Through the Pain

Damien's POV

"Here. Open your mouth" I broke off a piece of peanut butter granola and placed it in Jillian's mouth. I wanted to give her better food, but all I could find in the car was a stick of black licorice and this granola bar. Her dark eyes were half lidded as she chewed. She was exhausted and hungry. We didn't know which needs came first, her hunger or her sleep?

There were other things that needed to be done, like a bath to get rid of all the dirt from her cheeks and legs...but she still looked strikingly beautiful while being a bit of a mess. I had pulled off my jacket and wrapped it around her small body so she would be warm and comfy, she was drowning in it because it was huge and her lack of nourishment made her frame that much more fragile. I knew for a fact that something was broken, just by the way she gently clutched her chest and squeaked when I moved a certain way.

I looked out the window for a moment to watch the trees and the road go by. We were still in the car and on our way home. It seemed like the longest trip ever. Jillian needed to go home, and we were only half way there. I turned my head and saw that she had fallen asleep in my arms. Her breaths were shallow and her mouth slightly open. Stone purred to see her like this, my nose was in her hair within seconds.

I smiled to myself, She needs a bath, but I still love her to pieces.

There was a large gash on the side of her face, blood oozed out of it every once in a while. Thankfully werewolves had a high tolerance to infection even when silver was in constant contact with their skin. I had cleaned up the cut with the first aid kit in the car. She had bruises on her neck from being choked, pink scars were on her ankles and wrists from silver burning away at her skin, among other marks she made no fuss over. She held her stomach so I knew that there were some internal wounds too, not just external. They must have kicked her or something.

My teeth clenched with contempt, I hated the thought of Jillian in pain. She was in pain right now! I could feel it! Although in sleep she could hardly feel the agony, but he body still ached and cried out in discomfort. "Alpha......" she groaned for me in her sleep. "I'm here, Damien is here. Don't worry...." I whispered in her ear while holding her just a hair tighter.

Josie looked back nervously, "Is she alright?" I noticed that her hazel green eyes were shimmering with tears. I looked back at Jillian, she had fallen back into her semi-deep sleep in my arms, "Yeah. What's wrong?" I ran my hand over my mate's hair to smooth it down. My sister stiffened in her seat and blinked a few times, "You make her call you Alpha?" She chuckled, "Don't you have enough people calling you that?"

Whatever was bothering Josie was not important right now if she didn't make a fuss about it, If something is upsetting you, you can tell me, I reminded her silently, "No, I tell her to call me by my name all the time. I don't know why she doesn't" I kissed Jillian's forehead tenderly.

★★★

When we got home the sun was beginning to set behind the mountains. The refreshing smell of family was enough to bring the slightest of smiles to my face. We went to my house, but Josie had called some of the she-wolves to help attend to Jillian. Upon exiting the car Christina, Lana, and a few others were crowding around us, checking if we were alright, "Did you leave some of you for the other soldiers?" I asked while Lana tried to inspect a scratch on my face "Yes, yes...bring her inside already!" Christina hurried me along, Jillian still sleeping soundly in my arms.

I brought her into the house carefully, I didn't want Jillian to wake up just yet, I had no idea when she slept last. The females followed at my heels like little dogs shepherding me into the downstairs bathroom where they had already drawn hot water for a bath and everything. "Put her down and get out." Christina ordered before I even step foot in the room, "Wh-" I began but Christina was no woman to argue with, "Put. Her. Down. Then. Leave."

"I barely even-"

"What did I tell you?" Christina rose an eyebrow as if to dare me to talk back. I nodded and rested Jillian on the closed lid of the toilet, she had woken up by now from our conversation. As soon as I set her down she was being crowded with attention. Jillian looked wide eyed for a moment until she realized that it was loved ones and friends here to help her. "Damien, go shower, we can take care of her" Christina shooed me away easily. "Wait, are you saying that I smell?" I turned around again, Stone answered before Christina even did, "I can't lie..."

With a smile I left to clean up.

