

# Alpha's Rejected Mate Returns as Queen

Chapter 257 Gone For Three Years

Selma Payne's POV:

In short, after we calmed down, we were all a little embarrassed.

Aldrich did not dare to look at me, although he firmly held my hand. He stared intently at the murals on the temple as if he had suddenly developed a great interest in art. His face was as red as a tomato. I felt that I should break the silence in case he dug a hole and buried himself in it.

"So... you just said 'my believers'?"

Aldrich was finally willing to look at me, even though it was just a glance before he shyly looked away.

"Yes." He nodded. "Your believers, your kin, your servants, and your friends."

"Don't say that. It's really weird," I said with a wry smile. "But you already know that you've become my followers? I remember not having time to say anything before I fainted."

"Needless to say, it's a sense of belonging that comes from the soul. The moment we were reborn, we knew our identities, and from this, we couldn't help but have feelings of admiration and longing. Our god's kin will forever love and be loyal to you until they disappear from the world."

"But I'd only been a god for a minute, and now I'm just a mortal. Will you still have this feeling?"

"This has nothing to do with your current identity. The moment you gave us new life, all the contracts were completed. The contract will never fade whether you are a god or a mortal."

"Alright, it's quite romantic..."

I wanted to leave the bed and walk around since the doctor said my body was fine. There were still many inconveniences in the initial fusion of the soul and the body. I intuitively felt I needed to exercise more to eliminate these side effects.

After seeing that, he helped me walk around the temple. No matter how slow I was, I should know the place I was in.

"So, this is my temple?"

“Yes,” he said with a smile. “Funded by the royal family, supplemented by the donations and help of the believers, the temple was built in three months. Every detail is the crystallization of the thoughts of the believers and craftsmen, condensing the sincere blessings and piety.”

I could feel the strong love and faith in the murals and carvings. Although I was no longer a god, these precious feelings didn't change because of my identity.

“So I was unconscious for at least three months?” I asked.

Aldrich shook his head and said in a slightly depressed tone, No, you were unconscious for three years. Many things happened in these three years, and you are already twenty-two.”

What?

I looked at him in disbelief, hoping this was a harmless joke.

“Three years?”

The most precious three years of youth were wasted in my muddleheaded sleep from nineteen to twenty-two.

I'd missed out on my entire university life!

I'd missed out on the lives of my family and friends!

I'd missed three graduation balls!

“No,” Aldrich corrected. “To be precise, it was two terms. There are still two months before your fourth year ends. The graduation exam has been completed, but the graduation party has yet to start.”

I didn't understand how he could be so calm. “But I've skipped three whole years of classes! I'll be expelled. I'll be the first princess in the royal family to be expelled from school!”

“Hey, hey, calm down, dear.”

Aldrich carried me and ran back to the bed, whispering, “It's not that serious. The King and Queen have announced to the public that you went to a closed training camp in Europe as an exchange student for some reason, and all your homework was tacitly agreed to be completed there. So, you won't drop out of college, and you won't be expelled. You'll get your graduation certificate on the day of the graduation ceremony.”

“Is this okay?” I felt a little guilty. “I didn’t attend any classes. Isn’t that a little unfair to the others?”

“It’s just that you didn’t learn those things in school. The private tutors that the King and Queen hired for you should have handed over all the university courses to you within a few months, right? You went to school because His Majesty doesn’t want you to be separated from the secular life and develop a high and mighty character.”

“I understand.” Indeed, I had already completed my undergraduate course under the tutelage of my home tutor, so I didn’t have to worry about this anymore.

We leaned on the bed and chatted quietly for a while. Suddenly, there was a soft knock on the door of the temple.

“Your Holy Highness,” Kara’s trembling voice came from outside the door. “May your servant, Kara, have the honor of meeting you?”

It was Kara, my dear head handmaid!

“Of course!” I ran out of bed excitedly and into Kara’s arms. “My dear Kara, are you okay? I miss you so much!”

“I missed you too, my dear little princess.”

Kara gently hugged me with red eyes.

“I’ve prayed every night for the past three years, thanking you for everything. You’ve finally returned.”

I was very attached to this woman who had cared for me like an elder, and I felt even more guilty. “I’m sorry I slept for so long.”

“No, it’s not your fault. We are the useless ones.” Kara gently wiped her tears. “You must be too tired to take responsibility and move forward alone. If you’re tired, you should have a good sleep. When you wake up, everything will be over.”

Kara told me that my parents were rushing here. She had been caring for me for the past three years, so she lived near the temple. That was why she could come so quickly.

258 The new moon Goddess (1)

Selma Payne’s POV:

Only then did I find out that the temple was located in a quiet forest. It was an entire suburb away from the Lycan pack, so it was almost a no man’s land. This was to ensure

the peace of the temple and to ensure that I would not be disturbed by any unexpected visitors. The builders had specially chosen this place.

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I thought that the temple would be in some secret royal land or somewhere far away from the werewolves' territory. I didn't expect it to be so close to the core of the werewolves.

"Aren't you afraid of being discovered?" I asked, "This is a temple. How low-profile can it be?"

Aldrich, however, replied with a smile, "Why are you afraid of being discovered? This temple worshiped a great, kind, and merciful Holy Spirit, so there was nothing to hide. Anyone who finds this place will instantly understand the warmth and holiness of this place. They will repent their original sins in the temple and be redeemed."

"You're saying such mushy words again..."

I pushed him uncomfortably.

That was true. I was not something that couldn't be seen by others. What was there to be afraid of being discovered? Although the fact that I had only been a god for a minute was indeed ridiculous, there had never been a lack of strange anecdotes about gods in history. Compared to those myths that challenged the bottom line of ethics and the limits of human acceptance, this bit of anecdote of mine wasn't that shocking.

However...

My honorific title... I asked in a surprisingly low voice, "I mean, what do my kin call me?"

As Aldrich and Kara laughed, I said strangely, "It can't be something like a one-minute god or a sixty-second god!"

The two of them laughed, and I realized that they had tricked me.

"Of course not, Your Highness," Kara said. "You should have more trust in your believers."

"So what is it?" I asked in high spirits.

Pointing at the pattern drawn with silver powder on the dome, Aldrich said, "We call you the 'New Moon Goddess'."

The New Moon Goddess?

"Wouldn't that be the same name as the Moon Goddess?"

“Of course not. The ‘New Moon’ is just a reference. It represents new life, reincarnation, beginning, and dedication, just like what you did to your loved ones.”

Alright, New Moon Goddess, that sounded pretty cool.

We chatted for a while, and a few minutes later, Dorothy arrived.

She gave me a big hug as soon as she came up, then burst into tears. She didn’t say anything for a few minutes and just hugged me and cried.

“Okay, okay,” I comforted her as if I were petting a kitten. “I’m back. Everything is over. You don’t have to worry about me. You must have been very scared these three years, right? I’m sorry, Dorothy. Thank you for your sacrifice. I’ll always be grateful to fate for giving me a friend like you.”

“You just lay there for three whole years! You didn’t say a word. You didn’t do anything. I’ve tried all kinds of methods, but I couldn’t summon your soul!” She complained loudly, “I’m telling you, I’m tired of everything. I’ve already decided that if you don’t wake up this year, I’ll burn your body so that you won’t be able to come back, even if you want to!”

“Okay, okay, okay. I’m sorry. I won’t be so stubborn anymore. Please forgive me, okay?” I played along with her childish complaints and said, “It’s really the last time. To be honest, it doesn’t feel good to wake up and be told that you’ve advanced from a college student to a quasi-societal person. These are the most important years of youth in your life.”

I coaxed Dorothy for a long time before she finally calmed down. Aldrich, left out on the side, looked at us, hugging each other with hidden bitterness, and unwillingly said, “Dorothy is your priestess. She has been in charge of your affairs for the past three years. My god, how long are you going to hug? I’m going to be jealous for real now!”

“Don’t be so petty,” I said as I glared at him. Dorothy left my arms.

She rubbed her red and swollen eyes and cast a recovery spell on herself. She sobbed and said, “Anyway, many things have happened in the past three years, but they’re not big issues. When you’ve fully recovered, I’ll tell you bit by bit.

“I’ll be the one who tells her,” Aldrich corrected.

This person was really childish today!

I held his hand to comfort him, and he reluctantly shut up.

However, Dorothy did not give him any face at all and said bluntly, “You’re not mistaken, we’re ‘fighting for favor’- I know it’s weird to say this. But there’s nothing we can do about it. The nature of the followers makes us instinctively want to be close to our

master. There are many records of the followers of an ancient god killing each other for the god's favor, and in the end, the whole race was exterminated."

But I was no longer a god.

"Just as I was about to say this, I remembered what Aldrich had said, 'A contract had nothing to do with one's status'."

From my expression, Dorothy understood that I understood. "That's why you'll often see this kind of farce for the rest of your life. Your family will come together and fight because of your gaze. Don't you feel like a female lead of an idol drama?"

"Feel my as\*!" I was on the verge of breaking down. "Doesn't that mean I won't be able to live in peace for the rest of my life?"

What kind of weird side effect was this? Why did it sound like a little puppy that had not been weaned?

Just as I held my head and fantasized about my miserable life in the future, Dorothy burst out laughing. It was only then that I realized that she had played me.

259 Family

Selma Payne's POV:

Hey! Why was I constantly being tricked today?

"I'm not lying to you." She forced herself to be serious, although she couldn't help but laugh. "But it's not that serious. Don't worry. No one will fight for you publicly and cause you a social death. Maybe ancient minions were like that, but our situation is very different from ancient times. At least, I've never heard of any minion with independent thinking."

"That's why my emotional connection with you isn't that close. Although I'll be close to you, like you, and admire you, it's far from the point where I'll be jealous of you. Don't show that kind of expression, or do you want to turn your life into an idol drama?"

I rolled my eyes and ignored her.

"Be careful, Your Highness," she teased me. "A goddess wouldn't do such an unsightly action."

"You don't look close to me, like me, or admire me at all," I said. "Is this the attitude of a priestess to the goddess?"

Dorothy pretended to be sad. "Oh, I thought we were friends..."

“Don’t give me that.” I wouldn’t fall for her trick.

“But, is it appropriate for me to live here now?” I said, “After all, I’m no longer a god, and I don’t like the feeling of being ‘high and mighty’. When can I go back to the palace?”

“Anytime, but only after the King and Queen have visited you. Parents can never worry too much about their children, you know that.”

Alright, I still have a tough battle to fight.

Finally, my two closest family members arrived.

As usual, my mother hugged me tightly as soon as she saw me, and her warm tears instantly wet my shoulders. I tried to appear more mature, but when my mother hugged me, and my father touched me, I couldn’t help but burst into tears.

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“Father, Mother.”

I cried like a child. The strength I had built in front of my lover and friends was not worth mentioning under the care of my parents. The grievances and fear were like a flood that broke my heart.

How could I not be afraid? In the face of a supreme demon with unpredictable emotions, I knew that I would lose my life, but I still went up to provoke it, taking the risk of dying to steal the godhood and falling into a deep sleep after everything was over, not knowing if he could ever wake up again.

How could I not be afraid when I encountered these things? I was not made of lead. No matter how strong my heart was, it was just a ball of soft flesh. In the face of death, I couldn’t say with certainty that I was truly fearless.

But I still did it. Because of responsibility, because of dignity, because of love, and many complicated factors, I knew I would die, but I still did it. My fear didn’t disappear. It was forcefully suppressed at the bottom of my heart, pretending it didn’t exist. I tried in vain to ignore it and make myself into an invincible hero.

However, I didn’t have to be a hero in front of my parents.

All I had to do was to throw myself into their arms and cry out loud, and then pour out all the grievances and fears I felt in my heart.

I didn’t know when, but Aldrich and Dorothy had already quietly left. When I looked up from my mother’s arms, I only saw two faces intertwined with admonishment and love.

I felt a little embarrassed, so I wiped my tears and pretended that I wasn't the one who had burst into tears.

My mother said painfully, caressing my slightly emaciated face, "My daughter has suffered. You've lost so much weight."

"It's okay, Mother. The doctor said it's just a common side effect of long-term nutrient intake instead of eating." I quickly moved around to show off my strength. "I just lost some fat. I'm still very healthy!"

My mother didn't say anything. She only smiled bitterly and pulled me into her arms again.

