

Alpha's Blind Luna, Chapter 61

Chapter 61

Honestly, I didn't hear Max and Morgan pull in. They busted through the door, ready for a fight. I stood, my death grip on the chairs I was leaning against relaxing, third cigarette still in my mouth. Auri was still sitting on the chair. She was pretending to smoke, an unlit cigarette in her mouth. She was holding onto her iced tea that she had refilled for us.

I looked at my watch. "It's been three fucking hours."

"We were in the middle of something Logan! What the hell happened here?" Morgan was taking stock of the house, the table, and Auri.

"Yeah, another dead end of the Bloodhunter coven? Almost like it was conveniently laid out to have you busy for a few hours." I scoffed, turning away from them, I leaned back on the chairs, my eyes roaming over the paperwork in front of me.

"How the hell..."

I shook my head and reached out, tapping the ash into the ashtray. I realized my cigarette was almost gone and I grabbed another, lighting that one with the butt of the old one. I confirmed my new cigarette was lit before putting out the old one in the pile of butts. "Because they came here instead."

"The bad man came." Auri said between the cigarette she held in her mouth.

"What little bird? What bad man?" Max's voice sounded higher than normal, fear creeping into his voice.

"Micah Smith, vampire bastard extraordinaire. The man needed a cat to stroke on his lap to complete the look." I shook my head at the memory.

"What the hell was Micah doing here? Did he see Auri? Did he do anything?" Max spewed out questions, visibly upset.

I shook my head. "When they drove up I had her hide. I specifically said for her not to come out until she heard you or a phrase. He wasn't looking for her though. He was here for me specifically."

Max walked over to Auri and took the unlit cigarette out of her mouth. He crouched down and looked at her. "Are you okay little bird?"

She nodded. Max grabbed the lighter and lit her cigarette, putting it to his own lips. "I get the feeling I'm gonna need this." He mumbled.

"Why was he here for you? What did he want with you?" Morgan cut him off and strode over to the table, glancing at the paperwork strode about. "Oh fuck." I saw his eyes reading over some of the information.

"He wanted to make a deal. Apparently the Alpha King made a deal with him. They kill off me and my pack, the Bloodhunter coven gets the land."

Max swore. He put his hand on the back of Auri's chair. "Of course. Why come out of hiding when you know the High Council is just gonna shoot you down? Why bother except that you are surrounded with well known and influential beings."

"Ones that you can create alliances with and deals. The only place they are all in one place is the damn meetings." Morgan finished Max's thought, shaking his head. "It was never about the High Council, they were just humoring them. Shit."

"He wants to go after the Alpha King together. Apparently he thinks the Alpha King is an asshat."

"He is. Everyone knows it. How he hasn't died yet is beyond me." Max leaned over the table and shook out the ash in the tray.

"But that's not really beneficial to him." Morgan mused.

I shook my head. "It is when he gets three of the largest human cities in the Alpha's King territories."

"Fuck." Morgan's mouth snapped shut. He thought for a second. "Let me guess, the Alpha King offered him your territory."

I nodded, letting out the smoke slowly from the side of my mouth. Rubbing my neck, I just couldn't wrap my head around it. There was so much information here. So much to sort through I felt like I had only scratched the surface. That thought alone was pissing me off.

"So what's all the paperwork?" Max asked.

I took a drag of my cigarette and let it out. "He said it was a gift. Motivation to make the right decision. It's basically the history between my pack and the Alpha King. Between me and the Alpha King. Apparently a bunch of shit Morgan already knew I'm sure." I looked over at Morgan suspiciously.

"While I know a lot, I don't get involved in werewolf politics if I can help it." Morgan went over to bar behind the piano and poured himself a drink. "Auri knew some as well, but she didn't ask further either. She definitely didn't know that she was meant to be queen. The information that a white wolf would be born and take her side next to the next Alpha King was not information privy to many people."

I closed my eyes and took a breath. "How does any of this making any fucking sense?" I swept my hands over the paperwork. "The rogue attacks that Auri and I had been dealing with? The Alpha King. The attack when I was 14? The Alpha King. Even a fucking assassination attempt when I was a baby that led to the death of my grandfather. The Alpha King."

Saying it out loud it sounded preposterous. How one man could influence every single thing in my entire life. How every thing that had happened, it was all linked to him. There was even a list of close accomplices, his court. One of which was Leandra. It had all her info, her past work and even her current location, which was my pack. I was beyond tears at this point. I was livid.

"...what do you mean Auri was supposed to be queen?" Max looked at Morgan, brow furrowed. His hand had moved from the chair to holding Auri's shoulder. He looked like he also was struggling to process all the information what was being laid out before him.

"He's referring to a prophecy by a warlock named Cyrus Nym. Unlike a human king or queen, the Alpha King title isn't passed down by blood, though it can be. But any Alpha can be born with a specific gene, one that makes their Alpha presence stronger, makes them stronger. One that will make all Alpha's show respect for." I explained, staring at nothing. "Apparently this Cyrus Nym also knows when a new King is born. One will only be born when the previous King dies. He apparently knows specific details about their whereabouts and who they are. Enough that the High Council would know."

