

## Chapter 41 - The Lycan King's Gamma

The day after the attack, I could go home. Hunter hasn't left my side. But that has done little to calm my guilt and anxiety over what I did. The media have caught wind of what happened and they have been waiting outside the hospital to question the person who killed a prince.

"Beautiful, it's okay." Hunter said, trying to reassure me. He was holding me protectively as we walked to the back of the hospital, where a car was waiting to take us home.

As much as I wished I could stop feeling guilty, I couldn't. I'm a gamma. I should have incapacitated him. The events of yesterday kept replaying in my mind, and no amount of reassurance from Hunter was going to change my mind.

Luckily, the media wasn't waiting as we exited the hospital. Greyson and Zach were waiting by the car for us. Without saying a word, Hunter opened the back door and motioned for me to get in. I hopped in and slid over so Hunter could hop in beside me. When we were all in the car with Greyson in the driver's seat, we made our way to the Royal pack house.

My stomach was in knots as we pulled up out front and the media filled the driveway. There was a wall of warriors trying to keep them back so we could park the car.

"Kailen, it's okay. Ignore them." Hunter said, squeezing my thigh. I was on the verge of tears, watching how crazy everyone was acting.

As soon as Greyson parked the car, warriors surrounded the car. Hunter opened the door and stepped out just as Greyson and Zach also exited the car. I slid across the seat and he took my hand before helping me out. As soon as the media saw me, they pushed heavily against the warriors that were holding them back. Hunter rushed me inside with warriors surrounding us. Zach and Greyson entered behind us and locked the door.

My lungs twisted painfully as I listened to the yelling coming from outside. I was finding it hard to breathe as Hunter tried to lead me to our

apartment. I gasped as tears streamed down my cheeks. Hunter scooped me up in his arms and I buried my face in his chest.

“It’s okay, baby. Just breathe.” He whispered. I didn’t realize we were in our apartment until Hunter placed me down on our bed.

“Beautiful, how are you feeling?” Hunter asked me, kneeling in front of me. I was sitting on the edge of the bed.

“I think I need a bath.” I breathed out.

“Okay, baby. I’ll get that started for you.” Hunter said, standing. He bent down to kiss my forehead before he went to the bathroom.

I heard the water running before I entered the bathroom. Looking at myself in the mirror, I hardly recognized myself. My face and neck are still bruised. My hair was a mess. Unzipping the sweatshirt I was wearing, I could see the extent of the bite he gave me. It was red and angry, covering Hunter’s perfect mark. Tears swelled in my eyes, looking at the wound.

Hunter, coming up behind me, made me jump, but he was quick to shh me, holding me tightly against his chest. I felt disgusting having Jake’s smell and mark on my body.

“Beautiful, it will heal.” Hunter mumbled into my neck.

“I’m so sorry, Hunter.” I cried, not able to hold back my tears any longer. He turned me in his arms and hugged me to his chest.

“Hey, he attacked my queen. He got what he deserved. If you had let him live, I would have killed him myself. You have nothing to be sorry for. I should apologize to you. I let that monster stay in my kingdom even after he tried to claim you,” Hunter told me.

“Hunter, this is such a mess.” I cried into his chest.

“Don’t worry about the media. I’m going to be making a statement about what happened. I will officially claim that you are my mate and that I have marked you.” He said. Taking a deep breath, I nodded.

“Now, let’s get you in the tub. It will help you relax.” He said, kissing my forehead.

I undressed, and Hunter helped me into the tub. The hot water feels amazing on my achy body. I sank in until only my head was above the water. I leaned my head back and closed my eyes, enjoying the silence.

“Baby, are you going to be okay? Zach and Greyson are in the living room.” Hunter asked me. I opened my eyes to find him leaning over the tub, looking down at me.

“I’ll be okay.” I told him.

“Just call out and I’ll be right in if you need anything.” He said, kissing my forehead. I nodded before he left the bathroom, leaving the door open to our bedroom.

I’m not sure being left alone with my thoughts was a good idea, but I know Hunter had things he had to do. This was going to turn into a massive investigation. I find myself going into gamma mode the longer I stay in the tub. I had so many questions, the biggest one being why? Why was I the target? Was it just over the fact that I was the heir to the Opal mountain pack? And then what about the girls that were murdered? Are they a part of this? And why now? If Jake had known that I was here, why did he show up only after Marcus was dead?

My mind was racing, and I got out of the tub. I pulled on a robe and went into the living room to speak with the guys. I needed answers. It was the only way I could move on from all of this. I found them all sitting around the coffee table, deep in conversation about something.

“Kailen, how are you feeling?” Zach asked me, stunned to see me. Hunter stood up from his seat, turning to look at me.

“Baby, you should be resting.” He said, coming over to me.

“I need answers, Hunter. Until this is over, I can’t rest.” I told him.

“Kailen, you have just been through something traumatic. You need to rest.” He said.

“Hunter, I need to know why.” I told him, looking up at him.

“Okay, but if you need us to stop or to take a break, you let us know.” He said, and I nodded. Hunter took my hand and led me over to the chair he was sitting in earlier. He took a seat, pulling me on to his lap.

“Kailen, did Jake say anything to you?” Greyson asked me. I took a deep breath before I answered him.

