

## Fated to my Enemy by Diane Doherty Chapter 61-70

### Chapter Sixty-One

#### Alpha Blake

Watching Ryley with our boys had my heart swelling with love. They may not be little anymore but they still crave comfort only a mother can provide. Aspen may spend a lot of his time with her but I also spend quality time with the boys in the afternoons after their training. It makes me proud to watch them train the little kids. And I enjoy sparring with them after they are all done. Channing is an excellent fighter. They both are. They both have different techniques and they are becoming stronger fighters, together. Even I've learned a thing or two from Channing.

When Ryley was speaking with the boys Dr. Perry mind-linked me, telling me Ryley can go home to rest. A nurse would be in soon to get her ready to leave. But it was Luca's mind-link that had me on edge. I ordered Alpha Dorian and his pack to be escorted off of my pack lands. I would still send a team but I didn't want him anywhere near Ryley. She may not know it yet but she is mine.

The alpha had refused to leave the pack before speaking with her. He should be back at his pack protecting them from another rogue attack, but instead, he is demanding to speak to the person he tried to kill. I would have gone to the pack house to deal with this myself but Ryley woke up, and I didn't want to leave her. Now, Channing and she will have to have round-the-clock protection.

"If he touches either of them, he's dead," Gunner growled.

"Let's get home then. I need a long hot bath," Ryley said when I told her she could leave as long as she rested.

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### Chapter Sixty One

"Are you willing to speak with Alpha Dorian?" I asked her.

"Mom, don't. Nothing he has to say matters." Channing told her.

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"I won't force or ask you to have a relationship with him. And frankly, I don't trust him being around you. You are almost an adult and can decide who you'd like to have in your life. But there are answers I need to move on with my life." She said to her son. My heart ached for both of them, but especially her. I couldn't imagine the pain she went through after learning that the one person who had hurt her the most was her fated mate. And he was the father of her child. She had to look at his face every day when she looked at

Channing.

I didn't want her to give in to his demands and the thought of him being near her, made me want to rip him apart. I knew he was going to try to wiggle his way back in. He'd be stupid not to. Alphas are stronger with their fated mates. So it makes me wonder why he wouldn't have waited for his. Unless he knew she was his and he believed she was dead.

The boys and I left the room when a nurse came in with some clothes for Ryley. It was time to take her home. But first, we had to see her ex. I had a bad feeling about her seeing the alpha again. Even though I was excited to finally get Ryley into my bed. With the door locked so there would be no more interruptions.

"The doctor said she needs to rest," Gunner grumbled.

"Blake, I don't like this. I don't want that f\*cker anywhere near my mom," Channing confessed, interrupting my conversation with my wolf.

"I don't like it either, but she has her mind made up. But I promise I won't leave her side. Nothing is going to happen to her." I told him.

"I'm worried about the mate bond. I don't want him to manipulate her

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into going back to him."

"Over my dead body," Gunner growled.

"Dad, that can't happen, can it? He marked someone else, doesn't that mean their bond is broken?" Aspen questioned.

"The mate bond can be tricky. It's designed to bring two souls together. She never rejected him but her wolf didn't claim him when she saw him. Ryley is smart. I know she won't fall for his b\*\*\*\*hit again. She has us, and we won't let him get a hold of her again." I reassured them.

"Blake, he isn't a good person or alpha. And I don't want her to be sucked back into a world that almost killed her. And me. She was right to keep me away from him. I've followed his pack with Grandad's help. He killed her family and stole her pack," he exclaimed. Ryley opened up the door, stepping out into the hallway wearing black sweatpants and a grey sweatshirt. Channing quickly turned away, wiping his eyes. He was scared for his mother. And I understand why. In all reality, Ryley should be dead. If he wants her dead, he'll try until he succeeds.

The tension was palpable as she looked at all of us. She had to have known her son was scared of losing her. Channing was also the rightful heir to his father's pack. He was his firstborn child. This coming to light was going to

cause waves with the council.

"Mom, I don't like this. Please don't," he pleaded with her. Her face softened as we approached him.

"There is nothing he could say to regain my trust. There are things that you don't know and I need him to know what I know. If I'm going down, he's coming with me. And then you'll be taking over my pack. Where you should have been this entire time. I should have challenged him for my pack back, but I was scared he would take you from me. I've been protecting you, your entire life and now it's time to fight for

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what should have been yours. And I promise I'll explain everything." She told him.

"I don't need a pack, Mom, and neither does my wolf, Bliz. He's happy with the path I've set out for us." He said.

"I know you don't need a pack, sweetie. But I should have protected my pack. I was young and scared and now all I want is to take back everything that was mine. I work so hard to be the perfect leader for my father and I won't let the man who killed him think he won. It's time for me to make a stand for my wolf." She caressed his cheek. I grabbed her other hand, squeezing it to let her know she wasn't doing this alone. I may not know the entire story but I will fight with her and for her until my last breath.

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Chapter Sixty-Two

Ryley

After reassuring Channing, I sent the boys up to the alpha floor of the pack house. Blake already had some of our things moved over since we couldn't stay at the house until the front door and porch window were fixed. It made me uncomfortable knowing someone packed our stuff. And that was before I thought about where that stuff was being moved too.

I'm moving in with a man, who isn't my mate and I have no idea if this is going to work out. And now I was being carried to the pack house to speak to the one person who I also wanted to believe I was dead. And he wanted to speak to me and that made me nervous.

"But now that the cat is out of the bag, you have no more excuses as to why you can't be with Blake," Lily said. She may be right, but it doesn't make it

any less scary. I've never lived with a man that way before.

"Ryley, you don't have to do this. I can personally remove him from my pack." Blake said as he carried me along a stone path leading from the hospital to the pack house.

"I need answers, Blake. And this is the only way to get them."