"You're still a child." She patted my back and said gently, "My poor little thing. She hasn't even grown up yet, and she has to bear the responsibility for her useless elders."

"I'm already twenty-two, Mother," I mumbled unhappily. "I'm already an adult. Don't treat me like a child."

"A child who knows how to act coquettishly is a child."

My father ruffled my hair. After a long while, he suddenly sighed. "I'm sorry, child. You shouldn't have gone through all this."

Wait, why did he suddenly apologize?

I didn't quite understand, but I subconsciously retorted, "Don't apologize to me, Father. You have nothing to apologize to me... Well, it sounds a little weird. However, the truth is that you didn't do anything to let me down. On the contrary, I'm the one who should apologize."

I sat up from my mother's arms and said desolately, "I know I was too impulsive. I fell into Leviathan's trap, wanted to go to the rocky mountains, fell into Yuri's trap, and tried to become a god. Although the final result was good, many people were injured because of my impulsiveness. I closed my eyes and didn't care about the world anymore, but I still had to trouble my friends and family to help me solve my problems..."

The more I spoke, the lower my voice became. As I spoke, I wanted to slap myself.

I didn't want to not know. This breakdown, I had caused enough trouble.

I wished I could dig a hole and bury myself.



I always used my youth as an excuse to cover up my impulsiveness, but the truth told me that the chain reaction caused by impulsiveness didn't matter if one were nineteen or ninety years old.

260 Feedback

Selma Payne's POV:

Once trouble came to them, it would bring them not only trouble but also endless negative effects on others.

Aldrich, Dorothy, all of the people that had been killed by Azazel, as well as the soul-torn Frank and Linda who had turned into a black cocoon. A snowy mountain had turned everyone's fate upside down. Everything started because I used an overly high-profile method to take revenge for a school bully.

"Don't worry. I'm not some soft-hearted Saint with mental problems. I won't take the blame for the evil deeds of cowards and demons. I was just thinking that if I could have been more cautious and looked further away and not always let my hot blood get to my head, the outcome would have been different."

"Stop, Selma. Don't spiral."

A mother knew her daughter best. My mother could tell what I was thinking with one glance. She didn't berate me or educate me. She only gently interrupted my thoughts.

The past couldn't be traced back, and everything that had happened couldn't be changed. All we could do was remember the past and live a better life in the future. My father said gently, "I know what you're thinking. When I was your age, I didn't do much better than you. In addition to bringing vitality and energy, youth often brings many things we don't want to leave behind. But it has come, and we can't do anything even if we're unwilling.

"This is not a bad thing, child. Everyone is a piece of iron, and these 'bad things' are our whetstones. A smooth-sailing life can not sharpen a sharp sword.

"Most of the time, these whetstones differ from what we want. They make us feel embarrassed, ashamed, and even self-doubt. These negative emotions are also a part of the whetstone. If we can withstand it, the sword will shine even brighter. If we can't, all our previous efforts will be in vain."

"That's a little unreasonable," I retorted softly.

My father smiled and helped me tidy my hair. "Yeah, it is that unreasonable. We can only protect ourselves and make ourselves more brilliant."

I didn't know what to say. I understood, but I wasn't sure if I really understood. I knew it was not right to spiral, but how do I control myself when I was too emotional?

This was the truth, but it had always been easier said than done.

My father understood it better than I did, so he didn't say anything more and let me think about it.

I decided to change the topic and stop thinking about these annoying things.

"When can I go home?" I asked, "It's too big here. It's so scary to live here.

My mother laughed. "This is your temple. It should be more comfortable than anywhere else."

"It's comfortable," I said as I tugged at the gorgeous curtain. "I'm just not used to it. I've only been a god for a minute, and now I'm just a mortal. I feel it's too arrogant to live in the temple so openly. Won't my life be shortened?"

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The mother laughed loudly, "You still dare to say you're not a child! What kind of nonsense is this!"

Sigh, my mother always treated me like a child. I really couldn't do anything about it.

"Faith has a direction. The temple can gather the power of the believers," my father said. "Whether you are a god or a man, the devout wishes of the believers will always come to you. The werewolf grandmasters have been discussing this for a long time, but the ancient books or legends have yet to record an example like you. No one can be sure if this piety is still effective, but it is always a positive force. Even if there are no benefits, there will be no disadvantages.

"When we first sent you to the temple, your mother and I didn't agree. At that time, we couldn't find any illness, and you looked like you were only unconscious. We were so anxious that we were on edge. We stubbornly believed that only the doctors and the werewolf grandmaster could save our lives."

I couldn't help but ask, "What happened after that? Why did you agree to send me to the temple?"

"Because of Aldrich, that child is stubborn." As my father spoke, he laughed. "He barged in front of your mother and me. He pulled open his collar and revealed the gem on his chest.

"He said that you used all your power to reconstruct a life for him and all his followers, even at the expense of splitting your divine persona and giving up your divine position.

With such great favor, how could a believer watch their faith disappear? How can you let your lover fall into danger as a man?

“He doesn’t know what happened to you, but he and the rest of his followers are willing to use their divine fragment to repay your kindness. Broken divine personas were destined to be exhausted and unable to give birth to gods, but the boundless life force was not fake. They don’t know sorcery, and they don’t know how to extract power, but they will learn it, and they will do everything they can to learn it.

“After that, Dorothy became their priest and taught these people with no talent in sorcery to control the power of divinity and then fed it to you.

“Child...” he sighed. “You’ve resurrected your kin, and your kin has brought you a new life as well.”

261 The Black Cocoon

Selma Payne’s POV:

Three days passed by quickly.

I met all of my old friends once. On the night I woke up, Dorothy wanted to follow the original plan and bring his family to pray for me. I hurriedly rejected her. In any case, I was already awake, and there was nothing wrong with my body and soul, so I didn’t want them to make a wasted trip.

After all, the divine fragment was the proof that supported their rationality. Although they would not die so easily because of the little energy lost, who knew if there was a chance? It was better to be careful.

And I also felt a little complicated about this kind of repetitive behavior. I was touched and grateful. Anyone would be touched by such sincere dedication. However, it was also true that I felt uncomfortable. This wasn’t a difference in status but a difference in the race. However, I was no longer that high and mighty god. Rather than being worshipped by others, I would rather sit down and chat with them.

As I said that, Dorothy sneered, “Ha! You don’t know how blessed you are!”

“Why don’t you try it for yourself?” I immediately pulled her to my seat. “Sit on the high altar and imagine a group of believers in robes praying to you. And among these people are your friends, comrades, and team members. Can you accept them with a calm heart?”

Dorothy shivered and immediately ran away. “No, no, I’ll leave this good fortune for you to enjoy.”

In short, after three days of waiting, I could finally return to the palace openly and return to my normal social life.

Aldrich was in charge of escorting me. Along the way, he told me everything that had happened in the past few years.

The first was the advance party. Besides Linda and Frank, everyone had returned safely, including the first batch of soldiers who had come from the pack but were killed by Azazel. In other words, I now had nearly 400 followers, and these 400 people were all strong, experienced, and loyal warriors or werewolf grandmasters.

What kind of concept was this? No matter where I brought this large group of people, even if it was just for a trip, the other side might think I had brought people here to fight without declaring.

Linda's situation was very strange. Ever since she turned into a black cocoon three years ago, she had not made any moves. Neither scientific methods nor the werewolf grandmaster could detect the movements in the cocoon. The only thing they could be sure of was the evil power constantly emanating from it.

Even without the werewolf grandmaster's examination, Aldrich, Dorothy, and the others could recognize the source of the power – it was Azazel.

The elders suspected that Linda might end up as the fetus of Azazel, which meant that she would eventually become the vessel for Azazel to come to the human world again.

Some elders suggested destroying the black cocoon in case of an imminent disaster. Some other elders strongly opposed it. They believed that since they couldn't confirm the situation inside the black cocoon, they couldn't act rashly. Linda's life and death were unknown, and her compatriots couldn't be the executioners who sent her on her way.

The two factions argued endlessly, and the destruction faction had always had the upper hand. However, because the black cocoon's activity had been very weak, it had stopped directly a year ago as if it was dead. Gradually, this was put aside by a tacit understanding.

Hearing this, I couldn't help but sneer. Everyone knew what these people were up to. Previously, they advocated destroying it because they were afraid of death. The opposition didn't seem to value their camaraderie much. They thought they could do it now that the black cocoon was suspected to be dead. If I was not wrong, someone is clamoring to secretly send researchers to study the black cocoon again, right?"

Aldrich clearly understood the tricks of these political actors and said with disdain, "That's right. Some elders wanted to put their entire family, including their pets, into the

research team. Some even gave the guards money to smuggle the black cocoon samples, but they were all taken care of by His Majesty.”

Sometimes, I admired the intelligence and courage of some people. They knew it was an evil creation that contained the power of a supreme demon, yet they still wanted to try to get their hands on it.

What were they after?

Aldrich quickly explained to me, “For the sake of power and eternal life, in many ancient legends, flesh and blood of ancient creatures contain great power that can allow people to live forever and maintain their youth. Now that such a great temptation is placed in front of them, how can these short-sighted and life-cherishing trash resist their greed?”

“If they want power and immortality, they’ve missed a great opportunity.” I laughed. “If anyone went to the Rocky Mountains back then, they would’ve been able to obtain the divine fragment by now. Even if they couldn’t become a god and wouldn’t be able to live forever, they would’ve been ten times stronger and had a long and healthy life.”

Many elders opposed the Rocky Mountains plan at the time. They had used excuses like ‘it’s a waste of money’ and ‘meaningless’. Some of the more uptight ones even wanted me to die so they would have a chance to covet the throne of the heir.

Who knew that the advance party would bring back so many valuable results? Even if I were still unconscious, my parents would not let go of those who tried to ruin the results I had exchanged for my life!

262 Intelligence Network

Selma Payne’s POV:

Compared to Linda, Frank’s situation wasn’t any better.

to be more precise, it was uncertain if the person, Frank, still existed in this world.

The soul slices of the two Franks were sent back to the palace for treatment. However, on the night we encountered Azazel, the Frank at the foot of the mountain suddenly changed. He melted into a liquid substance and escaped into Linda’s ward, then disappeared.

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The investigation team suspected that he did not escape and that there was a high possibility that he had fused with the black cocoon. However, they couldn’t study the black cocoon for the time being, so they dropped the matter.

Meanwhile, on the mountain, Frank also escaped from the heavy guard, in the same way the night after. He was also suspected of being fused with the black cocoon.

Two of Frank's soul slices had gone missing. To make matters worse, according to Master Kevin, his soul had been cut into at least four pieces, which meant that there were at least two more soul slices that were still unknown. In the past three years, his father had sent people to search the Rocky Mountains multiple times, but they had found nothing.

At this point, Aldrich's mood deteriorated. "Such a long time has passed. There's a high chance that Frank has already died."

I quietly held his hand.

Frank was the first guide Aldrich met after entering the army, which meant a lot to him. The two were like master and disciple in ancient epics, not close but very sincere. Whether it was Frank's disappearance or death, it was enough to make Aldrich sad.

After being dejected for a while, Aldrich quickly calmed down and told me about the three years I missed.

Those who have become my followers could no longer claim to be the Moon Goddess' believers. However, for some reason, the goddess remained silent about this. She showed no signs of anger as if she had silently agreed that I had stolen her man from her.

Not only did their kin not lose their werewolf identity or their wolves, but they could even participate in divine festivals like the Moonlight Festival.

Even Dorothy, who was sandwiched between the two goddesses, was not affected. Not only did the Moon Goddess remain silent about her change of faith, but even the Goddess of Fate also did not withdraw the gift she had given to her descendants.

Now, Dorothy believed in two goddesses and became my priestess simultaneously. There probably wouldn't be a third person with more complex beliefs than her.

In fact, it wasn't that hard to understand if you thought about it carefully. I had only been a god for a minute. If I had to use some elegant words, I was a 'fallen' god.

What kind of threat could mortals who had fallen from their god's altar pose? To be honest, I only have around 400 believers. Even if there were people who wanted to join the religion later on, I couldn't do that anymore because even the New Moon Goddess was gone!

To be self-praising, my act of stealing a god back then was mainly to save someone. Of these two goddesses, one was famous for being kind, while the other was famous for

being cold. The moon would understand my actions, while fate would be indifferent to them.