"Not always but at least this time, his Luna was foretold as well. That the Luna Queen was to be the ultimate strength of the Alpha King. She would be the

only white wolf of her generation. And she would be extraordinary to rule beside this Alpha King." Morgan took a drink as pulled out a dining chair and sat down.

I put out my cigarette in the ashtray. "The currently Alpha King is the previous Alpha King's son. He was not born with the gene."

"You were." Morgan was staring at me intently but I didn't look at him.

"Along with my assassination attempt, he was behind the hunter attack on Auri and her mother. It's all in here. They killed Auri's mother because she was a white wolf. But Auri was only four, her wolf hadn't manifested. So they thought they killed the right person, her mother having no mate. Auri's father was her chosen mate. They fucked up without knowing it. Without knowing Auri was the one meant for me, not her mother."

I stared down at the table. Voicing it, was making me shake. I was so angry.

"DAMN IT!" I kicked the dinning table chair and watched as it flew into the glass looking out over the back yard. The glass shattered and made everyone snap their heads up.

Grabbing the box of cigarettes and the lighter, I walked out the broken window, feeling the broken glass dig into my feet into the vard. But I didn't care. I didn't give one flying fuck. With shaking hands, I struggled to lite the cigarette I was holding between my teeth. Looking out over the sea, I swore again. It was so much damn information going through my head. I was far past the point of where I would have normally shifted if Cato was with me. Without him though, I was swimming around this sea of anger. Trapped from actually letting myself run away.

Micah was right. This gave me plenty of motivation. I wanted to get my hands around the Alpha King's neck and watch the light leave his eyes. At the same time though, I hated myself just as much. I hated mv own blood. I hated myself for being the cause of all this. My own genes, leading so many people to their death.

Looking at the long list of deaths. All over me. It made me so angry.

"Logan..."

"I fucking caused all this! Don't you get it! This all comes back to me. Auri's mother, my pack, everything that has ever happened, happened because of me." I yelled.

"No, you didn't. The Alpha King did."

"Because of me! Because of my genes!" I didn't want to be lectured in semantics.

"You didn't know, Logan."

I balled my hands up into fists. "It doesn't fucking matter if I knew or not. The fact remains. All this shit is my fault."

"No one blames you."

"I BLAME ME!" I turned on my heel and stared into the only person around. I stared into grey eyes of Auri.

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"Don't yell at me Alpha." She put her hands on her hips.

The cigarette dropped from my mouth as I looked at her. I searched her face, trying to think, trying to figure out if that really was her. Was my Auri. Inhaling, her scent hit me like a freight train. The forest surrounded me, hugged me. Cato howled and I felt him jump out from the depths. He threw me back and we exploded into our wolf form. It was painful after not having shifted for so long.

She didn't move, didn't flinch as Cato stood before her. He was growling, baring his teeth at her. I tried yank him back, tried to take control again. I watched in horror as he jumped her. She didn't move or dodge as Cato sunk his teeth into her shoulder, his claws into her chest. I screamed from inside but Cato saw nothing but red. Crying out, I watched as blood started to soak through her shirt.

'MATE.' He yelled at her but there was silence.

'Cato, she can't hear you!'

'MATE!' He growled louder the hair bristling.

'Cato stop!' I yelled at him but he pushed me back.

She still didn't move. Cato started to relax, his anger was flowing out of him. As his grip loosened, Auri wrapped her hands around our wolf, slowly sitting down on the grass. He started to whine as his teeth lifted out of her shoulder, his paws settling into the grass. Whining more, Cato started to lick the wounds he just had inflicted on her.

"What the hell Logan!" Max came out but Auri help up her hand, stopping him in his tracks.

"It's Cato, not Logan." She stroked our head, slowly. "It's okay Cato. It's okay. I'm here. I can't hear you, but I'm here."

He whined and licked her shoulder. Mate.

"Auri..." Morgan was on his knees next to Max.

She smiled at him. "I'm sorry, Papa. I'm sorry it took me so long to come back to you."

Morgan let out a mangled cry, covering his mouth and nose with both his hands. Even Max had tears in his eyes.

"Princess..."

She chuckled shortly. "It's been a while since I've heard that."

Suddenly, she was being hugged tightly by both vampires. Cato didn't say anything, just nuzzling further into her. We stayed like that for goddess knows how long. All three of us crying and whining at some point. Auri just held us close, wiping the tears from the eyes of whoever was crying. She didn't shed a tear though, a sad smile on her lips the whole time.

"I'm here now, guys. Don't worry. I'm not going anywhere." She cooed at us. "We need to fix the window a storm is coming in." Auri's voice was so soft.

"I can't even be mad." Max said, shaking his head.

Morgan leaned back, and stood first. He took a deep breath. "I'll call someone." He headed back in the house.

"Max, do you mind grabbing some clothes for Logan?"

"Sure, Princess." He rolled up onto his feet and headed in after Morgan.

Auri looked at us, her grey eyes narrowing. She cupped our face and Cato whined. "Cato, I'm disappointed in you."

Cato was surprised, his ears went back flat. He made a single whine.

"You left Logan alone. You left him to get hurt and not heal, to not be able to shift. He needed you and buried yourself deep." She wasn't mad, but there was clear look of disappointment on her face.

