caleb?" I called him apprehensively.

"Don't worry Luna, everything is just fine." He said calmly.

"Yeah, it's all going according to plan." A voice rang through the night. I recognized it instantly, it was Leslie. I hadn't seen him since the night I had been marked.

"He's right, this is all on schedule." Now it was Jeremy, another voice I hadn't heard since that night."

"Stop trying to play nice with the bitch, let's just get this over with." A female voice joined the group. I had only heard it once, when she protested my mating with Reece. It was Donna. Here was everyone who had recently shown hostility toward me or made me uncomfortable in some other way. I was beginning to get scared. I thought it was just rogues and Warlocks I had to worry about. I didn't think there was an enemy in my own pack.

They had me surrounded, closing me in around the vehicle.

"Are you in on this too?" I asked Caleb, already knowing the answer.

"For me, this has nothing to do with you. I'm being paid to hand you over to someone else." Caleb's voice was empty, void of all emotions.

"Then what do you get out of this whole thing?" I snapped at him.

"With you out of the picture, Reece will be forced to step down. When that happens, I become the new Alpha."

"You're stupid if you think he would ever hand his pack over to you." I growled at him.

"He won't have a choice. It's our laws, he can't rule us without a mate."

"He can find another mate. And he had a mate, he had me."

"You never finished your mating. Isn't that right?" He smiled cruelly. For some reason, I thought it was best not to correct him, not to tell him the mating had been finished, just recently. "If he never finished the

mating then it doesn't count. He wasn't mated, therefore, he will have to step down or be taken down."

"You're insane." I yelled at him.

"Maybe, but I will rule this pack, and a wolfless mongrel like you isn't welcome in my pack."

"You're not just crazy, you're an asshole too." I spat the words at him.

"Thank you for the compliment." He smiled at me as he sauntered toward me slowly. The other three prowled, lower to the ground and aggressive, ready for the attack.

"You won't get away with this." I snapped at them all. Their maniacal laughter was all that answered me.

It happened quickly. I would like to say it was in slow motion, or that I saw everything clearly, but I didn't. The four of them came at me together. I wasn't going to go down without a fight, or without trying to get away.



I first tried to jump onto the hood of the car, if I could get near people then I should be safer. But I didn't have the time for that. Just as I had reached the other side of the hood I felt someone's hand close painfully around my ankle. Their fingers were digging in, biting deep into my flesh.

"Get back here." I heard Leslie growl. "It's time for some fun."

"What's in this for the rest of you, huh?"

"Jeremy and I are former 'independent' wolves, or so we told your bleeding heart alpha. We were rogues hired to infiltrate your pack over a year ago. Our boss wanted men on the inside." Leslie had pulled me back across the hood of the car and was pressing himself against me in ways that made me sick just thinking about it. Only Reece was allowed to touch me like that.

"Get off me." I growled at him as I tried to push him away. I managed to move him away from me several feet and was about to make a run for it when Donna stepped in front of me.

"Don't even think about it bitch." She said as she reached out and slapped me across the face, hard. "That's payback for what your aunt did."

"Is that why you're part of this? Because my aunt slapped you."

"No, I just don't think a slut like you deserves to be my Luna. You're a disgrace."

"Who are you calling a slut you tramp?"

"Watch your mouth, you wolfless girl. You're not my Luna, and you never will be," Donna raised her hand again to smack me. I felt her hand as it whipped across my face, the striking blow made my head snap to the side.

"Enough of this." Caleb snarled. I felt him grab a fist full of my hair and yank it backwards until I was looking up at him. "Say goodnight." He laughed as he brought a white cloth near my face. I knew what he was planning.

"Reece." I breathed the name before the smell of the chloroform could make me lose consciousness.

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## Chapter 93 - Reece-She's Missing

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Reece

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"As you can see, gentleman, my company's success rate with acquired businesses has been phenomenal. I have no reason to believe that your company wouldn't follow suit." I was currently in the middle of a meeting with the owners and operators of the bodyguard agency, but my mind was actually eleven hundred miles away. I couldn't stop reliving every moment with my sexy little temptress from the past two nights. I needed to stop it, I needed to focus.

"Mr. Gray, I see no reason not to proceed." The current owner of the company was smiling happily.

"Excellent. Then please, allow us to sign the contract. Once it's all done we wi-." I stopped mid sentence. I couldn't finish. I had just had the most intense feeling of my life. It felt like my Little Bunny had just called for help. I could feel her fear, taste the night air around her. It smelled like she was in town somewhere. Near the Thai restaurant by the university, but that made no sense, she couldn't leave the house.

"Mr. Gray, are you alright?" The middle aged man in the suit sitting across from me asked.

"I'm sorry gentlemen, but something has come up. I need to go, but I will be back shortly to finalize this paperwork. Either myself or a representative on my behalf." I was already rising to my feet, gathering my things. If Noah had been here I would have had him get them as I ran out of the room. But I was on my own today, so I had to do the bare minimum.

As soon as I left the meeting room I was on the phone with Noah. It was almost six-thirty, an hour behind home. It had gotten dark a long time ago and my Little Bunny was supposed to stay inside, so why did it feel like she was in danger, and that she was missing?

"Is the meeting finally over? Man I didn't think that thing was ever going to end."

"Something's wrong Noah." I said in a rush as I ran to the stairs.

"What is it? Are they not selling?"

"No, something's wrong back home, something's wrong with Trinity." I had reached the bottom of the three flights in no time at all. My car was parked right out front, I got in and sped off.

"Wrong how." He asked, finally taking the call seriously.

"I don't know yet, but I can sense she is in danger. She's scared, and I can tell she was near the university just now."

"That makes no sense at all, Reece. What's going on?"

"I don't know, but you call her and I will call the house."

I hung up with Noah as I sped toward the hotel. Mom, answered the call on the second ring.

"Hi Sweety, how-?."

"Mom, is Trinity there?" I interrupted her.

"What? Reece what's wrong?"

"Is she there?"

"No, she left with Caleb a little while ago." I felt my heart drop into the pit of my stomach when I heard those words.

"What are you talking about, Mom? Caleb isn't even supposed to be in town, let alone picking my mate up from the house." I growled into the phone.

"Is everything alright?" She asked me, I could hear the panic in her voice.

"No, Mom, it's not. I'm pretty sure that Caleb is in on all the attacks."

"Reece, no." Mom gasped.

"I'm on my way back, we need to find her."

I called Noah back as soon as I hung up with Mom.

"Any luck?"

"No, her phone went straight to voicemail."

"So they turned it off?" I snarled. "I'm almost back to the hotel, get everything ready and get out here quick, we're going back tonight, even if I have to charter a plane."

"I'm already on it."