Blake didn't put me down until he was standing in front of the conference room doors. There were two warriors standing guard. Once I was back on my feet, the warriors opened the doors. Blake took a hold of my hand before leading me into the room. More warriors were standing around the room and behind Dorian and his ga\*ma, Wes. I had met him a few times. They were seated at the table with Blair sitting at the head and Luca sitting beside the former alpha.

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Blake led me over to the side of the table where Luca was seated. Dorian's eyes followed with every step I took. I sat down beside Luca and Blake sat on the other side of me before resting his hand on my thigh.

My hands were trembling as I placed them in my lap. I tried to remind myself that this was a business meeting and I could do this. But being this close to Dorian was suffocating.

"If this is a play to make me jealous, and beg for you back, it's pathetic." He scoffed, crossing his arms over his chest.

"I'm glad you think being happy is pathetic. And any decision I made involving Blake has nothing to do with you. I'm here for answers so I can move on with my life." I told him. I watched him intently as he stared at me. Channing looks so much like his father, only getting my grey eyes.

I still feel this connection to him, even though we are no longer mates. He has his chosen mate. She has marked him. And I should hate him, but I find myself unable to as I sit here.

"When were you aware there was going to be an attack on my pack?" I asked him. I needed answers and to get the hell away from him.

"The night before the attack happened." He sighed, leaning forward, and resting his arms on the table.

"So, the plan was for you to get close to me? To get me to trust you, so you could kill me and take over the pack?"

"It started when my father wanted information." He answered.

“Everything you told me was a lie. You never intended for me to be your Luna and to run the pack, my pack together. This was done so you could have a pack for you and her?”

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“Yes. There was never an us, Evelyn. Getting you to trust me was all part of the plan to take down your father.” I closed my eyes, begging the tears not to fall. I knew this but it didn’t make it hurt any less when he admitted it.

“You can cut the act, I know you knew about the shady s\*it your father was involved in,” Dorian exclaimed and Blake growled.

“Watch your f\*cken tone. Remember you are in my pack, asking for my help.”

“I knew about everything my father was involved in. But do you know what your father was involved in? How he made all his money?” I questioned.

“He made his money in oil. Everyone knows that, even you.” He retorted.

“Interesting. I wonder if that’s why, he is still running the Crimson Lake pack and you are running mine, instead of combining them and making you, alpha of both?” I pondered out loud.

“What are you getting at?” Dorian growled.

“Why would you come here to ask for Blake’s help, when you could have asked your father?” He grumbled, crossing his arms over his chest again.

“Is it because you didn’t want to look weak in front of your father?” He didn’t answer me, so I continued to the point I was making.

“Your father was at my pack house when I told my father I was going to clean up his shady s\*it after becoming Luna, my father was into drug sales and weapons. But it was your father who was into human trafficking and the selling of body parts on the black market. He then invested some of that money into the oil industry. I knew my father

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wasn’t perfect but at least he wasn’t selling human beings.”

“You’re lying,” he snarled, slamming his fists down on the table.

“I have proof. After surviving the fall, I hacked into the system I created. I have all the proof I need to go to the council. And if I’m going down, then so are you.” I threatened.

“I’m here to demand rights to my son, but it would seem you aren’t the naïve

teenage girl you once were. But I still don't think you have proof and there's a lot about the council you don't know. So do your worst," he taunted.

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“Channing can decide who he wants in his life. And I wouldn't hold my breath if I were you. Neither one of us want anything to do with you. But if you try anything, I'll make sure the council gets everything they need to execute your father and bury you.” He growled, knowing it wasn't an empty threat. Walter had everything

needed to bury Dorian and his father.

Without a word, Dorian stood up, leaving the room. Everyone else followed, leaving me with Blake and his father. I finally felt like I could breathe again.

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## Chapter Sixty-Three

### Alpha Dorian

I had to get up and leave. Seeing Evelyn again had my head spinning and my heart racing. And seeing her hanging off another alpha, infuriated me. She was supposed to be mine.

Without a word to anyone, I left the pack house and climbed into the passenger seat of the SUV. I needed to go before I did something stupid, like challenge an alpha for a woman I can't even have. My gamma, Wes, climbed behind the wheel. The alpha's beta escorted us out of the pack. He was smart too because given the chance I would have gone back to get her and our son.

“I told you she was our mate. Even though you shifted early doesn't mean I wouldn't have known who my mate was. Especially, since she was standing right in front of me.” Fang, my wolf said.

“That doesn't help us now, does it?” I retorted. I was already furious without my wolf pointing out he was right.

The night she fell has replayed in my mind every day since it happened.

That's not how the plan was supposed to go. I knew my father was planning the attack and the plan was to get in before the warriors to get Evelyn out. I was only supposed to get intel for my father but I fell in love with her. She was a breath of fresh air, the sun shining bright.

My father anticipated that, and the warriors were sent in early without my knowledge. I tried to get to her but the warriors would get in my way. He must

have known I wasn't going to let them kill her. By the time I reached the pack house, she was running east with her father's

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beta.

Everything changed when I watched her fall that night. I wish I would have jumped in after her. Then at least we would have been together. I was a coward and an important part of me died that night. And now I knew she was alive, caring for my son, cursing my name, was almost too much to bear. Her with someone else was a kick to the stomach. She was everything to me. I was willing to go against my father to protect her. I had so much regret from that night.

"And attacking her in her kitchen wasn't very smart." Fang scoffed.

"It was a big f\*\*ken mistake." I sighed, rethinking that moment. She looked so terrified. I should have grabbed and kissed her. I should have shown her how much I have missed her.

"Then Lisa would have known. She may not be the love of your life or fated mate but she has been good to us." Fang said. He wasn't She has put up with all my bu\*\*\*hit for the last eighteen years.

wrong.

"Dorian, how long have we known each other?" Wes asked, pulling me from my thoughts. Looking around, we were almost back at our pack.

"Since we were kids," I answered.