Cato bowed his head, laying down before her. He closed his eyes and whined. Auri bent down and kissed our head. "I'm glad you're okay though." She smiled. "Let Logan come back."

Cato licked her hand before stepping back, allowing me to take the reigns again. I shifted, the pain of shifting back made me groan for a second. Rolling my shoulders, I was hit by clothes in the face. Max had thrown them at me just as I had shifted. Auri stood up as I pulled everything on. She walked into the house, stepping on the glass as she did.

"Fuck! Auri!" Max called to her, walking over and lifting her up.

It was like the pain didn't even register with her. All three of us looked at her, at her confused face. Max set her down on one of the kitchen island chairs and kneeled, looking at her feet. Morgan, who had gotten off the phone, grabbed the first aid kit.

"It's fine."

Max was visibly upset. He tore the first aid kit out of Morgan's hand and pulled the glass out of her bare feet. Gingerly he wiped the bottom of her feet with an alcohol wipe but she didn't flinch. The final step he wrapped her feet and taped it at the top. She was staring down at there feet, wiggling her toes.

"Thanks Max."

Max didn't say anything. He didn't even look at her as he got up and walked the first aid kit back.

She sighed and closed her eyes. "This is going to end up being a big adjustment."

"The earliest someone could be here is tomorrow afternoon. We should..." Morgan looked around at the broken glass and paper all over the table. "Clean up a little."

Auri smiled and jumped off the chair, landing on her feet. I winced for her but she just padded over to the kitchen, pulling out a dust broom and pan. Morgan and I looked at one another. I think the same thing was running through our minds. A mixture of shock, horror, sadness, and even confusion. She started cleaning up the glass, sweeping it into the pan that she held still with her foot. Max walked back in and looked up at us, and then at Auri.

"Auri stop! Do you not fucking feel pain?" Max was shaking.

She looked up at him, not at all bothered by his outburst. "No, I don't."

Silence filled the room until Auri started to sweep again, the glass shards clinking together as she filled the pan. My heart hurt. It was easy to see, see the effect of what Micah had done to her when she was little bird. Having Auri back though, we had been so elated that we had forgotten. Her being back didn't mean the effect of her torture disappeared. She would forever be scarred by it, even if it didn't leave marks. Auri was right. This would be another adjustment we would need to get used to.

I took a deep breath. Once I let it out, I went over to the dining table and started making a pile of the paperwork. Setting it all back into the box, I shut the lid. My hand rested the top. There was so much in here. So much information that I would need to continue to go through. Parts that had me worried. But right now, Auri was the priority.

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Chapter 63

One eye cracked open as the sun streamed through the blinds that I forgot to close. Getting up, I rubbed my face. The stubble started to become irritatingly long on my face. I walked into the bathroom and looked in the mirror. Why did I look so damn tired? Pulling out my shave kit from my bag, I started to lather the shave cream and rub it on my face. For a moment, all I could hear was the sound of the straight razor against my skin. Getting a little ways down my cheek, I rinsed off the razor and continued. Settling into a rhythm.

It didn't take me too long and I massaged my face with the after shave. I looked in the mirror. I still didn't like what I was seeing. Being with Auri for the past few days had been wonderful but also had me on edge. As much as Auri being back was the happiest moment, she was still struggling being back. She would jump if you touched her. Now she voiced her displeasure of us wanting to take the shackles and collar off. She refused and we all had been angry but we complied with her wishes. Auri refused to explain why though.

She went about in the same routine as before though. As if she had been there the whole time. Breakfast, going outside, lunch, reading books, dinner, playing the piano or any other activity. It was all the same, but also not. All three of us walked on eggshells around her. Scared that we might do something that would revert her back. Auri tried to ensure us it wouldn't happen but none of us were convinced.

I took more time, going through all the information slowly that Micah had given me. Trying to digest it. It made me feel more disgusted at myself. Morgan was right, I had never questioned the world outside of my pack. I focused, hyper focused even, on their wellbeing but not their place in the world as we knew it. I didn't step back to take a further look at the world. It never mattered until now. My pack almost died for my narrow views. I solely caused all the pain they went through, the deaths of our warriors, of my own family, and even Auri's. My blood, my gene, was the cause of all their suffering.

Looking up in the mirror, I balled my fist up and smashed it against the mirror. It cracked in several places and I pulled back my hand, shaking it out. I stretched my fingers and turned my back, heading into the room. I had to swallow it all. Reign my control back in. For Auri's sake.

Pulling on a shirt and some jeans, I heard wood being hammered. My eyebrows knit as I opened up the door and headed down the stairs. Max was looking out from behind the kitchen. A piece of toast with some jam in his mouth seemingly forgotten. I came over to him and looked out the window. Morgan and Auri were fighting. She had two wooden swords, Morgan had one. They were lunging, dodging, and attacking each other. Auri, her brow knit together, sweat made her shirt cling to her body. She was breathing heavy, Morgan though, looking composed, a hand even still held behind his back.

"They did this before as well. He wanted to see if Auri would remember fighting as little bird as well." Max said, taking the piece of toast out of his mouth.

"I thought Morgan refused to train her." I couldn't take my eyes off the two of them.

