

Chapter 301 - My Professor Is My Alpha Mate

Lila's POV

I stared at Alpha Jonathan with shock. Everybody in the room was silent and Sarah looked like she was about to cry. She wrapped her arms around her body like she was trying to hold herself together.

I heard a low growl coming from Brody and I knew he was close to shifting. His wolf was not happy.

“What do you mean she will die?” Brody asked through his teeth.

Alpha Jonathan glanced at him briefly before looking at my father.

“My daughter has been cursed by this bitch of a witch when she was born. Every time she uses her powers, she gets weaker. Soon, it will be the cause of her death,” Jonathan explained as casually as if he was ordering a meal.

I thought about all those times I saw Sarah in pain and almost passing out. I had no idea it was because of her powers. I looked at her, wanting her to meet my eyes, but she wouldn't.

How could she not tell me she was dying?

How could she not tell Brody?

“Sarah...” Brody breathed, his eyes glowing red as his wolf fought to take control.

If Brody lost control and allowed his wolf to take over, I know hell would break loose. I looked up at Enzo who gave me a shared look. He knew exactly what I was thinking and gave me a head nod as he approached Brody.

The closer Enzo got; the angrier Brody became.

“Sarah, tell me the truth,” Brody growled.

“Why does this nobody wolf care so much about my daughter?” Jonathan asked, raising his right brow at Brody.

“Because he’s her...” I began to say but Sarah’s words stopped me.

“Dad, can we just go?” Sarah said sharply; it was obvious she was holding back tears.

“You can’t just leave, Sarah,” Brody argued.

He was so fixed on Sarah that he no longer noticed Enzo who was still approaching him cautiously like he was a wild beast. Technically he was.

She finally looked at Brody.

“I’m so sorry I didn’t tell you...” she whispered. “But it’s true. I don’t have much longer to live. Unless my father can find a cure.”

“I have the best doctors doing what they can,” Jonathan stated simply. “I’m not going to let her die.”

“I’m surprised you didn’t tell me about this, Alpha,” my father said, narrowing his eyes at Jonathan. “You’d think the leader of the Alpha committee would know such a detail.”

“This is family business,” Jonathan replied. “It has nothing to do with you or your committee.”

“A committee that you are a part of.”

“A committee that should be mine,” Jonathan quipped. “I am far richer and more powerful than any of those fools, especially you.”

My father let out a low laugh and shook his head in disbelief.

“Do you want to eat your words?” My father asked, stepping closer to him.

I was worried they were about to fight so I ran toward my father, putting myself in between them.

“Fighting is not the answer,” I argued. “Sarah is dying, and we need to figure out how to save her. This is only stressing her out.”

“Let go of me!!!” Brody’s words cut through the room, taking our attention away and fixing it on him.

Enzo had his arms strongly around Brody and locked him in an Alpha hold. One of the strongest holds that work on any wolf, even if they aren’t part of his pack. Brody struggled against him, but Enzo managed to get him to the ground.

I could feel Brody's anger; his wolf struggled to break loose from Brody's body. A loud growl erupted in the room, shaking both Sarah and me. But my father and Jonathan, as Alpha's, were unphased.

"Fight it, Brody," Enzo ordered shoving him harder into the hardwood floor. "Fight your wolf. Take back control."

Brody's breathing quickened and I could see the fury on his face. His wolf's canines snapped multiple times before they finally dispersed back into Brody's body and left his normal teeth in their place.

His breathing finally slowed, though I could hear his panting through his nose. His eyes were no longer glowing red, but back to their normal blues.

I sighed, relieved that Brody was returning to normal as I looked up at Alpha Jonathan.

"What is your plan to save her life?" I asked, narrowing my eyes at him.

"It's not your business," he spat.

Before I knew what was happening, he grabbed Sarah by the wrist. She made a distressed and painful sound, which made Brody growl again. Thankfully, Enzo still had his hold on him.

"Let's go," Jonathan ordered her as he pulled her along with him.

My father, who was now standing in front of the door with his arms crossed, stared at him for a long while, a deep frown placed on his face.

"You can't keep me here, Alpha," Jonathan seethed, staring back at him.

After what felt like an eternity, my father finally stepped aside, allowing them to pass.

Once they were gone, Enzo finally released Brody who was laying limp on the ground, staring at the door.

Tears pooled in my eyes, and I rushed to him, touching his back gently. Enzo tensed when I made contact with Brody, but I ignored him. Brody needed me right now; I could feel his pain.

"It's going to be okay," I whispered to him. "We will figure this out."

He finally lifted his head and looked at me; I saw tears pooling in his eyes.

"She can't die, Lila..." he whispered hoarsely.

"And she won't," I said firmly, and way more confidently than I felt. "We won't let her die."

He nodded as he sat up, leaning against the wall with his legs arched and his arms resting across his knees. He looked so defeated; my heart hurt for him.

I sat beside him, leaning my head against his shoulder.

“She’s not going to die...” I repeated.

“What’s going on?” I heard Becca coming in from the doorway with Luis and Kayla close behind her.

They were no longer crying, but they looked frightened.

“We just saw Alpha Jonathan yanking Sarah out of here. What happened?” Kayla asked, breathlessly.

“Sarah is dying,” I said the words as smoothly as I could, but they hurt me more than anything to say. “But we are going to fix it and save her,” I made sure to add quickly.

“What do you mean she’s dying?” Becca asked, sitting on the other side of Brody. “What happened?”

“It’s her abilities,” I explained, looking between all of them. “She was cursed as an infant... every time she uses her powers, she gets weaker. Soon, it will be the cause of her death.”

Becca gasped at my words; Kay looked pale, and Luis just looked sad.

“How could a witch curse an infant?” Brody asked his voice hoarse and unfamiliar sounding.

“That’s what I’m about to find out,” my father said through his teeth. It was then that I realized just how pissed he looked. “I don’t think Alpha Jonathan is telling us the whole story.”

“What are you going to do?” I asked, eyeing him carefully.

He turned away and started toward the door.

“I’ll be returning to the Nova pack for a few days,” he said in a low voice. “I need to do some research and I need my people around.”

“Keep me updated, Alpha,” Enzo said, staring after my father.

“I will,” my father said in return.

On that note, he was gone.

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None of us felt like eating after that.

Which was such a shame because Dee prepared such an incredible meal.

As we sat around the table, staring at all the food that the packhouse maids laid out, Dee stared at all our sunken faces with a frown.

“You still need to eat,” she reminded us. “Strong Alphas and Lunas need food.”

“I’m not a Luna,” Becca said, glancing briefly at Luis and then back at Dee, timidly.

“Nor am I,” Kay said, giving Becca a small and reassuring smile.

“But you are ladies, are you not?” Dee asked, a twinkle of love and admiration in her eyes. “Lady’s also need to eat.”

“I can’t...” Brody said, quickly standing to his feet. “I need to speak with Sarah.”

“You can’t right now,” I said, eyeing him carefully and worried that he would lose control again.

He met my eyes and I saw the struggle he was facing; it tore a hole in my heart.

“Then I guess I’ll go to bed,” he muttered. He glanced at Dee and bowed his head slightly. “Thank you for the food, Miss Dee. I’m sorry I can’t eat it right now.”

He turned and left the room.

I looked at Enzo who was staring down at his plate with a frown; this certainly was not how I wanted this evening to go. I felt sick to my stomach.

I heard the familiar chiming of my phone in my pocket, drawing everybody’s attention to me. I might as well answer it considering nobody was eating.

When I looked at my screen, I frowned at the unfamiliar number.

Furrowing my brows and answered it.

“Hello?”

“Lila? It’s Raymond,” said Rachel’s father on the other end, making my heart drop.

“Hey,” I said, lowering my tone. “How are you? How’s Rachel?”

“She’s fine,” he answered much to my relief, but his tone sounded indifferent. “Actually, she’s more than fine. She’s awake.”

“What?!” I gasped, making Enzo stand protectively and rush to my side. “She’s awake,” I said loud enough for everyone to hear.

Becca jumped to her feet with a large smile; the first time she truly smiled all night. The others had shocked faces, which probably matched my own.

“Yes,” Raymond continued, still sounding strange. “But she would like to speak with you...” he continued. “Right away.”

Chapter 302 Rachel's Memory

Chapter 302 - My Professor Is My Alpha Mate

Third Person POV

Rachel’s brain hurt as she struggled to open her eyes. She barely had any memory of what had happened, other than the fact that she thought she had found her mate. But she had no idea where she was and what had happened after that.

As she wiggled her fingers, she realized there was something attached to her wrist, and she winced in pain as it moved.

As she winced, she felt this stabbing motion in her stomach, and she groaned miserably.

“Rachel?” She heard her father’s voice before she saw him. “Are you awake?” He proceeded to ask.

He sounded only a little worried.

She finally managed to open her eyes, and immediately wanted to shut them again. The bright light in the room was too much for her to take. She turned her head, not wanting to deal with the lights shining on her face.

“Doctor! My daughter is awake!” Her father yelled; he sounded further away now.

Doctor?

She must have been inside a hospital. The scent of latex soon filled her nose, and she groaned again in misery.

She kept her eyes shut, but she heard the shuffling of shoes entering the room and then she felt the presence of someone else by your bedside.

She felt hands on her face, probably to see if she was running a fever.

“She’s a little warm,” a woman said. “Rachel sweetheart, can you hear me?”

She managed to open her eyes again and look up at this woman with a pink blazer and a long white trench coat. She wore thin silver glasses, but Rachel could see her pretty emerald eyes and long lashes within the frames. She had her long blonde hair tied back into a low pony and her light pink lips were decorated with a worried frown as she stared around Rachel’s face.

“Can you hear me?” She repeated, much softer.

Rachel opened her mouth to speak, but only air came out.

“What’s wrong with her?” Her father asked in a gruff tone. He sounded angry as he looked at this female doctor.

“She just woke up from a coma,” the doctor said sharply. “Give her some time.”

“D...d...” Rachel stammered, trying to formulate some words. Her attempt drew the attention of this doctor, and she lowered herself so she could hear Rachel more clearly. “Doctor...” Rachel managed to get out.

“Yes, Rachel. I am Doctor Hanna Lauren,” said gently. “Can you tell me what hurts the most?”