"And with being friends for so long, I figure I would know you pretty well, would you agree?"

"What's your point?" I growled, growing impatient.

"Why did you lie to Evelyn? We both know Lisa didn't happen until after you believed she had died. And the plan was for us to protect her. After we learned about the attack, you, me, and Jared were supposed to get her out."

He said. All of what he said was true. Being with Evelyn was never an act.

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"And?"

"Why didn't you tell her the truth?" He exclaimed.

"And why would that have mattered? I have a mate, so I can't be with her. It's better if she hates me." I growled.

“Evelyn made you a better man, Dorian. And your son deserves to know the truth. He believes you tried to kill his mother, to kill him. And you know that isn’t the truth.” My ga\*ma sighed.

We drove in silence after that. He may be right, but it doesn’t change anything. I’m still marked by another and we have a son together. Her being alive doesn’t undo every decision I made after I lost her. just never thought I would see her again in this life.

For the rest of the drive home, I looked out the window and thought about the life I had without her. I had met Lisa years before I met Evelyn, but our relationship was only a friendship until after Evelyn’s death. I needed someone I trusted to be my Luna and I trusted her. I also needed the pain to stop and I thought moving on quickly would take the pain away. It didn’t but it made it easier to live with.

A few weeks after she turned eighteen, I marked her. She became pregnant with our son quickly and it was the distraction I needed to forget Evelyn.

Chadwick is almost seventeen and has always looked like his mother’s side of the family. And knowing Evelyn gave birth to my son, I know why Chadwick wasn’t an alpha wolf. It’s rare for an alpha to have two alpha sons and three was unheard of. Lisa never got pregnant again and I never pushed it.

When Wes pulled up in front of the pack house, Chadwick was waiting with his mother. My heart sank. This may be my life but my heart, the part I thought was broken, craved the life I could have had with Evie. I know that makes me a sick son of a b\*\*ch. I love my son and mate but she wasn’t my fated mate.

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“What are you going to tell them?” Wes questioned, as I stared at my son and mate.

“Nothing and neither are you. No one is to say a word about what happened, only that a few of his warriors are coming tomorrow.” I ordered.

“I may not understand what you are going through but I’m here if you need to talk.” I nodded before taking a deep breath. I then got out of the vehicle to greet my family.

Posted by **Admin-U**, 1733 Views, Released on August 25, 2023

Chapter Sixty-Four

Ryley



“Now, Miss Evelyn North, how are you feeling?” Blair asked me. My attention snapped to the former alpha.

“North? As in Alpha Evan North?” Blake exclaimed.

“He was my father,” I admitted sadly. He may have been a hard man, but my mother and I were his world.

“You changed your name?” Blake asked me.

“Ryley is my middle name and Halliwell was my mother’s maiden name. Did Dorian tell you who I was?”

“No, those grey eyes of yours gave you away. I suspected you were Evan’s daughter. I knew him from Alpha meetings. I only heard rumors about his businesses. Which is why this pack didn’t get involved with his pack. I didn’t want anything hanging over my head.” Blair explained.

“He wasn’t a bad person. He may have done some awful things but he loved me and my mother. And he cared about his pack.” I sighed, wiping my eyes. I wish I was given the chance to turn my pack around.

“I don’t understand why he was here. Alpha’s take the summers off from other pack business.”

“You said it yourself, he was here to ask for my help,” Blake answered.

“I was bluffing. I didn’t know why he was here. For all I knew you two

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Chapter Sixty Four

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were friends.” I shrugged.

“That may not have been smart, but it was fun to watch,” Blair chuckled.

“And it was fun to do,” I smiled.

“Ryley, I know it’s been years but did the pack ever have a problem with rogues?” Blake asked.

“Rogues? No, my father would employ them as runners. I don’t think we ever had an attack. They would come to the borders looking for work. Why? Is that why Dorian was here?”

“He has lost twenty-five warriors to random rogue attacks. They have only managed to kill one,” he explained.

“That doesn’t sound right. I may despise the man but I know he is a strong alpha. The attacks must be random. And there were no attacks to the east?”

“I think we just found our inside man,” Blair declared.

“How did you know that?” Blake questioned.

“The east is where I fell to my almost death. It’s rough even for wolves. Also, random means they can’t predict the next attack. It’s what I would have done.”

I shrugged.

"Your father taught you well, sweet girl," Blair praised me.

"It was more my mother. My father was the muscles and she was the brains and beauty. That's what my father always said." I smiled at the memory. My parents had a beautiful love story. My grandfather wasn't a good man and he would torture my mother. When my father was in their pack with his father for a meeting, he rescued her from him. He

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Chapter Sixty-Fout

loved her so much and was willing to start a war over her. The council stepped in since he was claiming she was his mate. But his love for her was unmeasurable. He did everything and anything to make her happy.

"Too bad ours went to sh\*t. I can't believe you liked that guy," Lily scoffed.

"Ours gave us Channing. And maybe a second chance, for an epic love story," I told her, looking at Blake. This could be our chance at a happy ending. And since my identity is now known, there is no point in hiding.

I covered my yawn. With the events of the day, I was exhausted.

"Head up to bed, I'll wait for Luca," Blair told us.

"Thanks, Dad. We'll see you and mom at breakfast." The thought should terrify me, especially after the dinner we had, but I was too exhausted to worry about it now. I hugged Blair before Blake took my hand, leading me out of the conference room and towards the stairs.

Nerves twisted my stomach as I climbed up to the alpha floor. I can't believe I agreed to this. To me, this was moving too fast. I understand his need to protect me but this was over the top, wasn't it?

I stumbled on a step as my entire body ached. It's been a while since I had to shift and fight to protect. And then I lost some blood. It's been one of those days where you just want to curl up under a blanket.

"Blake," I gasped as he took the opportunity to pick me up.

"Ryley," he mocked and I huffed.