"She wouldn't fight me. She would just put her sword down and submit. Morgan had to take it up out of necessity. This was the usual morning routine until you came. Auri asked him to spar this morning."

I sat down and took the glass of orange juice Max had slid over to me. "Why wouldn't Morgan train her to begin with?"

Max sighed and sat down next to me, his eyes not leaving the two of them. He didn't reply. I watched as Morgan slashed down, catching Auri on the shoulder. But she didn't flinch, using the one second pause to launch a counter with the other arm. Morgan was too quick and had his defense read by the time her sword reached him.

"There is a difference between a fighter and a killer." Max said as soon as Morgan blocked her counter.

"What do you mean?" My eyes broke from the fight and I looked at Max. His face was unreadable but there was the beginning of a frown on his lips.

"A fighter will exchange blows. There is an attack, defend, dodge. It's more of a dance and an understanding of what's at stake. They have something to fight for, a reason." Max paused, taking a drink of what I realized was blood. "Auri is a fighter, as am I, and even you. Yes, fights will end in death sometimes. It's the nature of it when you are trying to protect something. Either your own life or something else. But Morgan."

"Morgan is a killer?" I looked back at the two of them, still fighting. Auri had actually pushed back Morgan a little ways, attacking with a ferocity I hadn't seen. I realized after a minute, it wasn't just ferocity, it was desperation.

"Morgan is a killer. Takes no prisoners, doesn't care about steps. Doesn't care about the other person. He will do whatever it takes and if he can avoid a fight just by outright killing them, he will. He never trained Auri because he never wanted that mentality to rub off on her. He wanted her to value strength."

Just then, Morgan stepped forward and landed three quick hits. One to the shoulder, waist and left knee, Auri went down. She was on all fours, breathing heavy into the grass. I watched as she balled up her first and slammed it into

the ground, frustrated. Getting up, I opened up the back door and nodded to Morgan. He nodded back, setting his sword down on one of the chairs.

"Why not take a break Auri?" I put my hand on her shoulder.

"I can't beat him." She sounded bitter.

"You will. One day. But you have to gain your strength back. You're still not healed, still not at your full strength. The fact that you can hold your own that long already shows you're getting stronger." She growled and shrugged off my hand. I balled up my fist and backed up a step as she stood. "Easy for you to say."

I raised my eyebrow. "Morgan, do you mind?" I held out my hand and Morgan smirked, throwing me his wooden sword. Grabbing it, I swung it around a few times before facing Auri.

She looked from the sword to me and she picked up one of the swords from the ground. She also twirled it in her hand, her body dropping a little to face me. I didn't wait. I wasn't going to make the same mistake as I had two years ago. Slamming down the sword with as much power I could muster, Auri blocked it. She had to use her other hand though to stop the sword from being pushed down further.

Auri didn't wait long. She slid out from under my attack and threw her own at me. One. Two. Three.

Each with a fever and determination. I stepped back, avoiding all three. Huffing, she stepped forward but I threw another series of jabs and attacks just as she had. But she didn't move back. Deflecting all of them, she closed the distance between us. My mind whirled as she was inches from me. All sense of the fight gone, smelling her sweat and the forest that clung to her. My eyes were locked on her face, her lips. Leaning down, I couldn't stop myself. I needed to feel her lips. Her touch. I needed to taste her.

Before I could reach her lips, I doubled over in pain. Auri had jammed the hilt of the sword into my abs. She scoffed as she backed up a couple steps. I tried to take a full breath but I couldn't. Going down on one knee, I tried to blink through the pain.

"You got distracted."

I nodded. "You are distracting."

She chuckled. "I guess that means I have an unfair advantage over you."

I knew the silver cut her off. From Kai, from the pack, and from me. I wanted to ask her why. I was upset at her choice to leave it on. Upset that as much as she cared for me, she didn't exhibit any other feelings of love or attraction towards me. I was bitter. Her touches with Max and even Morgan sometimes so fluid when she would barely reach out to me. My phone started to ring, taking me out of my sour thoughts and I answered it.

"Hey Bryan."

'Hey Alpha. Sorry you called and it was pretty late.'

"I realized it after I called. The time change is throwing me off a little."

'Whats up?'

I pinched the bridge of my nose. "A lot...a lot has happened."

'How's Auri?'

Auri walked past me, dabbing the sweat from her face with a fresh towel. She smiled and leaned closer to me. "Hi, Bryan."

Bryan coughed, apparently he had been eating or drinking something. 'I thought...'

I snorted. "Like I said, a lot has happened. Is everything okay with the pack?"

'Yeah. It has been pretty quiet here. Some of the boys are getting ready for the Gathering. Hector is still refusing to go. Denise tried to talk to him but he won't. Are we just going to brush over Auri being back?'

Sighing, I shook my head. "Just leave him Bryan. It's fine."

'But Auri...is she back?'

"Yes?" I looked at her. "I think so."

There was a long pause on the other side of the phone. 'Leandra is upset you haven't called her yet.'