Rachel took a deep breath before answering. Or at least attempting to answer.

“My... my... my head,” she stammered.

Dr. Lauren placed her thumbs on Rachel’s head and began to rub in circular motions for only a short moment. Rachel was surprised that her pain and discomfort started to melt away.

“Is that better?” She asked kindly.

“Yes...” Rachel said. “Thank you.”

“I’m a healer,” Dr. Lauren said simply. “It’s what I do.”

“Is she going to be okay?” Her father asked without any signs of emotion in his voice.

“It seems she will be. But I’d like to keep her here for a few days just to be safe.”

“That’s not going to work; we have plans on Saturday,” her father scowled, which surprised Rachel.

The doctor raised her perfectly trimmed brows at Raymond.

“Her life is more important than any plans you might have made,” she said, her tone began to harden with each word she spoke.

“These plans we can’t cancel,” he said between his teeth. “You said you are a healer, so heal her.”

“Even my powers take time to work,” she said, narrowing her eyes at him. “I’d prefer if she stayed here for a few days so I can be sure she’s going to be okay.”

Her father growled, which was also surprising for Rachel. She was starting to grow uncomfortable with his presence.

Ignoring him, the doctor turned back to Rachel.

“You are an adult, and you don’t have to go anywhere if you don’t want to,” she breathed gently. “He has no right to tell you otherwise.”

She opened her mouth to thank this nice doctor, but no words came out. She caught a glimpse of her father’s angry eyes and she shuddered, looking away quickly. Memories of Rachel’s childhood surfaced in her mind. Her father was always angry; she remembered this look in his eyes so well.

She worried about what he would do.

When it came to her father, limitations didn’t exist.

“Rachel, do you remember what happened?” The doctor proceeded to ask.

“Huh? What?” Rachel asked, snapping out of her daydream to look up at Dr. Lauren.

Could this doctor read minds too?

“Do you know why you are in the hospital?” She rephrased.

“No...” she answered after a pause. “I don’t remember.” Which was the truth; she couldn’t remember what happened after she thought found her mate. She could hardly remember anything before that either. She couldn’t have found her mate... could she?

“You were stabbed in the stomach,” she explained gently. “By someone named Rodrick. Does that name sound familiar? I guess he’s a professor at your school?”

Rachel’s heart fell deep into her stomach.

Rodrick... the hybrid professor and vampire dorm advisor. It was he who stabbed her. He was also her supposed mate.

Was it all true? Were they really mates? Did he really stab her in the stomach?

As her mind worked around that fact, memories began to surface in her head. It wasn't Rodrick who did it; she made him do it. The voice that's been inside Rachel's mind forced Rachel to manipulate Rod's mind and made him stab her in the stomach.

It was to make him look guilty, but now Rachel felt nothing but guilt.

This was all her fault, all those deaths. They were her fault.

Now Rod, her hybrid mate, was going to get in trouble for it all.

Rachel was so wrapped up in her mind and these memories that she hadn't even noticed how heavily she was breathing and how rapidly the heart rate monitor was beeping.

"Rachel, sweetheart, try to calm down," Dr. Laureen said softly, placing a hand on her shoulder to steady her. "Just take a deep breath."

"What did you do?" Her father hissed at the doctor's. "She doesn't need to be remembering this shit."

This was making Rachel's blood boil; what was his problem? Didn't he want her to be well? Didn't he want her to remember this stuff? Or did he just want her to forget just like he wanted her to forget the entire childhood he abused her?

What was the point of him coming back into her life if he was just going to be an asshole again?

Lila was right about him the entire time; he hadn't changed. He never would.

The doctor was also right; she was an adult now and she didn't need to take his bullshit.

"Dad, get out," she hissed.

His eyes found hers and they widened.

"What did you just say to me?" He asked through his teeth.

"You are nothing but a nightmare. I don't even know why you are here. Get out," she said again, angrily.

She was feeling stronger now and her voice came out hardened.

The doctor looked amused as she looked at Raymond, folding her arms across her chest.

“You heard my patient; get out,” she said, backing Rachel up completely.

Rachel liked this doctor.

Her father scowled and at first, she didn't think he was going to leave. But then he turned and stalked toward the door.

Rachel couldn't stop thinking about all those people who had died because of her and now her mate was going to take the fall for it because Rachel made him. Her stomach clenched at the very thought. She needed to find out where she was; she needed to find out if this was fixable.

But most importantly, she needed to warn Lila.

“Wait,” Rachel said before her father left completely. He paused at the door and looked at her with his eyes turning to slits. “Call Lila. Tell her it's important and that I need to see her.”

“Why would I do you a favor after you just kicked me out?” Her father asked, narrowing his eyes at her.

“Because if you ever want to mend this relationship, you'll do me this favor,” she said in return, also narrowing her eyes.

He looked at her for a moment longer before muttering something she didn't understand and leaving the room.

She sighed and laid her head back on her pillow.

She needed to warn Lila about this strange darkness that was inside her; she was the one who killed these people. They needed to find out who this darkness was and get rid of it before it made her kill anyone else.

But then she felt claws digging into her brain; a familiar sensation that made her gasp and grit her teeth. Her heart rate began to speed up again and she found it difficult to breathe as these claws continued to grip her pain. She thought her head was about to explode.

“Rachel? Oh, my God! What's happening? Are you okay?” The doctor asked, trying to calm Rachel, but the pain was only getting worse, and her vision was becoming blurry.

She thought she was going to pass out from the pain, but then she heard the familiar voice in her head.

“If you tell anyone what had happened, if you warn anyone about me. I will make sure you and your loved ones suffer as I kill every one of them. I will make you watch their torture. Then, I will torture and kill you.”

Chapter 303 - My Professor Is My Alpha Mate

Lila's POV

Enzo took it upon himself to take me directly to the hospital while the others stayed at the packhouse. My heart was racing wildly against my ribcage. I was excited to see Rachel again, but it sounded like she needed to speak with me urgently.

I worried about what it was she needed to tell me.

I stayed quiet for most of the 15-minute car ride, and Enzo was respectful enough to keep quiet as well.

I had a nasty feeling in the pit of my stomach.

We finally reached the hospital and as soon as Enzo parked the car, I quickly got out and rushed to the hospital entrance. He walked behind me in long and casual strides, looking way more put together and certainly calmer than I was.

I already knew which room Rachel was in, so I didn't need to stop by the front desk. But the nurse at the desk greeted me with a smile when I entered.

I returned the smile, though it was incredibly forced, and I knew it didn't reach my eyes.

I went to Rachel's hospital and knocked on the door a couple of times, just in case she was indecent. Enzo stood behind me, crossing his arms across his chest and staring at me with a worried expression.

"I'll stay out here," he surprised me by saying, making me turn to face him. "That way you girls can talk."

I gave him a faint smile as I closed the small gap between us and kissed him gently on the lips. I loved the way he smelled, and I loved the way he tasted. I couldn't get over how good he made my wolf feel.

"I won't be long," I promised him as I turned and entered the room, shutting the door behind me.

I was surprised to see that Raymond wasn't in the room; I didn't even see him in the waiting room. I figured he'd be in one place or the other, but he wasn't. I quickly brushed that thought out of my head as I fixed my attention on Rachel.

She was awake and peering over at me when I entered the room. Her dark straightened hair hung messily around her features and shoulders. It was strange seeing her with no makeup; she was still pretty, but she seemed more ordinary. I noticed that most of her piercings have been removed too.

“Hey...” I managed to say as I stepped toward her bed. I wasn’t good at this kind of thing, so I wasn’t really sure what else to say.

“Hey,” she said in return, sounding much stronger than I anticipated.

“How are you feeling?”

“Bears don’t heal as quickly as wolves,” she said weakly, giving me a small smile. “But I’ll be okay.”

I sighed and sat on the edge of her bed, peering into her dark blue gaze.

“Do you remember what happened?”

“They told me what happened,” she answered, staring down at her hands.

She tugged at her fingers as she thought about what more to say. But she remained silent, biting her bottom lip like she was trying to refrain from telling me something.

“Tell me the truth, Rachel... why were you in the boy's section of the vampire den in the first place?” I asked, narrowing my eyes at her.

She swallowed visibly before meeting my eyes.

“I sensed something,” she told me, still biting her lower lip.

“What did you sense?” I asked, keeping my tone low.

I knew Enzo was outside the door and he could probably hear us anyway, being an Alpha and all. But that didn’t mean I wanted everyone in the hospital to hear our business.

I thought about darkness and how Celeste could sense it around the school, even with the barrier in place. Could Rachel have sensed darkness?

I shuddered at the very thought.

“I sensed my mate...” she finally said, scrunching her face as she spoke those words.

My eyes widened in shock; what did she say? She found her mate? I wanted to jump up and wrap my arms around her, pulling her into a large hug. But I was afraid I’d hurt her if I did such a thing.

“Your mate?” I gasped. “Who is it??”

She was quiet for another moment; I could tell she didn’t want to tell me. Or maybe she was in the middle of forcing herself to tell me. I couldn’t be too sure, and she did look incredibly nervous.

It’s okay...” I told her gently, reaching out to grab her hand. “You don’t have to say anything you don’t want to.

Though I was disappointed, I also understood and respected her boundaries.

“I want to...” she said quickly, meeting my eyes again. She took a deep breath and I waited with anticipation. “It’s Rodrick...” she finally answered, causing my heart to fall deep into my stomach.

“What?” I gasped, staring at her with disbelief, unsure if I heard her correctly.

She swallowed again and nodded slowly.

“Rodrick is my mate,” she repeated, almost gravely.

How is that possible?” I blurted. “He’s a vampire. Vampires don’t have mates like that,” I said, shaking my head and not wanting to believe what she was telling me.

She looked almost amused by my words at first.

“He’s a hybrid,” she reminded me. “Which means he has a wolf inside of him too.”

I knew she was right, but I still didn’t want to believe it.

“He also stabbed you,” I said, my brows knitting together.

She was quiet as her cheeks turned a strange shade of pink.

“He didn’t know what he was doing...” she said in return, lowering her face. “He wasn’t himself.”

“What do you mean he wasn’t himself?” I asked, not sure if I wanted to know the answer.