"You're se\*y when you pout," he purred and I pushed my lips into a line. His warmth sank into my body and I melted into him, resting my head on his shoulder.

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“I will allow this only because I’m exhausted.” I yawned, snuggling my face into his neck. His scent covered me in a blanket of comfort and I found myself completely relaxed. I felt safe with Blake. I knew nothing was going to happen with him by my side. But I also know that I carry a huge burden. One I’m not sure he would be willing to help me carry.

“Then in the morning, you will talk to him. If you want this to work, then you need to open up, Ryley. No more holding back. This is not just our future but Channing’s.” Lily said. I heard her but I didn’t answer. I was having a hard time staying awake. This is how I felt sleeping next to Dorian. He had made me feel safe. And now I was going to put my trust and faith into yet another alpha, who has the power to break me.

Blake would never, I thought as my aches disappeared and I drifted off to sleep snuggled into Blake.

## Chapter Sixty-Five

### Ryley

I awoke with a start, sitting up in an unfamiliar bed. My mind was racing trying to remember how I ended up here. I let out a scream when the bed moved beside me.

“Ryley, what’s wrong?” Blake exclaimed, grabbing my arm before he sat up.

“Blake, what the hell?” I panted, pushing against his naked chest. He fell back with a chuckle as I grabbed my chest.

Once my breathing had calmed, I looked down to find myself wearing one of his shirts. I grumbled, looking over my shoulder to see him watching me with a smirk on his face. He patted his chest.

“Blake, I,” I stammered, feeling nervous.

“Lay down. You can tell me everything or nothing. It’s your choice.” He patted his chest again. I sighed before lying back down. Blake pulled me close as I rested my cheek on his chest. His chest hair was soft as I ran my fingertips through it. Blake kissed the top of my head and I smiled. This was how I wanted to wake up every morning. Maybe not the panic scream but next to him.

“How are you feeling?” He mumbled.

“I’m okay. Still tired.” I shrugged.

“It’s still early, you can get some more sleep before breakfast.” He said, ‘ pulling the blanket up over my shoulders.

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“Blake, did you change me?” I asked him, thankful I couldn’t see his face.

“Yes. I didn’t look, not that it matters. I saw everything after you shifted yesterday.” He chuckled.

My cheeks heated. I forgot I was naked in front of not only Blake but a lot of people.

“F\*ck,” I grumbled.

“That’s what I said,” he teased.

“Never seen a naked woman before?” I retorted with a huff. I let out a squeal when Blake rolled on top of me, pinning me to the bed with his body. He used his knee to open my legs before settling himself against my core.

“Blake,” I panted.

“You are the only woman I want to see naked.” He purred, looking down at me. I watched his lips and he watched mine. I’ve never seen this side of Blake before. He was being so forward. It was scary and exciting.

I closed my eyes as Blake lowered his lips to mine. The kiss was gentle, his lips soft against mine. My core heated as he deepened the kiss, licking my bottom lip. I moaned softly as he slid his tongue between my parted lips. My tongue met his and my toes curled. It’s been so long since I felt this way. To feel another’s skin on my body. And to have lips against mine.

Blake rolled his hips, and I knew he could feel my wetness against the fabric of his boxers. I gasped as his hardened length, slid between my folds, pushing against my swollen c\*it.

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Chapter Sixty-five

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“F\*ck, baby,” Blake groaned, kissing my jaw and down my neck. My body was on fire from his touch as he kissed and nipped at my neck, grinding his c\*ck into my soaking lower lips. His boxers did nothing to contain the heat of his c\*ck. And the anticipation was becoming too much for me to handle.

The sex haze lifted when Blake ran one of his hands up my bare thigh, getting dangerously close to my core.

“Blake,” my nails digging into his shoulders.

“You like that, baby,” he mumbled against my neck. He lifted his hips so his fingertips could brush against my lips.

“Blake, I need you to stop,” my voice panicked, coming out louder than

Vexpected.

“What’s wrong?” He shot up, hovering above me. I could see the worry in his eyes and guilt twisted my stomach painfully.

“If I did something wrong, you have to tell me.”

“Blake, I need to tell you something,” I whispered. He rolled off of me and pulled me against his side again. His breathing was harsh and his heart was racing as I laid my head on his chest again.

“I’ve only been with one person, one time.” I rushed out, glad I didn’t have to look at him. I shouldn’t be embarrassed but I was. I had sex with Dorian one time and conceived Channing. I haven’t been with anyone since. I always had so much to worry about to think about a relationship. I was broken and I didn’t want to bring anyone into my mess.

“Ryley, look at me,” Blake’s voice was soft. I took a deep breath before sitting up on my elbow to look at him.

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Chapter Sixty Five

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“Is this moving too fast? Am I moving too fast for you?” He asked, caressing my check.

“It’s just so much has changed over the last few weeks. And I don’t know what I’m doing when it comes to you and me. Us? The last us,

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had didn’t work out so well and I’m scared. I know you said you are here, but you don’t know my story. And as alpha, you are bound by the laws of the council. Are you sure this is what you want?” I said.

“Yes,” he said quickly and without any doubt. It warmed my heart to hear that answer but I can’t move forward with him until he knows everything. It wouldn’t be fair to him. He needs to know everything he is getting himself, Aspen, and his pack into.

“Let me explain everything and then you can decide.” I sat up and crossed my legs beside him, facing him. There was so much I needed to explain but I didn’t know where to start.

“I suspect the attack happened because I told my father I was going legit when I became Luna. It was the night before the attack and Dorian’s father was staying at the pack house, visiting my father. He wasn’t in the room but I suspect someone told him. Dorian and I had a plan. We were going to be together and merge both packs. I didn’t care if he wasn’t my fated mate, I

loved him. I was willing to give him anything and everything and he betrayed me. His pack killed my parents, while my father ordered his beta to take me and run." I stopped to close my eyes and wipe away some tears. Blake rolled onto his side and was propped up on his elbow. His hand gently rubbed my leg.