“He said that I finally remembered him and that I had never put up that much of a fight for Marcus.” I said. Hunter’s body stiffed under mine and I could feel his rage through the bond.

“So, you think he knew Marcus?” Zach asked me, and I nodded.

“I remember Jake’s voice. He spoke to me at the auction house. He must have met Marcus there.” I told them.

“We found more missing women from the area of the murdered victims.” Greyson told me.

“What are you thinking?” I asked him.

“We don’t know why they started killing them, but we suspect that the missing women went to the auction house. All of them have similar features to yours. It was like someone was maybe looking for you.” Greyson answered.

“But, I’ve been here. It was no secret who I was. Why wouldn’t they just have come for me here? Marcus said he had to get the pack organized. But why did Jake wait?” I asked them.

“Maybe Jake feared Marcus?” Zach shrugged.

“Jake also said that I wasn’t his first victim.” I told them.

“Maybe he was kidnapping women that looked like you because he couldn’t have you because of Marcus?” Greyson said.

“Hunter, you’ve been quiet. What do you think?” I asked him, turning in his lap so I could look at him.

“I wish they were both alive so I could rip them apart myself. How the hell could this have been going on for so long without us knowing?” Hunter said. I could feel how angry he was, and I understood.

“All of this was in your uncle's part of the kingdom. He would have been informed. Until the alpha of the rogue attacks finally brought it to our attention.” Greyson said.

“I think we need to investigate Prince Andrew’s kingdom. Things aren’t adding up and we need to get to the bottom of all of this.” I told them.

“In a few days, we can plan to meet the Alpha of the Night River pack. I’ll call him and set something up.” Greyson said, and I agree.

“Kailen, I don’t want you leaving Ivory Moon,” Hunter said.

“What if I promise to stay at your side the entire time?” I asked him and he sighed.

“Fine, but we are bringing extra warriors. I don’t know if there’s another sicko out there trying to get you.” He said, and I nodded. After today, I don’t think I’ll ever be comfortable alone again.

There was a knock at the door, and Zach got up to answer it. The King rushed in, sighing when his eyes landed on me.

“I’m so glad that you are okay, Kailen.” He said, sitting on the couch beside the chair where Hunter and I were sitting.

“I’m sorry for the mess I caused.” I told him.

“He attacked our future queen. If you didn’t kill him, he’d be sentenced to death. The law is the law, no matter who his father is.” He said, and I nodded.

“Hunter, it’s time for the press conference.” He told his son.

“Kailen, are you going to be okay?” He asked me, and I nodded.

“We will stay with her until you return,” Greyson said, and Hunter nodded.

“When I get back, you are resting.” He told me firmly.

“Fine,” I sighed. He kissed my lips before picking me up as he stood up. He placed me down on the chair and kissed me again before turning his attention to his father.

“Lets make this quick.” He told him.

“You link me, if you need me.” Hunter said, bending back down to kiss me again.

“I will, I promise. I love you.” I whispered.

## **Chapter 42 - The Lycan King's Gamma**

The media meeting was a nightmare. Even though she was their future queen, all they could focus on was the fact Jake was dead and she killed him. Both my father and I both defended her, but there was no winning with them. She defended herself, but until she makes a public statement, I don't think what we told them will change their minds. Pulling up to the Royal house, there were still media outlets everywhere.

“Son, don't worry about the media. Just go take care of your mate. Everything else will work out.” My father told me. Sighing, I nodded.

“Did you have to deal with things like this with mom?” I asked him, walking into the house.

“She would have been out there, yelling at them.” He chuckled.

“Do you think she would have approved of Kailen, even though she isn't my fated mate?” I asked him, standing in the foyer.

“Your mother would have loved her. I see a lot of your mother in Kailen, both strong, independent women,” he said, and it made me smile.

“Now go take a few days off. She needs you right now.” My father said, and I nodded. Heading up to the gamma floor, I heard movement coming from inside our apartment. I knew Zach and Greyson were with her, but what the hell were they doing?

I opened the door to find boxes and boxes of files. Piles of files were everywhere and the map from Kailen’s office was hanging on the wall in the living room. Greyson and Zach were both sitting on the couch going through files, but I didn’t see Kailen.

“Hunter?” She called out from the bedroom.

“Baby, what is going on?” I asked her.

“There’s some dinner in the kitchen for you.” She called back, ignoring my question.

“Greyson, Zach, what the hell is happening?” I asked them, sitting on the chair.

“Kailen wants to figure this all out,” Zach answered me.

“She should be resting.” I sighed.

“I won’t be able to rest until we solve this.” She told me, walking back into the living room. She was now dressed in a pair of my sweatpants and one of my shirts, with her hair pulled back into a messy bun.

“Baby, I understand that, but you need to rest.” I told her.

“Hunter, I need to focus on something else right now.” She told me, sitting on the arm of my chair. I pulled her into my lap, wrapping my arms around her tightly.

“How did the media conference go?” She asked me, changing the subject.

“It was fine. Now stop changing the subject and tell me what you’ve found.” I asked her and her face lit up.

“Okay, so we have found out that girls started going missing after I did. None of them were seen or heard from again. We’ve made calls to all the surrounding packs and we are just waiting to hear back. But these areas are where most of the girls were taken.” She explained, while standing up and going over to the map. I followed her.