Back to my followers, their bodies had more or less undergone changes after they regained their lives. This was something that couldn't be helped. After all, they couldn't be considered pureblood werewolves now. They were a fantasy race that I had come up with based on werewolves.

This also meant that, in addition to their majestic sharp fangs, they also had one more component on their body: The wings were black and gold, with scales falling off as if they were condensed from moonlight.

This had a huge impact on their lives.

The first was the ability to fly. A few young people were playful and had arranged a cliff competition before they were even familiar with it. Fortunately, they only broke their legs.

Then came the unparalleled recovery power. It was as if the additional wings of a moth made them real moths, and their followers would spin a cocoon when seriously injured. No matter how many injuries they suffered during the mission, as long as they spent enough time, they could walk out of the cocoon unscathed, without any residual effects.

According to them, this self-healing ability came from the 'gift' of the goddess.

If it wasn't the Moon Goddess, then it was probably me.

Recalling the moths formed from spring water in the spiritual world, I thought I knew where they had gone.

The other was cohesion. Be they strangers, comrades, or people who didn't see eye to eye with each other; their relationship became closer after they became my family. Even if they weren't close friends, they would still establish a special link: the mind link.

These 400 people were connected to form a powerful intelligence network. Although there would be internal friction, they had always been united on the outside.

My only downside was that this network couldn't connect to me.

That was right. I didn't even feel the slightest bit of a mind-link interface. Other than Dorothy, I still couldn't establish a connection with anyone, not even with my family.

No matter how depressed I was, I couldn't do anything about it. If even becoming a god couldn't solve my problem of not being able to establish a mind-link with others, I believed all other attempts would be in vain.

## 263 Today Is The Same

Selma Payne's POV:

There were only a few important things to do. The rest were more daily.

Mara became the new president of the opera club. Although she did not have Ryan's creative talent, she surprisingly knew how to arrange things. Sometimes, a president who could appreciate their members could make them shine more. The opera club had shown its brilliance in the past three years and successfully stepped onto the stage in the Midnight Opera House.

During her university days, Avril joined the reserve team of the guards for a year, and after her glorious retirement, she continued her studies, maintaining her position as one of the top ten students in the school. No one mentioned the gossip of the past anymore. Now, she was dazzling enough to be herself and not the female lead of some rumors.

The southern Duke and Carolyn never came to the Lycan pack again. I could tell from his contact with my father that he and his daughter were doing well. Carolyn was nineteen years old and was currently choosing the university she was interested in.

The southern Duke had chosen many southern and famous universities for her as options, but Carolyn didn't really like them. It was said that she preferred the luxurious and modern environment of the Lycan pack. She even wanted to visit human society.

Adele was imprisoned in the manor like an invisible person and did not make any extreme moves. The southern Duke had never visited her. He only had a video call with her on time every week. The father and daughter pair did not speak. They spent visiting hours in silence, and the southern Duke hung up the video call with a heavy heart.

After becoming my kin, the werewolf grandmasters did not lose their magic power, just like Dorothy. They tirelessly studied the materials they brought back from the witch clan and published papers that could make students who took the history of sorcery cry in despair.

Yuri was confirmed dead, and the priest took his life away on the spot during the sacrificial ritual known as the Carnival. I didn't have the time to distinguish everyone's face when I resurrected my dead comrades, but I didn't know why Yuri was automatically excluded. Perhaps it was because he was no longer my comrade when he betrayed us.

Ryan was sentenced to thirty years in prison for summoning demons without permission. His parents seemed eager to get rid of their son and hurriedly moved to another pack with their other children. Of course, his father had already confirmed that they had nothing to do with the demon-summoning incident.



In short, everything was normal.

The carriage stopped in front of the palace. Looking at the magnificent gates, I couldn't help but sigh at the unpredictable fate. You never know whether tomorrow or an accident comes first.

When I first set off for the Rocky Mountains, I thought the worst-case scenario would be that I would return empty-handed and die. Who knew that things would turn out so dramatic? I died, came back to life, and then I was half-dead. This dangerous journey could be summarized into these three states.

The planned six-month journey was extended to three years.

It had been three years. Although things were not the same, the people were not.

My parents held a family dinner to welcome me, and Aldrich and Dorothy were also there.

At night.

Returning to the room that had been empty for a long time, I was in a daze for a moment. I kept feeling that every familiar detail was a little strange. The room's decorations were the same as the day I left, but every place was spotless. Kara must have taken good care of this place.

"Homesick?" Aldrich teased me.

I shrugged and strode into the room.

Since the graduation exam was over, I didn't need to forge proof of my results, so I spent another three days completing my final exam. As for my graduation thesis, I planned to help Dorothy and the werewolf grandmasters decipher the relics of the ancient witches. Rather than making up a nonsensical thesis, practical application was more suitable for me.

The graduation ceremony would be held a day before the graduation ball, meaning I had two months of free time before officially graduating. I emphasized 'free time' because my father intended to disclose my identity after graduating and then officially allow me to participate in social and political discussions.

"Isn't this a little too sudden?" I was a little surprised. "It's okay to disclose my identity, but I have no experience in political affairs."

My father said, "I had no experience at the beginning. If you don't start, you'll never have any experience. Don't worry. Your mother and I will help you."

“But what about the elders? The royal family suddenly has a princess who disappeared more than twenty years ago. Those old farts will not let this go.” I was still worried. “Although I’d always felt that the elders could guess my identity, that didn’t stop them from setting me up.”

“That’s right. Some of them have already guessed your identity. Some are overjoyed, while others are gnashing their teeth in anger.” My father confirmed my suspicion. “But this doesn’t stop me from doing anything. even if your identity isn’t made public, they’ve done many things to me. I can guess what they’re up to with my eyes closed. Besides, the royalists will help suppress the opposition.”

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Fine then.

To be honest, I wasn’t that anxious. Perhaps it was because my fear threshold had been raised too high by Azazel. I didn’t feel anything other than fear they would deliberately fall and blackmail me when I faced the group of wrinkled and trembling elders.

264 The Proposal

Selma Payne’s POV:

Monday.

In my mind, I was only a short summer vacation away from school, but the reality was rather unfamiliar to me. What kind of place was this classical and gorgeous Baroque-style building complex?

Was this the Sivr Academy? What about those ordinary green academic buildings?

Dorothy said confidently, putting her arm around my shoulder, “I had the same reaction as you at the beginning. You’ll get used to it.”

“No, we didn’t come to the wrong place, right? The Sivr Academy has been acquired and transformed into an elite academy?”

“Of course not, have you forgotten? Adele and her plant army had destroyed the original school. For safety’s sake, the construction team decided to demolish the entire academy and rebuild it. Not only that, His Majesty has also specially approved a piece of land from the royal family’s property to be incorporated into the academy’s territory. Now, the entire academy is twice its original size!”

“A royal land?”

“Yes, it’s the property of the two Majesties. Although our academy is still quite far from the city center, the land price isn’t considered cheap.”

“Are the natives willing to leave their homes?”

“Of course, no one would be willing if there were no diseases or disasters, but there was a witch invasion here, and there are even remnants of the light cocoon’s magic power. The residents are all trying to avoid it. Not to mention that the compensation is generous enough, and you can also get a discount from the real estate company belonging to the royal family. If it were me, I would also be willing to move.”

This kind of wealthy and overbearing posture was inexplicably very fitting for the royal family.

There were less than two months left until graduation. At this time, one could clearly distinguish which students were about to graduate and which were still struggling in the sea of learning. No matter which department’s graduates they were from, they were all unusually relaxed and happy. They were often not holding computers or books in their arms, but all kinds of magazines, folders, or even all kinds of snacks and desserts.

The folders were mostly filled with academic plans or personal materials, while the magazines were mostly about fashion and parties. Those who were holding snacks and desserts were the happiest, which meant that they had finished all the complicated affairs and could begin to enjoy the long holiday happily.

In such a youthful environment, I couldn’t help but smile.

My return wasn’t very grand. Other than a few close friends, no one else was alarmed.

“Selma! I’ve missed you so much!” Avril hugged me warmly, lifting me off the ground with her strong arms.

Mara hugged me from behind, and with Dorothy, the four of us formed a ball.

My friends’ enthusiasm touched me, but I also had difficulty breathing. Fortunately, Perrin suggested, “Alright, girls. You still have a lot of time to catch up. Don’t be so anxious. Selma is about to suffocate.”

We had a small party at Mara and Avril’s dormitory.

After the baptism by the army, Avril became stronger and stronger, while Mara quickly became a qualified director under the influence of art. The collision of rules and romance erupted in a wonderful chemical reaction in the small dormitory. The neat rules and the casual disorder, disharmony, and order were in good order.

“Sorry, guys,” Mara said, a little embarrassed. “I worked until midnight last night, so I needed more time to clean up the room.”

“Not only last night, ” said Avril. “Mara’s lamp is always on until midnight every day. In the past few years, what I’ve been most worried about isn’t my grades, but the fact that I’m afraid that I’ll wake up one morning and find my friend suddenly dead in a pile of draft papers.”

“It’s not as exaggerated as you say. I also had a good rest!”

“Yes, yes. If a person who usually goes to bed at two in the morning suddenly goes to bed at midnight, she is considered to have had a good rest.”

The two of them fooled around for a while. Seeing Perrin’s helpless bitter smile and Dorothy’s ‘see what I said’ look, I chuckled.

The quarrels between my friends reminded me of our relationship three years ago. There was no estrangement, no distance. It was great.

After three rounds of drinks, when we were all flushed, Avril made an announcement.

“We’re getting ready to get married.”

She held Perrin’s hand, and they looked at each other. They smiled shyly.

Now, no one cared about the alcohol in their cups. We were extremely surprised. Even Mara, who was closest to Avril, couldn’t believe it. “You guys are getting married? When did that happen?”

“In July, a month after graduation.”

“No, I mean, when did you guys decide? Who proposed? Where?” Mara crossed her arms and said in dissatisfaction, “We agreed to help each other plan a surprise marriage proposal, but why didn’t I hear anything about it? Don’t tell me it was just a spur-of-the-moment thing between you two!”

Avril rolled his eyes at her question. “Be real, little girl. It’s a proposal, not a marriage. There’s no such thing as planned. Everything just happened naturally.”

“Naturally?” Mara looked like she was about to faint. “You sound like a scumbag. Did you propose first?” she asked.

Perrin laughed and said shyly, “Actually, I was the one who proposed to her first. On the day Avril retired from the army, I proposed to her at her house.”

Selma Payne's POV:

Avril retired in January this year, which was three months ago.

Mara was about to strangle Avril with her gaze. "For three months, you didn't even say a word to me about your proposal? I feel so sad!"

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"I didn't hide it from you on purpose," Avril quickly explained. "It's just that I was very confused back then, so I didn't agree immediately. I've been in a dilemma for the past few months, so I didn't tell anyone. I finally agreed to Perrin's request last night."

I knew that Avril and Perrin had started dating before I went to the Rocky Mountains, but I knew nothing about what they had been through in the past three years, so I asked, "What's there to be conflicted about?"

"Many things. The meaning of marriage, the responsibilities and obligations it brings, the new stage in life, my age, and the uncertainties of the future." Avril was a little lonely. It was obvious that she empathized with what she felt then. "To be honest, I had a premonition that Perrin was planning to propose to me. I didn't do anything and acquiesced to his plan.

"I think I was already looking forward to going one step further with him, but when he took out the ring, I hesitated. I'm just twenty-two years old. Is it good or bad for my future if I get married too early? Perrin and I love each other, but is love the only condition for marriage? After marriage, can I fulfill my responsibility as a good wife? Is Perrin, as a boyfriend, different from Perrin, as a husband? There were too many questions that prevented me from thinking. I almost subconsciously chose to avoid it and started to deal with this relationship coldly."

Mara thought aloud, "No wonder you've been acting weird ever since you left the army. I thought the military life had done some strange things to you." However, to treat it coldly? To be honest, that's really a scumbag move."

Speechless, Avril pushed her away and told her not to interrupt. She then continued, "I didn't tell anyone about this, including my parents in another city. This is the proposal that I'm looking forward to, but it doesn't seem to be the proposal that I'm looking forward to. I'm in a dilemma. I avoided contact with Perrin and tried to delay this by not seeing it.