“Kinda like Scott when he confessed to those murders,” Rachel continued to explain. “He just seemed different. I can’t really explain it. But I know he didn’t mean to stab me...”

“He almost killed you, Rachel,” I breathed, grabbing onto her arm. “I don’t know what or why he did what he did. But he did stab you. Things would have been a lot worse for him if you died.”

“But I didn’t,” she said with a shrug. “That’s all that matters right now anyways.”

I knew she was right; she was alive and as well as she could be. Who cared about all the little stuff?

“Is that all you wanted to tell me?” I asked, raising my brows at her, remembering that Raymond called him here because Rachel desperately wanted to talk to me.

She was quiet for a moment longer like she was trying to figure out how to answer my very simple question. Then, she forced an obvious fake smile and nodded.

“Yes. That was all,” she said slowly.

I stared at her for a moment longer, analyzing her face I knew she wasn’t telling me the truth, and pained me to think that she didn’t trust me enough to tell me the truth. But the way she was now avoiding my eyes and biting her lower lip, I knew she wasn’t going to say anything more.

“Where did your father go?” I asked, looking around the empty room. “I would have assumed he’d be here.”

“I kicked him out,” she said, rolling her eyes and now looking annoyed.

“Why?” I asked, genuinely curious.

“He was treating me like shit since I’ve woken up. I didn’t want to deal with it anymore,” she said, giving me a coy smile.

I couldn’t help but laugh; I’m glad she was once again seeing Raymond for what he truly was.

A monster.

“So, what else did I miss since I’ve been in a coma?”

I thought about it for a moment, and then I sighed. I needed to tell her all that had happened. So, I went from telling her about Becca and Luis’s budding relationship, to Scott being killed in the most gruesome kind of way.

Rahcel’s face fell upon hearing about Brody, and I thought she was about to cry. Her entire face had gone pale, and her breathing became harsh.

“That’s awful...” she breathed with tears welling up in her eyes.

I nodded, trying and failing to keep my own tears in my eyes.

We talked a little bit more and then I told her I would allow her to get some more strong. I wanted her to heal properly and feel well-rested. I hugged her briefly before saying goodbye and leaving the room.

Enzo was still in the hallway where I had left him.

“How did it go?” He asked.

I opened my mouth to tell him that she was acting kind of bittersweet. I couldn’t help but feel she was hiding something from me, but it was also nice to laugh and joke around again. But just as I started to speak, I heard the familiar tune of my cell phone in my pocket.

I sighed and grabbed my phone, my frown deepened when I saw who was calling me. Without a second thought, I answered the phone.

“Hey, Alpha Jonathan,” I said, trying to appear as polite as I could. “What can I do for you?”

“Hello, Miss Campbell, this is actually Beta Hector,” Jonathan’s Beta said on the other end.

I raised my brows’ suddenly my heart felt like weighed a thousand pounds.

I’ve only met Beta Hector a couple of times when he came to the school with Alpha Jonathan a couple of times.

“Oh, hello, Beta,” I said, looking up at Enzo who was watching me with curiosity and tensivity. “Is there something I can help you with?”

“I’m just calling on behalf of Alpha Jonathan. He’s a bit busy so he left the planning for this Saturday up to me.”

My frown deepened.

“Planning for what?” I asked hesitantly.

“For the banquet Saturday night. It’s only a couple of days away. I’m calling because I need a headcount of who will be attending,” he explained.

My heart dropped into my stomach.

The banquet? We were still having the banquet?

Why hasn’t that been canceled yet?

Chapter 304 A Little Forest Play

Chapter 304 - My Professor Is My Alpha Mate

Lila's POV

The drive back to the packhouse was quiet. I was in a daze for most of it; still trying to wrap my mind around what I had just found out. Despite everything that's happened this week, Alpha Jonathan still wanted to hold a banquet.

I thought he would have canceled it by now. But apparently not.

Enzo parked the car in his usual parking spot outside the packhouse, but he kept the car running. We both just sat there for a long while; neither of us said anything. I don't think either of us knew what to say.

That is until I could no longer take the silence.

"Does he really expect us to attend this banquet under these circumstances?" I asked, peering over at him.

He was quiet for a moment longer before sighing.

"No... he expects you to go to this banquet," he said; I could see the aggravation in his eyes.

I had forgotten that Enzo wasn't even invited to this banquet. A nervous knot formed in the pit of my stomach. I didn't like the idea of attending this thing without him, but I knew I wasn't going to be alone. My father would be there, along with my mother and Beta Ethan. Also, my friends would be there as well.

I didn't have to worry about anything bad happening as long as I was surrounded by people who loved me. But I wasn't going to be around the one person I wanted the most. My wolf whimpered at the thought of being away from him, even if it was only for a few hours.

She pawed at me, wanting to get out and be entangled with his wolf. From the way he was breathing, I could tell he wanted the same thing.

"Want to go for a run?" He then asked, looking over at me.

I couldn't help but smile at him; I wanted more than anything to go for a run. I nodded eagerly, trying to contain my excited wolf.

He turned off his car and we stepped outside. He took me by the hand, and I felt instantly entranced by him. His hand was so warm and sent a wave of electric chills throughout my body. Goosebumps formed on my flesh, and I breathed in his incredible scent. He smelled of melted caramel and it made my mouth water.

I wanted to bask in his sweetness and get lost in his arms.

He traced my neckline and ran his thumb across the mark that decorated the back of my shoulder- blade his mark.

I often thought about marking him as well; it wasn't unknown for the female mates to mark their male mates. It was more common in today's generation than it was in the past, but it was uncommon for an Alpha to be marked by their Lunas for future Lunas. But my wolf wanted to mark him; she wanted to claim him as he claimed us. She wanted to mark her territory and make other she-wolves fully aware that he belonged to us.

Once we marked him, our bond would only grow stronger. I would be able to feel him much easier, and we could communicate from a further distance.

She kept going over all the reasons why we should mark him, but I kept telling her no. We can't mark him. He would hate us if we marked him; that's not how things work. Enzo was an Alpha... Alpha's don't get marked. They do the marking.

Val has been sad since that conversation, but whenever we are around Enzo, she perks up again. It made me smile seeing her so happy.

Enzo bent and brushed his lips across mine; I soaked in his scent and his warmth. I wanted to be entangled with him.

I didn't know it was possible to love someone this much.

"Enzo..." I whispered; my lips parted slightly as he kissed me.

The kiss was short but incredibly intimate. He pulled back, leaving me wanting so much more. But then I watched as his body transformed and he shifted into his wolf. His large dark wolf towered over me and howled up at the moon before fixing his golden eyes on my face.

I smiled, unafraid of the beast that stood before me.

Instead, I reached my hand out and allowed him to sniff me for a moment before he closed his eyes and allowed me to run my hands down his narrow nose and brush my fingers through his long and soft fur.

"Hey Max..." I whispered to the wolf. "You are such a good boy."

He opened his eyes and before I knew what was happening, he licked me in the face, making me stumble backward in surprise. I burst out laughing and wiped the saliva off my face.

I saw the twinkle of humor in Max's eyes as I shoved him playfully. He then licked my hand and let out a low and nonthreatening growl from the deepest part of his throat.

Max was very playful and seemingly gentle. He always seemed to make Val laugh, even before Enzo and I accepted one another as mates. Our wolves have been hoping that we would accept one another, that way they can be together way more often.

Val was itching to be released so she too could roam around our lands and have fun with her mate. I didn't want to deny her that any longer.

I allowed her to take control of my body and we shifted. Oftentimes, when I'm in my wolf form, I hand Val over full control, and I sit back in the corner of her mind and watch her adventures unfold.

She used her paw to pat Max's long nose like she was playfully bopping him. He replied with a growl, but I knew it was playful as well. She licked his fur and he nuzzled against her. After a moment, she decided to take off in the forest. Val ran quickly; she was large, but not as large as Max.

I could feel her powers surfacing and strengthening her. As she ran, it almost felt like we were flying. I looked down and was astonished to see electricity pouring from her paws and lifting her off the ground like it was carrying her through the night sky.

The moonlight poured its rays into Val's fur, making her even stronger. She couldn't help but howl loudly and proudly. If she had lips, she'd be smiling.

Max was watching in wonder as his mate made magic happen.

I felt on top of the world; I imagine Val felt like she was the world. Max's howl echoed hers.

She reached the ground again and went to join Max as they frolicked and rolled around the forest grounds. They were both so happy, and that made me so happy in return.

After an hour, Val gave me control back and I shifted, just as Enzo had shifted. We were both panting and laughing as we lay together in the middle of the forest.

"They had a lot of energy tonight," he pointed out, peering over at me.

Catching my breath, I managed to nod.

"It's because we've been depriving them of quality time," I told him. "They've been wanting each other."

He reached over and brushed a strand of fallen hair out of my face, but he allowed his thumb to linger on my upper cheekbone. I closed my eyes and leaned into his touch.

“I love you, Lila,” he said in a low and husky tone.

I opened my eyes so I could meet his eyes.

“I love you,” I said in return.

He leaned over and kissed me gently on the lips, I had almost forgotten that we were both completely naked still from our shift until he ran his fingers down my naked stomach and began to rub my inner thighs gently with his fingers.

I breathed deeply as a wave of warmth followed his gentle caress. He ran his thumb across my folds and wedged his fingers between them. My entire body was on fire from the contact, and I thought I was going to go insane.

He ran his tongue down the nape of my neck until he reached my shoulder. Then he nibbled my shoulder gently and playfully, letting out a small growl as he did so.

I felt his thumb find my clit and he applied only a small amount of pressure before he massaged it gently. I gasped at the sensation, throwing my head back and letting out a small moan of satisfaction.

How did he have such an effect on me with only his fingers?

My toes curled as the pressure built inside of me. His lips traced my chest, and he held my left nipple in his mouth with his teeth. I felt the sharp sting of his teeth, but then I was filled with pleasure as he teased my nipples with his mouth.

Neither of us cared that we were outside in broad daylight, lying on the forest grounds. Neither of us cared about anything other than one another.

“Oh, Enzo...” I breathed as I felt my climax around the corner.

“Cum for me,” he breathed into my ear, nibbling my lobe teasingly. “I want you to give me all of you.”