“Okay, so what are you thinking?” I asked her as we both studied the map.

“All the victims looked alike. It was like they were looking for someone. They definitely had a type. But I don’t understand why the rogues started killing them?” She said.

“Hunter, we also can’t get access to Jake’s financials. His pack is refusing to hand over that information.” Greyson told me.

“Maybe we don’t need them. Jake has social media. We can track him from his posts.” Kailen suggested. I pulled out my phone to open up my account. I didn’t like Jake, but I still had him on my social.

“Okay, and what am I looking for?” I asked her.

“Try going back four years. Maybe we can see if he’s tagged or if he posted tagging a location. Then maybe we can track down where the auction house is.” She told me.

“Kailen, that’s brilliant.” Zach praised her.

“We should also track down Marcus’ phone. He may have older photos on his phone with a GPS location. Most people don’t think of that when they are taking a photo.” She told us.

“And that's why my father made you gamma.” I told her, looking away from my phone.

“I feel like once we solve this, I’m retiring. We should just go live in the beach house.” She sighed, and I chuckled.



“And what will you do with that big brain of yours?” I asked her.

“Maybe I’ll start writing. I don’t know. I hadn’t thought that far ahead.” She said.

“You can’t give up teaching. You love those little fucks,” Zach said, and we all laughed.

“That’s true.” She giggled. I love seeing her smile. She was right, right now she needed to work. And this is what she’s good at. I also noticed that her face was less bruised than before. Taking her mind off of what happened is helping her heal.

“So what’s the plan?” I asked her.

“After we are done with our classes tomorrow, I think we should go to the Night River pack. Retracing their steps could help us locate the rogues.” She answered, and I sighed.

“Kailen, we can send a couple of other gammas. You don’t have to leave the safety of our pack.” I told her.

“Hunter, please, I know things are a mess right now, but I need to solve this. Jake was there that day and I just want to know why.” She told me, pleading with me to let her go.

“Kailen, I think this all has to do with your bloodline. They wanted you to have their child,” I told her.

“I figured that, but how did they know where I came from when I didn’t?” She asked me.

“She has a point, Hunter. Someone knew who she was and made sure that she would end up at that auction house.” Greyson said, and I sighed.

“Okay, but we are heading into my uncle’s half of the kingdom. You stay with one of us at all times. And we will have more warriors with us,” I told her firmly.

“I understand, Hunter. And I promise to stay with one of you at all times. I’ve been waiting four years to learn the truth and I’m so close.” She said, sitting in my lap, after I sat back down.

“And we will get you answers, but I need you safe. I swear you’re going to give me a heart attack.” I told her and she giggled.

“Thank you, Hunter.” Kailen whispered, wrapping her arms around my neck.

“Don’t thank me yet. We still have to convince my father,” I told her.

“I can do that. If you can get the warriors and the plan ready?” she asked me.

“And how are you going to do that, Missy?” I asked her suspiciously.

“The truth, we have some fantastic leads. I’ll also ask him for Prince Andrew’s financials as well. All of his should be public records. And I doubt Jake had the money that was needed at the auction,” she told me.

“Anything else you’d like?” I asked her.

“Go eat, while we organize reports and finish looking through your social media.” She told me. She kissed my lips before moving to a stack of files on the floor. Kailen sat down beside them and went through them.

“Which one of you wants to get the warriors ready?” I asked, turning my attention to my beta and gamma.

“They are already on standby, and the plane should be ready to go by the morning.” Greyson informed me, not looking up from the file he was reading.

“We know you can’t say no to Kailen,” Zach chimed in.

“You three are impossible.” I huffed out before going to the kitchen to get something to eat.

It had already been a long day, and I got little sleep last night with Kailen being in the hospital. Looking in the fridge, Kailen had already made me a plate. I threw it in the microwave to warm it up and strolled through Jake's social.

One thing that stood out was all the girls looked like Kailen. He could have a thing for brunettes, but I still find it odd. About three years back into his social, I found a picture of not only Marcus, but with Owen and Finn. It was from the same event that Owen had showed me, but he only had Marcus, Finn and himself. Cursing, I walked back into the living room, abandoning my food on the kitchen island where I was sitting.

"Hunter, what's wrong?" Kailen asked me, looking up from the file she was going through. I handed her my phone, and she gasped.

"Do you think that Owen and Finn are involved?" She asked me, scared.

"I think it's worth a conversation. This was three years ago. Maybe they knew Jake through Marcus and Jake was there." I told her and she nodded. Taking the phone back, I handed it to Greyson.

"This is the same event from the picture that Owen showed us to identify Marcus." He said, and I nodded.

"I'm going to be calling Owen personally." I told them.

"Hunter, do you want me to call him?" she asked me and Rex let out a low growl. He didn't want to scare her, but he wanted to make his stance known.

"Baby, I'll handle it. I don't want Owen to speak to you again," I told her, and she sighed.

"You know, you're the only one for me." She said, smiling at me.

"Still, I don't trust him," I told her, and she nodded.

"Its fine, Hunter. If it makes you feel better, you can talk to him." She told me, going back to her file. I looked over at Greyson and Zach and they were both smirking at me.

“Green isn’t your color, Hunter,” Zach said, and I glared at him while Greyson chuckled.

“And what have you two found?” I asked them, changing the subject.

