

Chapter 126

"Wonderful." I sighed a bit more dramatically than I initially meant to, "The only two people who can help us is a witch who could easily be dead by now and my mom, who actually is dead. Is resurrecting people a thing, or is that just in the movies?"

"Just in the movies, dear." Cordelia replied, not at all disturbed. If anything, my comment gave her an idea. Her eyes lit up with the same mischievous light as grandmas, only Cordelia's held traces of unearthly magic. "Summoning her spirit, however. That could be doable. I'd need to leave town to get the supplies...but I could have everything ready within a few days."

'It already sounds like a bad idea...do you really think this is the way to remove your magical block?' Asher's gruff voice filled my head, keeping my thoughts from drifting as I pulled onto the highway, seeing Breyona's car follow behind.

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'Afraid of a little ghost?' I used what weak humor I had to break up the tension in my chest. 'I honestly have no clue, but getting first-hand answers is something I can't pass up...if she even answers. Cordelia described it as a supernatural phone call. After all this crap, she better not put me on silent.'

Through the bond that connected Asher and me, I could hear the muffled sound of a ringing cellphone.

Asher cursed, 'I've got to go, that'll be Zeke and Mason. We've assembled a small group to comb through parts of the surrounding mountains. There's every chance the witches or vampires could be hiding up there.' ①

'Keep me updated if you find anything.' I replied.

'Sure thing, beautiful.'

Rather than turn around and head straight towards Asher like the mate-bond was telling me to do, I continued to the old house Cordelia and Rowena had been staying in. While Rowena got to

● old house Cordelia and Rowena had been staying in. While Rowena got to know Holly and hopefully found a way through the shell of fear that kept her rooted in place, Breyona and I planned to spend our day helping them move their belongings. There wasn't time to furnish the new house, and it was faster to move what furniture there was rather than wait. ①

I was surprised to see a small moving truck as I pulled into the driveway, and even more surprised when I saw a head of golden hair peaking above a stack of boxes. Breyona pulled up alongside the road and hopped out, following me up the porch to where Cassidy stood.

"Oh, hey!" Her baby-blues lit up as she saw Breyona and I. She placed her hands in the back pockets of her frayed shorts and smiled. "I hope you both don't mind. I got out of lacrosse practice early, so I figured I'd get a head start." ①

"I actually didn't know you'd be here, but we wouldn't mind the extra set of hands." I told her truthfully, looking at Breyona who nodded.

A look of understanding crossed her face, which only aided in confusing me.

which only added to confusing me.

"Oh, Asher didn't tell you? He must've gotten busy." Cassidy snorted, shaking her head. As she grabbed two of the smaller boxes, Breyona and I followed suit. She grinned over her shoulder as we descended the porch steps and placed the boxes into the small truck. "He asked if I'd come help you two out, make things go by faster. If you ask me, I think he just wanted more time with you." 3

The three of us got to work, hauling out the oak dining room table and pieces of the sectional. A few human men in a crappy pick-up truck passed by the three of us. I could instantly tell they were human because the driver slammed on his breaks and sent them squealing to a stop, all to gawk at Cassidy who carried a mahogany dresser down the stairs by herself.

A couple of hours in we ordered a few pizzas and took a short break. The soreness in my muscles wasn't entirely unpleasant and made me miss training even more. I made a mental note to start again as soon as I got the chance.

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“You’ll never guess who I ran into today.” I said to Cassidy, shoving a second dresser out of the front door. Next was the coffee table and entertainment stand, followed by the television that looked all too breakable.

“Who? Oh no, wait. Let me guess. Brandon?”

“Ugh, thankfully no.” I grimaced, “I’ll give you a hint. He’s five eleven but probably told you he’s around six two.”

Cassidy’s eyes turned thoughtful for a split second before she rolled them in typical mean girl’s fashion. If it weren’t for her sunny personality, she would’ve made the perfect Regina George.

“What does that tool want?” She lifted an eyebrow.

“He actually gave me an explanation on why his girlfriend was calling him—or should I say ex-girlfriend.”

“Ex-girlfriend?” She repeated, a manicured hand on her hip.