My jaw locked. There was a section in the paperwork on the Alpha King's court, his closest allies and her profile being one of them. Without knowing the hatred the Alpha King had for me, it just seemed like an asshole move to send a woman to warm my bed. Now, knowing she was so close to him, I was afraid. Afraid of what Leandra was. It came with too many questions and I had brushed the paper aside. Worse, I knew I loved Auri still. I knew she was my world and here I was, hiding away from the reality of my own actions.

'Alpha?'

My train of thought was broken by Bryan. " Sorry, thinking. Apologize to her for me."

'Alpha, do you remember what we spoke about, when you first talked to Morgan...'

I growled. "Bryan."

'I'm just reminding you Alpha of what you said.'

"I don't need reminding, Bryan. I'm fully aware of the situation I'm in, thank you."

'Yes Alpha.'

"Please implement full training for everyone. Also, add more patrols on the border."

'What? Why?'

"I'll tell you when I get back. It's not a conversation for the phone." I ran my hand through my hair. "Just start moving assets around as well. Pick up a few more Jeeps, add more groups. Also, I think we need to promote a few Captains, tell Hector he will be the one to choose them."

'Alpha, what the hell is going on?'

"We might have a war on our hands soon, Bryan. I want to be prepared." I looked up at the room. Morgan and Max nodded to me. Auri flashed me a sad smile "Keep that to yourself though. I know the others will question, but tell them that when I back, I'll explain."

'Understood. Anything else Alpha?'

"I want you to dig up information on the Alpha King."

'The Alpha King?'

"Yeah. Do it quietly. I don't want anyone else to know. I want to know if it matches up with my data. Send it to my email."

'You could just ask Leandra? She was close to him...'

"Do not involve her, Bryan. Leave her out of it. Just you."

'Alright. I'll do my best.'

"Thanks. I'll talk to you later."

'Yes Alpha.'

The line clicked and the room fell silent. A heaviness hung in the air. "I'll start on dinner." Auri turned and started to rummage through the refrigerator.

"There is a lot leftover from yesterdays dinner. We can just have that if you want, little bird." Max's eyes went wide and he covered his mouth with his hands.

"We could. It wouldn't be too bad but we are reheating it the pan. Not the microwave." Auri pulled out three containers and put them on the counter. She paused and furrowed her brow, all three of us had our eyes wide. "What? What happened?"

"I'm sorry..." Max looked like he was going to cry.

She looked confused. "Sorry for what?"

"I called you..." He whispered. "...little bird."

She paused for a second and just laughed. "It's okay Max. If anything, I might answer to that before Auri. It's been what, nearly two years since I've answered to Auri. Don't worry." Reaching up, she rested her hand on the side his face. "Don't cry Max. I hate it when you cry because of me."

"I missed you. I missed you so damn much."

She nodded. "I missed you too. I missed all of you." Her head turned in our direction. "You guys were the only thing that kept me alive." Auri looked at me directly. "That kept me fighting to come back."

I shook my head. I felt disgusting. I felt ashamed and mortified. Backing away, I left the room and slammed the door shut to the guest room I was staying in. My Luna, my mate was fighting to come back this whole time and I fucked another woman. I fucked her and now I was having a pup with her. A woman who may very well be a spy for the man who tried numerous times to kill Auri and I. Slamming the bathroom door open, I dropped to my knees and threw up into the toilet.

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"Logan?" I looked up at Auri, who was standing in the door of the bathroom.

After throwing up everything in my stomach, I just sat on the floor with my back against the cool bathtub. I looked away from her, not baring to look at her.

She kneeled down just inside the door on the tile. "Would you like something? Water? Soda?"

I didn't say anything.

"I know it's a lot to handle." I head her breathe out a laugh. "Trust me, I know." She paused. "How can I help?"

I felt the anger and bile rise again. "You can't help me Auri."

"Let me at least try." I could hear the concern in her voice.

The feeling was getting worse. I took a breath, trying not to snap at her. "You've got enough going on. It's just going to be an adjustment." I was fighting for control that I had held onto the past few days desperately.

She was quiet but she didn't move, she just sat on the floor with me. I was getting anxious in the silence. My stomach churned. I dragged myself back to the toilet and threw up more. I breathed heavily over the toilet and I felt a cold towel touch my forehead.

"Don't fucking touch me, Auri."

The compress immediately left and I heard her back up quickly. I knew I scared her and hurt her.

"I'm sorry. I was only...trying to help..."She stammered. She sounded near tears.

Her words had me seeing red though. The feeling of being sick was replaced by anger. "You're sorry? Sorry for what Auri? For making me morn you? For forcing me to move on? For leaving me all alone? What are you sorry for?"

"Logan." Max was standing behind Auri in the doorway. He was giving me a warning but it only served to anger me more.

"I mourned you already! Mourned your death! I moved on Auri. I did exactly as you said. I continued moving forward."

"Logan, don't you dare." Max was pulling on Auri's shoulder, trying to pull her back but she was rooted in the spot.

"I fucked another woman and I'm expecting a pup with her, Auri! I already moved on from you and here you are. Still alive. And you're here just wanting to help? How can a fucking ghost help me?"

There was a heavy silence that settled on us. I scooted back to my spot against the bathtub, leaning my head back. Closing my eyes, I listening for them to leave. Auri was the first to move, but she took a couple steps towards me and I felt the cold compress on my forehead again. My eyes snapped opened and looked at her, sitting on the edge of the bathtub. She was leaning over me, dabbing my face with the cool compress.