"I know you have a past with Alpha Dorian. But that doesn't change the way I feel about you or the idea of us. I hesitated before not because of my feelings for you but because I was worried about Aspen getting hurt. I know you would never hurt him. I see the love you have for my son, and it makes me love you more." He confessed.

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"You love me?"

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## Chapter Sixty-Six

### Alpha Blake

"You love me?" Ryley asked, and I immediately started cursing myself for using the 'love' word. If she wanted me to go slow, this was the opposite.

"Ryley, you don't have to say anything. I'm willing to go at whatever speed you need and feel comfortable with. But I want you to know that I want this. I want you and Channing to be a part of my family" I watched as she chewed on her bottom lip.

"And you also defended my mate. You understand I have a past and you aren't trying to erase it. I understand your hesitation. All the what- ifs that have filled your mind. It's hard when you experience a loss. And if your mate wasn't such a f\*ck up, I wouldn't have the honor of having you in my bed, wearing my shirt, smelling like me." I told her and she smiled.

"I would never want to take away what you had with your fated mate. That was your perfect love story. And I know if she didn't pass, you and her would still be together. And I would be happy for you both." I sat up on my hand, leaning in, I pressed my lips to her.

"I would be happy if things had worked out with your fated mate. No one deserves what he did to you," I mumbled, kissing her nose.

"Blake is this something you are willing to go to war over? If not with Dorian but with his father. I have more than enough dirt on him. And I'm sure he knows. Now that he knows I'm alive, I know he will come after me." She

sighed, the weight of her past was heavy on her shoulders.

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“If what you said about him is true, then I would gladly take him out. myself. Drugs and guns are one thing but human trafficking is a higher level of evil. Ryley, you have nothing to worry about. I will protect you and Channing from any threat that comes knocking, you have my word.”

“Can I tell you something? Something only Walter knows because it was the day he met me.” She whispered unable to meet my eyes. She played with her trembling hands that were resting in her lap.

“You can tell me anything. I would never judge you, baby. I know your life wasn’t easy, but I want to give you everything you will ever need and want.” She looked at me, giving me a small smile.

“This isn’t a happy story. After the attack, the river took me close to a city. I was sleeping on the streets for a few nights before I was assaulted. I fought him off, but I was just so tired of fighting. So tired of living with everything that had happened. I had no one, not even my wolf.” She closed her eyes, taking deep breaths, before she continued.

“It had been cold and ice was starting to form on the river. I didn’t see anyone around as it was dark. I walked out onto a bridge overlooking the river. It was snowing and the cold air blew against me. I climbed on the railing,” Tears were pouring down her cheeks as she relived that night. I moved up, resting my back against the headboard before pulling her between my legs. Hearing her story broke my heart. She didn’t want to live anymore. This perfect woman and mother was ready to give up on life because of what her fated mate did to her and her pack.

“I jumped into the river. Walter was watching me. He had heard the attack and followed me to the bridge. He jumped in after me. I woke up in a hospital three days later, where I learned I was pregnant. Walter hadn’t left my side. He was in the city visiting a lawyer after his mate’s death.” She snuggled into my chest as I held her tightly. That’s why

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she is so close to Walter, he saved her life and Channing’s that night.

"After that I always had Walter, he was like the father I had lost." She whispered and I kissed her hair. I wanted to storm into Alpha Dorian's pack and kill him for making her believe that the only way out was in death. He should have been there for her.

"That's when you knew he was your mate?" I asked and she nodded.

"And if I didn't have Walter, I might have given him up for adoption. But when I held him for the first time and my father's grey eyes were looking back at me, I knew I couldn't let him go." She confessed.

"Ryley, you have nothing to be ashamed of. You were only seventeen. And I will be forever in Walter's debt for saving you that day. You and Channing deserve everything and more. And look at everything you have done with your life. You may have needed help along the way but who hasn't." I told her, squeezing her

"Thank you," she mumbled.

"For what?" I lifted her chin so she would look at me.

"For listening. I've kept that buried for so long, I didn't realize how much it had been weighing me down. And thank you for protecting me, even when I didn't know how to ask," she shrugged.

"I will also protect you," I promised.

"I don't want to put your pack at risk. I don't want to be the reason someone dies." She exclaimed.

"We will always protect our own, no matter what. I know joining a pack scares you but I promise it will be worth it. That I'm worth this, and you. I know an alpha hurt you but I promise, I'm not like him. I would never hurt you."

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## Chapter Sixty-Seven

### Ryley

I thought about everything Blake and I discussed while I stood under the hot water pouring out of the shower. Blake was showering and getting ready in another room. Saying that story out loud made it real. I know it happened, but in my mind, I could ignore it since no one else knew. I could pretend it was all just a bad dream. But now I was trusting him with it. Trust him with the raw part of me that I wish didn't exist.

My parents didn't raise me to be weak. But in that moment I felt nothing but numbness. I didn't want to live anymore. I didn't want to keep fighting just to have to fight the next day. I was exhausted.

"Blake doesn't see us as weak, Ryley. He sees we were given a terrible situation at a young age. Most wouldn't have survived that river you fell into,



but you managed to live and make it to a city. You wanted to survive. And I'm sorry I wasn't there for you." She whimpered.

"I know, I just don't want things to change between us. I'm not that person anymore. I may not have known what I was fighting for back then, but I do now. It's just hard to trust anyone with your fight. Blake could backstab me and I would never see it coming," I told her.

"You don't truly believe that. Blake would never hurt us. He could have told us to leave his pack after our lovely mate decided to attack us, but he didn't. He also could have when Aspen was put in danger with the Shadow Moon pack. He loves us, and he trusts us with the only thing he has left of his fated mate. That should mean something to you. Him not pushing you, should mean something. He could have got angry when you stopped him this morning but he didn't. Instead, he

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listened to you and held you when you cried. So you need to stop overthinking and looking for a way out because there isn't any. He's a good man and you know it." My wolf said, lecturing me.