“More victims, we already put their location on the map.” Greyson said.

Studying the map, there were over 100 pins placed on the map. It disturbed me that this had been going on for the last four years and no one noticed or put it together.

“Each color represents the year they were taken. It all seemed to start around the time I was taken.” Kailen said, now standing beside me. I wrapped an arm around her waist, pulling her close.

“We will figure this out.” I told her, kissing her temple.

“I just hope we can find some of these girls alive.” She breathed out.

## **Chapter 43 - The Lycan King's Gamma**

It was late in the evening when we finally had all the victims organized. And Hunter had to force me to go to bed. I was feeling anxious about sleeping and having nothing to focus my mind on. When I was working, I didn’t have to think about what happened or the aftermath of what I’d done. I knew that after we were done with our trip, I would have to make a public statement about what happened. But I wasn’t ready to go on record or in detail about what Jake did to me.

Hunter was feeling anxious about me going to class tomorrow. He even offered to teach it, but hiding would only make things worse for me. I needed to get things back to normal and sitting at home, thinking, wouldn’t help. But I was also feeling nervous about going to class. Everyone knew what had been reported, and I knew everyone was still talking about it, forming their opinions about me. Hunter wouldn’t even talk about what happened at the press conference today. He just kept saying that he handled it when I asked him a question.

I was lying in bed, looking at the ceiling, when Hunter came into our room. Afraid to shut my mind off and have it wander to the events of yesterday. I wasn't ready to deal with all of that just yet. I needed to get through this case and the aftermath, and then I could focus on the recovery part. Sighing, I tried to get comfortable as Hunter climbed into bed beside me.

"Kailen, what's wrong?" He asked me, lying on his side, watching me.

"I'm worried about tomorrow." I told him, turning on my side to look at him.

"About class?" He asked me, and I nodded.

"Not just that. The recovery scares me. I know how hard it was the first time, and this just reopened the wound." I told him. He wrapped an arm around me, pulling me to his side as he rolled onto his back. I rested my head on his chest, listening to the beating of his heart.

"Beautiful, you will get through this. And I'm right here, whatever you need." He told me, kissing my head.

"I know. I just hate being in the public eye. Becoming gamma didn't even make me this popular." I sighed, and he squeezed me closer.

"Ignore them. They just want a story. They don't know you like I do, and my father feels the same way. He stands behind you 100%. So don't worry about them, just go to class and then, after, we can leave. And when this semester is over, I think you need to take some time off to focus on yourself. A lot has happened, and you need time to recover and work on yourself." He told me.

"Hunter, you know I can't just do that. Keeping my mind busy helps me." I sighed.

"Then write a book about your past and how this case is connected to you. Maybe getting everything off of your chest will help you heal. You don't have to print it. You can write it and then delete it when you are ready to leave it in the past." He explained, and that sounds like a good

idea. I'm not sure if I'm ready to relive it and write it down, but it could help me to write it down in stages.

"Now let's get some sleep. You have a long day tomorrow." He said, kissing the top of my head.

Sleep did not come easily as I woke with a groan as Hunter's alarm went off. I did not get a restful sleep, and I knew that today was going to be a hard one.

"I can always teach your class today or we can just cancel it." Hunter said, moving to shut off his alarm.

"I need to do this." I told him, crawling out of bed, yawning.

It took me longer than usual to get ready, since I didn't really want to go. I knew I needed to, but it didn't make it easier. Stepping out of our apartment, Zach and Greyson were waiting for us.

"Kailen, we are going to take you to class, and Zach is going to stay with you. Greyson and I have a meeting with my father about our trip today." Hunter told me.

"Okay," I told him, not feeling very comfortable being away from Hunter. I trusted Zach with my life, but he wasn't my mate.

We had to drive to the campus as there was still media everywhere. My stomach was in knots as we pulled up to the building with my classroom, and there was the media being held back by security. This was a media nightmare, and I almost thought about making a statement, so this would all be over and they would move on to the next story. But I walked inside with my head held high, holding on to Hunter's hand. As soon as we made it to my classroom, I felt like I could breathe again.

It didn't take long before my students made their way into my classroom. Hunter gave me a kiss and told me to mindlink him if anything happened or if I needed him. Zach sat beside me the entire class, and I was thankful for his presence. My students were wonderful, and they didn't ask too many questions about what happened a few days ago. It was an excellent

class, and we got into a really pleasant discussion about consent and respect. Even Zach took part and answered a bunch of their questions. After the class was over, I was feeling better and I was glad I forced myself to do this today. Hunter was right when he told me not to listen to the media. Everyone who knows me seems to be on my side in this matter.

“Hunter, class is done. Where are you?” I asked him through the link.

“I’m sorry, Baby. I got caught up. Zach and Greyson are going to cover training. Do you feel okay going with Zach?” Hunter asked me.

“Yeah, I can go with Zach. I’ll just sit and get some work done until you are ready,” I told him.

“I love you. How are you feeling?” He asked me.

“I feel better. I love and miss you.” I told him.

“Zach, I guess I’m going with you.” I said after closing the link with Hunter. I gathered up my things and followed Zach out to the training field. Looking around, I noticed more than normal warriors in the area. Hunter must have called them in. I sat on a bench close to the field and pulled out my laptop to get some work done while Zach and Greyson finished their class.