"I'm glad you actually listened to me." She said quietly, still wiping my face. I looked at her face, trying to find any source of anger, of hate, of anything that would make me feel better. But the anger just drained out of me to pure shame.

"But you're not dead..." I whispered.

She smiled and she pulled the compress away, holding it in her hands. "At any point in time, I could have died. I even considered myself dead. In all honesty, I will never be that girl again. I've lost a lot of myself in this. I felt it slip away the longer I was little bird. I wouldn't expect you to embrace me fully, to love me, or even forgive me."

Tears formed in the corner of my eyes. I couldn't even speak. I just watched her turn to me, like she was looking at me.

"I don't intend on getting in the way of your life, Logan. Not after being gone for almost two years, being dead to you for almost two years." Her smile dropped and I didn't know if she knew it had. Or how sad she sounded. "I didn't mean to dredge up old memories for you. I just wanted you to know that I appreciated you still being here for me now. Helping Max and Morgan. They were at their wits end." Auri chuckled quietly.

"Auri, I..."

The earlier smile made its way back on her face and she stood up. Setting the compress down next to me, she headed out the bathroom door. She stopped for a moment, her hand on the doorway. Looking back at me, she closed her eyes and smiled at me a little wider.

"Congratulations, Logan."

I watched Auri leave the bathroom. Turning, I punched the bathtub. I heard my knuckles crack with the force I put into it. What the hell was wrong with me? Max had been right. I couldn't keep control. Auri was back but apparently that didn't mean I couldn't push her further and further away. I gripped the edge of the bathtub.

She fucking congratulated me. When we had talked about having a family ourselves. The attacks hadn't died down. Not until she was gone. We had never gotten the chance. Now, we would never get the chance.

Bran had been right, reminding me of our conversation. Being with her here, it was easy to lose myself in a fantasy that we could go back. As though it was just us in the world. She wasn't the same and neither was I.

"You're such a fucking bastard." Max was still in the room, staring after Auri who had left.

"I'm leaving tomorrow."

His eyes snapped to me. "Excuse me?"

"You got Auri back. I did what Morgan asked. I've been gone from my pack too long, especially with the shitshow that Micah dropped in my lap. So I'm going home. Tomorrow." I growled the last word.

His laugh was hollow. "This is why I didn't want you here." Max left the room and slammed the door shut.

I rested my head on the bathtub edge.

'Mate?' Cato whined in the back of my mind.

'No Cato. Our mate died. We don't have a mate anymore. We have a family we need to take care of though.'

He whined more but didn't say anything else. I picked myself off the floor, took a shower and climbed into bed. I pulled up my phone and looked through the flights for tomorrow. There was one, it had a couple layovers but it would get me back home in a day. Booking first class, I also purchased a pickup a few hours before the flight. Tomorrow I would go home. I would leave this fantasy.

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I bolted upright as I heard screaming. Throwing the sheets off, I opened up the door and ran down the hall. I stood in Auri's doorway, Max and Morgan were already in there sitting on her bed next to her. Her eyes were wide in fear, sweat dripping down her face.

"Auri, it's okay. It was just a dream." Max collected her into his arms.

She was taking gasping breaths. "I wish it was Max, I wish it was."

Morgan reached over and rubbed her back.

"What did he do to you?" Max said, not really expecting an answer. He just kissed her forehead and held her close.

"He would bring me to the brink of death. I could feel myself slipping away to the moon goddess and then he would shove a healing potion down my throat. Over and over and over again."

Both Morgan and Max went rigid. Eyes wide as they looked down at her.

"He would go through 10 or 20 potions day sometimes, depending on his mood. Sometimes it would be a simple slit of my throat." She paused, burying her face further in Max but he was stiff, listening to her. "Or small cuts all over my bod and I would bleed out over hours."

My hand went out and I braced myself against the doorway.

"Auri stop." Max choked out. "Don't...just don't..."

"Sorry..." She hadn't realized he didn't want answer.

"Don't ever apologize. I'm not strong enough to hear it." Max leaned his head against the top of hers. "I'm not as strong as you." Morgan was still stiff, staring at his daughter. He managed, after a a minute, to gather himself enough to speak. "We can stay with you while you sleep."

She shook her head. "I'm okay. I need to...get used to this." Auri pushed back on Max. At first, he didn't let her move but finally loosen his hug. "I need to be okay on my own."

I turned and left the room. I realized it wasn't a place I belonged anymore. I had already chosen to leave, being there would only confuse the situation more. Getting back into bed, I tried to close mv eyes. Her words reverberated in my skull. At some point I fell asleep but it was a restless sleep.

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"I can't believe you're seriously leaving." Morgan was looking at me, arms crossed over his chest.

I had my bag in my hand. The car to take me to the airport was coming down the driveway. "I need to get back to my pack, Morgan. I left a lot of shit and now we get to pile on the recent events."

"Have you even decided what you are doing about Micah?"

I shook my head. "Not yet, but it's a conversation I need to have with my family. Since they will be the ones fighting as well." I gave him a quick smile. "Thanks, for housing me, dealing with me."