I knew she was right. I had to stop comparing Blake to my ex. But it's hard when Dorian was sweet in the beginning.

"I'll do my best," I told her, as I turned off the water. I needed to get dressed for breakfast and then it's back to work.

I quickly dried and styled my hair before going into the bedroom to get dressed. I didn't see my bags anywhere, so I walked into the closet to find my clothes already hanging. I guess this will be our room, I thought with a smile. After I was dressed, anxiety hit me as I gripped the door handle to leave. I was seeing Blake's parents again. And I don't know how to define our relationship. But worst of all, what if they don't approve of me with their son? My heart was pounding in my chest, as I stood there staring at the door. I jumped when a soft knock sounded.

"Ryley, is everything okay?" Blake called out. I took a deep breath before opening the door.

"Ready?"

"Where are the boys?" I asked, looking around.

"They already went down. They were starving and I was afraid they would start eating the furniture." He chuckled. I rolled my eyes, knowing it was true.

"Blake, before we go, can I ask you something?"

"Anything," he answered taking my hands. I looked up into his amber eyes, mesmerized but the swirling colors.

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## Chapter Sixty Seven

"What are we?" I blurted out. I smashed my eyes close as my cheeks heated.

"I can see dating is hard," Lily chuckled.

"Shut up," I retorted.

When my chest hit his I opened my eyes to find him staring down at me, with a smile on his lips.

"We are whatever you want us to be," he whispered, resting his forehead against mine.

"And what if your parents don't like me," I struggled.

"What? They love you. And if they didn't, that's their problem. I think you're perfect." He leaned down and brushed his lips against mine. His entire body shivered as he gripped onto me.

"You have no idea how badly I want you," he groaned. I felt guilty for not being ready. I'm a grown-a\*s woman, who isn't a virgin, I should be ready. People have sex all the time. But this felt different.

"It's okay, Ryley, you let me know when you're ready," he murmured, kissing my nose. I nodded.

"Now, let's go get some breakfast before our boys eat everything," he said and we both chuckled. He took my hand and led me out of the apartment to the stairs.

As we walked down the stairs hand in hand, others were staring and whispering. I could hear them with my Luna hearing, which is better than normal wolves. I knew Blake could also hear the whispering of his pack. I know by now everyone has heard about me and Alpha Dorian. This was a reason I avoided packs before. It was hard growing up as an alpha child and being an alpha mate was no different. Always

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Chapter Six

292 Nouchers

in the spotlight.

When we reached the main floor, Blake surprised me by spinning me into him and kissing me in front of several pack members and pack house staff.

"Ignore them. They don't know the truth," he whispered against my lips. After I nodded, he wrapped an arm around my back and led me into the dining room. As soon as we entered, the chatting died and all eyes were on us. Blake didn't pay any attention as he walked me over to the alpha table where the boys were seated with Blake's parents. I wiggled out of Blake's hold to kiss both boys on the cheek before taking my seat between the alpha and his heir.

“So, Alpha Dorian is Channing’s father?” Elizabeth questioned, before taking a drink.

“He’s more of a sperm donor, ma’am,” Channing said, saving me.

“I see, so you knew?” She asked my son.

“I did. And I want nothing to do with him.” He confessed.

“And would that be your doing?” She turned her attention to me.

“My dear, this isn’t something that should be discussed over breakfast,” Blair told his mate.

“Mom, Ryley’s past is her business. And she doesn’t have to explain it to anyone.”

## Chapter Sixty-Eight

### Alpha Blake

“Blake, I’m just concerned with what kind of pack she came from. We don’t need a scandal.” My mother retorted. Both our boys growled before Ryley excused them both. They didn’t need to be involved in this conversation.

“Liz, that was uncalled for. The decisions her father made were not hers,” my father defended.

“I’m just watching out for our son and pack. This could very well start a war. He has every right to come back here and demand her. Her and his son,” she exclaimed. Gunner let out a murderous growl causing the entire room to go deadly silent. Ryley jumped, but I grabbed her hand that was resting on the table, squeezing it. I didn’t mean to scare her.

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“He is marked. He has no right to her or their son. And if he wants a war, he’s got one.” I growled, low, not taking my eyes off my mother. I love her but this isn’t her place.

“And you’re okay with others dying so you can be Luna?” My mother scoffed, looking at Ryley. She tried to pull her hand from mine, but I held on firmly.

“This has nothing to do with being Luna, Luna Orion. I could walk back into my old pack and challenge Dorian for it back. I care about your son and grandson very much.” Ryley told her.

“If that were true, young lady, you would stay away from them.” She huffed before leaving the table.

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286 Voucher’s

"I should get to work." Ryley whispered, standing from her seat. I tugged her over to me. I could see the tears wanting to fall.

"I'll meet you in your office when I'm done," I murmured, caressing her cheek, she nodded before I pecked her lips. As soon as I let go of her hand, she was gone. I let out a sigh before turning my attention back to my father.

"What the hell was that?"

"Your mother and her gossip friends. I think she was also talking with Gwen's mother. Apparently, Gwen is telling everyone how Ryley attacked her when she offered to be her friend and you did nothing to protect her." He explained. My blood started to boil before my father raised a hand.

"You and I both saw that recording. And even after yesterday, Ryley could have lied. She could have denied who she was, but she didn't. She owns her father and her pack. This can put a target on her pack when Alpha Darius Crimson, learns she got away. And she has information about his wrongdoings." He said.

"What will you have me do?"

"As of right now, nothing. There is nothing you can do. But I'd advise you to move her here. If he gets wind of her living in another city, he will come after her. Also, stay on Alpha Dorian's good side. The attack was planned by his father, not his son. I'll look into the council and see if I can dig up anything there. I'll also talk with your mother." He grumbled that last part and I don't blame him. My mother is a handful on a good day, and today was not a good day.