I wasn't about to leave my mate to fight against whoever had her by herself. It was my job to protect her. It was my job to save her.

I'm coming, Little Bunny.

Noah was waiting for me outside when I pulled into the hotel driveway. He had our bags and threw into the car as soon as it came to a stop. He jumped into the front seat even as I was starting to speed away.

We made it to the airport just after seven. It hadn't even been an hour since I had known that something was wrong but I felt like it had been too long already.

I let Noah return the car while I tried to buy tickets. But I ran into a problem. There were no seats available on any flights back to Colorado without connections that would delay me too long. I needed to hurry.

Looks like I was going to follow through on my chartering comment. I would buy a whole damned plane to get me to where I needed to be dammit. This was LA, there were plenty of private planes for rent, I just needed to find one this late at night.

After nearly half an hour of searching, a copious amount of threats and a hefty bribe I managed to get a pilot who would fly us back home. The problem, they couldn't get clearance for the small airport right in our own city, the closest we could get was Denver, it was over an hour away and no where near the car we had waiting for us.



I made another call and had a car waiting for us as well. I would not waste a second once the plane landed. I was going to find my mate, and quickly.

I called Vincent to let him know what had happened. I knew it was his night off, but as the head of her security, he needed to know what had happened to Trinity, he needed to know that my Little Bunny was missing.

"Hey Boss, this is a surprise, I didn't expect a call from you. Aren't you on your business trip?" Vincent sounded so unassuming. He was not prepared to hear what I was about to tell him, he would blame himself as much as I blamed myself. If only I had brought her with me like she wanted, this wouldn't have happened.

"Vincent, I have some work I need you to do."

"What's wrong?" He could sense the tension in my voice, so I heard as it entered his to match mine.

"I am on my way back home now, but I am still a few hours away. Trinity is missing."

"What?!" He nearly shouted into the phone. "What happened? How can

this be? She's not supposed to leave the house, how can she be missing?"

"Caleb came back. It seems my suspicions were right, and he took advantage of my absence."

"Caleb? Caleb took her?" He seemed to be in a state of shock. "Why would the Beta take her?"

"He wants to be alpha, so he has been working against me. I think he has been helping the rogues and Warlocks that are after her."

"He'll pay for this. I swear to you Sir, he will not get away with this."

"I'm glad to hear you say that. I intend to make him suffer for hurting her." I growled into the phone. "I need you to go investigate where she went missing, or where I think she went missing."

"Where? I'll get the others and go right away." His voice was alert and intense.

"From what I could sense, it seemed like she was near the university. It smelled like it was near the Thai restaurant."

"I will start at the house, ask if they know anything about where they went. Then, I will run a thorough search in town. I will have a report ready for you when you return."

"I would expect nothing less of you. You're a good man, Vincent."

"We will find her, Sir, I promise."

"We'd better."

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Chapter 94 - Reece-Frantic For An Update

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Reece

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It was nine before we were given the all clear for take off. The Liberty 75 Learjet was small and wouldn't fly nearly as fast as a commercial plane, but it was better than having layovers that last hours long. The result was a nearly three hour flight, and with the time change it was one in the morning when I deplaned and made my way toward my rental car.

I had rented the fastest sports car I could find, and I would be putting it to the test. I raced through the night, across the empty highway. I made the seventy minute drive in just over forty-five minutes. I pulled into the garage back at home by two in the morning.

I should have been tired, with how late it was and the hectic night, but sleep was the last thing on my mind. I found Vincent and David waiting for me in the kitchen when I went inside.

"Tell me you found something." I begged him.

"I'm sorry Alpha, it seems like they had help from the Warlocks. Their scents disappeared almost immediately." He hung his head in shame.

"Dammit." I growled. "What do they want with her?"

"I don't know, Sir, but we will find her." He was showing his deference by refusing to look me in the eyes, he was focused on something over my shoulder.

"Where are the others?" I demanded, she still had two more guards and they weren't here right now, I needed to know that she hadn't been betrayed.

"Shane and Shawn are trying to track them as best as they can, Sir, they refused to stop until they had something to report."

"Good, let me know when they get back."

I left the room to change out of my suit and into something I didn't mind getting dirty, or destroyed if I had to shift in a hurry. My tension was at its max and I would not relax until I saw my Little Bunny's face again.

I needed to focus. If I was going to find her I had to use the mark I had

given her. It was the only way. But with how wound up I was there was no way I could focus. I needed to relax a little first.

Perhaps a hot shower would help relax the tension in my body long enough for me to focus on the mate mark I had put on her. I set the water to nearly scalding and climbed in.

My entire time in the shower I kept thinking about my Little Bunny's face, her tender little body that was no match for a full grown wolf. If anyone hurt her I would kill them. Rip them apart with my bare hands, tear them to shreds with my own teeth.

My wolf had been alternating between snarls and whines all night. His anger would overflow at the disappearance of our mate, and his hackles would rise. More than once I had to stop myself from turning after he had already initiated it. When he wasn't snarling and growling for her return he was whining, howling to the Moon Goddess to bring her back. I felt every ounce of his pain. I needed to see my mate, to hold her in my arms again.

When I finally got her back, I was probably never going to let her out of my sight again. I should have listened to her. I should have just brought her on the trip with us. She would have been safer. How could I have been so arrogant to believe that she would be safe as long as she was in my home. She was only safe as long as she was at my side. I would never forgive myself for this.

When I couldn't stand to be in the shower any longer, I finally shut the water off and stepped out. While drying myself I felt a small, sharp pain in my neck. That was when I remembered that my Little Bunny had bitten me back last night.

The sensation of biting her while inside of her had been amazing, but when she bit me back, completing the circle, it had turned that feeling from amazing into mind blowing. I finally knew what it was she had felt when I marked her so long ago. The heat that was pouring from her body into mine.

The flow of heat followed the rhythm at which I drove into her small body. It poured from me into her with every thrust in, and it flowed back into me from her mouth with every pull back. The developed rhythm, the flow between us, made it the best night of my life. I couldn't believe I had waited so long for her.

She was also the first woman I had gone back to. The first woman I had been with more than once. And she was the first woman I had spent the entire night with. I had never fallen asleep with a lover in my arms, nor woken to the feeling of her pressed, naked, against me. It was something I could definitely grow to enjoy, and I never wanted another

lover again. She was it for me. There could never be another woman for me for as long as I lived.

I examined the point on my neck where she had bitten me. She had gotten me right where a mate mark was left. 'I wonder if she did that on purpose?' I asked myself jokingly. But I noticed that there was a dark spot there still. Surely it wasn't still bruised, it would have healed by now for certain.