"In the first few days, Perrin didn't contact me. I thought this was it – our break up. However, what happened after that was a little beyond my expectations.

"When I was upset, I made many low-level mistakes in the handover procedures with the school, so I had to make a trip to the Academic Affairs Office. But then these

problems were suddenly solved perfectly. I thought that the teacher suddenly turned over a new leaf, and then I discovered it was Perrin.”

Perrin blushed. Let’s not talk about this,” he said softly. “Anyway, we’re still at the perfect ending, right?”

“Don’t interrupt. Let me finish.” Avril stuffed his mouth with an apple and continued, “I don’t even know myself as well as Perrin. I just filled in the form on the first day of school and forgot much of the information. The few mean teachers in the Academic Affairs Office suffering from menopause also refused to help me open the archive room, which almost made me lose my enrolment. Perrin sneaked into the archive room to check the information and was almost caught by the security guard.

“Later, I couldn’t catch up with the classes because I took a break from my studies. Mara is in the Literature Faculty, and I’m in social media studies. We don’t have any courses in common except for public extracurricular classes, so she couldn’t help me with tuition. Fortunately, there were kind-hearted seniors to help me with my homework, so I didn’t end up at the bottom of the grade.

“Later, I found out that Perrin also hired the seniors. For this, he helped them clean the club activity room for a semester.

“There were also Ryan’s bad friends. They came to find trouble with me but disappeared very quickly. That was Perrin too. He beat up those hooligans behind my back, and they never dared to come again.

“This semester was a complete mess. All kinds of unexpected troubles came one after another, making me feel more devastated than when I received the strict training of the guards. Luckily, many people were helping me; Mara, my classmates, and Perrin. He never told me when he was doing all this for me. He didn’t even have to appear before me. I thought we had broken up, but he has supported me silently.

“If I didn’t go to the boxing club to pick up the things I left behind, I wouldn’t have guessed what he was doing behind my back. At that moment, I thought, ‘What’s there to hesitate about?’ There was no difference between getting married at twenty-two and fifty-two. I was confident that I could take on the responsibility of a wife and that Perrin was a good man worthy of trust. All the questions aren’t problems anymore. I shouldn’t continue to avoid it.

“So I agreed. I was covered in sweat, and he was wearing a ridiculous apron. One of the activity room’s lights was broken, flashing like a horror movie. In such a simple and scary environment, we realized that the other party was our fated mate, so don’t worry, don’t hesitate. Love must be our final ending.”

She held Perrin’s hand happily and exchanged a sweet and trusting kiss with our excited cheers.

## 266 Drunken Truth

Selma Payne's POV:

The evening breeze gently caressed my red cheeks. The alcohol made me lose myself in the joy of dizziness. Under the moonlight, I waited for someone to take me home.

Dorothy supported me, or rather, we supported each other. Perrin was sent by his drunkard fiancée to escort us. Mara didn't come. She and Avril were sleeping on the same pillow.

It was still very lively in front of the school gate at night. Some smart vendors had set up a snack street on the empty grass, which was very popular.

When Aldrich came to pick me up, I was standing in front of a small and cute dessert cart, choosing doughnuts. The flavor of strawberry cheese and blueberry jam made me feel even more conflicted than the divine personality. I was afraid of getting fat if I ate all of them, but I couldn't bear to give up either. I didn't know what to do.

Dorothy was not very clear-headed either. She was holding a chocolate donut and whispering to it.

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"Good evening, ladies. How can I help you? "

Aldrich gentlemanly paid the bill for us and sent us to the car after he revealed his identity and intention to the vigilant Perrin.

"The King and Queen specifically told you not to drink too much." He was helpless in the face of two drunkards. "Well, I'm not the one who will be taught a lesson tomorrow anyway. I'm just an innocent driver.

I was suddenly agitated by his words. "You're not the driver!"

"You're not the driver!" Dorothy teased.

"Then, what am I?" Aldrich asked back helplessly.

"Then, what is he?" Dorothy joined in the fun.

I held my precious doughnuts and stared at the cheese and jam on them. After a long time, when Aldrich thought that I wouldn't reply, I said, "You're my boyfriend."

"You're her boyfriend!"

"You are my lover!"

“You are her lover!”

“You’re the person I... want to hold hands with for the rest of my life.”

“You’re the person she wants to hold hands with for the rest of her life.”

My sudden proposal caught Aldrich off guard. Even the front of the car swerved a little and went into the opposite lane.

“What?” Aldrich looked at the rearview mirror in disbelief. This time, Dorothy did not mimic what he said. She had already fallen asleep in a posture that was not human-like.

I didn’t say anything else. It was as if the melting cheese and jam were some rare gem that I couldn’t even open my eyes to look at. Even my mouth was temporarily lent to my eyes to help me see.

Aldrich realized that we were on a busy road, so even though he had a lot to say, he didn’t ask and focused on driving.

How did I know him so well?

Haha, that was because I was not drunk.

It wasn’t accurate to say that. It should be: I was drunk but had sobered up again.

New Flow, who had become one with me, had developed strange abilities. For example, it no longer rejected all negative factors and could effectively transform them into safe powers for my use. These negative factors had a wide range, such as alcohol.

New Flow had stolen the work that should have been mine. When I held the donut Aldrich bought me, I was already out of my drunken state. By the time Aldrich started to drive, I was already sobered up.

But I didn’t say anything because being drunk was the best excuse.

I had to admit that the news of Avril and Perrin’s engagement touched me greatly. An invisible magnetic field surrounded them and continuously emitted light waves that said, ‘We are very happy’.

I couldn’t help but recall the grand village wedding in Gorndbell Village. The bride and groom had happy smiles, and with everyone’s blessings, they became a match made in heaven, walking on a bright road to a beautiful future.

Looking at them, I couldn’t help but think, ‘What about me? When will I be able to step into this sweet door?’



The missing three years made me feel inevitably lonely. I somehow felt that these three years had been wasted. In those muddled days, I could have finished my studies, made new friends, enjoyed the joy of my parents, and could have laughed and cussed with my lover, rubbed shoulders with each other, and imagined a limitless future together.

However, when I reached twenty-two years old during my coma, the shadow of youth had only touched a corner before it disappeared.

I'd lost three years here. Could I have reaped the fruits of love like Avril?

I should have been too embarrassed to show my eagerness, but under cover of alcohol, everything seemed so natural.

"You're the person I want to hold hands with for the rest of my life."

This wasn't some drunken nonsense but a confession I wrote with my heart.

Aldrich, my lover, I love you, and I want to step into the hall of marriage with you.

And you?

Would you want to do that?

After entering the isolation belt in front of the palace, the traffic was suddenly left behind in the bustling streets. On a starry night, our car was the only one driving slowly. The lush trees hid in the shadows and quietly observed the weirdos in the car.

A drunkard, a sober person, pretending to be drunk, and a handsome man full of worries.

What a strange group. Under the moonlight, what kind of truth could be said under cover of alcohol and probing?

The tree looked at us for a while and felt it was boring, so it stopped looking.

267 An Update

Selma Payne's POV:

The night breeze blew gently, and the leaves rustled. Under the moon's gaze, a car filled with souls bogged down by thoughts slowly drove toward the bright lights.

Kara was already waiting in front of the palace with her men. With her 'I knew it' gaze, the unconscious Dorothy was quietly carried back to her room by the servants. She had no idea what kind of storm would come tomorrow morning.

As for me, out of courtesy, the servants were still in charge of sending me back to my room. Of course, Aldrich could go with me, but when he saw Kara's smile, he let go with a bitter smile and then softly said good night to me.

"Good night, Aldrich." I believed he probably realized I was pretending to be drunk. "See you tomorrow."

I had insomnia that night, so much so that when Dorothy woke up the next morning, my eyes were swollen like two pieces of bacon.

"What's wrong with you?" Dorothy jumped in shock. "Did you have a nightmare? Did you cry in your dream?"

I lay back on the pillow tiredly, my breathing shallow. "No, I couldn't sleep the whole night, and I had diarrhea after drinking, so here I am."

"We should've drunk less last night," Dorothy mumbled as she lay beside me. "It's all Avril's fault. She suddenly announced such exciting news. I'm so happy for her that I can't drink less. "

"You're so unreasonable," I mumbled.

Dorothy did not say anything else. She was also extremely sleepy. When we opened our eyes again, the sun was already high in the sky.

Kara was waiting for us in the living room.

"Good morning, Your Highness. Miss Dorothy."

Her smile was so kind, but Dorothy and I shuddered.

"It's already 11 o'clock before noon. Perhaps you'd like to move a little and sit in the dining chairs to have brunch? Or should I say, lunch?"

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What else could I say? We had no excuse to refuse, not to mention that our hungry stomachs were clamoring for food.

To be honest, although my mother also valued my behavior and even found various etiquette and social teachers for me, they were nothing compared to Kara. This head servant, who was responsible for my daily life, really had extraordinary combat power. When my mother was too busy with political affairs or socializing to take care of me, she would automatically take her place.

So, I could still act coquettishly and beg for mercy when my mother was strict, but I was a little afraid of Kara.

Although Kara was dissatisfied with our drunken behavior, she still thoughtfully prepared some easily digestible soup for us.

“This corn-cream soup is so delicious. It seems a little different from the past.” I asked, “Is it a different chef?”

“Yes.” Kara nodded. “The previous chief chef has retired. Miss Bertha recommends this one.”

Like how the chef society had been updated, the servants had also changed in the past three years.

For example, Kara had to take care of me, who was sleeping in the temple. She needed help managing the palace at the same time. My mother had chosen a servant to take over the position of the head servant temporarily.

This person was Bertha.

I met her once when I returned to the palace. She was a petite red-haired woman with bright facial features and a few cute freckles on the bridge of her nose. People had a good impression of her, but I heard she had trouble joining the company.

All of this was related to her identity – she was an Omega.

I was not familiar with an Omega. As a person who grew up in a normal modern society, this kind of identity chosen by the entire race as a punching bag had already existed in history books. However, it was undeniable that there were such werewolves in some remote and conservative packs, and Bertha was one of them.

For an Omega, people wouldn't show any special characteristics, but the remaining contempt in their hearts was enough to cause a lot of trouble for Bertha. From an unknown, ordinary servant to the acting head servant, she received a lot of criticism.

From this, it could be seen that Bertha must have done her job very well, which was why she could win everyone's trust.

However, this made Kara's identity awkward.

Now that the newcomer had gained a firm foothold, how would she, a senior, deal with it?

I quietly drank my soup and did not mention that Kara had taken care of me instead of managing the palace. I was afraid that it would hurt her. Dorothy worked even harder to make herself invisible.

But who was Kara? This woman, who had served the royal family for half her life, had long seen through the fickleness of human nature. Faced with my hesitation, she bluntly said, "Don't worry, just say what you want."

"No, no. I just wanted to say that the soup is delicious." I waved my hand with a smile.

"So you want to ask about Bertha and me?" Kara calmly poured me lemon water. "As you can see, I am now semi-retired. I can retire with glory when Bertha becomes a qualified head servant."

"Don't say that. Everyone in the palace can't live without you," I quickly consoled her.

Kara laughed. "I am not sad. I do not have any opinions about Bertha. You do not have to be so careful."

268 The Wolf Transformation

Selma Payne's POV:

"I've served the royal family since the time of the late King, and I've seen at least 800, if not 1000, personnel transfers over the years. I've long been used to the younger generation pushing the older generation into retirement," Kara said.

"I started as an ordinary servant and was guided step by step by my seniors to the position of the head servant. From the day I replaced the head servant as the acting head servant, I knew that this day would come sooner or later. The old will grow old, and the new will grow. The old replacing the new is an ancient and unchanging truth, it's that simple."

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Dorothy and I couldn't help but sigh at Kara's open mind. At the same time, we were happy for her.

Kara, who had worked hard for the royal family all her life, never showed her fatigue in front of others. On the day of her retirement, she could finally live a leisurely and happy life like an ordinary person.

However, I only knew a little about Bertha, and I hadn't had many chances to meet her in the past few days. I should find time to get to know this head servant.

Morning, training ground.