When I was all caught up with work, Zach and Greyson’s training was still not over. I sat there wondering what was taking Hunter so long to get here. We will have to leave for the airport soon. As nervous as I was about stepping foot onto Prince Andrew’s side of the kingdom, I was eager to see where this case would take me. I wanted answers, not only for myself but for the missing women.

“Hunter, what’s wrong?” I mindlinked him.

“Nothing is wrong, Baby. I’ll explain everything on the plane. I have someone grabbing our bags, so after Zach and Greyson are done, just head to the airport and I’ll meet you there.” He linked back.

“Is it that bad?” I asked him, my stomach now in knots.

“Baby, you have nothing to worry about. I’ll see you soon.” He said before closing the link. Sighing, I went back to watching the students train.

They were getting good, and I noticed that Mr. Cooper was even using some moves I had shown him. I felt good about being a part of the teaching process with the future alpha’s and beta’s. Hopefully, they will be better alpha’s and beta’s than their fathers and real change can happen.

After class was done, Greyson and Zach took turns getting ready, and then they were both done. We made our way to the airport, where Hunter was waiting outside the plane for us. Hunter was standing with a bunch of warriors that were coming with us. He came over to the car as soon as I stepped out. Wrapping his arms around my waist, he pulled me close, crushing his lips to mine.

“I missed you.” He whispered, pulling his lips from mine.

“I missed you. Is everything okay?” I asked him, looking up at him.

“I’ll explain everything on the plane.” He said, grabbing my hand and leading me to the plane. Hunter and I boarded the plane, and the warriors followed behind us. Zach and Greyson were the last to board, and they sat across from Hunter and I. As soon as the plane took off, I turned my attention to Hunter. I could feel that he was anxious through our bond, and it was turning my stomach into knots.

“Hunter, tell me what’s going on?” I asked him and he sighed.

“My uncle is threatening war. He called dad after learning that we were coming to investigate another matter. He told him you would be arrested if you were to step foot on his side of the kingdom,” Hunter said, and I gasped.

“And, we are still going?” I rushed out.

“Hunter, what are you planning?” Greyson asked him. And it all clicked.

“You are planning on challenging him,” I gasped out.



“Kailen, this needs to be done. My father already runs that side of the kingdom, and I will not let him threaten my mate.” Hunter said.

“Hunter, I understand that, but you should have discussed this with me first. What if something happens to you?” I looked at him, and I could feel the tears building. I was not emotionally ready to handle this. If anything happened to Hunter, it would kill me.

“Baby, I promise everything will be okay. Nothing is going to happen to me and when it’s over, we will go back to our investigation.” He said, wrapping an arm around my shoulders and pulling me close. Taking a few deep breaths, I tried to get my emotions in check.

“Please, trust me.” He whispered, kissing my forehead.

## **Chapter 44 - The Lycan King's Gamma**

I could feel how anxious and scared Kailen was through our bond. But this had to be done. I refuse to have anyone threaten my mate, our queen, and get away with it. Jake biting over Kailen’s mark was a crime, plus everything else he did. Kailen may not be my fated mate, but our people will respect her. And as soon as my uncle called to inform us that Kailen would be arrested, he declared war. I knew I could beat him. I’ve been training my whole life for a challenge and he’s a second-born alpha. My father is stronger than him and I could beat my father.

Kailen was quiet the rest of the flight and I could tell that she was growing more anxious the closer we got to our destination. She was watching out the window when I reached over, resting my hand on her thigh. She jumped before she turned her attention to me. I could tell she was on the verge of tears.

Undoing my lap belt, I reached over and undid hers before I stood up from my seat. Taking her hand, I led her back into the bedroom at the back of the plane. I knew she was holding back because she didn’t want to breakdown in front of the warriors. She didn’t want them to think that she was weak.

I closed the door behind us before I took a seat on the bed. Kailen was standing by the door, watching me intently.

“Baby, please come here.” I asked her. She sat down beside me, but I pulled her onto my lap so she was straddling me. Resting her forehead against mine, she let out a sigh.

“Please talk to me?” I breathed out.

“Hunter, you should have talked to me about this. What if something happens to you? I can’t watch you get hurt. Aurora will force the shift, and then we will break the law.” She told me. Staring into her hazel eyes, I could see that she was terrified.

“I will not lose, and I will let no one arrest you for protecting yourself. You are their queen, and they will respect you.” I told her and she sighed.

“Hunter, I killed a prince.”

“Kailen, you killed your attacker. Your life was in danger and you protected yourself. And you outrank him. The title has nothing to do with this,” I told her and she nodded.

“Baby, I will not lose or get hurt. I’ve been training for this my entire life. And I can almost kick your ass. I think I’m ready.” I chuckled, and she gave me a small smile.

“I still feel guilty about all of this.” She said, and I pulled her closer.

“You have nothing to feel guilty for. I should have protected you. And that’s what I’m doing now. No one threatens my queen and gets away with it.” I told her.

The pilot announced we were about to start our descent, so Kailen and I had to make our way back to our seats. As soon as Kailen looked out the window, she gasped. Zach looked out his window and cursed. Looking around Kailen, I noticed we were about to land and there were warriors everywhere.