"I'm going to go say my goodbyes to the boys before going to get your mother. I'll let you know what I find." My father said, before standing up from his seat. He squeezed my shoulder as he walked by me.

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Chapter Sixty Eight

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"And remember Blake, if it was easy, it wouldn't be worth fighting for," and then he was gone.

I didn't have time to think as Luca was in my head.

"Ga\*ma Connor and his team are ready to leave."

"I'll be right there," I told him, standing from my seat. I didn't even get a chance to eat.

Before leaving the dining room, I asked one of the servers to take up breakfast for two to Ryley's office. She needs to eat and my mother didn't give her the chance.

"She can't seriously think we will be with Gwen, can she?" Gunner asked as I

left the dining room to meet the others outside the front of the pack house. "I'm not sure where her head is at. But she should be able to see how much Aspen loves Ryley. She was all excited until she found out who her mate was. Or maybe it's who her father was. I don't know, I'll have to ask my father." I said.

As soon as I walked outside, Connor and Luca stopped talking to stare at me. They didn't say a word as I approached them.

"What?"

"Nothing. A little bird said there was a pretty little blonde staying on the alpha floor." Luca shrugged.

"You wouldn't know anything about that, now would you, Blake?" Connor grinned, alongside Luca.

"Both of you knock it off, nothing happened." I scoffed.

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Chapter Surty Eight

288

"Did you forget how to do it?" Luca questioned and I punched him in the arm.

"Ouch," he exclaimed, rubbing the spot.

"I know how it works, ds\*\*\*\*it. She was resting. She lost a lot of blood yesterday." I told them. I wasn't going to tell them we made out, half-naked.

"Uh huh, anyways, are we still going to Alpha Dorian's pack?" Connor asked.

"Yeah, that's still the plan. I'll meet you there in a few days to discuss a new/plan." I answered.

"Blake, you are handling this well, considering you are helping her ex- mate and the father of her son," Connor shrugged.

"He's marked," I growled, not liking where this conversation was going.

"Yeah, but he still wants her," Connor said.

"But she doesn't want him, Blake, you have nothing to worry about." Luca tried to reassure me.

"This is also to get some intel on the takeover eighteen years ago. See what you can find out." I ordered.

"Blake, what are you thinking?" Luca questioned.

"I think there is more to the takeover than was reported. My father is looking into the council. But in the meantime, I want to have eyes on their pack." I explained.

"I'll ask around and report back. See you in a few days." Connor said

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Chapter Sixty-Eight

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before hopping into one of the SUVs.

I watched with Luca as the three vehicles pulled out of the driveway. This is a chance to get Ryley some answers.

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Chapter Sixty-Nine

Ryley

I was finally able to breathe when the door to my office was closed. I leaned back against it, panting trying to push down the panic attack that was bubbling to the surface. Blake's mother was right. If I did care about them I would leave. I wouldn't put them in danger.

"She was wrong about you wanting to be Luna. You were born to be Luna. And this pack would benefit from your leadership." Lily huffed.

"Will they? This could get their loved ones killed. I could get killed and then who would Channing have?" I cried in despair. The thought of leaving my son with no one twisted my heart painfully.

"He would never be alone, Ryley. He has Walter, Blake, and Aspen. They would take care of him." She reassured me. But this feeling was overwhelming. I made my way over to my desk to start working. I needed to focus my mind elsewhere.

Opening up my laptop there was an email from Issac. Why wouldn't he just call me if he needed to speak with me? Especially, since I've been trying to get a hold of him. Coward.

'Miss Halliwell,

Please meet me in my office tomorrow morning at ten am.

Mr. Miller'

What the hell is this about? He knows I'm four hours away and he just wants me to drop everything to go back for a meeting. I grumbled in frustration. This was not how I thought I'd spend my morning. Since I

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## Chapter Sixty-Nine

288

didn't have my phone, I placed a call to him through my laptop but he didn't answer. I left him another message to call me before ending the call.

There was a soft knock on my office door. I sighed before calling out for them to enter. Just then a woman carrying a tray opened the door, I rushed out of my chair to help her.

"Thank you, miss," she nodded as she placed it down on the coffee table.

"From the alpha," she said before leaving the room. I lifted the top to find breakfast for two or one of our boys. My heart swelled knowing Blake sent this up.

There was only juice on the tray so I made us both a coffee before sitting down. He didn't have me waiting long before there was a knock on my door and Blake came strolling in.

"Just in time. I made coffee." I told him as he sat beside me on the couch. He leaned in, pecking my lips. I couldn't help but smile. This man had awoken all my butterflies.

"I'm sorry for my mother's behavior." He sighed, resting his forehead against mine.

"It's okay." I brushed it off.

"It's not okay, Ryley. No one has the right to speak to you like that, not even my mother." He said, rubbing his nose against mine.

"I understand her worry. If it was Channing, I probably would have acted the same way. She's just looking out for her son and grandson." I shrugged.

"That may be so, but she went about it the wrong way. And I want you

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## Chapter Sixty Hins

to know, I'm on your side. I'll defend you even from my mother."

"Thank you," I whispered. He pecked my lips.

"Anything. Now let's eat." He handed me a plate before taking the other one.

286

As we ate, I thought about how I was going to bring up the topic about going home. I needed to pack everything up if we were going to be moving here and Issac wanted to meet with me in person. I had a bad feeling about meeting with him. I haven't been able to get ahold of him or his sister, Isabelle.

"Blake, I need to head into the office tomorrow morning. My boss has asked me to his office at ten am." I told him. Blake stopped chewing and placed his plate down before shifting towards me.

"Issac asked to see you, in person?" He questioned.

"I received an email this morning. I'm not sure where my cellphone is but I tried calling him through my laptop and he didn't answer. I left him a voicemail but I'm sure he won't get back to me. I've been trying to get a hold of him but he's not calling me back." I explained.