Sure enough, I could see something there, right where she had bitten me. I inched closer to the mirror, to get a better look. But it wasn't a bruise I was seeing. It was a mate mark.

How is this possible? Men have never gotten mate marks before. But there it was. I could see the outline of a crest forming where her teeth had been. She'd partially changed again last night, her teeth, nails, and eyes had become wolf like just like the night before but she still hadn't changed. With any luck she will change soon, and could possibly help defend herself even more.

I concentrated on the mark I left on her, and the mark I could see forming on myself, they were links between us. She could link to me with my mark and I could link to her with hers. If we each had a mark



that should just make the link that much stronger.

I put my hand on my mark and closed my eyes. I thought about my mate, my Little Bunny. I pictured her beautiful face, the soft curve of her jaw, her plump, cupid's bow shaped lips, her small, perfectly shaped nose, those big, curious, bright blue eyes of hers. The heart shape of her face. The pale, moonlike glow she had to her skin. The dark brown, almost black, hair that smelled so wonderful. Her tight, exquisite little body.

I imagined the feel of her. The way she smelled. Every detail about her would help me link to her. The image was so clear that I felt like I could just reach out and touch her.

I watched as she looked around her, the serene look on her face changed into one of anger and pain. The room around her came into focus. I saw her there, sitting in a dimly lit stone room.

I couldn't see anyone else around her, but I could see my Little Bunny. She had a bruise across the left side of her face. Blood was running down from a split in her lip. Her eye was swollen. But there was no trace of fear in her eyes. There were no tracks in the dirt on her face, so she had not been crying. She was being brave, but how long would that hold out for.

"Trinity." I called out to her. I saw her head turn toward the sound of my voice but she couldn't see me, I didn't even know if she could hear me. But the movement she made and my outburst seemed to have broken the connection. I couldn't see the outside of the building, but she seemed to be in an old building with a stone basement. It looked like the cellar of a very old house.

"I'll find you, please hang in there." I cried out. "I'm sorry, Little Bunny."

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## Chapter 95 - Trinity-A Surprising Truth

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Trinity

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I woke up in a room that was nearly dark, just a small lamp across the room from me. It was damp and smelled like mold, mildew, and dirt. I

felt a slight chill. All these clues made me think I was underground somewhere, most likely a very old cellar or basement. The table the lamp sat on and a single chair next to it were the only furniture I could see in the room.

The last thing I had remembered was calling out Reece's name when Caleb was about to put the cloth over my mouth. Now, I was waking up groggily with my face pressed into the dirt. The left side of my face stung like I had been hit, or maybe dropped, on my face.

I tried to push myself into a sitting position, but that was when I realized that my arms were tied behind my back. They had obviously been there for a while because they had gone numb from the position they were in. I didn't know what time it was, or how long I'd been here, but I knew I needed to get away.

I used my shoulder and rolled to the side to get myself into a sitting position. My head and face throbbed and it was difficult to see out of my left eye. There was also a slight taste of blood in my mouth and a stinging ache on my lips. I couldn't tell if someone had hit me while I was unconscious or if they had just dropped me on my face when they threw in this room.

I was looking around the room, trying to get my bearings when I heard someone whisper my name. It sounded like Reece's voice but I didn't see him anywhere. It was impossible for him to be here anyway, he was in LA, he didn't even know what had happened to me. And we might have gotten closer over the last few days, but I doubt he would put that much effort into finding me. No, I was going to be here until I saved myself.

"Finally, you're awake." A man spoke from the shadows, his voice was ominous, deep and smooth, and vaguely familiar.

"Who are you?" I demanded of the dark corner.

"I've been waiting a long time for you, Trinity." The man stepped forward into the dim light. He was tall if you were thinking from a human perspective, but he was shorter than most of the men in the pack, probably just shy of six feet tall. He had hair that was as white as snow yet he looked no older than thirty. His face was long and full of angular lines. But his complexion that looked moonlight and his bright blue eyes were the exact same as mine.

"Who are you?" I asked again but in a much weaker voice.

"You've been asleep for several hours, how are you feeling?"

"Stop ignoring me." I shouted at him. He smirked, looking at me with an odd expression, it was calm but looked frightening.

"You don't want my full attention yet child, so be careful what you ask for." His voice was menacing as he stalked in slow circles around the cold, damp room.

"What do you want with me?"

"I was bringing you home, child, back to where you belong." He was smiling now, his voice holding a fake sense of happiness and concern.

"Home? What do you mean home? I don't belong here. I was born in the pack, that's where I belong."

"You may have been born there, Trinity, but that's not where you belong. I'm certain you know that as well as I do." His words were cutting deep, hitting me hard where I've always felt the most insecure.

"No, I belong with the pack. I am the Luna, I have a mate. I belong there, with my pack, with my mate."

"A mate who doesn't love you? A mate who doesn't want you? Are you certain you're even compatible? Could you really be mated with him?" He spoke in a calm, even voice but his words were sharp and biting.

"Shut up. You don't know what you're talking about. You're wrong. I don't belong here, I belong with my pack, with my mate." I screamed at him.

"We will see about that." He seemed to hum. "If he comes for you, then you belong with him and the pack. But if he doesn't, then you belong here, with your father."

"My father?" I gasped.

"I have been waiting for you, child. All these years I have been waiting for you to return to me."

"You can't be my father." I scoffed at him.

"You wound me. Why would you deny me, my own daughter? I have finally found you after you were stolen away from me. I have never

been given the chance to be part of your life, and when I finally find you you deny me." The fake sense of hurt in his voice was frightening, it was like every emotion he had was fake. Did he feel anything at all?

"How could you be my father? You look like you're thirty, at most, that would have made you nothing but a child when I was conceived."

"Looks can be deceiving, especially among us with magic my dear. It is something you will learn for yourself soon. I have been leading this coven for over two hundred years."

"Are you telling me that I am half witch?" I asked him incredulously.  
"That can't be. It's impossible. I am not a witch, I belong to the werewolf pack."

"Do you have a wolf?" He sounded smug as he grinned at me. I didn't answer him. "I know you don't, there's no use trying to hide it to me. You don't have a wolf because it is not often compatible with us magic users."

"You're wrong. I have wolf traits. I have the enhanced abilities. That means I can't be a witch."

"That is why I created you."

"Created me?" I was shocked to hear what he had just told me.

"Yes, I created you, Trinity. I needed someone to be my pawn, my way into the wolf packs. And that's where you come in."

"I don't understand? How did you create me? And how is having me around of any use to you?"

"How did I create you? Come now, child, you're not that young and naive are you?"

"So, you raped my mother?" I was disgusted, just the sight of him was making me sick to my stomach.

"She was needed to serve a purpose. If it makes you feel any better, she didn't remember any of it."