I'm not sure the amount of favors my uncle had to pull to get all these warriors here, but they were about to feel my wrath at this level of disrespect. Regardless of who Jake attacked, he still attacked someone, and his title would not protect him from his actions.

I looked over at Kailen to see her shaking, trying to hold back her tears as the plane hit the tarmac. I wrapped an arm around her shoulders and pulled her into my chest. Looking over at Zach and Greyson, I gave them a nod. They knew about the plan and their job was to protect Kailen. All the warriors with us were here to protect her.

Exiting the plane, a few warriors went first. My uncle was waiting at the bottom of the stairs waiting with some of his warriors. Kailen walked down beside me. She was squeezing my hand as her eyes never left Prince Andrew. Zach and Greyson were right behind her. Everyone had their orders and this should be over quickly.

"Finally, come to your senses, Hunter." My uncle sneered at me.

"You're an even bigger idiot than I thought if you, for one second, thought I'd hand over my queen." I told him and he growled.

"You will go to war over some whore?"

"Your son broke the laws and if Kailen wouldn't have killed him, I would have." I growled out.

"And how the fuck do you know she didn't like it?" He yelled and Rex let out a murderous growl. All of his warriors took a step back, and I could even see the fear in my uncle's eyes.

"Are you challenging our future queen?" I growled out.

"No, I'm challenging the whore who killed my son." He sneered. With that, Rex forced me to shift, ripping my clothes to shreds.

My Beta, Gamma and warriors surrounded Kailen while Rex started circling around his prey. The fear in my uncle's eyes as he looked at Rex made me chuckle. If he thought I was protective of Kailen, wait until Rex rips him apart.

My uncle shifted, and so did his warriors. What my uncle did next didn't surprise me. He took off and Rex started the chase. Rex would never let this fucker live.

Fighting broke out around us and it didn't take Rex much effort to catch up with my uncle's dark gray wolf. I don't think his wolf wanted to fight, but there was no going back now.

Gamma Kailen Steele

As soon as Rex shifted, I knew there was no going back. Everyone shifted around me, and I noticed that all our warriors were surrounding me. Now I knew why Hunter had brought all the warriors. It wasn't for him; it was to protect me.

Greyson and Zach were both standing guard around me as I watched the scene unfold. I tried to shift to help, but I couldn't.

"Aurora, shift." I commanded as wolves targeted Greyson and Zach. I knew Aurora was stronger.

"I can't. We are pregnant." She whined, and I was stunned, lost in my thoughts, until a wolf tackled me to the ground. Greyson's massive brown wolf tackled the wolf, and he flew off of me while I tried to get up.

"Hunter!" I yelled out through our link. This situation just went from bad to worse. I needed Hunter to get back to me.

"Kailen, shift," he commanded.

"Hunter, I can't. I'm pregnant." I told him, while trying to dodge around the wolves fighting around me. This was terrifying as I tried not to get hit or cut by bodies and claws, my arms wrapped around my abdomen.

How the hell could I even be pregnant? My heat was less than eight hours and the damage. This shouldn't be possible. Someone knocked me to the ground and a large light brown wolf had me pinned to the ground, his long claws digging painfully into my shoulders. Snapping his powerful jaws in my face, I kicked him in the stomach. The action only angered

him as he growled out, digging his claws in further, causing me to scream out in pain.

Before I knew what was happening, the wolf was gone and Rex was standing over my body, growling at any wolf that would come close.

“Baby, you’re hurt.” Hunter said through the link. I looked at his body, now covered in bites and scratches, but nothing was still bleeding. Before I could say anything to him, he let out a howl and all the wolves stopped what they were doing.

Our warriors surrounded us, with Zach and Greyson being the closest. Hunter shifted back. Kneeling down beside me, he helped me to stand up. My shoulders were bleeding, but I was okay.

“Everyone stand down. Prince Andrew is dead and if anything happens to my Queen, I will rip all of you apart.” Hunter yelled out. Zach and Greyson shifted back, about to take me back to the plane.

“I have her. You two figure out this mess until I return.” He told them.

Hunter walked me back to the plane in silence as some warriors surrounded us until we were on the plane safely. Hunter closed the door behind us as I walked back into the washroom to look at the damage. My shoulders were killing me.

“Aurora, is our baby okay?” I asked her, afraid that I had lost too much blood.

“Baby is okay.” She answered, and I let out a breath. Hunter came into the small washroom wearing a pair of shorts. He growled when he saw the wounds on my shoulders.

“Kailen, why didn’t you tell me? I never would have risked this,” Hunter said, and I sighed.

“Aurora just told me when I tried to shift and couldn’t.” I told him. He pulled me out of the washroom and into the bedroom. After sitting on the bed, he left the room. He came back into the room with a first aid kit and

I was feeling anxious about his lack of excitement, or maybe he didn't want to risk getting excited.

"Aurora, does everything feel okay with the baby?" I asked my wolf.

"Kailen, everything seems to be okay." She answered.

Hunter cut off my shirt before removing it and started cleaning up the wounds. I noticed I was healing slower than normal, and I assume it's because Aurora is making sure our pup is safe.

"Hunter, are you okay?" I asked him. His emotions were all over the place.

"Baby, we should have had you checked before we did any of this. I could have lost not only you but our pup." Hunter said after he set everything down and knelt down between my legs.