That was right. Even after experiencing such an adventurous life, my training had not stopped. In terms of physical strength and constitution, Aldrich was already no match for me. After all, I had strengthened this body a lot the minute I became a god. However, in terms of experience and skill, I was still far from a battle-hardened general.

The change happened in an instant.

The strange discomfort made it difficult for me to control my body, and I almost used a ridiculous method, like using my left foot to trip my right foot.

My heart was beating like a drum in my chest. I could almost hear the sound of my blood flowing through my bones. My muscles trembled and expanded. Golden moth-like patterns were faintly visible on my skin. A faint light was flowing through my body like magma flowing through cracks.

Aldrich hurriedly hugged me tightly to the lounge, and a few minutes later, the small lounge was filled with people.

As usual, Master Mary and Tracy checked my body.

“Some signs of a transformation,” Master Mary said. “In addition, I can observe some unusual power surging. Due to Your Highness’s special experience, I believe that Your Highness’s transformation will bring about some unexpected changes, but it’s probably not a bad thing.”

Tracy agreed, “That’s right. Your Highness is about to have your first transformation. However, there are some abnormalities in your physiological data. Perhaps you have experienced a forced transformation earlier?”

This question made me freeze – that was when we were dealing with Adele’s crisis in the garden. To confess my feelings to Aldrich, I had to transform into Maxine.

But how should I explain this? My parents were here. They wouldn’t agree with me doing this. If they knew, they’d be disappointed.

However, I didn’t have to say anything. My expression said it all.

Fortunately, it was not the time to be concerned about these minor details, so no one was holding on to this. I had to rely on myself to get through this. This meant that everything would have to be done by Maxine and me. No one could help.

Master Mary and Tracy were arranged to be on duty in case anything happened to me. My parents simply didn’t go back and ordered someone to set up a bedroom in the empty lounge. According to the rules, ministers were kept from staying overnight in the palace for no reason. However, Aldrich was not an ordinary minister, so he stayed with my parents.

Even Dorothy, who was in the academy, had rushed back.

After switching to Mullwica’s eyes, the side effects of the Eye of Insight had miraculously disappeared. Dorothy felt that the records of the witches of the ancestors

were not very accurate. Rather than calling it a 'close blood relation', it would be more appropriate to call it a 'close soul relation'. Even if there were no biological blood relation, it would take effect as long as the soul was close.

Let us get back to the present. Perhaps because of that one minute of godhood, the effect of the Eye of Insight on me was greatly reduced. Dorothy was unable to see through me like how she saw other people. She could only obtain a few clues, like how she usually captured prophecies. I couldn't even be seen in normal prophecies.

After analyzing the Eye of Insight, she said palely, "It's a good result. Although there are no exact images, I feel the result is good."

Looking at her face covered in sweat, I couldn't help but worry. "You look very weak. Are you okay?"

"It's fine. This is the price to pay." She waved her hand and did not care. "The Eye of Insight is not as useful as I thought. Every time I use it, I have to pay a huge price. However, compared to the previous life force loss, this controllable method is much better."

Night soon fell.

I was restless the entire day, and my heartbeat was accompanied by tinnitus, making me restless. I felt like I had stayed up all night for a week, and my mind was on the verge of sudden death.

This feeling was even more intense after the moon appeared.

"Do you feel it? It'll be here soon," said Maxine.

That was right. I could feel the violent elements flowing in my blood. They were like flames that made my entire body burn, restlessly attempting to extinguish the evil fire with the moonlight.

269 The Wolf And Its Cub

Selma Payne's POV:

I stayed in the lounge alone, and no one disturbed me. Everyone else's rooms were closed as they tried to create a safer and quieter environment for me.

Finally...

I could feel that the moment that belonged to me had arrived. the moment the moonlight reflected in my irises, I broke out of the window and faced the white light, looking up to the sky and howling-

“Awooo...”

Hair broke out from my itchy skin, and my sharp nails tore my shoes and socks. My limbs were more powerful and slender, and my cold eyes could easily see the bird flying in the sky.

I'd completed the transformation in the time it took for my eyes to close.

The wolf's vision was a wonderful vision. The wolf's huge body did not reduce the field of vision because of its four feet on the ground. Its superior vision allowed all details to be seen. As far as a cloud on the horizon, as close as the dust floating in the air, this feeling of nothing in the world could hide gave people a sense of security.

The only thing that surprised me was that something that should not have appeared on my back-

It was a pair of black and gold wings that I was very familiar with.

Didn't this thing only belong to kin? Why did I have one too?

I flapped my wings gently, and I was shocked. It took me a few seconds to realize that I was controlling it.

Wait, why was I the one controlling it?

Where was Maxine? Where did she go?

I tried to call out to her in my heart, but I didn't get a response. This time, I panicked a little. After trying to no avail, I subconsciously wanted to ask Tracy and Master Mary for help.

However, I heard a weak whimper from where I was standing before I could run a few steps.

“Ah... I can finally breathe. You're so heavy. I was almost crushed to death by you.”

I turned around and saw a furry little wolf cub sprawled on the ground. It couldn't even open its eyes, but its round mouth could already make a howling sound.

What was this?

I was a little confused.

Where did this wolf cub come from? Shouldn't the training ground have been cleared?

No, who was talking just now?

It?

If anyone could see it, the scene would be very funny. A two-meter-long giant wolf stood stiffly in place, and the thing that made it look like it was facing a great enemy was a wolf cub that was not even the size of its claws.

Suddenly, the wolf cub spoke again, "The ground is really cold. There's not much hair on my belly. Selma, what are you doing? Pick me up quickly. I don't want diarrhea to be the first thing I do after obtaining a physical body. That would be too embarrassing."

It knew my name.

A certain whimsical thought gradually surfaced in my mind. I asked, "Are you... Maxine?"

"Who else can I be?" The wolf cub howled unhappily. "Hurry up. I'm freezing!"

It was really Maxine!

I quickly picked up the wolf cub, but there was no place to put it on the cold concrete ground. I had to lie down and put it on my stomach.

By the way, my fur was a beautiful silver-white color. Coupled with my soft belly, even I wanted to bury myself in it and take a deep breath.

Maxine didn't seem to be surprised at all. I asked, "What's happening? How did I turn into a wolf, but you are separated from me?"

"I don't know, but I have to say that I've always had this feeling," Maxine said. "Do you still remember when you blocked me at the Rocky Mountains? Since then, I had a vague feeling that we differed from the average werewolf. Although we are twins, we didn't seem to be closely connected. I could even occasionally feel an obvious rejection."

"I swear I don't hate you," I immediately clarified.

Although the wolf cub couldn't open its eyes yet, I somehow felt that Maxine was looking at me as if I was an idiot. "Of course, do you remember that we share the same thoughts? If you dared to hate me, I would have let you have a taste of schizophrenia."

Back to the matter of leaving the body.

"In short, I think our separation this time is still out of your own will." Maxine said, "Although you may not have such thoughts, the depths of your soul express such thoughts."



I thought it was ridiculous. “The soul wants to separate, but I don’t have such thoughts. Isn’t that contradictory?”

“Yes, it’s very contradictory. But haven’t you experienced enough contradictions?” Maxine sighed. I had to admit that the wolf cub’s actions were very cute. “Even after your physical body was destroyed and reassembled, and you became a god, you still couldn’t see the secrets in the depths of your soul. In that case, I don’t think there’s a need to think about such things now. Just accept reality with peace of mind.”

“How can we do that? It’s very dangerous for my soul to have an independent consciousness.”

“You know it’s dangerous, so what? How do you think I can solve it? If you, a god, didn’t notice the problem with your soul, it meant that it was something that even gods couldn’t solve. What can you and I do with our current strength? Instead of worrying unnecessarily, it’s better to solve the current problem first. I feel I can’t go back as a wolf cub. What should I do?”

What?

I suddenly felt a headache coming: why was I always encountering rare incidents like this?

270 The Cub

Selma Payne’s POV:

In fact, the result had already given a hint.

The connection between Maxine and me had been cut off. No matter how much I called out to her in my heart, she couldn’t hear me.

In theory, this was impossible. Wolves and werewolves were natural partners. Unless we lost our wolf forever, our connection was stronger than a mind link. However, the reality was that Maxine and I had already become independent individuals.

If this was also the doing of the independent consciousness that might exist in my soul, then she was a loner. Not only did she not like to communicate with others, but she also drove her roommates away.

We tried to transform back, but no matter how hard we tried, I was able to shift back to my human form, while Maxine was still existing as a wolf cub.

What should I do? I was going to lose my wolf!

“Correction, there’s no loss.” Maxine said, “Our connection still exists. It’s just that we can’t communicate clearly anymore. I can vaguely sense some of your thoughts, especially when you’re particularly emotional, like just now.”

From the looks of it, my connection with Maxine wasn’t cut off, but it was weakened for some unknown reason.

Why?

Looking at the fist-sized wolf cub, a thought suddenly popped into my mind.

“Could it be because you’re not fully developed? Your body is still that of a newborn wolf, and your body may not have fully developed yet. This also causes your brain to be unable to process information as it used to. After all, you were using my body before. An adult’s body can’t be compared to a baby’s!”

The more I thought about it, the more I felt that it made sense. Maxine also agreed.

“Anyway, let’s wait a few months and see if our relationship will change after you grow up.”

Just as our thoughts ran wild, a few heads popped out of the lounge’s window.

“Baby, you’re so beautiful!”

My mother gasped in amazement, and then people walked out of the lounge and surrounded me, asking about my well-being.

Obviously, everyone had noticed the problem that I had encountered after I transformed into my wolf. No one could give any advice on the man-wolf separation.

It was better to say that this had never happened in the history of werewolves, and there was no precedent for reference.

After half a day of discussion, no conclusion could be reached. Tracy and Master Mary felt they could only observe for a long time. If it were confirmed that there was no harm to the body, it would be safer to let it go or find a solution.

As for Maxine, this cute little wolf cub quickly gained my mother’s love and attention, stealing all of her attention away from me. She even ordered people to build a separate ‘little wolf paradise’ in my room for Maxine.

“You know that she can only be petite and cute for another four months before she can crush the wooden ladder into a pile of firewood, right?” I was a little embarrassed. “And how am I supposed to explain her existence to the public? The separation of the wolf and the human must be kept a secret from the outside world.”

My mother was hugging Maxine and could not let go. She did not even lift her head as she said, "I'll get someone to build a bigger place for her when the time comes. As for her identity, we can just announce her as a pet. Compared to the royal family that keeps lions and tigers, it's not a big deal for the werewolf Princess to keep a wolf."

"... perhaps you still remember that I am Maxine and that Maxine is me? It's too strange to keep yourself as a pet."

My mother simply didn't answer. She was busy playing with the wolf cub like a baby and ignored me.

And Maxine had the nerve just to accept it! 'Don't think people will forget that you have a complete adult mind just because you hide in your cute little shell!'

My father touched my smooth hair and held back his laughter. "Do you know how much your mother wants to make up for not being able to take care of you? Alright, Helena, my dear, be more reserved. Everyone's watching."

The process of transforming back to my human form took up much of my time. I was worried that something had gone wrong with the transformation. However, Tracy consoled me by saying that it was normal. Even the werewolves' first shift was as unskilled as mine. Once they get used to it, their efficiency would naturally increase.

No one had any doubts about my wings because my followers all had them. As the person who 'created' them, it was not surprising that I also had a pair of wings.

After the human, it was the wolf's turn. Everyone transformed into their wolves to share their experiences with me. Of course, as they spoke, their attention unconsciously shifted to Maxine. This was especially true for Irene. She was indeed my mother's wolf. Her love for Maxine was overflowing, and she even subconsciously wanted to lick her fur.

Of course, I wouldn't be jealous of Maxine. In fact, I finally joined the army of wolf 'pets'. It was just that the young Maxine was too cute, and I was her, and she was me. So what was wrong with liking me?

This was not narcissism, definitely not.

All in all, I successfully transformed and gained a new 'sister'.

It wasn't an exaggeration to say that the treatment that Maxine received was ten times that of mine. From my parents to the servants who cleaned the room, everyone treated the wolf cub great.

Selma Payne's POV:

At first, she was still a little ashamed, but after a few days, she had completely adapted to the life of a baby. She acted coquettishly with Kara without qualms just to get extra special milk from the head chef.