After my own shower I made an effort to clean up the bedroom, over the past few weeks I had been too distracted to do it, plus Jillian shouldn't come back to a dirty home. I was wiping down the mirror in the bathroom when I heard some commotion in the bedroom. I stepped out to see Jillian propped up on multiple pillows. She was clean, her hair washed, the dirt removed from her skin and a shy smile on her lips. She looked stunningly simple, her hair tumbled over her shoulders and cascaded in waves over the sides of the white pillows, a beautiful contrast of dark and light. Her eyes glimmered with peace and happiness. "Hi, Damien" she twisted a lock of dark hair around her finger while she looked at me, "Why are you staring?" her question was innocent, but it had so much more meaning. She still had bruises on her face, a large bandage covered her left temple and her lip was busted, she had marks across her legs and arms, but in spite of that she looked so beautiful it baffled me. "I'm trying to overcome the urge to go over there and squeeze you"

"Oh, Alpha.." she fanned her face as if she were blushing. I walked over and sat by her feet, "Tell me what hurts" I barely ran my finger over the reddish pink rings around her ankle and she hissed in surprised pain, "This is silver, right? I'll call the doctor to get you some ointment." I looked out the window and saw that darkness had come, but Jillian did not need to wait for a convenient time.

"Kiss me first" Jillian's request did not fall on empty ears, I moved up closer, "I was going to get to that" our noses touched, Jillian shrugged, "You were taking too long"

Her lips were surprisingly soft and seemingly sweet, I held her tighter while deepening the sensations that danced across my skin when she touched me. I relayed all my emotions through my lips, I missed her, I had missed her so much. Her small hands curled up in my hair, slowly running through and tangling on the wavy curls. She whimpered and pulled away, holding her midsection, "Oh, sweetheart, I'm so sorry...I didn't mean-" I tried to apologize but she pressed her finger to my mouth, "It's not your fault..." she breathed shallow and slow. Without a second thought I pulled out my phone and called Otis. Soon my mate began hacking her lungs out like she was about to die, making Stone very worried for her safety.

"Will you be alright?" I rubbed her back while she worked through her coughing fit. She whimpered every time and I just wanted her pain to stop. "Shh...its okay..." I cooed in her ear as comfortingly as possible. It hurt me to know that she was home, and I was ecstatic about it, but Jillian herself was in agony just breathing. Shakily and slowly Jillian removed her hand from her mouth, her palm was covered with little splotches of blood. I gasped and grabbed a tissue from the nightstand to wipe it away as soon as possible. I wanted it gone, but before I could discard the bloody napkin I had caught a whiff of it. The smell was fire to my nose, Jillian was bleeding.

I think I might faint.Stone staggered and plopped on his butt. He hated that this was happening, my brain was freaking out over the sight of her beautiful body in so much pain that I could not see and so much that I could. "Oh, Jillian..." I took her in my arms so softly and nuzzled her hair. I found a better smell there, one of sweetness and lemon, one that was calming and soft, a smell that counteracted the figurative acid to my nose that was her perfect red blood. "Alpha..." Jillian murmured with a raspy tone, she held my shirt in her hand and I could tell she was savoring my scent just as much as I was hers.

A faint but noticeable knock on the door made us separate. I opened the door for Otis, the doctor, to enter. He pushed up his glasses and walked right in toward the bed where Jillian lay helpless. "Hello, Alpha, Luna" he nodded at me then my mate. Jillian tried smiling back but it came out as a pitiful grimace instead. Otis placed his little doctor bag on the bed by Jillian's feet, "Permission to touch?" He asked Jillian, "Uh...yeah...I guess" she stammered and clenched her hands in the bedspread. Otis looked back at me, making sure I wouldn't flip out when he placed his hands on my mate. "You specifically asked me to bring ointment for silver burns and there is some in my bag. Would you mind if I further inspected your burns, Luna?" when Jillian gave her nervous reply Otis looked at her legs and the pink scars very intensely, "These are by far the worst silver burns I have seen in my career, I will prescribe some lycanthrope in pill form along with the healing ointment. May I see your wrists?" The check-up went on as such until Otis asked Jillian to lift her shirt so he could see her stomach and use his stethoscope thingy. I nearly growled with possessiveness but Jillian's wolf, Gladys butted into my brain, Hey, I get that you feel all manly ego, or whatever, but she's hurting and nothing you do will stop her from getting the treatment and care she needs. So lay off.

