

into an enormous barrel-chested man with a thick brown beard and long hair knotted into a bun on the top of his head. He glared down at our group.

“You know the rules. We do not allow outsiders, Nina. How could you have betrayed us like this!” he said in a booming voice.

Nina straightened her shoulders and looked up at the man. “I haven’t betrayed anyone, Ivan. These people need your help. We’ve been on the run for days. The East Coast Pack is looking for them.”



“And so your thought was to lead them right to our doorstep!?” Ivan roared.

The Japanese woman laid a gentle hand on his forearm.

“Home Hearth has always been a place for those in need of shelter,” she said softly, then spoke directly to Nina, “but *hageshi*, these people are not rogues.”

She gestured toward Aiden, who was still slumped against the trunk of a tree.

I could see my faint hope of refuge dying before my eyes. I had to say something.

“My name is Sienna Mercer-Norwood. This is my husband, Aiden Norwood.”

I crossed to Aiden and laid a hand on his shoulder. “This is my family. Please, can you help us? My mate has been poisoned with wolfsbane and is badly hurt.”



Ivan sneered. “Norwood. I knew it! Yuki, this is the Alpha of the East Coast Pack. This whole thing is a trap!”

The woman, Yuki, considered for a moment. Then she turned to Nina. “*Hageshi*, is this true? Have you brought trouble to Home Hearth?”

“These people have lost their Pack. They were betrayed by those they trusted. They’ve lost loved ones.

“They’re rogues now, just like I once was. They need a safe place to heal. And this man is in dire need of a healer,” Nina said, her voice edging on desperation.



Rogues.

Until Nina said the word aloud, I hadn't even considered it.

Rogues.



We were running without a Pack for the first time in our lives.

Yuki met my eyes, and I stared back at her with my head high.

She nodded decisively. "Then follow us."

## MICHELLE

"—remember that now is the time for tradition, family, and strength."

I paused the video of myself on the screen of the television.

All the national news agencies were covering the story of Josh's revolution. My soundbites had been playing on a near constant loop all day.

Most of news anchors seemed surprised and upset by the sudden “regime change,” but on *InfoWolves* the talking heads were busily discussing the improvements that the new Alpha would soon bring to the ECP.



I rewound the clip and watched it again.

God, I looked good. My hair was sleek and shiny, my skin glowing.

I had only been the mate of the Alpha for a day, but already I was blossoming into the role.

I rewound the video and watched it again.

My body, still filled with pent-up need, began to react to the discussion on the television.

Lying on my bed, I inched one hand down towards my center, already yearning for release.

The door to the bedroom slammed open and Josh stormed inside.



I paused the TV and then turned to face him, my hand still gently massaging my aching sex.

He didn't look up.



I threw my head back and moaned, hoping that I would open my eyes to find my mate's tongue buried between my thighs.

Instead, I heard the door to our bathroom slam shut.

I opened my eyes. Josh was gone.

Ugh. What did a girl have to do to get an orgasm around here?

I stood and crossed the room, knocking gently on the door to the bathroom. "Josh, what's wrong?"

The door opened immediately. Josh's face was beet-red with frustration. "That bitch! That crazy freak took out four of my best hunters—and she damn near cut the throat of one of them!"

Even removed from power, everyone seemed to want to talk about Sienna Norwood.

“I did tell you not to leave them alive,” I retorted.



“Fuck off, Michelle. I don’t need this from you right now. How am I supposed to maintain power as Alpha if that half-Deity monster is tying my best men up in vines like fucking marionettes!?”

*How indeed?*

But what Josh needed right now was a distraction. A distraction I was all too happy to provide.

I slid my hand down the front of his jeans.

“You’re the Alpha, Josh. You beat Aiden Norwood. Everyone will do exactly what you tell them to do. Including me,” I said, tugging down his zipper.

I could feel his cock stiffen beneath my hand and felt a corresponding surge of wetness in my groin.

“Tell me what to do,” I whispered in his ear.

Josh’s breathing increased. He was rock-hard.



“I want you to suck my dick,” he whispered.

I smirked. “No, say it like the Alpha.” I wrapped my hand around his shaft and moved my fingers up and down the smooth length.

Josh’s eyes rolled back into his head, but then he returned my burning gaze.

“Suck my dick.”

“Yes, Alpha,” I was already loosening his belt as I sunk down onto my knees.

I wrapped my lips around the engorged head, then slid his shaft down my throat.

“Fuck, yes,” he moaned.

I used my tongue to draw a winding path down the length of his cock before taking him even farther into my mouth.



I moaned around him, sending a tremor through his entire body.

“Go to the bed,” Josh said.



I looked up at him and smiled around his shaft before rising to my feet.

I turned and, with my back to my mate, slowly bent over and eased off my cotton shorts, revealing only a silk thong, which also ended up on the floor.

I cast a glance at the television, which was still paused on a clip of this morning's press statement.

It gave me an idea.

I grabbed my phone off the bedside table and swiped it open. I went to the app that said “RECORD.”

“What are you doing? You can't film this!” Josh said as he came up behind me.

“Sure I can. I want us to watch it later,” I said with a grin. I positioned the phone on our bed where it would have the best view of



our bed where it would have the best view of our actions.

Then I climbed onto the bed on my hands and knees and looked back invitingly at my mate.

Josh hesitated, casting another wary glance towards the phone, which now had a shining red light on its side.

“No one will ever see it but us,” I said. “I want to watch you fuck me.”



With a groan of desire, I saw lust sweep away his misgivings. He climbed onto the king-sized bed behind me.

With a single thrust he buried himself in my folds as deep as he could go.

I screamed at the sudden rush of sensation. He reached one hand down and found my burning center with a gently grazing thumb.

He was stimulating every nerve ending at once. My breath came in quick bursts as he withdrew only to slam into me again.