"You are depraved," I said bitterly. "Your gentleness cannot breed strong wolves. Indulging in pleasure will destroy you."

"Enjoyment will destroy me, and jealousy will also destroy you, my dear."

What was she saying?! How could you slander my reputation?

Half a month passed quickly in a stable life, and in the blink of an eye, it was June.

On the morning of the 1st, my father called me to the study room. My mother was there, along with a few officials I'd seen but wasn't familiar with.

I forced my casual greetings into my stomach when I saw everyone. Facing my parents, I calmly bent my knees and bowed. "Good Morning, Your Majesties."

They didn't return the greeting in a distant manner as they usually did to outsiders. My father waved his hand and smiled. "Come quickly, my child. Let the elders see you."

I was at a loss for a moment at my father's actions, but I quickly reacted. My parents had already discussed with me disclosing my identity. Today, they were probably going to meet all the important officials.

"Good morning, my Lords." I played my princess role quickly and nodded to everyone.

"Allow me to introduce you," my father proudly presented me to the crowd. "This is my daughter, Madeline. She disappeared twenty years ago. Fortunately, the goddess has taken pity on her and sent her back to the Queen and me. Due to various reasons, we didn't disclose her identity immediately. Instead, we announced to the public that she was my wife's niece. Now that she's grown up to be a girl I'm proud of, I think it's time to let you all get to know her."

The ministers immediately congratulated my father happily, then bowed to me.

"I'm here to get to know the adults and children."

My father introduced them to me one by one.

This is the left-wing President of the Council of Elders, Arkadius S. Williams.

A white-haired old man gently kissed my hand. He wore a pair of frameless glasses, and his muddy eyes shone with wisdom.

“The Minister of Defense, Duke Frank, Devin Leopold.”

This was an old acquaintance. We gave each other a warm hug.

“Earl of Marlowe, the head of the Royal Academy of Sciences, Morton Cletti Iberia.”

Earl Marlowe was nearly eighty years old. He was spirited and gentlemanly. There was a gold-chained monocle in his chest pocket. He looked like a scholar from an old movie who had walked into reality.

“Hello.” He bowed to me. “Long live, Your Highness.”

I smiled. “There’s no need to be so polite, my Lord. If I remember correctly, you have a granddaughter named Emma?”

“Yes, she was fortunate enough to be your attendants.”

“She’s a good girl, and we got along very well. If there’s a chance, I think we’ll become friends.”

I wasn’t being polite, but being with Emma and Jordin really made me feel relaxed. It was a stupid and happy experience to have someone criticize the etiquette teacher’s wooden mustache with you in a formal etiquette class.

The last one was even more familiar.

“The werewolf grandmaster’s representative, Mary Borgia.”

We just met last night. She came to examine Maxine and me, and we winked at each other in tacit understanding.

There were four ministers, all of whom were his father’s trusted aides, and they were also the pillars of support for the imperial court and the people.

Our conversation was quite pleasant. The old ministers didn’t question me or embarrass me. Instead, they took care of me like elders would.

This made me very touched, and at the same time, I was more willing to trust them. This was the political capital that my father had left me. If I wanted to gain a firm foothold in the Town Hall as a rookie, I had to rely on the power of my seniors.

The topic came to my social circle. The ministers were all very concerned about the issue of my servants. I also understood that as the heir to the royal family, I had to have

a few noble ladies by my side to serve as my attendants. This was a tradition, a ritual, and had nothing to do with thinking or not thinking.

My mother had already warned me about choosing an attendant, and I had also hinted that I wanted to find someone I was more familiar with, such as Emma and Jordin. I felt that most noble girls followed the rules like Carolyn. This wasn't bad, but it didn't fit my taste.

So, I wasn't surprised when my mother asked Bertha to invite Emma and Jordin in.

As for the heated discussion, it seemed that it was just a formality.

Three years had passed, and Emma and Jordin had also turned from young girls to energetic young women. The way they kneeled and bowed didn't look like girls who would skip class. Only when the adults weren't paying attention did they show some real liveliness by winking at me.

Everyone praised the girls and had high hopes for them. In the end, my mother put on the brooch that represented the status of the Crown Princess' attendants for Emma and Jordin.

With the sapphire's gaze, my pitifully small team now had two new members.

In addition to the ministers and my attendants, my father also decided on one thing: He'd be giving a speech at this year's graduation ceremony and announcing my true identity to the public.

"Isn't that a little too ostentatious?" Thinking about that, I felt a little embarrassed. I had so many classmates!

272 Bertha's Past

Selma Payne's POV:

"Your Highness," Arkadius said. "You would actually need a formal and friendly occasion to announce your identity. The graduation ceremony is very appropriate.

"Firstly, everyone here are your classmates and teachers. Most of them don't have extreme political stances, so the risk of questioning you in public is very small. Secondly, the media the Sivr Academy has invited over the years are mostly old names with good reviews and conservative writing styles. They'll be impartial in publicly announcing your identity and won't compete with the official media.

"Moreover, people always have a positive impression of the school. Announcing your identity here will help to consolidate your legitimacy and friendliness to the people. Also,

the royal family funded the new campus of the Sivr Academy, so we can better ensure our safety there.”

Alright, as expected of the left-wing President, who has gone through half of his life’s trials and tribulations, he had considered everything thoroughly. I had nothing to object to.

The announcement of my identity was settled just like that.

After sending off the ministers, my parents gave me a few instructions to take care of my new companions before going back to work. Now was the girls’ time!

Jordin gave me a big hug. “I really missed you! You suddenly went back to Europe three years ago. I was worried that we would never see each other again!”

Emma still couldn’t let it go, and she looked at Jordin disapprovingly. “Watch yourself.”

“Don’t worry, I don’t like those overly elaborate formalities. In private, we’ll still get along as friends. I held the girls’ hands. “Relax, there’s no etiquette teacher here with a pointer!”

We laughed out loud, and the barrier between us quickly disappeared.

Dorothy, who had heard the news, also came. She and Emma had a good relationship with Jordin. We talked and laughed, and it was soon noon.

After my convincing, Emma and Jordin stayed at the palace for lunch. Bertha considerably prepared a large table of food for us in the garden. Delicious food, fresh flowers, sunlight, and a gentle breeze made this gathering very pleasant.

After-meal tea time.

I noticed that Jordin was always looking at Bertha, so I asked, “What’s wrong? Do you need any help? Bertha is a very good person, you can tell her all you want.”

“It’s nothing.” Jordin shook his head. “Actually, I was the one who recommended Bertha to the palace. I’m satisfied to see that she’s doing well now.”

“Really!” I was greatly surprised and, at the same time, pleasantly surprised by this wonderful fate.

I made a prompt decision and immediately pulled Bertha into the tea party.

Bertha refused in a panic. “This is not for my status, Your Highness. I’ll just stand aside and listen.”

She was unwilling to sit down no matter what. I remembered Kara once said, 'Other than watching the servants' behavior and the master of the palace, there were also invigilators who were everywhere.' So I let it go.

"I heard that you came from another pack. Did you come to the Lycan pack for work?"

Bertha shook her head. "That's not the case, Your Highness," she said softly. "My visit to the Lycan pack was purely coincidental."

"What's wrong?"

"I escaped from the original pack with my brother. I was born in a very remote and conservative pack. As an Omega, my brother and I couldn't survive there. Three years ago, Madam Sheedy, who was on a business trip, kindly took us in and even gave me a job as a servant.

"Later, Madam Sheedy thought I was hardworking, so she brought me back to the Lycan pack to serve the Countess of Mirror Lake. Later, the palace was recruiting servants, and her Ladyship encouraged me to sign up for it. After being selected, I stayed in the palace as a servant."

"What about your brother? Is he still in the countess' residence?"

Bertha didn't give any details. With my questioning, she choked and said, "I don't know where he is. The wandering people attacked us on our way back with Madam Sheedy. I separated from him, and we didn't see each other again."

Oh my god!

I felt apologetic for my rash question. At the same time, I sympathized with Bertha's past. "How old are you this year? How old is he?"

"I'm twenty, Your Highness. My brother should be thirteen this year."

Thirteen years old! This meant that her younger brother was only ten years old when he went missing, and he was still a child!

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The girls all sympathized with her. I sincerely said, "Let me help you, okay? I'll send someone to investigate the place where your brother went missing. Do you still have anything that belonged to your brother? The werewolf grandmasters might be able to use this to find some clues."

Bertha looked at me in disbelief and cried out in surprise, "Really? Your Highness. I... I don't know how to thank you! You are a good person. May Moon Goddess protect you



forever! Thank you for being so kind, I swear I will use the rest of my insignificant life to serve you loyally! Thank you! Thank you!"

"Quickly get up." I motioned for the servants to help her and gently said, "I'll give you a break today. Go back and rest. Don't forget to find your brother's things and bring them to me."

After she left, the girls all felt sorry for her.

Bertha had always blamed herself for her brother's disappearance. She believed she did not protect her brother well as an older sister. Jordin said emotionally, "I helped her look for her brother, but the situation was critical back then, and no one could care about a ten-year-old child. Some people even assumed he might be dead."

"No matter what, I want to see him. Dead or alive," I said. "Bertha is a good girl. Since I've promised her, there's no reason for me to go back on my words."

### 273 The Unknown Wife

Selma Payne's POV:

At night, Bertha came with a brooch. This was the only thing she had that belonged to her brother.

"This is what our mother left us," Bertha revealed her reminiscence of the past. "After giving birth to two Omega children in a row, my father abandoned her, and also abandoned us. She raised Angus and me herself and passed away from exhaustion and illness. The brooch was the only thing she left behind. At that time, Angus was still young, and he cried for his mother all day long. I'd pin the brooch on his chest and tell him that mother is in our hearts and will always be with us..."

As she spoke, she started to cry.

"Angus and I once swore to protect each other at my mother's bedside, but I lost him. He was still so young, and I don't know how much he'll be bullied if he wanders outside alone..."

I could only comfort her patiently and promised to inform her immediately if there was any news and get someone to send her back to her room.

"It's so heartbreaking," Dorothy said dejectedly. "I can't imagine how much pain Bertha was in when she found out that her brother was missing. I can't imagine what happened to Angus out there. A young Omega, in case he encounters a wandering group or some other bad people... Sigh."

She used the brooch as a medium to spy on Angus, but the brooch had only been with Angus for a short time, so she could only see fragments of a few locations.

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However, these fragments greatly reduced the difficulty of the search.

The repaired Eye of Insight had a cooldown time. Depending on the situation, recovery would take a few days to a few months. It was hard to say if it would harm the body if used forcefully.

After sending the brooch to the werewolf grandmaster, the matter of finding Angus was settled.

According to tradition, Jordin and Emma had to live in the palace after becoming social companions, so the attendant suite that had been vacant for many years was cleaned up again. Bertha was in charge of this work, and everything was in order under Kara's guidance.

Thus, I had two more companions by my side. It was inevitable that they had to go to school with me and meet my friends. Fortunately, Emma and Jordin were not people who cared about their status. They had a good time with Avril and Mara. They even planned a lot of ideas for Avril and Perrin's wedding with their knowledgeable fashion taste.

"Isn't the teardrop diamond yarn a little too eye-catching?" Avril looked at the cloth samples on the table and was at his wit's end. "I know the tiny rhinestones will sparkle in the sun and look very nice. But I'm more inclined to a short wedding dress. Such a high-profile material seems tacky."

"Why don't we take a look at the mixed composition?" Jordin opened a new cloth book. "The silver thread is randomly inserted into the yarn's threads. It's gorgeous and elegant, perfectly meeting sparkly and low-key needs."

Mara and Emma asked for more cloth booklets from the shop assistant.

Dorothy and I, the two fashion rookies who usually wore T-shirts and jeans, were quietly drinking tea at the side. We would not easily express any childish opinions.

We were ashamed of our inferiority.

We were in a high-end women's clothing store called 'Y&Y'. Even I had to think for a few seconds when I saw the price of a custom-made wedding dress. Avril had made up her mind not to leave any regrets, so she had put in a lot of effort, from the wedding dress to the venue, to do the best she could.

A wedding dress worth a whole year's salary and bonus for the soldiers couldn't be done half-heartedly, so she pulled Dorothy, Mara, and me to use as commenters. I didn't expect that, in the end, Jordin and Emma would be the advisors.