Jillian looked at me apologetically while she lifted her shirt to expose her belly. My eyes widened at the sight, huge red and purple splotch went all the way from her ribs to her hip in varying brightness. The magenta mark moved up and down with Jillian's steady breaths, but the doctor and I stood in shocked silence upon seeing it. This wasn't just your regular I-hit-my-arm-on-the-table kind of bruise, it was the deep severe kind that indicated massive internal bleeding. "Jillian" I gasped breathlessly, "Why didn't you tell me about this?"

She looked down, "I didn't want to complain...it was my fault anyway-"

"Excuse me?" I took a step closer and pivoted her chin up so she could meet my eyes, "This was not your fault. None of this was in any way your fault. Look at me, Jillian, this and everything else that I've seen was not a consequence to what you did. You did nothing wrong, you got it?" I hated to be so harsh on her, but I had to make her see that she was not the problem it was everyone else that was. Tears welled up in her eyes, but before they could spill over she tried to swallow them back. I wished that the doctor wasn't there just watching us awkwardly while we had a deep conversation. "But I tried to run away so I was punished, Damien. I shouldn't have done that..."

I shook my head harshly, "Yes, you had every right to try and escape. It's your life they got in the middle of, and they are the ones in the wrong, he was wrong not you. Repeat what I said, Jillian, he was wrong not you"

"H-he was wrong not you" Her words struck me and I kissed her forehead, "We will get through this and you will feel better soon, alright?" I moved back so Otis could re-assume his position over my mate, "Get back to work"

She had at least one broken rib, but her lung had not collapsed which was a marvelous thing and no surgery was necessary. "If you could come down to the office tomorrow so we can do x-rays that would be awesome. Here is the ointment, apply it every 6 to 8 hours so put some on before bed, and take the pills daily, the amount I gave you should last until the end of the week and if your wolf doesn't naturally regenerate give me a call and I can administer the shot." Otis wiped his hands dry from washing them and smiled gently at Jillian, "every single member of this pack is extremely happy to have you back, we wouldn't have it any other way" He said his piece and left the room.

"What so you want for dinner, I can ask Josie to make you something real quick" I suggested while trying to fix one of the pillows Jillian sat on. "Isn't it a bit late for dinner?" she smiled and continued her job of rubbing the green gel on her wrists and forearm. "It's never to late for dinner," I touched her stomach playfully, "You know that" I took the jar of ointment and began to massage the cream into her ankles, rewarded with a relieved moan of ease from her lips. "What do you have?" she inquired of the refrigerator's contents.

"We had pea casserole yesterday, I didn't eat any so there must be leftovers, and the day before that we had roast beef with pasta. But that's just the stuff at the house, you can have anything you want, authentic Italian pizza? It's yours. A plateful of toast with butter and brown sugar? I'm on it." I grinned and kissed a yellowing bruise on her knee. "I think I'll have the beef and noodles, please."

"Done"

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Jillian's POV

Last night was kind of rough, both Damien and I wanted to cuddle because we missed each other, but at the same time my rib made getting all snuggled up really difficult. So after much tossing and re-positioning, I needed up propped up on my pillows and Damien slept next to me with his head by my hip and arm slug across my lap.

I woke up when he came back from training, a guard was stationed outside the door for my safety. I understood why Damien was so paranoid, he had left me for nearly 20 minutes and I was kidnapped by two creepy dudes and my dad. I couldn't blame him for being cautious, but I noticed the extra locks on the windows and I felt nervous.

I didn't say anything about it because Damien needed time, we both needed time!

After breakfast Damien took me to the doctor's to get my x-rays done. I went into a small room with the nurse and changed into the cloth gown and laied on the bed while the machine did its thing and took pictures of my body. Now we sat on a different bed in a different room waiting for the doctor to come and make sure my lungs were 100% ok, and to discuss my x-rays.