“Still sleazy.” Breyona shouted over her shoulder, carrying a stack of boxes down the stairs and onto the trucks ramp.

the stairs and onto the trucks ramp.

Cassidy nodded, "agreed, still sleazy."

"Apparently his ex-girlfriend is mated to his younger brother." I elaborated, chuckling when Cassidy's lips popped open.

She cringed just a tad, "ouch...I'm not apologizing for breaking his nose, though. He could've easily chased after me to explain himself."

"What about his keyed motorcycle?" I asked, smiling as Breyona's raucous laughter sounded from inside the moving truck.

Cassidy shrugged, "Fair, I'll apologize for that. It is a really nice bike." ①

With how often we'd get distracted talking and laughing with one another, we finished just as the sun dipped behind the tree line. Cassidy and Breyona agreed they'd take the moving truck to the new house and then drive back to get their cars, since Asher sent me a mind-link letting me know Giovanni had just gotten back into town.

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ound driving at night to be relaxing, even though with these twists and turns it was near impossible to see more than ten feet in front of you. Since there weren't any light posts, all I had to guide my way were the headlights of the car. The crisp breeze filtered in through the cracked window, carrying damp soil and pine trees.

The shrill ringing of my cellphone filled the car, along with the harsh white glow from the screen lighting up. Tristan's name and a blurry photograph I snapped of him at night flashed on the screen. I let it go to voicemail, thinking he was calling to tell me Giovanni had gotten back.

When it rang a second time, and I felt a sharp tug in my gut, I knew something had happened.

I cursed and reached for my phone where it sat in the passenger seat. The harsh light left splotches in my vision, but I managed to hit the little green answer button before the screen faded to black.

"The only thing--I will ever envy about you werewolves--is your ability to mind-link." Tristan's choppy but disappointed sigh filled the car, followed by the crackle

...h filled the car, followed by the crackle of crappy service.

"I'm glad you're having a good day." I replied, "If you called to tell me Giovanni's back, Asher beat you to it."

"Actually, I'm calling because---" His voice cut in and out, broken up by harsh static. "---nightmare."

"Nightmare?" I repeated, "Holly had a nightmare? About what?"

"...Holly had a nightmare...dark...hard to see--"

I pinched the bridge of my nose, feeling a dull throb in my temples as I tried to make out what the hell he was saying. Glancing down at my phone, I stared at the four bars until I had no choice but to look back up at the road. I was approaching the welcome sign we had driven past on our way into town when Tristan's voice came through even louder and more urgent.

"...in the car...sign...black boots...Lola--"

My phone chimed, and I glanced down in time to see the picture Tristan had sent me. It was one I had taken and sent Breyona

It was one I had taken and sent Breyona when we first ventured to the capital of this pack. The town sign we had all passed, the one that read 'Welcome to the town of Pine Plains.'

"...man in black boots...is going to make you crash..."

My head snapped up the moment his voice came through the phone, locked on a pair of eyes peering at me from beyond the windshield. That split second glance was all I had before I slammed into an invisible wall in the middle of the road. The sight of pale skin and expressionless eyes were the last things I saw before the tang of blood and the sharp sting of pain took over every sense I had.

It wasn't the glass digging into my face and eyes that hurt most. What hurt most was the bone shattering pain of impact, the whiplash as my neck cracked and my head lurched in the opposite direction. I knew the car was rolling when my ribcage cracked and groaned, shoved against the seatbelt repeatedly.

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I couldn't breathe until the car skidded to a stop, sending sparks skittering across the ground from the metal roof skating along the asphalt. The blood coated, inky tendrils of my hair clung to my face and obscured my vision.


'Fuck, we need to get this glass out of our face. Our body is trying to heal with it in there.' Maya snarled, but the sound ended with a whimper.

I clenched my teeth and tried to reach the seatbelt buckle. When that failed, I tried to wriggle free. As a last resort, Maya gave me what strength she could to make our nails elongate into claws.

It was the distant crunching of glass that made me freeze.

I turned my head to the shattered driver side window and spotted a pair of black boots just twenty feet away.

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