I was drinking my tea in boredom when a customer suddenly entered the store and caught my attention.

It was Master Kevin. This was a women's clothing store. Why was he here?

Since we were in a VIP suite, the fine bead curtain blocked my figure, so he did not see me and went straight to the sales counter.

I didn't want to disturb his private life, but my sensitive hearing still caught the conversation between him and the front desk.

The receptionist seemed to be familiar with him. She smiled and said, "Good morning, Mr. Mark. Are you here to custom-make a gown for your wife again?"

"Yes." Master Kevin took out a document bag from his briefcase. "The design drafts are in there. The requirements are the same as the original. I hope they can be completed before the end of the month."

The receptionist was a little surprised, "Why are you in such a hurry this time? You know, our tailors have already arranged the schedule. If you want to cut the queue, please..."

Master Kevin was very familiar with the rules of the shop. "You'll need to increase the fees by 40%. I understand."

After settling everything, he didn't stay any longer and left.

I was completely confused.

Master Kevin's wife? Who was that? I'd never heard of Master Kevin was married.

From the receptionist's tone, he seemed to come here often to custom-make clothes for his wife. If that was the case, he must have been married to his wife for a long time. However, even Master Mary and Master Hayley had never mentioned that Master Kevin was married. The background check on Master Kevin clearly stated that he was 'single'.

The whole incident raised a strange suspicion. I'd kept this in mind and would find time to ask the werewolf grandmasters.

274 The Sapphire

Selma Payne's POV:

In the end, Avril was completely lost in the piles of gorgeous fabric. She picked no less than ten choices she liked, but she couldn't give up on any of them. She promised to meet us again at Y&Y tomorrow.

"The wedding dress would take a month and a half to be completed. It'll be too late if we wait to make a decision." She said confidently, "I'll make up my mind tonight. I promise we'll be able to finalize the results within two hours tomorrow."

I didn't have much hope because I saw seventy to eighty wedding dress designs in her photo album.

At night.

The girls and I were drinking tea in the room when I asked, "How does it feel to live in the palace? Are you adapting well?"

"To be honest, it's a little awkward." Jordin was always the one who spoke bluntly, "Although I know that everyone here is good, but... This is the palace! I cannot calm down and let go of my fear of this place. If the six-year-old me were to live in the palace for a month, I don't think I would need to hire any etiquette teacher to become a perfect quail lady."

Emma nodded, obviously a little burdened.

"You'll get used to it. I do feel uncomfortable at first." Dorothy shared her experience. "After a week or two, you will naturally feel a sense of belonging when familiar with the faces here."

From this point of view, Jordin's adaptability was much better than Emma's. Perhaps it was because she had been placed in her uncle's care since she was young. She was particularly open-minded and never gave herself a hard time. Although Mr. And Mrs. Sheedy were good people, there were times when it was inconvenient to be around her uncles and aunts, and Jordin had probably developed such a character because of that.

I was always worried she'd use her happy-go-lucky front to cover up her grievances, so I often paid attention to her.

The next day.

Just as I expected, Avril was once again caught in a dilemma. Even though we decided on the fabric, the wedding dress design was still a problem for her. The short designs that had been decided at the beginning were gradually wavering under the recommendations of fashion magazines. Yesterday, the table was full of cloth, and today, it was full of design drafts for reference.

“Seriously, why don’t you make it a detachable model? I sincerely suggest that the main body be made into a short wedding dress, and on top of that, a long puffy skirt. This way, you can wear long or short as you want. It’s perfect to wear two dresses for a ceremony and a ball.”

“You are a genius, Selma!” Avril was greatly inspired.

It was the designer’s time next. Avril, Mara, Jordin, and Emma took turns testing the professional standards of the designer. Dorothy and I were still quietly drinking tea at the side, silently praying for the designer whose forehead was covered in cold sweats.

I hoped that his salary was enough to pay for his efforts.

While observing his surroundings, Master Kevin suddenly pushed the door open and entered. He went straight to the front desk and handed the front desk lady a small velvet box.

“I hope the dress can be inlaid with the sapphire in the box,” he said. “Like before, on the chest.”

The front desk lady politely took the box and asked, “The designer is in the studio on the second floor. Perhaps you can discuss your ideas with him? Every time, you just leave behind the design drafts and materials before leaving. Our designer wants to meet you. He sincerely hopes to know your opinion on his work.”

After a moment of silence, Master Kevin shook his head and refused, “No, there’s no need for that. Just make the clothes.”

After saying that, he did not stay any longer and left in a hurry, just like last time.

Meeting Master Kevin again, the doubt in my heart deepened. From the packaging, the sapphire was probably expensive. Who was the dress for? What was going on with that non-existent wife?

“Hey, what are you daydreaming about?” Dorothy tugged at the hem of my shirt. “What do you think of the knee-length? Or maybe we can make our bridesmaids into different styles?”

The girls’ train of topics had unknowingly come to the bridesmaid’s dress style. Compared to the wedding dress, this was much easier to make. As they couldn’t steal the bride’s limelight, the bridesmaid’s dress was mostly simpler, which meant that there weren’t so many extravagant choices.

After deciding on a light green Roman-styled dress, the preparation of the formal dress was finally completed. It was already afternoon.

“Do you want to go back to school for a gathering?” Avril suggested, “Most graduates have moved away in advance, so the common kitchen is free. We can make some delicious food and DIY cocktails.”

I was very tempted, but I still had to learn political affairs from my parents, so I could only refuse. “No, I’m busy tonight. Let’s meet another day.”

Back at the palace.

The government affairs that a rookie could handle alone were not very complicated, and they could be reviewed according to a fixed process. It was just that with the dull and monotonous paperwork, it was very easy to get tired of. Every half an hour, I had to do something else to relieve my fatigue. Black tea and biscuits were the easiest things I could get. It didn’t take long for the snack basket to be empty.

Seeing me looking for snacks, my mother helplessly said, “Control yourself. It’s dinner time soon.”

275 Wanderers

Selma Payne’s POV:

I stuck out my tongue in embarrassment and said, “But eating relaxes me, Mother.”

“You’re not a baby anymore. Are you going through some kind of growth spurt?” My mother didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. She called Bertha over to give me three small blueberry cookies. “This is the last snack. No matter how much you want to eat it, wait until dinner. Restraining desire is also an important lesson in learning.”

I quickly swallowed the three small biscuits and mechanically flipped through the routine report. I suddenly remembered: it was Sunday tomorrow, the gathering of the New Moon Goddess’ followers.

It wasn’t exactly a ‘gathering’, but a large-scale assembly. In the three years that I was unconscious, the Sunday Assembly was originally held by my followers to refine the power of the divine shards to feed me. When I woke up, I stopped this. It was too much for a living person to be worshipped like a god!

However, the blessed still retained the habit of gathering on Sunday. Since I had clearly stated that I didn’t want to be disturbed, the gathering became a platform for eating, drinking, and communicating feelings.

I wanted to go too. A party with hundreds of people must be very lively. However, Dorothy advised me not to because even if I no longer thought of myself as a god, in the hearts of my followers, I was still the goddess who had given them a chance to rebirth

and whose souls were connected. Such an identity would make the kins unable to let go, turning a happy gathering into a dull worship.

So I had to give up.

When I thought of kins, I couldn't help but think of Master Kevin and his non-existent wife.

I thought my parents might know something, so I asked, "I met Master Kevin at a fashion store today. He seemed to be ordering a dress for his wife. From the staff's tone, he does this often. Is Master Kevin married? How come I've never heard anyone mention it?"

To my surprise, they didn't answer me. Instead, they were silent.

"What is it?"

Such a reaction made me even more certain that something was hidden, so I pressed on.

Finally, my father put down the documents in his hand and said softly, "This is a sad story, child. Speaking of which, I think it has something to do with you?"

"With me?"

"Yes. Speaking of which, it's been twenty-two years since that incident."

Twenty-two years, and I was twenty-two years old this year. Thinking about what happened twenty-two years ago...

"Could it be related to my disappearance?" I made a bold guess.

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My father nodded again. I had guessed correctly.

Then, I heard a sad story from my parents.

Twenty-two years ago, when I was just three months old, something big happened to my Lycan pack.

With the cooperation of a few elders who were dissatisfied with my father, a group of brutal wanderers broke into the palace and took my mother and I away while my father was attending a charity event.

At that time, the captain in charge of the palace guards was a she-wolf named Layla. She made a prompt decision and divided the guards into two teams to chase after the

wanderers who had taken my mother and me. With her wise command, the wanderers who had kidnapped my mother were quickly executed, but another team was in trouble.

It turned out that there was a sorcerer among the wanderers. This mysterious werewolf grandmaster, who was not in the records, had caused the guards to suffer a lot. However, they were afraid that I was still in their hands, so the guards did not dare to use forceful means. They could only passively follow the other party's traces.

By then, the opinions were divided into two factions. One faction believed that the soldiers who had received the emergency transfer order had already set off from the barracks and would soon come to rescue and that the guards should wait for follow-up arrangements for the time being. One faction thought that if things continued to develop, my life would be in danger, and it was better to try their best to save me.

Layla firmly supported the latter and rushed to help another team of guards despite their objections. My mother, who was still in shock, insisted on going with her. She wanted to see me out of danger with her own eyes before she could feel at ease.

With Layla's help, the situation quickly reversed. The guards crushed the wanderers, and only the mysterious werewolf grandmaster was left to escape with me. However, Layla quickly defeated him with a sharp arrow that was said to be a relic of the Moon Goddess' human incarnation. We returned triumphantly.

She was warmly welcomed by the people like a hero and personally returned me to my mother's arms.

However, no one had thought that there was a conspiracy hidden in this.

Just as everyone let their guard down, a black mist suddenly spread from Layla's body, covering everyone's eyes and ears. It turned out that the mysterious werewolf grandmaster had used some kind of sorcery to attach himself to Layla's body. He took advantage of the time when everyone's ears and eyes were blocked and kidnapped me.

No matter how long they searched, there was no result. There were even rumors that I was already dead.

## 276 The Big Picture

Selma Payne's POV:

Someone had to take responsibility for this incident, and Layla became the target of public criticism.

Some criticized her for being arrogant and complacent and for letting someone kidnap me in her carelessness; others criticized her for wanting to be in the limelight. If the army had arrived, there wouldn't have been so many accidents. Some people secretly



did her dirty her, saying she might have colluded with the wanderers long ago. Otherwise, how could the wanderers break through the palace's defenses so easily?

In short, the malicious public opinion was all poured on her. Even if my parents knew that it was not her fault, even if the royal family published a Clarification Statement, and even if she was secretly sent away to hide from the limelight, the intentional abuse still filled her life.

Layla was a powerful warrior, but her heart was also made of flesh. It could not be as cold as steel.

On an ordinary morning, she committed suicide, leaving only a scribbled suicide note. The will was scratched and rewritten many times, and in the end, there was only one sentence left, "I'm sorry."

The 28-year-old young warrior ended her life just like that. People who used to praise her for her promising future were now pointing at her photo in the newspaper. In the cemetery of heroes, she was the one who was the least cared about.

Even though my father had ruthlessly taken care of the group of vicious idiots in the Council of Elders after this incident, and even though the royal family had never admitted to the slander and accusations against Layla, some things could never be reversed.

Layla had kept her life a secret, so few people knew she was engaged.

Her fiancé was Master Kevin.

My parents only knew this much. They had no access to other things from their perspective. Out of respect for privacy, they could not simply dig up the past of a dedicated werewolf grandmaster.

"In any case, I think this may be a kind of nostalgia." My mother sighed. Women were always more sensitive to emotions. "It is said that before the kidnapping, Layla and Master Kevin had already agreed on a wedding date. This dress may be Master Kevin's way of making up for his late fiancée's wish."

I thought for a moment, but in the end, I couldn't help but ask, "Why don't you make the matter of those elders colluding with the wanderers public? Won't we be able to clear Layla's name easily this way?"

My father shook his head lightly, a rare look of helplessness. "Selma, things aren't that simple. Even if this was made public, it won't change the conflict with Layla because this is not about who is right or wrong. Public opinion is manipulated to achieve the purpose of wrapping Layla up as the culprit. As for who the real murderer is, it doesn't matter at all."