I sat up in the small bed because sitting up with my feet elevated was my most comfortable position. Standing for too long made me dizzy and sitting for too long made my legs hurt. It aggravated me to be so needy. I could hardly change my clothes this morning by myself! Damien had to help me get dressed. I can't tie my shoes, because bending over made my rib act up. I couldn't brush my hair out all the way because my shoulders ached to raise up to my head. I nearly had a breakdown when I couldn't brush my hair, thankfully Damien was there but, phew! I could have lost it over a hair brushing.

I kicked my feet gently on the bed, watching my olive green nails against the white bedspread. Josie had painted my nails this morning while Damien was out, she talked to me and it felt good to have a friend. She apologized over and over again for peer pressuring me into going out with her that night. I forgave her because it was obvious that Josie had been through some things and she needs someone to be her friend. I told her that everyone makes mistakes and that I would be a hypocrite if I didn't forgive her.

Damien was sitting by the bed, on his phone doing work because while I was missing he wasn't keeping up with some of his paper work. I felt guilty and wanted to help, but he insisted that I needed rest and not to be stressed. "Do you think he's gonna come soon?" Damien looked at the door impatiently. "He has other patients to see" I touched his muscular arm softly, "I would hate it if he refused care to someone for me"

Damien smirked and looked back at his phone, "You are too selfless"

"Is that a bad thing?" I fixed a pillow behind my head and my mate helped, "I never said that, sweetheart" then his phone rang loudly, surprising both of us so we jumped slightly from the shocking squealing phone. I leaned over when Damien scowled at the screen, the caller ID was 'The Council😈😈😈'

"Are you kidding me? I swear if one of them tries to make me go to their potluck --" he grumbled before picking up, "Hey! How's it going up there in the arctic, Miss. Ice-Queen?" Right after his excited greeting he rolled his eyes with boredom. "Yes, Christa, I... I did! I called you yesterday morning and you didn't pick up!....I told you, check your call history and tell me I didn't call.... Ha!...Yes I know I technically should have waited, but if you listen to my voicemail you will know that it was a dire situation that could not wait for time zones." My mate began to pace the floor like he does while on the phone regularly.

"I did not....He was still alive when I left the room!...ugggg...Are you serious right now?....I left you voicemail explaining everything!"

Isn't mate apart of the council? Crescent Moon is one of the five original packs, Gladys wondered to me. She was right, Damien was a member of the werewolf council. When the Moon Goddess came down and turned the first wolves into werewolves, meaning they could shift into humans, and gave them all the gift of their tongues so they could speak she had made 500 wolves. Within the 500 she appointed 5 Alphas to rule over the separate packs of 100. Even humans know that there are some wolf packs that have an uncanny amount of members, those are werewolves. Those 5 packs were named for the 5 phases of the moon: New Moon, Crescent (waxing and waning) Quarter, Gibbous, and Full Moon packs. Each of those packs are in different continents, New Moon resides in Africa, Crescent North America and South America, Quarter lives in Asia and Europe,Gibbous in Australia, leaving the Full Moon Pack to Antarctica.

Now can you name all the Alphas of those packs? You get extra points if you know the Lunas, Gladys winked at me, making me think even further into my primary schooling. I already recalled everything I can remember, plus the Alpha's change all the time at different rates!

Don't make excuses, you just got your diploma from human school, you can name a bunch of presidents, its just like that

Its not like that at all! Its like your asking me to name all the presidents and rulers of other countries!

Don't make excuses, I bet mate knows them, Gladys tapped her tail on the floor, happy to have stumped me. I rolled my eyes and looked to the door again, I hope that the doctor's other patient is alright. Damien's sharp gasp rips me from my thoughts, "What? You're here?! Christa!....You have Zeff with you too?" My mate ran his hands through his hair and growled lowly, "You should have told me....Give me another 30 minutes...yes, I'm at another appointment! What do you think I do all day? Sit around and wait for you to come dropping by unannounced?" I covered my mouth to hide the slightest smile from seeing my mate flustered, he could be so cute sometimes. "Yes...fine...whatever...bye"