"I should be thanking you. We know it was because of you Auri came back. You came with me and I appreciate that." Morgan held out his hand and I shook it.

Max was nowhere in sight. I figured him and Auri were out back. It was fine. I knew he was pissed. Turning, I headed out the door, the car pulling up. Throwing my bag in, I shut the trunk.

"Were you going to leave without saying anything?"

I spun around to see Auri, leaning against the front door. "I didn't know if you still wanted me to."

Auri walked over to me, took my hand. She wove her fingers between mine, her eyes closing. "I would rather you say something than just leave without a word."

I smiled down at her. "Goodbye Auri." I brought her hand up to my lips and kissed the top of it.

"Goodbye Logan." Her hand slipped from mine and fell to her side.

Turning, I swallowed hard. Getting into the car, I closed the door and nodded to the driver. As he pulled away, I looked in the side mirror. My heart broke as I watched Auri drop to her knees and wrap her arms around herself. I tore my eyes away from the mirror as I watched the tears stream down her face. My own tears blurring my vision. I looked out the window.

'Mate?' Cato whined. 'No Cato. We are letting our mate go.'

Alpha's Blind Luna, Chapter 65

Auri's POV

At some point, Max picked me up from the ground. He carried me into the house and held me in his arms as I cried. I buried my face in his chest. All this time I had fought. I had tried to survive. Only to watch my mate, my Logan, walk away from me. I knew it was a possibility. That he had moved on and what did I expect? I literally asked him to. But that didn't mean it didn't hurt.

Everything I was feeling was just my own heart though. I didn't smell my mate. Didn't hear him in my mind. The slight shock I would feel when touching him

went away after the first few times. I was cut off from everything that made me a werewolf. I honestly couldn't imagine myself removing these shackles. After what I had been through, I questioned whether I was even a werewolf anymore. If I deserved Kai anymore.

Weeks into my torture I decided I wasn't. Decided that I would never take these silver reminders off. It burrowed deep in my subconscious that now, my reaction was extreme. I felt back for Max and Morgan. They had tried a few times to just help.

I wondered how long it would take for the numbness in my heart to set in again. Feel my heart building its walls up against intruders. Max and Morgan sat with me the whole time. Morgan holding my hand and sometimes rubbing my leg.

"Auri, I'm sorry. I didn't think he would actually choose..." Morgan trailed off.

"Shut up, Morgan. This is exactly what I said. You have no thought for the consequences." Max barked at him.

"We still managed to make some headway!"

"And it's breaking her heart!"

I smiled, leaning my head back. "I'll be okay. How can I not be when he only did what I asked? If I was actually dead, it wouldn't have mattered."

Max growled. "But you aren't dead!"

I shook my head. "The old Auri is definitely dead. She died a long time ago. I wish I had been stronger. That he didn't break me so quickly. But in trying not to reveal who I was, I just didn't have the strength to hold myself up."

"The only reason we even had a chance was because you didn't say anything. Micah would have never brought you to that meeting if he knew who you were."

I flinched at his name and Max caught it. He leaned his head on my forehead. My body had just involuntarily reacted. I felt so weak at the moment. His name, his voice. I remember curling up in the third dresser drawer of the guest room when Logan told me to hide. But as soon as I heard his voice, I had to bite down on my hand to keep me from crying. The whistle that nearly summoned

me to his side that day in town. It made me sick. Even jumping at simple touches or if anyone got too close.

"How can I ever thank you? For what you've done over these past months..." Tears started to fall again.

"Auri, you will never need to thank us. You've already given us the greatest thank you. You came back." Morgan squeezed my hand and kissed it.

These two men were my family now. My only connection to this world. I leaned my head against Max and closed my eyes. Honestly, they were all I needed.

I must have fallen asleep at some point because I woke up tucked in bed. Listening, I heard Max showering and Morgan typing away on his computer. Getting up, I walked into the bathroom. For a while I stopped at the shower, seemingly staring at it. Taking a deep breath, I reached in and turned it on. The water turned on and I jumped at how loud it was but I undressed slowly. Gingerly, I stepped into the shower on my own. The water beat down on my back and steam filled the shower. I reached out, tentatively grabbing the luffa and body wash.

The scent of coconut and cocoa filled the room and I squished the luffa, feeling the bubbles form in my hands. Starting at my neck, I brushed the luffa down my shoulder. Slowly, my heart rate started to rise. Flashes, memories, raced through my mind. I squeezed my eyes shut against the barrage. Micah's hands on my body. His torture, insuring that I never showered on my own. The feeling of drowning without him. I started to shake, as I scrubbed across my chest. Finally, I squatted down, unable to go further. I buried my face in my knees, hugging my legs.

"I can't even do it on my own." I finally coughed out. Aware of the presence that had joined me in the bathroom.

"It's going to take time. Don't think you can do it all at once." Max leaned in and grabbed the luffa from my hands. He started to gently scrub my back as I was curled up. "One day though, you will be able to face him and rip his head off. And Morgan and I will be there next to you the entire time."

I nodded into my knees. Max's touch was gentle as he scrubbed me down, like he had done so many times before.

"Want me to do your hair?"