"This isn't your fault. And I'm okay, a little sore, but I'll live and Aurora is taking care of our pup." I told him with tears in my eyes. I never thought I'd even be able to have a pup of my own.

Hunter wrapped his arms around my waist, pushing his head into my chest. I wrapped my arms around his neck, pushing my hands through his hair.

"I can't believe this is happening. And I could have lost you." He whispered.

"I'm okay, Hunter. And I'll get checked out when we get home. But right now, we need to deal with the fact that you just killed your uncle." I told him and he looked up at me.

"We are going home. We will come back and investigate once it's safe. I'm not risking you or our child." He told me. And as much as I wanted to argue, I couldn't. I would not risk this pregnancy for anything. This may be my only chance to give him a child.

"Okay." I told him and he let out a breath.

“I’ll have Zach on the plane with you and warriors watching the door to the outside. You need to rest. I’m just going to clean up your wounds and then I’ll get you some water.” He told me and I nodded.

After my wounds were all cleaned up, I was ready for bed. Hunter tucked me in before going to get me a bottle of water. Once, he was satisfied that I was safe. He leaned down, kissing my forehead.

## Chapter 45 - The Lycan King's Gamma

The plane was already in the air by the time I woke up. Hunter was snuggling into me when I shook awake. Panic of what had just happened hit me until Hunter rubbed my stomach. He was my big spoon with his arm draped over me. Kissing my shoulder, I felt myself calming down.

“Baby, it’s okay.” Hunter mumbled.

“What happened?” I asked him, rolling over to face him.

“I left Greyson and Zach there with most of the warriors. My father has sent more warriors to get everything cleaned up. I’ll meet back up with them in a few days.” He told me, with his eyes still closed.

“Hunter?” I asked him, and he opened his eyes to look at me.

“Are you okay?” I whispered.

“I’m more than okay, beautiful. We are having a baby.” He exclaimed with a smile.

“Hunter, what if something happens and I can’t carry to term?” I asked him. I didn’t want to disappoint him and if I wasn’t in danger, I probably would have waited to tell him until I knew for sure.

“Kailen, we will cross that bridge if it comes to that. I know you are worried about what I will think if you can’t have a child, but I’ve already accepted you for you. A child is just the cherry on top of an already perfect sundae.” He said, pulling my chest flush with his.

“How did I get so lucky?” I asked him with tears in my eyes.

“Baby, I know what you have been through, and it’s not your fault. If it's meant to happen, it will happen.” He said, peaking my lips.

“I love you.” I whispered before my lips brushed his, my heart racing in my chest. This man always made me forget all the bad in this world. He deepened the kiss, but then pulled away.

“I want you, but I think we need to get you checked first,” he said. I wanted him, but I knew that this wasn’t a time to risk it. He kissed my nose after I nodded.

“How are you feeling?” He asked me, pulling back the bandage on the shoulder I wasn’t lying on.

“I’m okay. Can’t wait to be home.” I told him and he nodded.

“Looks like this side is all closed up, but it’s still heavily bruised. You still need to take it easy until everything is healed.” He told me, placing the bandage back down.

Before anything else could be said, the pilot was announcing our arrival. We should land in the next 10 minutes, and I was glad to just be home. I still felt exhausted, even though I had slept. But I know the first stop would be the hospital to get checked out. I wouldn’t be able to rest without knowing if I’ll be able to carry this baby to term.

Hunter kissed me before getting out of bed to get dressed. After he was done, he went around the bed to help me pull on a sweatshirt. I knew I probably looked like a hot mess, and I still had dried blood in my hair. After we were finished, we made our way out of the bedroom and into our seats. There were only about six warriors with us, and I assume it’s because when the plane lands, the media will surround us demanding a statement from Hunter. He not only killed his uncle, but the supposed king of that side of the kingdom. And days after, I killed his son. The media are going to have a field day.



When the plane landed, I hesitated before I looked out the window. I was right about the media. They were everywhere and there were warriors and police holding them back from our plane. Hunter leaned over, taking my hand in his, bringing my hand to his lips.

“Everything will be fine. Let’s worry about us first. They can wait, and my father will issue a statement soon.” He told me and I nodded. I have more important things to worry about right now.

When the plane finally came to a stop, three warriors exited the plane first. Hunter and I followed, and the last two warriors followed us. There was already a car waiting, and Hunter didn’t waste any time pulling me over to the car and opening the back door for me. I slid in and he slid in next to me. Hunter told the driver to take us to the pack hospital. One warrior hopped in the front passenger seat and the others were in the car in front of us and one behind us. Hunter wasn’t taking any chances.

When we finally pulled up to the pack hospital, my stomach was in knots. It was very early in the morning and there was no one around. Even the media didn’t follow us, or maybe the driver lost them. Honestly, I was lost in my thoughts and I wasn’t paying attention. Hunter squeezed my hand and pulled me from my thoughts.

“You ready?” He asked me. Letting out a breath, I nodded. Hunter opened his door and got out. I followed, and we walked into the hospital together. To my surprise, Dr. Connors was waiting for us at the front desk.

“I called her before we left,” Hunter said in my head.

“Kailen, let’s get you checked out.” She said, before leading us to a room.