He came back and sat next to me, "I hope your in the mood for visitors" His chin was in his hand with his elbow propped up on the side of the bed. "I should be okay." I took his hand in mine and looked back at the door when the Doctor came in. I liked Otis, he was kind and efficient, he didn't waste time when he was working. He was a good pack doctor in my opinion. "My apologies in advance, the printer was jammed and I had to attend to someone for longer than I expected." Otis came in and placed his leather bag on the side table, "Now on to your x-rays, it seems that two ribs on your left side have been broken. We call ribs 8 and 9 false ribs because they connect to your spine at the back and not your sternum in the front. If you look here," he held the x-ray to the light to give me and Damien a view of the picture, "If you look here you can see the imperfection in that rib? And the lack of an end in that one?" I could see that one of my ribs, it was the eighth one, it had a kind of bump in it and the one under it had a separation that made it seem jagged. "Now because there is a high risk of your lung being punctured I advise extra care when moving around. If you have difficulty breathing or you cough up a substantial amount of blood call me and we will work it out. And if your wolf can't heal it within two weeks, we can schedule you a shot"

Damien rubbed my back gently while the doctor spoke. When he was finished we went back to the pack house to meet the rest of the council.

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Even before we got inside the house I could hear voices and laughter. I stood behind Damien and held his arm like I normally do, he was my shield and I was his soul's armor. Gladys became stiff when we got inside and went to the living room. There were two different people. I had only seen them in pictures or heard their voices when new laws were passed by the council regarding werewolves. I hated to be rude and stare but she was there. In the flesh.

Alpha Christa Fuller was just sitting on the couch. She was the ultimate female, being the first female to be in the council and I could see why. Alpha Fuller was the leader of the Full Moon Pack, she lived in the arctic cold, but she didn't seem like an ice queen. In fact, she was flushed beet red and slouching on her seat like a dog on a hot day, "I forgot how hot it was here..." She groaned out while fanning her face. Her ash blonde hair was collected in a messy bun, a half-hazard way to get the hair off her neck. "It's only spring, Christa" Damien smiled at her like she was the most pitiful thing on earth. "Oh, shut up, Kingsley."

There was a sharp sound coming from the powder room behind us, Damien stood taller, "Zeff..."

He was taller than my mate, he was probably the tallest man I had ever seen. The Alpha stood, at least, at 6"7, with his biceps that were abut the size of my head. Alpha Zeffar had a giant grin that was particularly white against his ebony skin, "Kingsley!" he came up and snatched Damien from my arms and held him in a bone cracking hug. My mate made a sound that expressed his discomfort. Dropping Damien to the side the African Alpha looked at me with kind eyes, "Why hello there" his accent was thick and voice deep. I smiled and waved politely. Christa got up from her spot on the couch and came beside Zeff, she smiled at me which lit up her eyes. I reached out and clutched Damien's hand, "This is my Luna." he introduced me proudly and all I could do was nestle closer to my mate's warmth and hide my face in his jacket.

"So you both came all this way to have a trial?" Damien asked in a slightly agitated tone.

Why is there going to be a trial? Did something happen that I don't know about?

"We will have to wait till Australia and Asia to come" Christa answered.

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Once Alpha Yang and Alpha Taylor came we all headed to the meeting room. I squeezed Damien's arm and whispered, "What's going on?" I had been given no explanation for the reason that 5 separate Alphas were at the pack house. I might be in trouble, Damien used mind link.

Why?

Because I saved you.

My eyes narrowed , Why would that get you in trouble with the counsel?

You'll see.

I began to worry when we entered the conference room and Alpha Fuller took the spot at the head of the table leaving the other 3 Alphas to sit at her right and Damien and I to be seated on her left. I watched as Christa pulled out some papers from a briefcase and place them on the table. She smiled, a simple quirk of her lips before speaking, "Today we will be trying Alpha Damien Kingsley for attacking another pack without authorization or recognition."

All I could do was stare at her then look back at Damien in shock.

"It is also worth mentioning that this Alpha in particular may be accused of killing another Alpha without stating that a challenge was to take place. Also, he may be charged with the stealing of a persons, but that will be determined within this hearing."