It hurt—but god it felt so fucking good.

I reached up and grabbed my phone, moving it to show my moaning face, then zoomed out so that I could view the entire scene on the screen.

The muscles of Josh's legs flexed as he pounded into me.

He slapped my bouncing ass with the palm of one hand.

“Fuck me, Alpha Daniels,” I cried. “Fuck me until you cum!”

Josh wrapped a hand around my throat and gently squeezed.

The pain combined with the intense pleasure from my sex brought me to the edge, but then he retreated and pulled out of my dripping center.

I whimpered with longing.

“I give the orders around here,” he said, thrusting back into me so hard I screamed again



again.

“Yes, my Alpha!”

“And I’m telling you to cum,” he hissed, driving his hips against my ass.

I obeyed, my orgasm crashing through me with such intensity that I thought I would break apart.

A harsh cry came from Josh as he buried himself with a final, driving thrust.

He collapsed on top of me, panting with release.



After he withdrew and lay back against the pillows of our bed, I continued lying flat on my stomach.

The red light from the phone shone like a beacon in the gathering darkness.

## SIENNA

Step after weary step, mile after unending mile, we trudged through the skeletal pine forests of southern Virginia.

forests of southern Virginia.

Hell, we might be in Kentucky by now for all I knew.

The forest was certainly different. It was quieter here, less overgrown with competing seedlings.

The sun set early in the mountains, and even though it was only four in the afternoon, it was becoming increasingly difficult to make out the trail.

It had been almost invisible to begin with



Yuki Kato and her wolves moved like ghosts through the trees, barely rustling the leaves that covered the forest floor.

My family and I, on the other hand, stomped noisily through the underbrush. We were constantly tangled in the low bushes and overturned logs.

Aiden's head hung low.

Nina's plantain leaf-paste had slowed the bleeding somewhat, but it was clear that the

bleeding somewhat, but it was clear that the wolfsbane was still preventing him from healing properly.

The children had walked as far as they could, but eventually their tired little legs wore down.

Thankfully, Ivan had shifted and picked up Rowan as if he weighed no more than a feather.

I initially held out a hand in protest, but my own arms were still aching with bone pain. My son's sleeping head was nestled against the huge man's shoulder.



Vanessa was trudging along, but River was nestled on Nina's broad hip.

Hours ago, I had wondered if I could use my Deity powers to clear a wider path, but the splintering pain shooting through my bones already made it difficult to stand upright.

I couldn't allow myself to become any weaker than I already was.

My mother came up behind me, her arms

My mother came up behind me, her arms pulled tight across the chest of her padded down jacket.

Our breath puffed out in little clouds of mist which combined the creeping fog that had begun to settle over the hills.

A shiver ran down my spine. This forest had been eerie enough during the day.

At night it was downright spooky.

A sniffing sound broke my chilling thoughts, and I turned towards my mom.

Tears were pouring silently down her cheeks. She brushed them away, but another stifled sob escaped her throat.

“Mom? What’s wrong?” Even as the words left my mouth, I cursed myself.

What a stupid question.

Mom shook her head, swallowing back her tears.



This is all my fault.

I wanted to reach out to my mom, but I was so afraid that she would shy away.

Afraid that she would blame me as I blamed myself.

“We’ll get him back, Mom. If I have to destroy the entire Pack House and everyone in it, we’ll bring Dad back safely,” I said in a low voice.

“I have to go back, Sienna. I just...left him,” she cried.



“You didn’t just leave him. You kept your grandchildren safe. You would have wanted Dad to do the same.”

“She’s right, Melissa,” Nina said from my other side, making me jump. River was fast asleep, her thumb fastened securely in her rosebud mouth.

“You can’t go back,” she continued. “They’ll be expecting that. You need to stay here and help take care of Rowan and the girls.”



I nodded firmly. “Yes, you stay here. I’ll go back and—”

“Sienna, you can’t go back to the Pack House and you know it. If Josh has gone off the deep end as far as I think he has, he’ll have you killed on sight.” Nina shifted River’s weight to her other hip and came to a stop before continuing.

“You need to stay here and watch out for Aiden. This is going to be harder for him than he knows.” She glanced at my mate, who walked alone about twenty paces behind the rest of the group.

Poor Aiden. I had wanted to travel beside him, but he had sullenly shrugged me off.

I tried not to take it personally and to give him his space, but I could see that Nina was right.

Aiden’s entire identity had been tied to his status as Alpha of the East Coast Pack, and that identity had been stripped from him.

Nina looked back at me. I could barely make out her dark brown eyes in the gloom of the





out her dark brown eyes in the gloom of the setting sun.

“You need to stay here. Melissa, so do you. But I can go back and find Robert.”

“Nina, you can’t! It’s too dangerous!”

“We can’t ask you to do that, Nina,” my mother agreed.

“You didn’t ask. I’m volunteering. Barely anyone at the Pack House knows me. As long as I steer clear of Josh and Michelle, I’ll be fine.”



She handed the sleeping River to me and I hugged my niece close.

“Nina, are you sure we’re safe with these people?” I whispered, ducking my head low.

She looked at Ivan, who still held Rowan, then to Yuki Kato who was waiting for us to continue with her rifle held casually in one hand.

“The people of Home Hearth helped me

I'll be fine."

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"Nina, are you sure we're safe with these people?" I whispered, ducking my head low.

She looked at Ivan, who still held Rowan, then to Yuki Kato who was waiting for us to continue with her rifle held casually in one hand.

"The people of Home Hearth helped me when no one else would. You can trust them." Nina turned back the way we had come.



"Are you sure you'll be safe?" I asked, this time meeting her eye.

She winked at me over her shoulder.

"I'll be fine. I'm a spy. Remember?"

Next Chapter