On command, I exploded around him. My legs buckled and quivered as my orgasm only intensified. It felt like it was never-ending; I screamed out in satisfaction just as he let out a growl.

But he didn't stop, even when I tried to move his hand from me.

“Not yet,” he breathed, before positioning himself between my legs, still massaging my clit.

He lowered his head to my core and replaced his fingers with his tongue. My orgasm was still there, and my legs were still shaking. I knew I was gushing between my legs, but he didn't care. In fact, he seemed to have loved it. He was licking up all my juices like he was parched.

He continued to please me with his mouth, and I moaned loudly, running my fingers through his hair. I wasn't sure how much more of this I was going to be able to take.

"Enzo..." I gasped as another large orgasm nearly knocked the wind out of me. I had no idea when the last orgasm ended and this one began.

Before I could fully catch my breath or make my legs not quiver, he lifted me up and placed me on his erection. I went willingly with him, wrapping my legs around his waist and my arms around his neck. He slid inside of me so easily because I was already so wet down there.

I straddled him and he used his arms to move me up and down on his cock. He moaned into my ear as I picked up speed. Feeling him inside of me gave me all the life I needed. I buried his face in my neck and let out a growl as his wolf fought to emerge once again.

My wolf was practically panting.

Sweat poured from both our bodies; we were a tangled mess. A mass of sweat and skin, holding onto one another like our lives depended on it.

Another orgasm hit me suddenly and I felt his body quiver as well as he released himself.

I fell beside him, finding myself so exhausted that I couldn't keep my eyes open. In the middle of the forest, completely naked, I fell asleep.

Chapter 305 Unexpected turn of events

Chapter 305 - My Professor Is My Alpha Mate

Lila's POV

"I don't feel comfortable going to this thing without you," I pouted, peering up at Enzo with a frown.

He bent and kissed me gently on the lips, placing both his hands on my shoulders.

“I know... I don’t like it either. But if I went, it would make Alpha Jonathan suspicious and that’s the last thing we need right now.”

I sighed, knowing he was right.

“But Ethan will be there if anything happens,” he reminded me. “Ethan should already be there actually. I think he drove in with your father.”

I stepped into his open embrace and buried my face in his chest, not caring if I ruined the little bit of makeup that was on my face, which I allowed Brianna to do.

She had gotten here a little while ago and she eagerly made it her project to do my hair and makeup. She had my dark curl pulled out of my face, but it was still down so they draped over my shoulders. I wore a casual black evening dress that sloped downward in the chest area to reveal only some of my cleavage. The dress also hugged my body perfectly, revealing all my curves and my slender legs.

“Just don’t be flaunting your stuff in front of any guys at this banquet,” Enzo teased, though I could hear the concern in his voice as he checked out my dress and my figure within the dress.

I narrowed my eyes at him.

“The only one I want to see my stuff isn’t even going to be there,” I said pouting.

He grinned at me and kissed me again, looking like he was going to say more. But just as he opened his mouth to speak, we were interrupted by a knock on the door.

“Lila, are you in there? We have to go before we are late!” Brianna said from the doorway.

She was sounding a lot better than she had been since being rejected by her mate. I was glad that she got her strength back and was actually out of bed. though, I was surprised that she agreed to go to this banquet.

I looked up at Enzo with a frown and he kissed me again.

“Go,” he said gently. “I’ll be here when you get back.”

I smiled at him, though I knew it didn’t reach my eyes before I turned to the door and opened it.

Brianna rushed into the room.

“Everybody is waiting for you downstairs. What’s taking so—”

Her voice trailed off once she spotted Enzo standing before her; her face instantly went bright red and for once, Brianna was at a loss for words. She staggered backward and then glanced at me with large eyes.

“I’m so sorry…” she breathed, covering her mouth with her hands. “I didn’t mean to… interrupt,” she stumbled on that last word.

I laughed.

“It’s okay, Bri. You didn’t interrupt anything,” I assured her.

“I wouldn’t say that,” Enzo murmured, but I nudged him, giving him a look.

He smiled and kissed the top of my head.

“Call me if you need anything at all,” he whispered, still keeping his lips on my head.

“I will,” I said to him, catching his lips with my own.

We parted and I followed Bri out of the room and down the stairs to join the others. Everybody looked so nice. Even Luis was wearing a suit, which I knew right away belonged to Enzo. Becca was clinging to his arm; it made me smile seeing the two of them together and happy, even if they weren’t fated mates.

Brody was refusing to go; he kept himself barricaded in the room he shared with Sarah. I know he’s been trying to get a hold of her but to no prevail. My heart ached for him. According to Jonathan, Sarah wasn’t going to be at home, he took her to a special doctor and won’t tell us where. It was driving Brody insane.

I turned to Enzo who had followed us downstairs.

“Can you keep an eye on him,” I asked in a low voice; I didn’t have to elaborate further than that. Enzo knew who I was talking about. He nodded once.

“I will,” he assured me, making me smile, but he could still see the worry in my eyes.

He kissed me again before he turned to Gamma Jake, our driver for the evening.

“Get them there and back safely,” Enzo ordered.

Jake nodded.

“Of course, Alpha.”

Jake motioned for us to go outside, and we did.

We piled into Jake’s large SUV; I sat in the passenger seat while the others took his backseat. There was enough room for all of us and more.

Most of the ride was quiet besides the soft murmurs of Becca and Luis whispering in one another's ears. I knew it made Kayla uncomfortable and I felt bad that I couldn't rescue her in that situation.

It took about 30 minutes to get to Alpha Jonathan's pack. It was located near the school in Higala.

His packhouse was 10 times bigger than Enzo's, which didn't surprise me because Alpha Jonathan was incredibly rich. I had to admit though, it was a beautiful packhouse. It actually looked more like a mansion than anything.

We drove up a long and windy driveway until we reached a parking area just off the garden entry. There were a few other cars, one of which I recognized as my father's. I was glad that he was already here.

I recognized the car next to him as Ethan's. I know Ethan wanted to arrive with my father, so he left much earlier. He and my father had a bit of business to take care of beforehand anyway, so I hadn't seen either of them all morning.

I was more excited to see my mother than anything.

There were also a bunch of cars I didn't recognize; I know Alpha Jonathan parks his cars in his private garage, but I knew they weren't his. I imagined they belonged to his other guests.

I would be lying if I said I wasn't a little nervous. I worried about how this evening was going to go down and Val was feeling uneasy as well. Whenever my wolf felt uneasy, I felt uneasy.

"Are you sure you don't want to come inside?" I asked, peering over at Jake with a frown.

He shook his head.

"It would seem weird if Alpha Enzo's gamma escorted you into this banquet," Jake told me. "Especially when it's not necessary. There's plenty of protection here."

I sighed, but I nodded, understanding.

"What are you going to do?"

"Maybe grab some food up the street and then come back here and hang out. This isn't my first time being a driver, so I don't get bored easily," he assured me. But when I didn't move or look away he sighed and gave me a small smile. "No need to worry, Miss Lila. I promise I'll be fine and here waiting when you return."

I nodded.

"Okay," I said softly, sliding out of the car to join my waiting and obviously nervous friends.

We started to walk toward the building but paused when another car pulled up and parked next to Jake.

I recognized this car but couldn't figure out where I had seen it.

It wasn't until I saw Bri's incredibly pale face that I realized whose car it belonged to.

Alexander stepped out of the car. He was wearing a nice suit and had his shaggy hair neatly combed out of his face. It was nice seeing his face and not seeing his hair covering it. He had a nice face I will admit. But I certainly wasn't expecting to see it this evening, or else I would have warned Brianna about it.

Her breathing hitched and her entire body tensed as she watched him approach.

As he neared, his face began to grow more wary. His eyes found hers and they never left her gaze.

"Alex..." I said, stepping in front of Bri. "What are you doing here?"

"Alpha Jonathan invited me," he said with a shrug. "He liked the work I did at the school and offered me an invitation. Only an idiot would decline an invitation from Alpha Jonathan."

He then looked over my shoulder to meet Bri's eyes once again.

"Hello, Brianna," he said, lowering his tone.

He almost seemed sad and timid to see her; it was a reaction I wasn't expecting from him. But Brianna remained completely frozen.

Even though he rejected her, their mate bond would still be in effect until one or both were claimed by another. Alex has to either get marked or be marked in order for the bond to officially break. Same with Brianna.

However, because neither of them was marked, or marked any others, their mate bond was still fully intact. But the act of rejection was enough to break not only Brianna's heart but her wolf's. It was enough to make her wolf not want to speak and hide in the farthest corner of her mind.

Not that I could blame her.

I don't think I could handle it if Enzo did the same to me.

"We will never have to worry about that," Val assured me.

I heard Bri audibly swallow. She didn't know what to say; she was completely frozen.

"Look, Bri. I've been wanting to—"

Before he could finish that sentence, a loud growl came from inside the packhouse, making us all turn to look at what was happening. The growl itself sounded familiar and my heart pounded in my chest, wondering what was happening.

It sounded angry, but also in distress.

Bri's breathing grew shaky and when I looked at her, she was sniffing the air.

"What's going on?" I asked her in a whisper, so only she could hear me.

"I smell something.... Delicious," she whispered back, her voice trembling. "It's like.... Hot chocolate with those little marshmallows. But not the powdering hot chocolate... homemade hot chocolate."

"Is it Alex? Because of your mate bond?"

She shook her head, allowing her long auburn hair to fly around her face.

"No... he smells like the earth. Fresh mowed grass and pine," she answered. "Nothing like this...."

I couldn't smell what she was smelling, so I found it odd at first. But then the door of the packhouse slammed open and Ethan rushed outside. I saw his eyes glowing red as he fought to keep control of himself and not release his wolf.

His canines were snapping as he growled again, shaking the earth as he did.

"Oh, goddess..." Bri whispered, her eyes large and alert.

My father ran out of the packhouse as well, along with Alpha Jonathan.

Neither of them stopped him. I went to step toward Ethan, but one look at my father and I stopped. He gave me a small headshake.

He didn't look worried, but I was.

Ethan's eyes darted around the yard until they finally landed on his target.

He stared at Brianna like he was starving, and she was on his menu.

I wanted to jump in front of Bri to block her from him, but I was frozen. When I looked at Brianna, her eyes were huge and round, her mouth was hanging open slightly and her body trembled.