If she was suggesting that Damien stole me... I sat back in my chair and tried to find a more comfortable position in my seat, by chest had began to burn from sitting up so long.

"Luna Jillian Sadem, you should be advised that you will not be permitted to speak until given permission because anything you say could be used against your mate in this setting." The female Alpha addressed me and I nodded in understanding. "Good, now we will proceed with today's hearing, Alpha Kingsley, do you admit to entering Midnight Destines Pack Territory yesterday around 3:30 in the afternoon?"

"Yes I did" Damien looked unnervingly calm in this situation and I wanted to squirm in my seat for him.

"Were you invited onto Alpha Easton's territory?" The African Alpha spoke this time.

"Yes, we had an appointment" At my mate's response Fuller took notes on one of her papers.

"Did you break the Alpha's neck upon leaving the room?" Alpha Taylor from Australia asked the accusatory question.

"I did not kill the Alpha. I may have severed a vertebrae or two" My mate answered the question with his regular aloofness. "A 'yes' or 'no' will suffice" Alpha Taylor snapped at Damien's attitude.

"Yes, I did break his neck, is that good enough for you?" My mate clapped back twice as sassy as before, I rested my hand on his knee in efforts to help calm him down.

The questions continued, they ranged from before Damien's infiltration to after the act. They asked when he met me and where we were and all kinds of things that seemed meaningless at the time. Apparently, to the council these details meant the world. They even enquired what side of the bed I slept on!

Damien had been answering very specifically and precisely as he could. I was listening as closely as possible, I already knew the story but the one being accused was to relay the information untill witnesses were called upon. My mate cocked his head at the others in the room, "You're doing all this because Cross called you?"

"We ask the questions-" Alpha Taylor started but Zeffar interrupted, "Cross never called us"

My eyebrows narrowed and I thought of who could have given the tip that Damien had done whatever he had done (most of their accusations made no sense) My father? Easton himself? A beta, or an onlooker? My mother?

Damien sat back and crossed his arms over his broad chest, "So who did?"

"We may not tell you. We don't need you killing more people at random" Christa rested her chin in her hand.

"I didn't kill anyone" My mate continued to deny that allegation the council members threw at him. "Plus what makes you think I'd just flip out and comment murder anyway?"

"You've done it before" Alpha Yang kept his eyes on Damien. My mates face pursed and I could imagine he was thinking about zapping everyone with lasers from the sky. "Actually, we wanted to talk to your Gamma as well, he's in charge of housing correct?" Zeffar picked up a phone laying on the desk.

"Yes?" Damien's voice was sceptic, "The Gamma has his own extension, its--"

"I know" The African Alpha was already dialing. He left the room to carry out the conversation. Damien sat back in his seat and watched everything curiously, he really wanted to know what was going on, I could tell. Still I could not speak out loud and ask him directly what he was thinking so I tried to get a sneaky look into my mate's mind.

Why, hello there, He noticed my presence before I had a proper moment to equate myself with the twists and complicated turns of the male's complex mind.

Sorry, your probably don't want me in here....

No, its fine. I have nothing to hide.

What do you think is going to happen? I inquired.

Maybe some witnesses will be called or maybe they want the Gamma's side of the story.

Why are they mad at you for saving me?

Because I'm impatient

What could your punishment be?

I don't know...maybe a fine, or something physical, like a public whipping. My eyes widened at his last suggestion. Would they beat him? Would they beat my mate infront of his entire pack?

I imagined the scene, I could see the redness of his blood and I could smell the testosterone radiating off the young males. They would want to challenge their Alpha after he was publicly disgraced. Damien would have to accept their challenges and kill them.

All that blood......

Stone made a sound of exasperation, See? Now you made her upset! Damien looked at me apologetically, Sorry, sweetheart. Don't worry, they probably will do something private but noticeable to mar me.

That's not any better.

Oh, sorry.

My nose began to burn, I rubbed it. The feeling was like I snorted a line of pepper and it was congregating in my olfactory bulb. Then my whole body reacted to the smell I was experiencing. It was male and burned of my mother's womb.