"No, it doesn't. Because of you, and what you did to her, my mother killed herself."



"Yes, but without me you wouldn't be here." He smiled like that made it all better, like he didn't ruin my mother's life when she was just fifteen years old.

"Why? Why would you do this? Why would you do that to my mother? She was only fifteen for crying out loud."

"I'm well aware of how old she was. I chose her specifically. She was determined to be especially susceptible to my bloodline. My mistake was sending her back to her family so soon. I should have kept her longer. She might not have ended up so weak minded if I had more time with her."

"You're a monster, you sick son of bitch." I wanted to get away from him but I had no means to get by him at the moment. I knew he would destroy me in my current state.

"Think what you want of me, but I will do what's best for my coven. I have fought to live the way we see fit for centuries, I will not give up because some pathetic little girl calls me a monster." His voice was icy and held an edge of anger. It was the first emotion I had seen from him.

"You've fought against wolf packs for centuries?" I asked him, confused.

"Not just wolves. I have fought against the magic council, vampires, Fae, anyone who tries to oppose the way my coven lives."

"If everyone thinks you're wrong, don't you think it's about time to accept that they're right and you're wrong?" I snapped at him.

"I don't care who is right or wrong. My coven will continue to live the same way we always have. And I will destroy anyone who tries to stand in my way."

"You're insane." I breathed, unable to comprehend everything that he was saying.

"Maybe I am, but I will not give up my coven or my power, not for anyone. That's why I needed you." There was a maniacal fire burning in his eyes now.

"Why? What can I do?" I yelled even though he was right in front of me.

"You will be my tool. I am going to force your magic to manifest, and

when it does I will send you back to your precious wolf pack. You'll be the agent of destruction among the wolves that I have been planning for all these years. You will simultaneously manipulate them to work for me as well as bring about their ultimate downfall. I will rule the shadow world. And when I do, I will reveal my ever growing coven to the humans. When that happens, I will rule over the entire world." He was nothing more than a megalomaniacal fiend, his plot seemed like something out of a comic book to me.

"Do you seriously think that I will help you? That I will just play along with your little plan."

"You won't have a choice. You think I can't manipulate your mind? I'll change your memories, make you forget everything that happened here just like I made your mother forget. It will be a compulsion to you. You will do anything I ask you to do." He reached his hand slowly toward me and pushed my hair out of my face. His hands were as cold as ice when they touched me. I shuddered in disgust when he touched my face.

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Chapter 96 - Trinity-Torture

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Trinity

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"It's time for us to get to work." He grinned at me. I heard a door open in the shadows where he had appeared from. Four people walked in, three men and one woman. The men were the same group that had attacked me outside of Riley's pack house. I had never seen the woman before.

Two of the men came and grabbed me by the arms, yanking me to my feet. The woman went across the room to the chair. She dragged it into the middle of the room which I could now see had a pattern drawn on it in black. I couldn't see the whole pattern clearly but it seemed to be made up of curving lines that formed a three leaf pattern, running through the pointed tip of each leaf was the line of a circle.

The chair was put right in the middle of the symbol. The two men carried me over to the chair, my feet dangling in the air below me. I would have kicked out at them, doing something in an attempt to get away, but the look on the third man's face as he held a knife menacingly

in his hands stopped me.

The man with the knife was the man that had kicked me in the head before. He used the knife to cut the ropes from my hands. As soon as my hands were free the two men holding me forced me into the chair. I saw an eerie flash of light out of the corner of my eye, it was a strange purplish light so dark I almost wanted to call it black. The next thing I knew there were ropes winding their way around my arms and legs, binding me to the chair.

"What are you planning?" I snapped at them.

"Shall we get started now, Master Edmond?"

"So, that's your name? Edmond? At least now I know the name of my father that I can hate and resent for the rest of my life."

"Watch your tongue, mongrel. He is the high warlock of this coven. Master Edmond is the greatest of all time." The woman glared at me as she spoke.

"I don't care who Edmond is. To me he is nothing more than a psychotic bastard."

"I said watch your tongue." My head snapped to the side as the woman smacked me across the face with tremendous force.

"That's enough, Reya." Edmond spoke calmly. "Actually Edmond is my surname, child. The name you should have been given but I was not able to grant to you. Gannon Cornelius Edmond, high warlock of the Sacramentum de Mortis." Edmond boasted proudly as he leaned over me.

"The Covenant of Death, how charming. I'm sure you have people begging to join you everywhere you go." I snapped sarcastically.

"So you speak Latin, wonderful."

"It's one of the languages I was forced to learn growing up, never thought it'd be coming into use like this though."

"You're in need of an attitude adjustment, aren't you."

"I don't think so. No one else has ever had a problem with my attitude."

You seem to be the only ones who don't like it."

"Hmm, we will just need to take care of it ourselves then. Grantham, Cormac, Beckett, why don't you do something about this. Reya, you help them out." He grinned as he went to leave the room. "If you can't change her attitude or make her magic manifest by tomorrow, well, then it's my turn."

I heard the sound of four sinister laughs as Edmond left the room. I slowly turned my head to focus on the four people who remained in the room with me.

"This will be fun." One of the men said as he punched me in the face. I felt an explosion of pain as blood began to trickle down my face, over my lips, and onto my lap. The man who hit me was about five-foot-ten with short, greasy, light brown hair and pale gray eyes.

"Yeah, we can get some payback from before." Another of the men said as he aimed a blow right into my stomach. He was maybe an inch taller than the other one, with long, dry, dirty blond hair and muddy brown eyes.

"Let's not play around, we have other methods." The last man said as he walked to the outer edge of the room. He came back carrying a large device with a crank handle on the side. This man had the muddy brown eyes of the second one but the light brown hair of the first one, he was similar in height and features to them both as well. It looked like they were all related somehow.

"Oooh, you brought us a toy." The woman, Reya, laughed excitedly. She looked nothing like the men. She was short, like me, but she had bright, unnaturally red hair and black eyes. Instead of the normal pale complexion that goes with red hair she had an olive complexion. Her overall look was wild and unkempt.

The device the man carried in was attached to my hands, feet, and head with cables.

"Douse her, Beckett." The man with the light brown hair and muddy brown eyes said. I didn't see which one but one of the other men must have grabbed a bucket of water from somewhere as the next thing I knew I felt the ice cold water being dumped over my head. I shivered for a moment, letting my body get used to the feeling of the water. I had a feeling I knew what was coming next, and I was not looking forward to it.

"Crank it Cormac." The same man instructed, by process of elimination this made him Grantham. The man with the dirty blond hair smiled as



he put his hand on the device's crank.

"Ready to jump?" Cormac smirked as he began to turn the crank.