I nodded, still not moving from my crouched position. His hands come up and started to rub my scalp, lathering the shampoo. His hands ran through my hair. It had gotten so long that Morgan would separate my hair into three, braid those parts, and then braid all three of them together. It still fell down past my butt.

"He said that if he found out who I was, he would cut my hair off." I said aloud, feeling Max's hands soap my hair.

"It's so long now." Max mused, taking the shower head and rinsing my hair down. He put it back and I could hear him squeeze the bottle of conditioner in his hand. "Do you really not feel pain?"

I was quiet for a moment. "No. I don't even feel the silver anymore. I lost all sense of pain." I sighed, burying my face deeper. "Or pleasure."

Max hands froze for a second but continued to brush through my hair with the conditioner. We were quiet as he finished and grabbed the water again, rinsing off my hair.

"All done princess." Max got up from the tub and started to walk out when I reached out and grabbed his pant leg.

"Stay with me a few more minutes? Please?"

He stopped but didn't turn. My hand dropped and I just curled up tighter into a ball. I just felt the pounding water against my back. It took another couple of minutes until I finally uncurled myself and stood up against the water. Feeling it race over my body, I felt like my body was finally warming up and my heart rate was slowing. Max still hadn't moved. I swallowed hard and turned off the water. Before I turned, a towel was wrapped around me and Max picked me up out of the shower and set me onto the bathroom rug. My toes wiggled in the soft material.

"Thanks."

His hands came up and brushed the side of my face. I turned to faced him. I don't know what emotions ran through my face, but he dropped his hand and walked out of the bathroom. I pulled the towel tighter and walked into the

bedroom. Getting on a large shirt and some underwear, I walked down stairs. Morgan's typing stopped.

"Max left, said he needed to run a quick errand."

I chuckled. "Out to get milk?"

Morgan fake sobbed. "Oh no!"

Smiling, I walked around to Max's piano and sat down. I ran my hands over the keys. I played a few cords and heard the sound ring out, felt the sound ripple through my bones. Music always brought me back. I remember vividly hearing Max play at the castle. It had woken me up. Sure, Micah would have me perform like a monkey for him, but it was always just me. Max playing, I remembered it filling my heart and it reached me, stirred me.

A few more cords and I realized that I had been playing Max's unfinished piece. I had thought about it a lot. Trying to keep my mind occupied as I hung against the wall. I remember moving my fingers, the only things that didn't hurt like crazy, playing the song over and over in my head. Now, it was like they came out as second nature. But I had finished it. After weeks, I got tired of playing the partial song and I continued to mess round with the arrangement. Until finally I was happy with the ending.

I paused for a moment. I had never actually played it outside of my own head. I closed my eyes and started to play. First, I played the part Max had created. Feeling his passion and his sound flow through me. My fingers raced across the piano, filling the air. I breathed it in, playing faster, not letting my fingers stumble. I continued his notes, his cords until they softened, him lost in thought of the music. I then picked up the pace again, starting the part I had finished for him. Slamming my hands down on the keys, I brought the emotion back and let the sound fill the room again, vibrating in the air. Each cord, each note my own as I had played it hundreds of thousands of times. Finishing the song, I completed the last push of the keys and let my fingers linger there, the notes staying longer than intended.

"Auri..." Morgan's voice sounded sad like he had been crying.

My hands fell off the keys into my lap. Hearing it out loud was so different but I was actually pretty proud of it. I wasn't one for the piano but it felt good to finally get it out.

"It was one of the things that occupied my mind a lot. At first, I just played it over and over in my head. But it stopped working. So I just...arranged the ending. Don't tell Max...okay?"

"Too late."

My head whipped up as I heard Max's voice in the room. I couldn't pick out the emotion in his voice. I was scared he was angry.

"Max. I didn't." My hands clasp together, intertwining my fingers out of habit.

I finally heard him move but he just walked up the stairs and slammed the door of his room. Wincing, I let my head fall. Morgan touched my shoulder and I jumped lightly.

"Why don't you go to bed? It's pretty late."

I nodded and closed the piano. Laying in bed, I listened to the sounds in the house but both Morgan and Max were being silent. My heart hurt. I didn't hear him come in over the music. He was probably angry that I had the audacity to finish his song. Flipping over, my knees came up to my chest and I closed my eyes.

Again I woke up screaming, drenched in sweat. Morgan was by my side already, holding me. My dreams were just memories now. Memories of Micah. A minute, or an hour, a day, or a week in his hands. I was shivering and my skin crawled. Morgan held me, rocking me until my whimpering quieted.

"I'm okay, Papa." I finally managed out.

"You aren't though. And the moment I find that bastard, I'm going to kill him. But not before I do everything he did to you. Not before I break him."

I smiled at him. "Thanks Papa, lets not give him a chance to escape though. Okay?"

He nodded against me, his cheek resting on my head. "Death it is."

Morgan laid next to me this time, just like when I was little and I was scared. I had heard Max come down but he hadn't come into the room. Morgan was enough to calm me down though and help me go back to sleep. I know I

dreamed, probably cried and whimpered, but when I woke up in the morning, I didn't remember the exact memory I had dreamed about.

I pulled on some clothes for the day. "Small steps Auri, small steps."