Hunter then helped to take off my sweatshirt, so Dr. Connors could exam the wounds on my shoulders. They looked to still be healing, but Aurora said that my healing ability would be slower.

“Kailen, can you tell me what happened?” Dr. Connors asked, taking a seat in front of me. I was sitting at the exam table with Hunter standing beside me.

“Aurora said I couldn’t shift because I’m pregnant.” I told her.

“And does Aurora say that you are still pregnant?” She asked me, and I nodded.

“She told me that’s why I was healing slowly.” I told her and she nodded.

“Prince Hunter mentioned you went into heat. That would have been about a week ago?” She asked me, and I nodded.

“It only lasted about eight hours, though,” I told her.

“If your wolf is refusing to shift, then you are pregnant, but I want to do an ultrasound to make sure everything has closed up like it should.” She told us.

“Aurora says that everything seems okay. But I’m worried that I wouldn’t be able to carry to term.” I told her.

“Just lay back and relax. I’ll be back with the machine and we can talk after I take a look.” She told me and I nodded. After she left, Hunter stepped in between my legs that were hanging over the edge of the exam table.

“Kailen, everything will be okay.” He mumbled, kissing my forehead.

I knew that if I couldn’t have a child that it wouldn’t be my fault, but I still felt like a failure. Hunter says he doesn’t need a child, but I know he wants them. I was ready to accept that I would never have a child, but now that we have this hope, it would kill me if I couldn’t carry this child to term. All I want now is to be a mother.

Dr. Connors came back into the room. Hunter moved out of the way and I laid back on the table. I pushed my pants down, exposing my lower abdomen while she got the machine ready.

“So there won’t be much to see, as you will only be about a week pregnant or three weeks in human pregnancy. We won’t even be able to hear a heartbeat yet, but I just want to check that everything is sealed up. Have you had any bleeding?” She asked me and I shook my head.

“That’s a good sign. Let’s look.” She said before squeezing some gel onto my stomach. She then pressed the wand into my stomach, moving it around until she found what she was looking for. Dr. Connors turned the screen to us. Hunter was standing beside me on the other side of the exam table.

“That’s your little bean.” She pointed to the screen, and I squeezed Hunter’s hand while I looked at what would eventually grow into our child. I had tears in my eyes when Hunter leaned over and kissed my cheek.

“From what I can see, everything looks good. But I would like to see you every week for the next six weeks to make sure that everything is going how it should. Also, if you experience any bleeding, you come in immediately.” She told me and I nodded.

“What about work?” I asked her, as she wiped the gel from my stomach.

“Just take it easy. Don’t put yourself in a situation that would require you to shift or to fight. Everything looks good now, but this is a high-risk pregnancy.” She told me.

“Also, sex is safe, but just be careful. Everything should be okay, but if anything hurts, stop and come see me.” She said before I sat up.

“Thank you, Dr. Connors.” I told her.

“And Kailen, just be happy. Congratulations to the two of you.” She said, and I gave her a smile.

“Dr. Connors, please say nothing about this.” Hunter asked her.

“Of course not. I would suggest holding off on telling anyone until about the sixth week, just to be safe. And I’ll call you with an appointment for next week. Both of you are going to make wonderful parents.” She told us before she left the room. Hunter went around the table and settled between my legs again.

“How are you feeling?” He asked me.

“I might be a mom.” I whispered, looking up at him, tears in my eyes.

“And you’ll be a wonderful mother. Now let’s get you home to bed.” He said, before pulling my sweatshirt over my head. Leaning down, he kissed me before I even had my arms through.

Licking my lips, I thrust my tongue into his mouth to play with his. Heat pooled in my core as our tongues tangled together, Hunter’s hands finding my hips, pulling me to the edge of the table.

“I love you, my queen.” He whispered, pulling out of the kiss, resting his forehead on mine.

“I love you, my king.” I told him, pecking his lips.

“Let’s go home.” He said, pulling down my sweatshirt after I pushed my arms through. Hunter helped me down from the table and we made our way home.

“Aurora, how can this be happening?” I asked my wolf as we were driving home.

“Kailen, I’m not sure. I did all I could to fix the damage done. I didn’t know if it would be enough, but it was. And I’ll do everything I can to keep our pup safe.” She told me.

“I just can’t believe we are having a baby.” I said to her. Never did I think this day would ever come and I know it’s early and I shouldn’t get my hopes up, but I can’t help it. This is the happiest I’ve ever been since Hunter marked me as his.

We finally made it back to the Royal pack house and even though it was early morning, the media were still standing outside. The warriors put up a barricade and were guarding the perimeter. Later today, Hunter will have to make a statement about what happened. Which means I should also make a statement. I need to put this all behind me so I can move on and be as healthy as I can be for our pup.

We finally made it home, and I was excited to have a shower and some sleep. I wanted to go with Hunter when he and his father went to make a public statement.

“Hunter, I want to come with you to the media conference.” I told him, walking into the bedroom after my shower. I felt so much better and my shoulders were almost all healed up. Hunter was lying on the bed, looking at his phone.

“Baby, I don’t think that’s a good idea. I don’t want you under any unnecessary stress.” He said, looking up from his phone.

“I need to put this behind me. I’ll start therapy every day if I have to, but I need to put this all behind me so that I can focus on growing our baby.” I told him, crawling into bed beside him.