"It's not possible..." she finally whispered.

I didn't understand what was happening, until Ethan took long strides in our direction, ignoring everyone else around him.

"Ethan...?" I tried to say, but my words were cut off when he finally spoke.

"Mate..."

Chapter 306 Second Chance

Chapter 306 - My Professor Is My Alpha Mate

Lila's POV

"She's mine!" Alex growled, which shocked me to my core.

"You rejected her," I seethed, glaring at Alex. "She is not yours anymore."

"The mate bond is still there," Alex growled. "She's mine until I say otherwise."

Bri couldn't take her eyes off Ethan. When I looked at Ethan, he was no longer looking at Bri, but glaring at Alex. I could have sworn I saw smoke coming out of his nostrils.

"Bri, come with me," Alex proceeded to order, reaching out to grab her.

"Don't you dare fucking touch her!" Ethan growled, rumbling the entire ground.

Brianna looked terrified; I thought she was about to cry at any moment and my heart was hurting for her. I couldn't imagine what she must have been thinking right about now.

I grabbed her arm and pulled her out of the way just as Ethan shifted into his large orange wolf and lunged at Alex who had also shifted. The two growled loudly as claws swiped at one another, drawing blood that I couldn't figure out which wolf it came from.

Brianna screamed for them to stop, tears finally flooding her face as all her emotions came out at once.

Ethan dug his teeth into Alex's collarbone, making his wolf yelp in agony. Despite Alex being a gamma, Ethan was a lot bigger and much stronger. Ethan had spent a lot of time with Jake and helping him train other gammas, so he knew a thing or two about fighting. I shouldn't have been surprised considering he was Enzo's beta.

The growls and snarls terrified Brianna; tears poured down her face and her entire body trembled.

I grabbed onto her arm, trying to get her attention, but she wouldn't look away from the fight.

The metallic scent of blood invaded my nose, but I couldn't be sure who it belonged to. They were both getting decent strikes in, Alex with his claws and Ethan with his canines. There was blood pooling on the ground as they tackled one another. Neither of their wolves submitted or backed down.

They were furious.

A gamma and a Beta. Things were getting majorly dangerous. Bri shouldn't be seeing any of this stuff. I turned to my other friends, and I saw that Luis had already taken Becca inside. I heard her whimpering moments ago, and now they were gone.

Kay stood staring wide-eyed at the fight, her body trembling. She wasn't a wolf so if they were to attack her in the crossfire, she wouldn't be able to protect herself. The magic she has is mainly for the forest.

She was a forest fairy after all.

I'm sure she's never been this close to a wolf fight before.

A loud howl echoed through the night, and I turned to see that both my father and Alpha Jonathan were now shifted into their wolf forms. My father's wolf was huge and ran as fast as he could toward the fighting wolves. Alpha Jonathan wasn't far behind him; between the two of them, they shook the earth when they ran.

"Get her inside!" My father screamed through our shared mindlink.

I finally willed my feet to move, and I tugged Brianna's arm, trying to pull her with me. I heard the low growl of her wolf in her throat; she didn't want to leave. She wanted to stay here with her mate; whichever one she chose.

But telling from the distant look in her wet eyes as she stared at the fighting wolves, I knew the human in her didn't know what to do.

"Bri," I said softly. "Come with me."

She stood her ground, staring and lightly growling at the scene before her. It was like I wasn't even.

"Bri?" I said again, this time with a question.

Her growls only grew louder and that was when I realized Brianna wasn't there at all; her wolf was there. I needed to speak to her wolf.

"Amira..." I said to her wolf, trying to keep my tone as calm as possible. "Amira, please... let her go. Your mate will come to you when he's ready."

Brianna's breathing grew shaky, but the growling had lessened. I knew I had her wolf's attention and I needed to tread carefully if I wanted her wolf to give her full control again.

"Your mate will come to you, Amira. But you need to protect Brianna right now. You need to release her so she can get to safety. It's what he'd want."

"Mate..." Brianna whispered; except it wasn't Brianna. It was her wolf, Amira.

I understood that and I respected it.

"Yes," I said softly. "He's your mate. He will come to you. Protect Brianna..." I repeated slowly. "Protect your human, Amira."

Brianna blinked and then her eyes found mine.

"Lila..." she whispered, her voice cracking.

I knew she was back; I hadn't realized I was crying until I blinked, and tears were released down my cheeks.

"Come with me, Bri," I told her gently. "Let's go inside."

Her eyes flashed to the fight again, my father and Alpha Jonathan were in the middle of breaking it up. It appeared like Ethan had the upper hand. He was bleeding badly, but Alex clearly had an injured leg and could hardly walk properly in his wolf form. I looked at Kay who was still looking at the fight through her terrified and unshed tears.

"Kay," I said to her, trying to sound firm. She flashed me a look, her terrified look remaining. "Go inside."

It was an order and she took it as that; it was like she was waiting on my permission. She nodded her head and scurried into the packhouse after Becca and Luis.

I held onto Brianna's arm tighter, keeping myself close to her.

"Amira," I said to her wolf softly. "Give her full control so she can move. Do what you can to protect your human."

Bri pulled her eyes away from the fight to look at me; I saw a flash of glowing emerald in her eyes, and I knew it was her wolf.

Then, there was a small nod and Bri blinked a few times again. She kept her eyes on me as tears fell across her features.

“Amira wants to go inside...” she said in a broken whisper.

I nodded, giving her a small and reassuring smile as I guided her away from the fighting wolves and into the packhouse.

It was quiet inside the packhouse; only the sounds of the food being cooked in the kitchen could be heard. There were a bunch of guests in the front foyer, but they were all too preoccupied with the fight outside to make a sound. Most of them were watching from the windows, some were watching on the front patio.

I couldn't even imagine how Brianna must be feeling right now. She looked like a ghost of herself; she was pale and sickly looking. Her entire body trembled, and tears continued to pour from her eyes.

I wrapped my arms around her, holding her close to me, wanting to calm her down. But I knew nothing could calm her down. My heart ached painfully in my chest.

I walked her into the grand living room, and we sat on the large sofa. It was comfortable; we both nearly sunk into the thick fabric of the couch.

Her body continued to tremble as she sobbed uncontrollably. I wished I knew what she was thinking right now.

“How.... how.... how is it.... possible?” She asked between sobs.

She didn't have to elaborate; I knew what she was asking. She wasn't sure how it was possible to have two possible mates. Alex was her mate, but then he rejected her. But rejection doesn't completely sever the mate bond; at least not yet. So, she shouldn't be able to get another mate yet.

But now Ethan was here, claiming to be her mate. It was obvious that her wolf also recognized him as their mate. It was all so confusing, and I had to take some time to wrap my own head around this as well.

“From what it looks like, it seems as if the Beta is a second chance mate,” a voice said from the doorway.

We all turned to see Luis and Becca standing in front of us. It was Luis who had spoken, and his words took us by surprise.

Of course, I had heard of a second chance mate. But they were extremely rare.

“A second chance mate?” Kay was the one who asked, sitting on one of the love seats.

Luis nodded.

“It’s possible,” Luis stated simply. “I don’t know much about the situation, but Miss Brianna has two wolves fighting over her. Both claiming to be her mate.”

“I thought the mate bond had to be severed before a second chance mate is granted,” Becca asked, furrowing her brows together.

“Not always,” Luis said, glancing at her. “If the moon goddess feels it's deserving, she can grant it earlier than that.”

“She is the goddess,” I shrugged, glancing at Bri’s pale face. “She can do what she wants, and it does seem like she gave you a second chance mate.”

“But why not take away the mate I already have?” She asked, her voice quivering.

“Perhaps she wants you to choose for yourself,” Luis suggested. “Or rather, wants your wolf to make the choice.”

A thought came to me at that moment.

“My mother always told me to trust my wolf because my wolf will never steer me wrong. You have to trust Amira. She knows what’s best for you both. She loves you and wants to protect you. She wants to protect her mate as well; she already knows who her true mate is. Just let her tell you...”

Bri looked at me for a long while; she blinked away some of the leftover tears before swallowing hard.

Then, her eyes hardened, and she nodded as she stood to her feet. I stood with her, ready to fight whatever battle she wanted to fight. But before we could say anything more, the door swung open, turning all of our attention.

“Hey, guys.”

I stood, staring at the person in the doorway with my mouth practically on the floor.

I couldn’t believe who was standing in front of us.

Chapter 307 Rejection

Chapter 307 - My Professor Is My Alpha Mate

Lila's POV

"Rachel?" I breathed, staring at my friend from across the room. She stood at the doorway, leaning against the frame as if it hurt her to stand straight, but she tried to play it off cool. "You were released from the hospital?"

"Looks that way," she said in return, narrowing her eyes at me.

"How are you feeling?" I asked, stepping toward her. Everyone else was quiet, almost awkwardly so.

"Like I was stabbed in the stomach," she said almost bitterly. After a moment of being shocked, she cracked a smile, showing that she was mainly joking.

"I'm really glad you're back," I breathed, placing my hand on her shoulder and not wanting to hurt her any further than she was already hurt.

Becca on the other hand didn't give her that same courtesy. She rushed past me and threw her arms around her, nearly knocking them both to the ground. "I can't believe you are here!" Becca cried. "I'm so happy!"

Rachel gave me a wary look as Becca hugged her; it confused me because I knew how close they had gotten this year. With me being with Enzo all the time, they were left alone often and bonded. They were becoming very good friends; but in this case, it was almost like Rachel hardly recognized her.

After a brief hesitation, Rachel finally lifted her arms and wrapped them around Becca, returning to the very awkward embrace.

"We weren't expecting you to be here," I said, narrowing my eyes at her. "Are you sure you're feeling up for a banquet?"

"Of course," she said, plastering a smile on her face. "Alpha Jonathan was kind enough to provide some hospitality. So, I'll be staying here for a little while."

That was shocking to me. I knew Rachel wasn't the biggest fan of Alpha Jonathan, none of us were. Now that Rachel had cut ties with her father again in the hospital, I thought she'd cut ties with Jonathan as well.

But as if on cue to my thoughts, Raymond enters the room, making my heart fall deep into my stomach.

"Oh, hello, Lila," he said, giving me a smile that made me feel uneasy.