"Then we can fly out this evening, pack up your house and leave tomorrow after your meeting," Blake said.

"You don't have to come with me. I can leave this afternoon. Pack up some things. Arrange for movers tomorrow after my meeting." I told him and his chest grumbled.

"I will come with you and we will fly. I don't want you driving that far without security. And the person I trust the most with your security is on another assignment. I'll cancel all my meetings this afternoon and then we will leave. I'll ask Luca to watch the boys since my parents went home." He told me.

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Chapter Sixty-Nine

"Blake, that seems like a lot of trouble." He moved my plate from my lap to the coffee table before wrapping an arm around my shoulders and pulling me to his side.

"It's not too much trouble. I need you to be safe. I can't let you leave the pack without protection. I promise I will protect you and I will." I grabbed his stubbled cheek before pulling him close. My lips crashed against his. Dare I say the love I feel for this man just grew deeper and stronger?

Without breaking the kiss, I climbed into his lap, straddling him. His large hands went up my shirt, leaving tingles in its wake as they moved up my back. I didn't realize how badly I craved a mate until this moment. I wanted someone to fight by my side. To always have my back and to protect me in my moments of weakness. Always having to be strong, was exhausting. But I know with Blake I can let my walls down a little bit. And maybe one day soon, they will come down completely.

Blake let out a groan before pulling away. We were both breathing heavily as I rested my forehead against his.

"Baby, I have to go, but I'll see you this afternoon."

Chapter Seventy

Alpha Blake

I groaned when Luca was in my head reminding me about the meeting this



morning. F\*ck, I didn't want to leave Ryley. She just opened up sexually and I wanted to see how far she was willing to take it. But ending it like that was just wrong and my balls ached.

I cleaned up the plates while Ryley made me a coffee to go. I'd keep her just for her coffee alone. There was nothing this woman couldn't do. When it was done, I kissed her one last time before leaving her office and heading down the hallway to mine. I was making a mental list of everything I needed to do before we left this afternoon.

I entered my office to find Luca pacing.

"Finally," he exclaimed, throwing his hands up.

"What's wrong?" I asked him, placing my mug on the desk. He was about to speak when he sniffed the air. He grinned and began wiggling his eyebrows.

"Oh, that's why you left me to deal with that grumpy old bat. You were having some morning fun," he chuckled.

"We ate breakfast in her office." I clarified.

"That's what the kids are calling it nowadays?" He gave me a pointed look.

"We may have kissed," I shrugged and he lifted a brow.

"Okay, more like we made out. And I was enjoying it until you popped

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into my head." I scoffed.

"Looks like she is feeling better," he teased.

"It was a good morning until my mother decided to confront her at breakfast," I grumbled.

"F\*ck." He breathed out.

"And now Issac has requested a meeting with her in his office at ten am tomorrow. So, you will be in charge of the pack and boys until we get back tomorrow evening. And while I deal with the grumpy old bat, I need you to get the jet ready. And get a moving truck ready. They can meet us at her house so we can start moving everything out." I explained.

"Can he not just call her?" Luca questioned and I was wondering the same thing.

"She told me she has been trying to get a hold of him but he hasn't responded. The email request came in this more." I told him.

"Well, I'll get started getting everything ready. Mr. Grumpy is waiting in the conference room for you." He informed me.

"I'm going but cancel the rest of my meetings." He gave me a nod before leaving my office. I grumbled to myself as I took my coffee and headed to the conference room. This was going to make for an even longer morning.

I couldn't wait to leave the conference room after the meeting was finally over.

Some people don't like change. And when you are running a business, you have to be willing to do so for your business to succeed. That's the biggest challenge when dealing with older generations. Trying to convince them to upgrade.

Chapter Seventy

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"Done?" Luca asked through the link.

"Finally," I exasperated.

"Good. Get Ryley and go pack a bag. The jet is waiting. I also had a moving truck and warriors already on their way. They should be arriving when you are." He explained.

"Thanks, man, I appreciate it," I told him.

"And I already talked to the boys. I'm going to station a few warriors on the alpha floor. They feel they can handle themselves since they have their wolves."

"Of course they do. Fine, the warriors will do. I don't think the alpha would be stupid enough to storm my pack looking for his son. But I do think his father would hunt down Ryley." I said.

"That's why I sent warriors and not movers. This way you both have a backup if anything were to happen." He told me.

"You might need a raise," I chuckled. He was always thinking of everything.

"I would never turn one down. Have fun. He ended the link and I made my way to Ryley's office.

I knocked quickly before entering, finding her behind her desk, typing away on her laptop. I watched as she was deep in thought about something. She must not have heard me knock or enter the room. I took a seat in front of her desk, watching her concentrate.

"Blake," she gasped, noticing me.

"I may have to get a chime for the door," I teased.

Chapter Seventy

288

"Or you could knock louder." She retorted.

"Come on, we have to go pack a bag and get to the airport," I told her standing from my seat.

"But I need to finish this," she protested.

"It will still be there when we get back tomorrow," I assured her.

"Fine," she grumbled, closing her laptop. She stood up from her chair before picking it up. I took it from her before taking her hand and leading her out of the office. I locked the door behind us before walking hand in hand to the alpha floor.

Pack members were whispering as we walked by but I ignored them. When

Ryley is ready, I'll make an announcement to the pack explaining what happened. But until then, they will just have to gossip. Ryley let out a breath only after the door to our apartment was closed behind us.

"You would think I would still be used to all of that," she sighed I placed her laptop down before pulling her into my arms.

"When you are ready to make an announcement, I'll explain everything to the pack," I told her and her breathing hitched.

"Only when you are ready. There is no pressure." I reassured her, hugging her tightly.

"Thank you," she whispered as she buried her face into my chest.

"Anything, baby. Now let's get ready. We have a flight to catch."