I felt jolts of electricity when the crank started to turn. They started out small when he was just getting started, but the more the crank turned the more intense the currents became. It wasn't long before it was nearly unbearable.

I refused to cry out. I clenched my jaw and squeezed my eyes shut as my body began to jerk uncontrollably. I couldn't move a single muscle in my body. The spasms wracking through my body was throwing me against the ropes binding me to the chair causing them to dig in painfully.

Gradually the current running through me lessened. My body began to settle back into the chair. I slumped forward unable to hold my head up. I was breathing heavily, the breaths sawing in and out of my lungs painfully.

I glared at the man, Cormac, through the hair that was stuck to my face with water and sweat. I wanted to hurt them. I wanted to destroy them

in that moment. With every fiber of my being I wanted to do harm to another person unlike never before.

"I see your attitude hasn't improved at all." Grantham chuckled. "I think you need another lesson." Cormac began to turn the crank again, faster this time. The spasms began once more causing my body to toss and thrash about wildly.

The pain was more intense, but still I did not cry out. I held my cries, my screams of pain inside.

Just as I was ready to throw my head back and scream the current stopped. I nearly sighed in relief, but I managed to hold it in. Once again I glared daggers at the sadistic warlocks in front of me.

"We need to do something about you moving all over the place. Let's tie her up some more." Beckett said from behind me.

"I have just the idea." Reya said from somewhere in the dark. She came sauntering out with another cord of rope. She wrapped the cord around my neck, not quite choking me.

"A garrote, good thinking, that will hold her in place." Beckett laughed. "But let's add one more." He came forward, apparently he had another

cord. He wrapped his cord around my upper chest, this one was much tighter than the one around my neck.

Once again the current poured into my body. Jolt after jolt. My body jerked harder than before. Cormac was spinning the crank wildly, faster than he had either time before.

My body spasmed and thrashed against the bindings. The cords cut into my chest and tightened around my neck. I couldn't breathe. I could feel the ropes scraping the skin away where they rubbed against me at my neck and wrists. But the pain was nothing compared to the jolts of electricity.

I couldn't bear it any longer. I had tried to keep from screaming. I had tried not to cry out. But I gave in. I used the last of the air in my lungs to scream long and loud. I lost consciousness as the last of the breath left my body.

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Chapter 97 - Reece-Missing Warriors

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Reece

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I told Vincent to wait until six to call the rest of the pack warriors to the house. I wanted everyone here working on finding my Little Bunny. I wouldn't accept anyone not putting their all into this.

The men and women started to arrive quickly, having been summoned to the alpha house on official business. I was expecting nearly a hundred warriors to show, but imagine my surprise when I barely had eighty-five show up. We seemed to be missing quite a few people.

I gave Noah the task of seeing who exactly was missing while I called Riley. I needed to have as much backup on this as possible.

"Reece, you better have one hell of a good reason for calling me so damn early." Riley grumbled into my ear.

"Someone kidnapped my mate last night." I snapped back at him.

"What the hell? Who?"

"I don't know, I was out of the state on business when it happened." I sighed. "I need your help Ri."

"Yeah, anything, man, just tell me."

"First, find out if there are any members of your pack missing. Then I need you to take everyone that is left, everyone that you trust, and help me search for clues. I need to track any one that might be missing from my pack and yours."

"Missing from your pack? Who is missing from your pack?" Riley seemed shocked at the very thought that someone from my pack had betrayed me.

"I'm not certain who all yet, but I seem to be missing about a dozen warriors at least. I'm not sure who else, I have a bigger pack and a much larger territory, it will take a lot longer to find out the complete list."

"I'll rouse the pack and do a full roll call. Once that's done I will wait for

your instructions."

"Thank's Riley." I didn't know how far this web of lies in my pack went, but at least I still had my allies.

When Noah came back, he had a list of everyone that was missing from the warriors. Among them were the former guards that seemed to have caused problems for Trinity. There were a few other newcomers to the pack missing, but the rest had been in the pack their whole lives.

I realized now that I might have gone too easy on those guards. I had reassigned them, put them back through training, and disciplined them. But I had not banished them, or better yet killed them. If they had anything to do with this directly, then I will personally see to it that are ripped to pieces.

As for the missing pack members that had been with us since birth, their families had been here for generations. I just needed to look at who the families were. That was enough to tell me that each one of them had been loyal to Caleb, or better yet, my Uncle Frederick for years now.

It looks like I've got to clean house. There are clearly some problems inside my pack that need to be rectified. Traitors will not be tolerated in my pack. If they didn't do anything directly and walked away they might

live. But if any of them so much as touched her, or knew about what was going to happen to her then they would pay dearly.

Mom had been asleep when I had gotten home. So, even though she knew what had happened yesterday, she didn't have any new details. She came to see me in my office just after noon, after she had lunch. She had the Whittons with her when she came .

"Reece!" Mom exclaimed as she ran toward me. She threw her arms around my neck, squeezing me tight. "Oh Reece, we will find her. I know we will." She soothed me, rubbing one hand over the back of my head.

"I hope so, Mom. I won't ever stop looking for her." I whispered dejectedly.

"Alpha?" Wesley, Little Bunny's uncle, said my title as question, he seemed to be at a loss."

"Call me Reece, we're family now after all." I told him. He looked taken aback by that, but continued nonetheless.

"Reece, what happened?"

"I don't know exactly, but I'm trying to figure that out."

"How did this even happen?" Eve seemed to have been crying a lot recently.

"Noah and I were gone on business, someone took advantage of that and orchestrated this situation."

"You find her, boy. You need to find her so the same thing doesn't happen to her that happened to my daughter." The old man's face seemed to have broken, tears were falling from his eyes and sorrow filled his face. I had never seen the old man behave so emotionally.

"I won't let that happen to her, Mr. Whitton. I refuse to lose her to anyone." I could see Noah standing behind his family, a strange expression on his face, a mix of pain and anger. He was blaming himself as much as I was. He had advocated for me to leave Trinity home as well, he didn't want to put her at risk, now look what had happened.



"Reece, you haven't eaten or slept since you found out what happened, have you?" Mom sounded worried.

"I can't, I need to find her first."

"What use are you going to be to her if you don't have the energy to function? The same goes for you Noah. I know that you two will refuse to sit idly by and let others rescue her when she is found, you need at least a little rest."

"I wouldn't be able to relax enough mom. I can't bring myself to sleep knowing she's out there somewhere. Who knows what's happening to her." I had been imagining things all night. Horrible things that they might have done to her. My imagination was running rampant.

"Reece, you need sleep. You need to be at your best for her."

"She's right son, you need to rest. You too Noah. Go get something to eat and get some sleep." Eve added, backing up Mom's insistent words.