A grimace contorted my mate's face. I turned in my seat to face the door, it was him. Alpha? I whimpered through mind-link.

The door opened and out came a male. We had the same dark eyes, the same hair, the same mouth, and our mother's nose.

"D-Devon?" My mouth went on without my knowledge and before I could stop myself I had whispered out his name. My brother....my twin.

He looked at me and smirked. Damien gripped my thigh tightly at the sight of him. I could tell he wanted to snarl.

My brother was accompanied by the Gamma and Zeffar was leading them in. It felt like I had been punched in the stomach and I lost all my air. I was hopeful and excited for a minute, then anger crept in and rage dominated my mind. Normally all my anger was fueled by my wolf, but this, no, this was all me. I could only watch him, my nails digging into my palms and jaw set.

"This is Devon Sadem. The son of Alpha Victor Sadem, actually" Christa was looking at her notes when she introduced him.

Hey, sis

I didn't answer. I refused to let him in my head. I refused to look in his eyes and buckle. He was my brother and I loved him so much, if I looked at him I would forget what he did to me. To our family.

I would forget that he was a coward, that he ran away. I would forget that he was just like my father, quick tempered and violent. I would forget that he betrayed me. I had vowed never to speak to him, that I would let him go without a fight. I also wouldn't fight for him. Now, I never wished death upon my brother, but I didn't think about him often.

He watched. He always **watched!** Then he ran from us like a coward, he couldn't face problems like an Alpha and he didn't get the position. So he threw a tantrum and ran away yet again. He was the weak one, the one who cried first, the one who cowered in fear, but found satisfaction in watching others being tortured. He did it to me a number of times. I would sit there, refusing my tears to touch air and he watched without feeling. Without care, and with the same remorseless smirk that he wears now.

When my sister made her case about why I should live with her she brought up my beatings. The way I was abused and neglected. My brother denied for my father's sake. He kept saying "No, she has never been hit my our father"

Even though he watched and he saw everything.

My emotions felt raw. The pit in my stomach burned like fire. I never though I would see him again, I thought my brother was dead. "This was the man who warned us about your attacks, Alpha Kinglsey" Alpha Taylor gave a small patronizing smile to my mate, "It has also been proven that he is the Luna's brother"

Hearing them say that made a lump form in my throat, he was no brother to me, just like my father was not my own.

"We will now hear Devon Sadem's claim against the Alpha present" Fuller nodded her head while Damien seethed. My brother then proceed to tell the story of how he heard about how I was mated to Damien and how he wanted to come visit me. He spoke about how he just knew that I was in danger and that I was missing, he talked about how he helped my mate in trying to find me. He concluded with saying that he was worried that Damien wasn't doing the right thing and called the counsel down to avenge the Alpha who might as well be dead.

I couldn't tell if Damien was praying or if he zoned out, but my head was here, in the moment. "How did you know that your sister was in danger. Alpha Kinglsey did not tell other packs that his Luna was gone" Christa nibbled on the cap of her pen, exposing one of her canines. "Like I said, I just knew. She is my twin we're connected like that"

Uh huh.

"As werewolves we may be supernatural, but not that supernatural. You are going to have to give me more than that. Right now we have every reason to suspect that you are in cahoots with Kinglsey's alleged enemies, and thus are a biased source."

Damien sighed loudly, like he was bothered. "What do you have to say, Alpha?" Alpha Zeff asked. "You shouldn't trust him"

"And we should trust you?" Zeff crossed his arms in challenge.

"He's a rouge and that's illegal. We aren't getting anywhere in this..." my mate rolled his eyes into the back of his head while he whined.

"We need to know the whole story." Christa explained then continued to investigate.

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And the whole story they got. For the next five hours the counsel called witnesses, asked questions, got my side of the story to know how to properly punish my father, Cross and Easton. Then they took a break for lunch and met in private to discuss the outcome of the session.

I turned in my chair and looked at Damien, he seemed to have aged withing the last day. He had re-assumed his burdens and as always, refused to share them with me. His face showed no emotion, which meant he was in a bad mood. I noticed that with him, if there were no signs of happiness, then there was no happiness. "Why didn't you tell me?" he asked out of the blue and surprised me.