“Raymond...” I said in a greeting, glad that my voice didn’t quiver. “What are you doing here?”

He raised his brows and then placed a hand on Rachel’s shoulder. She looked lost. Her eyes were practically hollow; what was going on with her?

I couldn’t be the only one to notice this. I looked at my friends and saw that Becca’s eyes were furrowed together and Kay looked pale.

Okay, so I definitely wasn’t the only one who noticed this.

“Why wouldn’t I be here? Alpha Jonathan is my business partner so naturally; I would come to his banquet. Not to mention my daughter is here, so I’m here.”

Rachel said nothing, she just looked at me.

“I thought Rachel cut you off,” I said, still looking at Rachel. “I thought you argued in the hospital.”

This made Raymond laugh humorlessly.

“She would never cut me off,” he said, squeezing her shoulder so hard I was surprised Rachel didn’t flinch in pain. I was flinching for her. “Sometimes we argue, but I will never allow that to come between my relationship with my daughter. Isn’t that right?” He asked, looking down at her.

She nodded without hesitation.

“He is my father,” she said, giving me a plastered and non-Rachel smile.

“Lila bean!” My mother said as she rushed into the living room.

I was relieved to see her, and I instantly melted in her arms as she wrapped me in her motherly embrace.

“Your father just filled me in on what was going on,” she breathed, hugging me tighter. She then turned to Brianna and wrapped herself in a hug. “Hi, dear.”

I had almost forgotten that Bri was still there; I was surprised she didn’t slip out of the living room to go to her mate. But she stayed fairly close to me.

“How are you doing?” My mother asked for only her ears, but I still heard her.

“I...I don’t know...” Brianna whispered, tears filling her eyes again. “I don’t know how to feel... I’m just so tired.”

“I know,” my mother said, hugging her tighter. “Bastien is dealing with everything right now. They finally got them to stop fighting.”

“Is one of them going to leave?” I asked, a lump forming in my throat. I didn’t want Ethan to leave, but if his presence made Brianna uncomfortable, I suppose he would have to. Enzo wouldn’t like that one bit, but he will have to be okay with it.

It’s not like I am unprotected; my father was still here, and I could always get Jack to return. We could say that my father requested it just like he requested Beta Ethan to accompany him while his own Beta, my Uncle Aiden, was tending to the Nova pack.

My mother held Brianna at arm's length, keeping a hand on each of her shoulders. She looked into Bri’s eyes as she spoke these next words.

“Whichever one your wolf chooses, the other will leave,” she said slowly. “The decision is yours alone.”

Bri stared at her for a moment longer before her eyes began to glow an emerald, green color.

“Mate...”

My mother smiled and nodded.

“Yes, Amira,” my mother said, speaking to Bri’s wolf. “Go to your mate.”

Without hesitation, Bri took off from the living room.

I wasn’t going to miss this one and I knew my friends felt the same. We all looked at one another for a moment before rushing out of the living room and following Bri to the front door of the packhouse. There were women and men that I didn’t recognize crowding around the front foyer.

At that moment, I realized the entire foyer smelled like the delicious foods that were still cooking in the kitchen. I was starving and oddly enough, I couldn’t wait to eat.

I mainly just wanted to get this evening over with; but also, I really wanted to eat.

Bri shoved through the crowd of people who then parted for the rest of us, watching with curiosity as she made her way to the main door. She walked with a mission, and I knew her wolf was taking control, but keeping her human form.

Her wolf knew exactly what she wanted; she knew exactly who her mate was. It left the rest of us in our seats, wondering who it was.

Could it be Alex, the mate who broke her heart by rejecting her? The one that Bri spent the past month crying over and isolating herself. She could hardly get out of bed and her wolf could

hardly function properly. Rejection was the most painful thing for any wolf, and I hated that my best friend had to experience it.

Or could it be Ethan, her second chance mate? Enzo's Beta and a fairly decent guy from what I know about him. But Bri doesn't know him at all; she's never met him. There's no emotional attachment to him.

I had a feeling I knew who she was going to choose.

She stepped outside, allowing the cold night air to attack her skin. She breathed in as the wind brushed through her hair.

Ethan and Alex were still growling at one another. But my father had a hold of Ethan and Alpha Jonathan had a hold on Alex. But as soon as Brianna stepped outside, both Ethan and Alex looked in her direction.

Brianna didn't miss a beat; she walked down the front steps and across the patio until she reached the grassy area the men were fighting on. She glanced at the patch of dirt that was dug up from the fighting and the blood that was seeping through the soil.

I grimaced at the blood, but Brianna didn't seem to care. She continued to walk with her head held high. She swayed her hips, and I smiled knowing that was all Amira. She has always been a sassy wolf; I admired that about her. Even Val was chuckling.

Alex was still growling ferociously, but Ethan had stopped. His wolf was calm now and he couldn't take his eyes off Brianna. It looked like there were a million things he wanted to say but refrained from speaking. He wanted Bri to do the speaking.

I found myself holding my breath, bracing for her to choose Alex. I knew it was coming; it was inevitable. She paused in front of them; she looked at each of them. She turned to Alex, just as I expected.

"Mate..." she whispered, her eyes filling with tears.

A growl escaped from Ethan, but he kept himself under control. I even heard him whimper in distress; my father had a strong hold on him. Brianna ignored him though and kept her eyes on Alex.

"I loved you and you let me down..." Brianna continued, staring at Alex. "You rejected me... you didn't want me. You left me broken and confused all month. I felt useless... you used me for higher rank and when you found an even higher-ranking, she-wolf, you left me. What happened Alex? Did she decide you weren't worth it?"

He growled with frustration.

“I decided I didn’t want her,” he said in a lowly growl. “It’s always been you, Brianna. You are my mate. I made a mistake.”

“Maybe...” she breathed, almost sounding bored. “Mistakes can usually be fixed...” She paused as she watched the relief flood across his face. My heart was breaking for Ethan whose wolf was whimpering and growling inside of him. “But not this one...” she continued, making my breathing stop.

“What?” Alex asked, furrowing his brows together.

“This mistake cannot be fixed. I, Brianna Channing, of the nova pack, reject you, Alexander, gamma of the nova pack.”

Chapter 308 She Trusted Her Wolf.

Chapter 308 - My Professor Is My Alpha Mate

Lila’s POV

I don’t think any of us could really process what had happened. It all happened all at once and soon howls were coming from the house. Alex looked as if he had been shot in the chest as he staggered backward. Alpha Jonathan had released him, no longer posing him as a threat.

I thought he was going to fall over.

Brianna stared at him without any remorse on her face; tears welled in my eyes. I was beyond proud of her. She had finally stood her ground and stood up for herself. I’m sure a lot of it was her wolf, but Brianna was strong enough to pull through.

She did exactly what she needed to do; she trusted her wolf.

Alpha Jonathan motioned for some of his warriors to come and escort Alex off his property. They did so without hesitation.

My father released Ethan once Alex was out of sight. Bri was now looking at him and I could see the pure fear in Ethan’s eyes. He was no longer whimpering or growling, but his body trembled slightly. I had never seen Ethan appear so weak before; he was a strong Beta and fighter. He fought and worked alongside my mate... an Alpha.

Seeing him weak like this, made me realize that he was also just a man. He was tentative; he didn't want to speak because I knew he was worried. He was worried that she might reject him as well. '

There was a part of me that wondered if she was going to. I think I and everyone around me was holding our breaths, waiting for the second rejection of the night.

She swallowed audibly as she stepped toward him. I knew he wanted to close the gap and wrap his arms around her, but he remained still.

"Mate..." she whispered, staring up at him. Then her next word changed everything. "Mine..."

With that word being said, she was the one who closed the cap and threw herself into his arms. Ethan seemed to have unfrosted at that point and closed her into her embrace.

I hadn't realized I was crying until the howls echoed throughout the house and this time, my friends and family joined in on the howl. My vision became blurry, and I blinked away the tears as I too howled my congratulations to my best friend and her mate, Beta Ethan.

I wanted more than anything to call Enzo and tell him of this incredible news, but it was going to have to wait until later when Alpha Jonathan wasn't around.

I looked at Ethan and he looked as if he never wanted to let her go. I couldn't blame him; he came close to finding his mate and losing her all in the same day. I'm sure it wasn't easy for him to see that she was already mated to someone else.

Second-chance mates were incredibly rare, especially when the mate bond was still technically active even after the rejection, but my best friend was blessed by the goddess herself and given her second chance mate. The goddess didn't want Brianna to suffer anymore and took away her pain by giving her someone else.

Beta Ethan was perfect for her in every way and my heart soared for them both.

Brianna finally untangled herself from his arms and happy tears ran down her face. He ran his thumb across her face to wipe away the tears before kissing her head gently.

"I'm never letting you out of my sight..." he whispered.

She smiled up at him and sniffled away her runny nose.

"What is even your name?" She asked, making all of us laugh.

I forgot that Bri had never met him before, and this was their first actual conversation.

"I am Ethan Holland," he said, bowing his head slightly at her.

“Ethan Holland...?” She asked, her eyes wide. She glanced at me, and I smiled, biting my lower lip to keep from laughing at her dumbfounded expression. “He’s Alpha Enzo’s beta?”

I nodded before she looked back up at Ethan. She stepped away from him, causing the corner of his lips to fall.

“This can’t be right... a beta?” She said, her voice becoming shaky.

Now it was my turn to frown; I didn’t understand what was wrong with a Beta. They were high-ranking wolves; of course, not as high ranking as Alpha’s, but they were higher ranking than Gamma’s. Alex is a gamma warrior, not even the head gamma. So, I wasn’t sure what was wrong with being mated to a beta.

“Is something wrong?” He asked, worry returning to his voice.

His breathing became heavy, and I thought she was about to have a panic attack.

“I wasn’t even good enough for a gamma...” she said, her voice cracking. “How could I be good enough for a beta.”

That’s when we all realized at the same time what was running through her head. She was terrified of being rejected again. She thought she wasn’t good enough to have a mate, let alone a mate with a high ranking.

Ethan’s eyes softened as he stepped toward her, once again closing the gap between them.

“You were always good enough,” he said gently, running his fingers down the side of his face. “That man-child wasn’t good enough for you. But you never have to worry about something like that happening again,” he assured her, giving her a small smile to add to his reassurance.