"I know that you're right, it's just not going to be easy. But I promise to try." Noah agreed.

"That's all I ask." Eve smiled at him.

"Reece?" Mom implored me.

"I'll try." I grumbled.

I did intend to try. Mom forced me into the kitchen where I was given a plate of food made by Abigail. But all I could think about while trying to eat was how Little Bunny wasn't there. How her not being there made the food taste bland. I managed to force myself to eat almost half of it, but that was all I could manage.

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Chapter 98 - Reece-Another Vision Of Little Bunny

~~

Reece

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I dragged my feet slowly up the stairs. Each step seemed to take its toll on me mentally, telling me I was getting further and further away from where I needed to be.

I didn't want to go to my room. I would find no solace in there. My room was a place of solitude and loneliness. It was the prison I had sentenced myself to for years.

I turned left at the top of the stairs, away from my room. I followed the scent that lingered from my mate, the smell that drove my wolf wild and made everything seem right with the world. I trudged along, down the hall to her room.

It hurt, opening the door and seeing her room empty. She wasn't there to brighten the space. But smelling her scent so intensely did help a little.

I was actually starting to feel really tired, now that I was here. I walked slowly to her bed, the bed we shared so recently. The bed where I had learned so much about her body. I felt a hollow ache inside me when I thought about those nights, and how she wasn't here for me to hold now.

I grabbed her jacket as I passed the chair it was hanging on. The soft blue cloth held so much of her scent trapped in it's folds. I kicked my shoes off next to the bed and pulled back the covers. I crawled into the middle of the bed, but I didn't bother to pull the blankets around me, I didn't need them, I just needed to smell more of my Little Bunny's scent where it was trapped in her pillows.

With my head resting on the soft pillows, holding her jacket close to my face, I closed my eyes. I didn't expect to fall asleep so quickly when I came to her room, but I was more exhausted than I thought.

I started to drift into an uneasy sleep. All I could think about was finding my mate. Finding my Little Bunny. Finding Trinity.

I felt myself walking as if on air. The feeling was disconcerting but I paid no mind to it. I was focused on what I was seeing. I was walking through the woods toward an old run down house, approaching it at an angle. It was clearly built in the late 1800s, there was a stone foundation under the dark wooden construction.

The front of the house had two windows and a door, and had a slightly

taller pitched roof with two chimneys. The side of the house I could see had four windows, two upstairs and two down. There was a second portion of the house in the back, all one floor, with a small porch set back into the house, walls from the house closing it in on three sides. There were cellar doors near the front of the house, leading down to what was likely to be a very old basement.

I didn't know why I was seeing this place, why I was here, but I continued walking toward the old house. I thought it would be dilapidated, void of all life, but it was clear that people were here, either living here or coming here frequently.

I saw footprints, drag marks, and scuffs in the dirt and dust around the house. Whoever was here had only started coming recently. I wasn't able to smell anything, at all, and that was disconcerting. I couldn't smell the dirt, the trees, the old rotting wood of the house, nothing. But I could feel how cold it was here. It felt like I was covered in ice, I had to resist the urge to shiver.

I hadn't heard the sound of any animals since I had been here. Not a single bird, no mouse scurrying in the woods, it was silent. Until I got to the front of the house. Then I heard the sound of someone screaming, long drawn out sound like someone was in immense pain. It sounded like my Little Bunny.

I whipped my head side to side trying to find out where the scream was coming from, where the sound was most intense. She sounded so close to me, yet so far away.

"Trinity?" I called out to her. "Where are you?" I ran through the house just as the screaming started to fade. "Where are you Little Bunny?" But there was nothing but silence now. The sound of her scream was still ringing in my ear. I searched every room but I could not find her.

"Trinity?" I called out for her several times but there was no answer.

I heard a slamming from somewhere outside, and several voices laughing. When I ran outside I saw no one, but the voices still echoed. The only place the voices could have come from was the cellar.

I threw the cellar doors open and bolted down the stairs. The stairs went down farther than I expected. The long narrow staircase was dark, no light penetrated to help guide you down. Thankfully I didn't need the light to make my way down.

When I emerged I was in a stone room carved out of the rocky earth. It was square, maybe twenty feet long per side, with only a lamp on a small table to light the room. One chair was sat in the middle of the

room on top of strange black likes. And there in the corner of the room, was my mate.

She was unconscious. Blood had dried on her face even though it looked like it had been rinsed off somewhat, there was blood on her clothes, like it had dripped down her face onto her jacket, shirt, and pants. I could see red marks around her neck and wrists like she had been tied to something and then thrashed around a lot. Bruises were starting to show on her face, neck, and wrists.

My heart ached seeing her hurt like this. I ran to her, I wanted to hold her in my arms, to take her home with me. To protect her, keep her safe. To make everything better again.

"Little Bunny." I cried out as I reached her side.

I stretched my arms out to her, intent to scoop her up and hold her to my chest, but my arms passed right through her. I couldn't touch her. It was like I wasn't really here. It explained why he couldn't hear any sound besides her scream and the voices outside, or why he couldn't smell anything.

"Is this where you are?" I asked her. "Is this real Little Bunny?" I tried to get an answer out of her, but she couldn't answer me. "I'm going to find you."

I felt myself being pulled. Like there was a tether attached to my navel, pulling me backwards. I passed through the ground, then the foundation and floor of the house. Once I was through the walls, I started moving faster, rising higher and higher.

I saw the area around the house. It was a farmhouse with a barn, but it was surrounded by trees on all sides. Once you went past the yard it was trees for at least half a mile or more in every direction. There was a small town nearby, the biggest building in it was an ornately decorated church with a bell tower that looked out of place in the tiny town.

As I got higher, I saw cliffs off in the distance. Black cliffs. There was only one place I knew that had cliffs that looked like this, the Black Canyons. But where at? Where is this house near the canyons?

Could they seriously have taken her this far? It was almost a six hour drive from the university. Why bring her all the way here. What was the purpose?

I woke to the sound of someone knocking on the door.

"Reece, are you in there?" Mom was calling me.



"Yeah, Mom, I'm in here." I said sitting up and sliding to the edge of the bed as she came into the room.

"Sweetie, what are you doing in here?"

"You told me to get some sleep, so I did." I yawned as I spoke, showing how little rest I had actually gotten.

"Doesn't look like it helped at all."

"I was plagued by strange dreams."

"What kind of strange dreams?" She seemed concerned, but I wasn't ready to tell her what I saw. Not until I found out if that house was real.

"Just my worries, coming to bother me."