"Tell you what?"

"That you had a bother, a twin no less."

"I guess it never came up in conversation. Plus I don't consider him family, he went rogue after all" I played with the ends of my hair. I would need a trim soon.

"Okay, but it would have been nice to know that there was another one of you"

"Why? Is one of me not good enough?" I teased. My mate's mouth tipped up on the left side, "You know how they say, 'the more the merrier'" he took my hand in his, "But seriously, do you have anymore crazy family members that could be trying to kidnap you?"

I pondered for a moment, "Um, my mom is insane, and I have some pretty weird cousins, but overall, as long as we're together, I'm pretty sure I'll be fine" I noticed how Damien knocked on the wood desk as not to jinx our future.

All the Alphas of the council came in after Damien and I's little conversation. Alpha Zeffar smiled in my direction as he took his seat. Alpha Fuller sat at the head of the table again and straightened her papers.

"Alpha Damien Kinglsey, we have come to a conclusion for your punishment. But first let Alpha Zeffar make a statement" Christa looked to her right to signal him to speak.

"As 4 out of the 5 werewolf international council, we say that Alpha Damien Kinglsey has piled up many offences. Excessive force and battery on another Alpha without initiating a challenge and acting without proper authorization from the council in which he serves." Zeff crossed his hands on the table in front of him, "But many charges were dropped because he only acted admirably. The Alpha that he didn't kill directly did take his mate and that is a punishable offence on Alpha Easton's part."

Damien relaxed in his seat and sighed deeply as if a burden had been lifted from his shoulders.

"But," Alpha Taylor interjected, "You still will be punished for acting without authorization from the council. A mere fine will be sent to your office within the next week. It must be payed and accounted for by another member of the council"

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After the trial, Damien and I went home. The other Alphas were going to stay at the pack house until the next morning. While I changed into sweats Damien busied himself in the kitchen. It was late into the night, the sun had been down for a few hours. I assumed that he was getting a midnight snack, and went downstairs to join him. Gladys hummed with bliss to be home, to be safe, and to be with our mate again.

Instead of seeing the man grubbing on some tortilla chips or something, he was standing by a cabinet with a very pretty glass pouring dark brown liquid into it. "Do you drink often?" I asked while making my way to his side. My rib had begun to ache when I changed my pants and I wanted to sit. My mate shrugged and took a sip while I got into a bar stool. "Not really..." he made a face as he contemplated my question, "I mean, I hate getting drunk, but I like how whiskey tastes."

I smiled, "I missed you"

"I missed you too, sweetheart."

"But not even because I needed you or because I was in danger, but because I actually kinda like your company" I propped my chin in my hand, "Plus you're cute, so that helps"

Damien grinned, "Well thank you, for that you get some peanut butter" Damien reached behind him and took out my jar of peanut butter from the freezer along with a spoon. "Here" he walked around the breakfast bar to give me the snack. I reached for it, but he pulled back, "Kiss first" his lips were puckered and everything. I went up to kiss him but almost immediately pulled back, "Ew!"

"What?" Damien asked innocently, barely containing his laughter. "You taste like fire! And wood, and its gross!" I wiped my mouth, trying to get the whiskey aftertaste from my lips. Damien laughed out loud, a deep, inviting laugh that made the situation humorous. "I love you" he gave me the peanut butter that I opened as fast as possible to cover the taste. "Yeah right" I muttered with a mouthful of delicious creamy peanut butter coating my tongue.

"I know you love me too" Damien leaned on the bar and looked at me with twinkling, mismatched eyes. To see him so relaxed and so happy made my chest feel fuzzy.

"Yeah, I do"

Author's Note:

Okay, so it's been a while, and this was just a mediocre chapter, so I can't even lie that it was worth it. Thank you for reading in spite of that, it is so kind of all you.

What do you think if the werewolf council? Are they mean or crazy?

I hope Jillian gets better quickly, broken ribs are not very fun.

Thanks again, please feel free to comments and vote (I really love when you do) and I hope you enjoyed.

See you next update 🖤

-Deanna

Continue reading next part