Her body relaxed and her eyes remained on his.

“I would never reject you,” he continued, pressing his forehead to hers. He closed his eyes and inhaled deeply, taking in her scent. “I will always protect you... you are mine.”

My heart was pounding heavily against my chest; this was such a beautiful thing to be a witness to. There wasn’t a dry eye around here; well, maybe Alpha Jonathan, but he hardly counts.

“And you are mine...” Brianna whispered in return.

On that note, Ethan’s kissed her deeply on the lips and Branna let him.

This was no longer a banquet to honor my victory, this was now a celebration to honor new love and new beginnings.

We were all so caught up in the moment, that I didn't even notice a petite woman running out of the packhouse and toward Alpha Jonathan. She whispered something into his ear before returning to the packhouse.

He cleared his throat loudly, getting everybody's attention.

"If everyone could head to the dining hall. Our dinner for the evening is about to be served," he announced, his Alpha voice booming across his yard. No doubt that everyone in his pack had heard him.

Everybody turned to walk inside, I stayed behind because I wanted to walk in with Brianna. She walked over to me with Ethan's arm protectively draped around her shoulder. She grabbed my hands eagerly and I saw the excitement in her eyes.

"I have a mate," she cooed. I hugged her, even with Ethan's arm still around her petite shoulders. "I can't believe this," she cried.

"I can," I told her, pulling away so I could look at her glowing face. "You deserve this, Bri. I'm so happy for you."

"Thank you," she said in return, her smile growing as she looked up at a very pleased Beta Ethan.

"You better take care of her," I said, narrowing my eyes at him. "She's my best friend and my uncle Donovan's niece. We will both kick your ass if you hurt her."

Bri chuckled, and Ethan's face reddened.

"Gamma Donovan?" He asked, raising his brows and looking down at her.

She blushed and nodded.

"Yes," she answered.

"I guess I have a lot to learn," he laughed.

"And we have our whole lives," she assured him, nuzzling herself against him.

Ethan then looked at me and smiled brightly.

"As the future Luna of the calypso pack and the mate to my Alpha, you'll always be around to keep me in check," he told me. "But I don't ever intend to hurt her."

I nodded, smiling from ear to ear.

"I know," I said in return. "Now can we go inside and eat? I'm starving."

Through laughter and tears, we all headed inside to join the others and feast.

....

Third person POV

Hours prior.

“I don’t feel comfortable going to this thing,” Rachel breathed once she finished dressing in the red dress that her father had gotten her.

“You don’t have a choice,” he growled. “I signed your release papers from this hospital and now we are leaving.”

Rachel’s heart was heavy in her chest. She hadn’t heard the voice in her head in the last 24 hours, but she knew it was still there, listening. It was always listening.

Her father rummaged through his bag and pulled out a long syringe with a mysterious green liquid. He tapped the liquid, and it moved like Jello. It made Rache’s stomach turn.

“What is that?” She asked, stepping away from her father.

“Wolfsbane,” he said, walking over to her. “A lethal dosage. It could kill an entire wolf... but not a Volana. It only knocks them out.”

Rachel’s breathing got caught in her throat. Her father reached his hand out, forcing Rachel to take the syringe from him.

“What am I supposed to do with this?”

Chapter 309 | Am Danger

Chapter 309 - My Professor Is My Alpha Mate

Lila’s POV

The long dining hall table was crowded with different wolves from Alpha Jonathan’s pack and then my friends and family. It was a strange batch of people, but everyone seemed kind enough.

This was odd because they were from Alpha Jonathan's pack; I really didn't expect anyone in this pack to be kind. But they were all engaging in conversation with me and my friends. Ethan and Bri received several congratulations from those they didn't even know.

They sat together and Ethan kept stealing glances at her. I couldn't help but smile at them; I was so happy that Bri finally got what she deserved. Ethan has been waiting for his mate and now he finally has her. I know he's not going to let her go for anything and Bri is going to make an amazing Beta female.

Enzo was going to be very pleased when I told him the news. They are going to need to set up Bri's stuff in Beta Ethan's room and allow Bri to make herself at home on the Beta floor of the packhouse. I couldn't wait to help her with that.

It dawned on me suddenly that Bri and I would be living in the same packhouse. I as the Luna and she as the Beta female.

It felt like everything was right in the world.

The food that Alpha Jonathan's staff had prepared was incredible. There were a lot of my favorite things, but also some stuff I had never tried before. Everything was prepared so elegantly; I didn't even know where to begin.

The stake was rare and absolutely perfect. There was no seasoning on it so we could enjoy the natural taste of the bleeding meat. There was also ham, chicken, both fried and grilled, mac and cheese, a variety of veggies, a salad with a variety of dressings, potatoes, both diced and mashed, grilled fish, homemade stuffing, and French fries for some of the pups that sat at the kid's table. There were also stuffed mushrooms and shrimp cocktails, along with a large fruit bowl.

Not to mention caviar which I had never tried before and I didn't particularly like, even before my father told me what it was.

Everything was set up at a large buffet table so we could easily help ourselves to what we wanted.

"The steak was hunted this morning," Alpha Jonathan explained to some of his guests. "My warriors brought back the biggest bison during their hunt. So, it's very fresh. Enjoy it!"

Everybody cooed at that news; my mouth was watering as I piled food onto my plate. I wondered if I could get a to-go plate so I could bring some food back to Enzo.

As we sat around the table and ate our food, the conversation felt almost normal. Everything and everybody flowed together naturally. Of course, my mother is the queen of conversations. She had almost everybody laughing at her antics and my father looked at her with such love and admiration that it made my heartbeat quickly in my chest.

I missed Enzo so much. I know I haven't been away from him for long, but being surrounded by all this love, new and old, made me miss my mate. I wished more than anything that he could be here with me, but Alpha Jonathan couldn't know that we are mates... at least not right now.

"When do I get to move into the packhouse?" Bri asked excitedly.

"I'm moving you in as soon as we get back," Ethan said, smiling down at her.

Her face reddened.

"That soon?" She asked, her eyes wide.

"I'll help you get settled in, Bri," I assured her. "You won't be alone."

She looked relieved to hear that and gave me a faint smile.

"Okay, thank you," she breathed as she continued to eat.

Rachel cleared her throat and wiped her face with her napkin before placing it on the table. She looked uneasy. She sat nearby me, so I was able to see her easily. Her face was incredibly pale, and she looked much thinner than she had a few days ago. She also had dark circles under her eyes, so I knew she hadn't been sleeping.

"I am feeling unwell," she announced, glancing at her father and then at Alpha Jonathan. "Alpha, would it be all right if I excused myself?"

Alpha Jonathan raised his brows for a moment as he assessed her face. Raymond placed a hand on her forehead to see if she had a fever.

I noticed that Rachel flinched when he raised his hand to her though and that made my heart drop. Has he been hurting her again?

I suddenly felt angry, and I needed to fight to keep Val under control. She would rip Raymond's throat out with her teeth in a heartbeat.

"She's burning up," Raymond announced a fake worry in his tone. I had to stifle an eye roll; I really hoped that no one else was falling for his bullshit.

Alpha Jonathan finally nodded.

"You can be excused. Get some sleep," he instructed.

She smiled faintly at him and stood to her feet. But before she left, her eyes shifted to me and they held my eyes for a moment longer. My heart tugged and I knew something had to have been seriously wrong.

I made a mental note to check on her myself later. Maybe we can finally talk once we are alone, and her father isn't lurking around.

She left the dining hall and everyone resumed their conversations as if nothing had happened. Rachel's spot was empty now and I couldn't help but stare at it sadly. It was like a missing tooth.

Once dinner concluded and everybody was stuffed out of their minds, the packhouse staff returned and cleared the table. I offered to help, but they refused to allow me to lift a finger.

Alpha Jonathan stood to his feet, holding a freshly filled wine glass in the air.

"I hope you all enjoyed the meal," Alpha Jonathan said loudly and proudly. Everybody clapped and cheered for him. "I'm glad," he said, smiling widely. "I'm sorry that my daughter Sarah couldn't be here. But she wasn't feeling well herself. However, I'd like to take a moment to congratulate one of the students at my school, Lila, for her victory of becoming the president of the student committee," he said, raising his glass high in the air.

Everybody, including my parents, mimicked his moves. They all looked at me proudly and I felt my face warming from the attention.

"You won fair and square against my daughter," Jonatha continued, staring daggers into me. "it was a fair fight on both parties."

I suddenly understood what he was doing. He was trying to make it look like Sarah did nothing wrong and that I won fairly. I wanted to roll my eyes, but I was starting to like Sarah, and not because she was Brody's mate. Okay... maybe that was part of it. But not the whole reason; I was starting to understand her a little better and I was understanding that her relationship with her father was estranged.

I think she was more misunderstood than anything.

So, I decided not to say anything to out her for cheating.

"So, congratulations Lila," he said, smiling broadly.

Everybody murmured their congratulations to me and I smiled at them in return, feeling very uncomfortable.

"And congratulations to our newest mated couple," Alpha Jonatha added, turning to Bri and Ethan. "May you live a happy life for many moons."

After another round of congratulations, everybody drank their wine.

This concluded dinner, but everybody went into the living room to mingle before dessert and coffee.

I, on the other hand, wanted to make sure that Rachel was okay. So, I politely excused myself and began to head toward the stairs. At first, Becca wanted to come with me, but I told her I wanted to speak with Rachel alone first and that she could join us in a little bit or see her later if she wanted.

Becca finally agreed to let me go alone.

I wanted Rachel to talk to me... like really talk to me. I don't think she would if I came to her with others.

I went down various hallways, following her florescent scent. She always smelled like lavender and cherry blossoms. I think it was her lotion and perfume mainly, but she also had a particular scent that was hard for me to put into words.

But I finally found the door that her scent was potent in, and I knocked on it. At first, she didn't respond, so I knocked again, louder.

"Come in," her raspy voice rang from the inside.

I swallowed the lump in my throat and opened the door, stepping inside of the guest room she made her own.

I was surprised that she wasn't in bed. She was facing the window, gazing down into the yard. I wished I could see her face, so I knew what she was thinking. But she was quiet, pondering.