"Reece, have you told her how you feel yet?" Mom asked me. My head snapped to the side, my eyes open wide in surprise. How did she know, I hadn't told my mom how I felt about Trinity, the only one who knew

was Noah. She laughed at me before she spoke again. "Reece, I'm your mother. I may have been asleep for seven years, but there's still no one who can read you like I can. I know you love her."

"No, I haven't told her yet. I was going to before I left, but Noah got in my way."

"He is rather protective of her isn't he?"

"He's like a brother to her. I'm actually grateful he was there for her. Did you know he actually punched my in the face for how I treated her?"

"Now that's one brave man." Mom was laughing again. "I know that with the two of you working on it, we will find her. You both love her very much. Her mate and her brother working together, what better way to find her?"

"You know he's not really her brother right? He's her cousin."

"He's one of the only two brothers that girl will ever have. He's her oldest brother now, he may legally and genetically be her cousin, but that boy has always been her brother." Mom smiled. "And now that you're not in denial, you will always be her mate. The two of you will find her, I know you will." She seemed so certain that it was making me

more confident as well.

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## Chapter 99 - Trinity-The Warlocks Return

~~

Trinity

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I woke with a start when I felt cold water splash over me. I was drenched from head to toe. When I gasped from the feel of the icy cold water I inhaled a mouthful which caused me to cough and choke uncontrollably.

"It's about time you wake up." Reya sneered as she stood over me holding an empty bucket. She was wearing a very pretty, flowing purple dress, she looked like she was going to a party rather than spending time in a dreary stone room.

"Too bad she wasn't a werewolf, then she wouldn't be choking." Beckett cackled at his own stupid joke while I tried hard to stifle the coughs.

"What do you want?" My voice came out hoarse when I tried to snap at them causing them to lose the biting edge they might otherwise have held.

"I see your lessons bore no fruit." I heard Grantham drawl from somewhere in the darkened room. "It's a good thing we're here for another round of your training."

"We've got some wonderful plans in store for you this time." Cormac walked forward out of the dark, a heavy looking chain in his hands.

A few minutes later I was standing in the middle of the room, directly in the center of the circle. The chair had been moved aside, leaving the area open and free of obstacles. My hands were once again bound tightly by the thin cords of rope.

The chain Cormac had brought in was attached to a hook in the ceiling

and threaded through the ropes around my wrists. I was strung up with my feet barely reaching the floor. If I grew tired and was unable to stand, my wrists would be all that supported my weight.

"I don't think you'll be needing this." Reya laughed as she pulled violently on the jacket I was still wearing. The fabric gave and tore roughly away from my body. Beneath the Jacket I had been wearing a thin, light blue, button-up shirt over a white cami and bra. All of which was already stained.

"One more adjustment should do." Beckett sounded giddy as he approached me. I couldn't see what he had planned as he came closer to me. But I felt the cold steel of his knife as he slid the blade into the top of my shirt. He moved the knife down slowly at first but then, with a chuckle, he finished the slice in a quick flourishing move. He moved the blade a little too eagerly at the end and I felt it slice into the small of my back for the briefest of moments. It stung, but the pain was tolerable.

"Oops, my bad." He seemed to giggle as he saw what he had done. I didn't know what they were about to do to me, but I was betting it was worse than a small cut on my back.

I was standing there, my back now almost completely bare to the four of them standing behind me. The cold air, and their eager gazes, were raising goosebumps all over my body. I was glad they were not looking directly at my face, because I knew the fear was warring with the anger

inside me and was likely visible in my eyes.

There were suddenly different lights glowing eerily in the room. Dark green, a deep burgundy, a muddy brown, and smoky gray, colors you wouldn't normally expect to see coming from lights. They gave off no sense of warmth, in fact they seemed to make the already cold room even colder.

The next thing I knew I felt a searing pain slash across my back. I bit down on my lip to keep from crying out but I couldn't stop my body from jerking with the pain. The four of them cackled with glee at the sight of my misery.

"That's right, mongrel, this time it's a dance lesson. Dance for us, come on dance." Reya almost seemed to be singing joyfully.

Another searing pain rent across my back. I felt the skin split open this time. It felt like hot coals were being pressed against my back, the heat around the slashes was so intense. I realized now what was happening, they had a whip and were beating me with it.

"Let's get to work." Grantham's voice seemed to coo as he spoke. His

voice was beginning to sicken me.

I felt another slash followed quickly by another, then another and another. Four slashes in quick succession. They must all have a whip. Was that what those lights were? Did they have whips made of magic?

I didn't have time to think about it as I felt the pain searing and flaying my back, strike after strike. I bit down hard on my lip to stop myself from crying out and I locked my knees to stop myself from moving as much as I could. But that just made them more determined.

Whenever I did let a soft moan or cry of pain escape, unable to stop myself with the severe pain I was feeling, they would laugh maniacally. They delighted in the pain I was feeling and it made them eager to hear more. I didn't know how much more I could take, or how long it had already been.

My vision was growing dark around the edges. My back was on fire. Not a piece of my back felt untouched by the glowing light whips in their hands. My legs were getting weak and unable to support me. I wanted to scream, I wanted to cry, but I refused. I fought to stay awake. I fought to stay conscious.

To save a bit more of my strength I let my legs go slack, leaving me to hang from the ceiling by my hands. My arms and hands had long ago

gone numb, and my back hurt so bad now that I could feel no pain anywhere else. But I remained awake. And I did not cry.

"That should do for now." Grantham sneered from behind me. I hadn't seen any of them since they had tied me in this position. "Cut her down."

"Shouldn't we just leave her?" Beckett said eagerly.

"No, Master Edmond wants her cut down, she can't be permanently damaged. Not beyond repair at least." Grantham seemed like he was the leader of the group and they all followed his lead.

"Fine." Beckett grumbled, his voice growing nearer.

I pretended to be asleep as he came closer to me. He slid the knife against my wrist, I felt the cold of the steel again as I pressed against me. He flicked his wrist quickly, slicing through the ropes holding me to the chain. I wanted to brace myself for the fall, but that would give away that I was pretending to be asleep, so I had no choice but to take the fall full force.

I fell, the right side of my head banged against the stone floor first. The impact jostled me violently. When my upper body quickly followed all



the air was pushed out of my lungs. I couldn't breathe, I couldn't take a breath at all. I knew I was going to lose consciousness again soon.

Some of the last things I thought of before I could think no more were about Reece. How I wished he would come for me. How I wanted him to save me, to rescue me. How I wished he would want to save me. And also how he was probably happy to be rid of me. How he no longer had me there to burden him. How this couldn't have come at a better time for him, he finished his conquest and now it was out of sight.

Wait, did he actually set this up? Did he plan this whole thing? Was Reece really the one behind me being taken. Was he actually trying to get rid of me?

Please, Reece, don't be involved. Please don't be a part of this pot full of crazy sauce. I can deal with you not caring enough to come save me. I know you don't love me like I love you, but please, don't be the one behind this whole thing.

If I found out he was the one that caused this, the one that did all this, I would never recover. I would rather die than face that truth. I love him, there was no getting around that. That's why it would destroy me too much.

I heard the sound of the four maniacs leaving the basement just as I was on the verge of losing my consciousness altogether.

"We'll be back to play some more when she wakes up." Reya laughed. That was when my strength broke, at least temporarily. I began to cry. With my face pressed into the stone floor, unable to move my arms, unable to roll over or even sit up, I sobbed into the floor as I let the pain take me into unconsciousness.

I fell into a state of fitful dreams, nightmares filled with words but no images. I heard Reece's words from so long ago and Edmond's voice from much more recently.

"You're more than a burden, I hate you." 'No, he said that was a lie.' I heard my subconsciousness reject the words.

"Are you sure you're compatible?" Edmond's voice sneered at me. 'Yes, we are! We're mates.' My mind reeled again.

"You are nothing to me." Reece's words stung so much more than they did the first time I heard them. 'No, things are better now.' I protested.

"If he comes for you, then you belong with him and the pack. But if he doesn't, then you belong here, with your father." Edmond's voice scared me. 'No, I will never stay with you, never.' My dreams continued like this until my mind seemed to crack under the weight of doubt.

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## Chapter 100 - Reece-Allies Arrive

~~

Reece

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I had been asleep for around five hours when mom came to get me. It was just starting to get dark again. My Little Bunny had been missing for twenty-two hours now, but if my dream was to be believed, then I had seen the house she was in.

I had no choice but to believe it. It was the same basement I had seen

her in last night when I had gotten out of the shower. I needed to find that house, if I find that house then I find her.

I wanted to try using the mate mark again. I was sitting in the chair in her room, reluctant to leave her scent, when I put my right hand over the mark she had left on me. I had seen it in the mirror when I went to the bathroom and washed my face following my attempt at resting.

The outlines of the mark had gotten darker. The crest in the middle was forming its picture, though it seemed to be different from the pack crest. And I could see the outline of the shape that surrounded it, the lines that flowed around it almost forming a three leaf pattern. It was a trinity symbol. I recognized it and realized that was the symbol that had been on the floor of the cellar she was in, sort of. That one was a trinity symbol but it had a circle near the tips of leaf branches. Funny her pattern is her name, the thought made me smile.

I closed my eyes, inhaling deeply of her scent that lingered in the room and on my clothes. I pictured her, every detail of her. It didn't take as long to link with her this time.

I saw her hanging limply from a chain in the cellar. I still could not see the other people around her but I saw her clearly. The back of her shirt

had been cut open, her jacket ripped away and laying in tatters across the room. There were dozens upon dozens of red slashes and welts all over her back. The skin split open in several places. Blood was pouring down her back in steady streams.

My wolf and I were ready to kill every single person who had laid a finger on her. They would all pay the ultimate price with their lives. They had committed the ultimate crime, the ultimate sin against me. They dared to touch and defile my mate.

I watched as it appeared someone was about to cut her down. One moment she was hanging suspended by her wrists, then the next she fell face first against the stone floor. I ran to her side, I wanted to hold her but I couldn't. I wanted to make sure she was alright.

I knelt by her side, unable to touch her, As I watched her lay there, the sound of the people in the room began to fade, and with it, she began to cry. I heard her cry out my name while sobbing before she drifted into a fitful sleep.

I opened my eyes, seeing Little Bunny's familiar room around me. I had seen the same basement this time. Every time it was the same. She had to be in that room. I just needed to find out where it was.

I may not know where the house she was in is at, but I might know

someone who does. But I'm not so sure that someone would want to help me out right now, we're not exactly allies. Not enemies really, but not friends either.

First, I would need to gather my pack and explain everything to them. They needed to be prepared for what we were walking into. Then, I would need to call the alpha of the Black Canyons pack. He was not someone I had ever spent much time with, I didn't know what kind of man he was or if he would help at all. But I had to try.

When I left Little Bunny's room I noticed that the house was a lot busier than when I had last been down stairs. I could smell and sense dozens of people, and they all seemed to be on the first floor. Fear and panic flooded me and I made my way down the hall and to the stairs.

Was that dream a vision of something that had already passed? Did that happen a while ago? Have they already moved beyond the torture they were using on her then? Am I too late? These thoughts and more were running through my head as I moved down toward the crowd gathered in the formal dining room.

The table was full of men and women, all chatting in semi-hushed voices and working their way through the piles of food on the table. I

could tell that Abigail had cooked the feast, the food was easy to recognize, but she had obviously done it in a hurry as it wasn't her best meal. Instead, the food was all things that could be cooked quickly and in large quantities. the group gathered around didn't seem to care.

Among the group I noticed Riley, sitting quietly near the head of the table, next to where I would sit. He was lounging in the chair, trying to appear casual and nonchalant, but it was clear that he was upset. The line of his body was rigid and the stiff set to shoulders and jaw was a tell tale sign. He was also not eating, instead he was watching the men and women gathered eat their food instead.

He lifted his head as I walked nearer to him. A tense look on his face.

"Reece, how are you holding up man?" I could hear the concern in his voice.

"I'm going to kill whoever took her." I grimaced. My voice didn't shake, I didn't have emotions filling my voice, but still I felt as if I sounded like a broken man. I watched as the sympathy filled Riley's eyes.

"Don't worry Reece, I'll make sure you get that chance." I saw the determination chase the sympathy away. Riley had a mate, he knew what it must feel like to be away from her.

"How do you do it, Riley?" I asked as I sunk into my chair, my head slumped forward as my shoulders hunched.

"Do what?" Riley was confused by my question.

"How do you leave your mate? How do you live every day when you have to leave her at any time?"

"You've fallen for her hard, haven't you? I knew you would. It's not like we can deny the truth the Goddess gives us, Reece. She told you that Trinity was your mate but you tried to fight it. Now, when she is in danger, you've only just started building you bonds with her, am I right?" I turned my head and glared at him as he lectured me. "Looks like I nailed it in one. Look Reece, you have to understand that the Goddess doesn't make mistakes. When she tells you that your mate is right in front of you it's just a fact that you need to accept." Riley was always the immature goofy one of us, but having his mate around must have matured him somewhat.

"I know."



"Then why did you deny her?"

"Because I'm a damn idiot." I admitted to him.

"I won't argue there."

"Go fuck yourself." I snapped at him jokingly.

"Nah, I'd rather have my wife, it's more fun that way." He retorted. We both laughed for a moment as we watched the group around the table eat, but the laughter felt hollow to me.

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