"Rachel?" I asked, closing the door behind me. "Is everything okay?"

She didn't answer at first so tried again.

"Rachel..."

"You shouldn't have come here," she said quickly, and I could tell she's been crying.

"Why?" I asked, furrowing my brows together. "What's going on, Rachel?"

"I'm not safe..." she whispered.

I still didn't understand what she meant.

"Are you in danger?" I asked. "I can get my father and—"

"No!" She barked, whipping around to face me. I saw the tears in her eyes and how red and swollen they were.

My breathing got caught in my throat; I couldn't speak.

“I’m not IN danger...” she seethed through her teeth. “I AM danger.”

“I don’t understand...” I said with a weakened voice. “Please explain that to me— I’m here to help you...”

Can’t you see? Nobody can help me...” she said, laughing bitterly, almost crazily. A chill crept down the back of my neck and Val was feeling uneasy. She wanted to leave, but I couldn’t make my feet listen to me. “I’m way too far gone.”

“That’s not true...”

“Look at me, Lila! Do I seem normal to you? Have I seemed normal at all??”

I opened my mouth to speak, but then I saw it. Darkness. It was swirling around her feet and up her body. I saw it clouding her vision. Her green eyes began to turn black, and her lip curled up in disgust.

I stepped backward, my entire body trembling. I wanted to scream, but no sound came out of my lips.

“Oh, goddess...” I breathed... finally realizing what she was saying. “It was you... you killed all those people...”

Chapter 310 No Turning Back

Chapter 310 - My Professor Is My Alpha Mate

Third Person POV

The darkness that consumed Rachel fed off the fear that Lila was feeling. She tried her best to hide it, but even Rachel knew that Lila’s fear was evident. The color had completely drained from her perfect features and as much as she tried to blink them away, Rachel could see the moisture in her eyes.

She wanted to cry.

“It’s been you this whole time...” Lila breathed, still trying to wrap her head around the facts.

Rachel didn’t have to confirm, Lila already knew the truth. Her intuition was telling her the truth. As much as Rachel wanted to go to her friend and comfort her, the darkness wouldn’t allow her.

She was consumed by it. She felt all sorts of anger and hopelessness. She gave into the darkness long ago; even before it's been conjured. She was an easy target for it to take as a vessel. She wasn't surprised.

"Please say something..." Lila whispered. Rachel could hear the desperation in her voice.

"What is there for me to say?" Rachel asked, her voice emotionless and dry. It made Lila wince; she had never heard Rachel sound this way before and she didn't like it.

"I want you to tell me it's not true... that you didn't kill those people. That you didn't kill Scott."

"I didn't kill Scott," Rachel quipped. "But I would have if I could. I only framed him. I made him believe he was the one who killed those people."

A stray tear escaped from Lila's eye as she stared at Rachel.

"You were the one who sent him to jail..." Lila said hoarsely. "Which means you were the one who killed him."

Her voice had gone dry and bitter by the end of that sentence. Rachel couldn't argue or deny those facts, so she remained quiet.

Lila was so wrapped up in her own thoughts, trying to process all that's been exposed to her, replaying this past week in her mind, trying to figure out how she didn't see what was right in front of her. She didn't even notice the door of the bedroom had opened and Raymond, Rachel's father, was standing behind her.

He was staring directly at the back of her head; his eyes trailing down her narrow back and across the nape of her neck. He held the syringe tightly in his grip as a glimmer of humor spread across his thin lips.

Rachel hadn't meant to give him this idea, but she did. It was right after he tried to give her the syringe, hours before the banquet.

"Lila is smart, she will be able to see through me a mile away. I won't be able to stick her with that thing," Rachel said, refusing to take the syringe.

This angered Raymond, but he had to agree with his daughter. He furiously paced back and forth, knowing that both of their lives were at stake.

But then he paused, and a smile snaked his lips. He looked at Rachel who was pale as a ghost and feeling sick to her stomach.

"Then you won't be the one to inject her with this," he said, holding up the syringe. "You will be the distraction...and I will inject her."

Rachel was brought back to the present moment when Lila let out a small sob.

“Rachel... whatever is going on... let me help you,” she pleaded.

But Rachel knew there was no helping her right now.

She closed her eyes and looked away. Just as Lila was about to say something else, Raymond stabbed her as hard as she could in the neck with the syringe.

At first, Lila seemed to be consumed by shock. Her eyes grew large and round as she tried to process what had just happened. Then a gasp escaped her lips and her eyes flickered to Rachel.

Lila reached up to touch the syringe in her neck and at first, Rachel didn't think the wolf's bane was going to work. Maybe she was too strong of a Volana for it to take effect. Even her father began to look nervous.

Lila opened her mouth to speak, but no words came out. And then, her body began to quiver uncontrollably, and her eyes rolled to the back of her head, shocking Rachel to the core.

Had they killed her?

The darkness was going to be pissed and probably kill them too. Not that it mattered anymore; Rachel didn't deserve to live after everything she had done. Her thoughts might be her own, but her actions and words certainly aren't. It's like she's standing on the outside, watching herself do these horrific things and she can't do anything about it.

Lila fell to her knees; her eyes fluttered shut and then she fell to the ground.

Raymond looked relieved and let out a sigh.

“Is she alive?” Rachel asked, her voice sounding unfamiliar and raw.

Raymond bent beside her to feel her pulse on the side of her neck and after a moment, he nodded.

“Her pulse is faint, but she's alive.”

Before Rachel could say anything, she was stopped when the voice began to speak.

“You have done well,” the voice said. It took a minute for Rachel to realize that she was speaking out loud so Raymond could hear her as well.

Ray tensed and stared at Rachel, confused. But Rachel couldn't speak to explain what was happening. The darkness wouldn't allow her to speak or move.

“We will handle the Volana from here,” the voice continued.

Soon, darkness reined in through the cracks of the window, pooling in like a rapid river. It swirled around the floor and filled the room with its dark essence. It felt cold and gave Rachel a chill down her spine; she would have shivered if she could. But she couldn't move a mussel.

Telling from her father, he couldn't either.

The room was filled with dark smoke, but it didn't smell or feel like smoke. It was just there, lingering around the room until it grew thicker and darker. Rachel had to strain herself to see what was happening, but that wasn't good enough. She didn't know what she was seeing. It almost looked like the darkness was swallowing Lila.

It didn't take long for the darkness to be covering her completely and Rachel couldn't see her friend at all.

Then, the darkness swirled around the room a final time before slithering its way to the window once again. Just as it came in, it used its cracks to disperse from the room. Rachel looked down at the place Lila once was, but she was no longer there.

Rachel and her father were left alone, staring at one another in disbelief. Then, her father was bold enough to speak first.

"What about my end of the deal?" Raymond asked, staring at Rachel. He knew the darkness was still inside of her and whoever was controlling it was listening. "You promised that I'd get power once this is over. I want to use the vessel you create to get that power."

Rachel let out a lowly laugh, but it wasn't her. It was the voice.

"Silly bear," she spat. "Did you honestly think I was going to let you walk away with zero repercussions? You know far too much."

"What?" He seethed. "We had a deal, witch. I spy on your Volana, and you get me power. I used my own flesh and blood to fulfill that task."

It was like a slap in Rachel's face; she knew her father wasn't genuine when he wanted to spend time with her. But part of her was still in denial about it. She wanted to believe that maybe he did care about her after all and that he was truly sorry for how he treated her.

"And you have done well, but I can't possibly allow you to walk around with all the knowledge that you have," the voice said, chuckling.

"Then erase them," he said through his teeth. "You have the power to do that."

"I do..." it said simply. "But my little friends are so very hungry and before they depart from your lovely daughter, they need to feed."

"What?" Raymond asked, staggering backward. "You are crazy. Why me? Why not kill her?!"

The voice didn't respond at first; Rachel was oddly curious about the answer as well. Why won't it kill her? Or maybe it still will. A sickening feeling formed in the pit of her stomach.

"I like her," the voice finally answered. "She had done far too much to deserve death. Plus, she doesn't know much of anything. Nothing that can expose us. As for you... well... we don't like you as much. You are a failed spy. You could hardly even get close to her."

"I was the one who gave her the wolf's bane, knocking her out" Ray argued, furiously.

"You couldn't have done it without Rachel," the voice hissed. "Also, didn't you also abuse your daughter throughout her entire childhood? You took her virtue. You drove her to drugs and alcohol and forced her into that wretched facility. You are hardly worth a life."

Rachel was surprised that the voice knew this information, but she supposed it's been living in her brain for weeks, so it made sense that it would know things about her. It sounded like the voice was angry at Raymond on Rachel's behalf.

Raymond was shivering, unable to move. She wondered why he wouldn't turn and run; it's not like the darkness was inside of him and making him stay still like it was doing to her. The only darkness inside of Raymond was his own.

"Rachel darling, my little friends are hungry, and I need them to be at full strength when they return to me. They will be leaving you shortly and you will be free of your duties. You have done well and as your reward, you get to keep your life," the voice said, only to her this time.

Rachel was relieved, but her heart was so heavy, and her brain was so confused. She had done such horrible things; she was never going to recover from this. She knew this; death doesn't seem so bad.

"You will keep the unbearable truths of what you had done," the voice confirmed. "It might in fact be a punishment worth than death."

Rachel flinched at those words.

"But before my friends leave you, we ask that you perform one last task."

"What is it?" Rachel asked in a quivering tone, finally able to speak again.

After a beat of silence, the voice answered, "Kill him."

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Downstairs in the living room where the guests mingled and laughed, their conversations ceased to exist as Raymond's tormented screams sounded throughout the entire packhouse. At first, nobody knew what they were listening to but then it was clear that someone upstairs was in grave danger and crying out for help.

Alpha Bastien was the first to jump into action; he was closely followed by Beta Ethan and then Alpha Jonathan.

Luna Selene wasn't far behind as well, despite knowing she should stay with the others. But her daughter was upstairs, and he needed to see that she was okay.

Bastien followed the sounds of the gargled screams and then the screaming stopped. But he knew exactly where it was coming from. He ran to the room at the end of the long hallway and barged inside. He paused, frozen to the core, when he saw Rachel kneeling over her father's body, covered head to toe in his blood.

"I... I... I didn't mean to kill him..."