When people believed that the mastermind of a crime was a certain person, the appearance of other suspects would only increase the number of accomplices of the mastermind. It would not change the murderer's crime in their hearts.

These words were perfunctory, and I didn't accept such a roundabout explanation. I asked, "But this doesn't prevent the crimes of the elders from being made public, right? Even if we can't clear Layla's name, we can at least share her burden with the real murderer, right?"

Faced with my questioning, my father was helpless and could only say, "Yes, you're right, but this still can't be made public."

"Why not?" I was greatly puzzled.

"To avoid causing social panic. In the public's impression, the Council of Elders had always been a think tank that maintained social stability and protected the safety of the people. However, political institutions are the most trustworthy and untrustworthy things. If the news of a traitor in the Council of Elders spreads, its reputation will instantly be reversed.

"People will doubt, fear, and anger. In the end, they will vent their anger on the entire government. Once people no longer trust the government, its credibility and social control will also drop.

"Out of the 100 things that happen in the world, ninety-eight are insignificant and ordinary things. One is a good thing, and the other is a bad thing. And the power of this one bad thing could offset the good and even offset ninety-eight ordinary things. The government's responsibility is to prevent this bad thing from happening. If it did happen, then the negative impact would be minimized. And a government that has lost its credibility will never be able to gather the power to fight against evil.

"Back then, there were still terrorists in the Council of Elders who wanted to take over the position at all times, and there were also wanderers who colluded with other forces outside. I had to prioritize the protection of the people, and the premise of all this was that the people still believed in the government."

"So, Layla was abandoned..." I had expected it, but I still couldn't believe it. Real politics is so cold. In the face of the big picture, a person's life was too insignificant, even if she had given everything she had.

My father didn't answer. His silence was a tacit agreement.

"Actually, we didn't give up on Layla," my mother said quickly. "Sending her away was also a way to protect her, but no one would have expected that... sigh..."

It was just that no one had expected her to commit suicide, no one had expected that a powerful warrior would be so mentally fragile, and no one had expected that the situation would crush the captain of the palace guards with mature political literacy.

“In the end, we’re the ones who let her down.”

277 A Memorial For The Dead

Selma Payne’s POV:

That was all my mother had to say. I understood what she meant.

After helping my father win so many battles, I was no longer a political noob. Of course, I understood the helplessness hidden under the boundless glory. But the death of Layla still made me feel lost. It was as if something was blocking my heart. It was stuffy and some sort of existential crisis.

If I wanted to protect the majority, did I have to sacrifice one person?

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Could the conflict of numbers and numbers not co-exist?

I didn’t understand. I couldn’t say anything even if I wanted to. I could only sit there in a daze, lost in my thoughts.

Seeing through my thoughts, my father was kind enough to give me a break.

I left in a daze.

This sad story made me lose my mind. At night, I told Dorothy, who was sleeping on my bed.

“Heavens!” She felt very sympathetic. “I can’t imagine how sad Master Kevin would be when he learned of his fiancée’s death. It was not Layla’s fault! She protected you, so she shouldn’t bear all these baseless accusations.”

“Yeap!” I hugged the pillow and said sullenly, “I don’t understand. Why do you have to sacrifice a person’s innocence to maintain stability? She was not the one in the wrong. Isn’t it a lie to hide the truth? Is the trust gained from sacrifice and deception reliable?”

Dorothy was even more clueless about all this. Even though she was a smart girl, she knew nothing about politics, so she could only comfort me by saying, “Although the ending was indignant, according to the situation at that time, His Majesty had already done his best.”

"I know. I don't mean to blame my parents. It's just that I can't figure this out. Sigh, how annoying!"

Layla's death made me confused and frustrated for the next three days.

On Wednesday night, Master Mary came to give me a routine examination. After everything was over, I asked her to stay and asked her about Master Kevin and Layla.

Master Mary was very confused. She didn't expect me to know about Master Kevin's past.

"I met Master Kevin at a fashion store, who was making a custom-made dress for his wife. I didn't know that he was married, so I went to ask my parents." I said, "It's because of this that I know the story of Layla. I want to know why Master Kevin insists on making a suit for his late partner. If you find this offensive of me, then forget it. This is Master Kevin's privacy. I don't have any intention of prying."

"This isn't a secret. everyone close to Kevin knows about it." Master Mary said, "Perhaps you knew that before Layla committed suicide, she was already engaged to Kevin?"

"Yes, I'm very sorry for that."

"Not only that, their wedding was supposed to be a week after the kidnapping. Layla had already applied for a month's leave for her wedding day. she was going to try on the wedding dress the next day."

Recalling that past, Master Mary was also very sad.

"Who knew that heaven would play such a trick on us? Since you disappeared, Layla has become the target of public criticism. No one dared to get close to her then, whether they were malicious or kind to her. Even the fashion store that customized the wedding dress for her rejected her order.

"I believe the fashion store you went to today is Y&Y, right? To tell you the truth, this shop was founded in the Silver Moon Pack, where the two Majesties sent Layla to lay low. Y&Y was the fashion store that took over the production of wedding dresses. However, before the wedding dresses were completed, Layla had... anyway, eventually, Y&Y opened a branch in our pack. Kevin would make a brand new wedding dress every year on the day of their supposed wedding anniversary, and he would throw a huge party. He never told us why, but we all know it's for Layla."

"Oh my god!" I stammered, not knowing what to say. "I'm sorry, I shouldn't have asked about this. It's a sad past, and I'm ashamed of myself for digging up others' sad stories."

Master Mary smiled bitterly. “You don’t have to feel sorry for this. In fact, so many years have passed. It’s not like we haven’t persuaded Kevin to let go of the knot in his heart. But now that things have come to this, rather than saying that the knot in his heart has not been resolved, it is better to say that it has become a habit that must be done.

“It seemed like this would make Master Kevin feel that Layla was still by his side, so we stopped persuading him to stop. You don’t have to be afraid of anything regarding this matter. Being calm will instead let Kevin understand that you understand him.”

I nodded and didn’t say anything.

It was mid-June, and my father would inspect a mine belonging to the government, so I was going with him. This showed that the Queen’s ‘niece’ could accompany the Lycan King to a political event. For a moment, the outside world was discussing my identity.

On the 20th of June, the royal family announced that the King would attend and give a speech at the Sivr Academy’s graduation ceremony. The public had mixed reactions. Some of the more sensitive media outlets had already guessed that I had something to do with this. For a moment, the discussion about me was very heated. However, under the instructions of the official media, everything did not go too far, and the storm subsided in two or three days.

29th of June.

After renovating the campus with the royal family’s donation, the Sivr Academy shed its conservative style. This graduation ceremony was luxurious and memorable.

278 The Day Of The Ball

Selma Payne’s POV:

The graduation ceremony and ball, which were usually scheduled for one day, were now scheduled for two days, which meant that the students had two days to party.

The graduation ball was on the 29th, and the graduation ceremony was on the 30th.

Students were always the most informed when it came to gossip. Since many media tycoons had sent their children to the Sivr Academy, the news spread very quickly. These few days, speculations about my identity had been circulating among the students, so much so that when I walked around the campus, I would always receive some glances.

I chose to ignore this. They didn’t have any ill intentions anyway. They could just watch, and they wouldn’t lose anything.

But I didn't expect Mara and Avril to be so gossipy. The moment O arrived at the dormitory, they kept asking, "Selma, I've heard that the King has the intention to adopt you as his daughter and groom you as his heir. Is this true?"

"What?" I didn't know how to react. "Where did all this gossip come from? How is that possible?"

I was my parents' biological daughter. Why would they adopt me? That was why it was impossible.

Of course, Mara and Avril thought I couldn't be adopted and become the heir. I didn't say much, hoping that they wouldn't break off our friendship because of my hiding of the truth tomorrow.

With the experience from the last graduation ball – for example, having to guard against a witch who could explode at any time – Dorothy and I were smart enough not to dress up early. Instead, we left the dress and accessories in the dormitory and went to enjoy the ball to the fullest.

Jordin and Emma didn't come because my identity was still a secret. They couldn't accompany me as my attendants, and on the day of the ball and graduation, teachers, students, and parents were also forbidden from entering the school.

The graduation ceremony was much grander than three years ago, but the clubs would still compete for a bigger and better venue. Among them, the opera club was particularly exotic. As a club with its independent building, every year, the opera club would sit in the spacious opera hall and watch the 'open and secret fights' between other clubs elegantly.

As Avril had joined the escort team, she had left the boxing club a long time ago. However, she still had a good relationship with the club members and had to attend such a grand event as the graduation ceremony. She played two friendly games with the club members as a special guest and won the audience's applause.

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"We're all proud of you!" We gathered around her and said happily, "Your combat skills are so dexterous. You finished off your opponent in no time. It was so enjoyable to watch!"

Avril nodded in a reserved manner as if she had won a championship in an international competition. "Thank you. Do you need an autograph?"

She was no longer the 'crybaby' when she was insulted as a 'muscular woman'. Now, her body and soul were both strong. She said that her dream was to join the army and become a soldier, and I had a feeling that her dream would come true.

After that, we went to the opera club to enjoy the fun. After, we went to the Midnight Opera House. The opera Club was in high demand. Classic songs were being played here. At a glance, most of the audience were parents of students. It seemed like traditional art was more popular among middle-aged people than rock bands, which were highly sought after by students.

'The Butterfly Lady' was currently playing. After three years, Chloe was playing the female lead again.

Seeing that I had arrived, Mara decided to have me act as the flower delivery person. The backstage was so busy that there wasn't any manpower left.

So, when the act ended, I walked up on stage and presented the pink bouquet to Chloe.

"Hey, I remember you. You're Selma, aren't you? We haven't seen each other for three years. I heard that you've returned to Europe to study. I'm happy you can return to school to attend the graduation ceremony."

"Thank you," I said. I had a good impression of this cute girl. "I remember coming to the opera club to help Mara and even helping you change your costume. How have you been these past three years?"

"Very good. This is the life of my dream. Speaking of which, I still have to thank you. If you hadn't exposed Ryan's true colors, the opera club would still be under his control. He was an extremely selfish person who only wanted to be famous. He would suppress anyone outstanding. Ever since Mara came to power, she swept away the dictatorial atmosphere, and everyone was able to develop well. That's what we're most pleased with."

"As Mara's friend, I'm happy you have such a high opinion of her. This means that her efforts were not in vain. She will be very proud."

"It's nothing. Mara deserves all the praise. She deserves it."

As we were talking, Mara walked toward us.

"Hey girls, what are you whispering about?"

"I'm complimenting you," I teased her. "Your club members have a very high opinion of you, dear President Mara."

Mara was a little embarrassed and glanced at me. "Don't say that. It's so mushy."

Since I was already here, I didn't just sit around and do nothing. I started helping out backstage.

The student council called Dorothy away. As a great senior about to graduate, she needed to hold down the fort for the juniors on patrol.

## 279 The Graduation Ball

Selma Payne's POV:

Strictly speaking, Mara was no longer considered the drama club president. As a graduate, her position had long been replaced by a junior. However, on the last day before graduation, the club members unanimously invited her to direct for the last time, using the audience's cheers and the actors' respect as a graduation gift.

Mara looked at the floating 'lake fairy' on the stage and felt a little emotional.  
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"I'm lucky to meet a like-minded friend," she said. "In fact, when I first joined the drama club, I only wanted to fulfill some credits, so I chose the easiest job, the props team.

This department doesn't require as many brain cells as the production team, nor does it require as much rest time as the cast. It also doesn't need to deal with the aftermath of the production like the logistics team. You just need to make the props and costumes according to the requirements. You can even apply for funds to buy them. You don't have to do it yourself.

"But the more I understand the opera club, the more fascinated I am with it. Every time I see the actors in the costumes I hand-sewn, I feel very proud. I don't know when it started, but I had to do my best in the work of the opera club. Due to my love for the drama club, I would even bear to live under a scumbag like Ryan.

"From then on, I knew that I had found the direction of my life – opera, a dream I found at eighteen.

"After Ryan fell from power, I was forced to become the president. At first, I was so nervous. I was just a minion of the props team. Not to mention directing, I had only touched the script a few times. But looking at the hard work of the club members, I knew that I couldn't give up easily. I can't let down their hopes, and I can't let down my own heart. So, I madly learned about directing, gritted my teeth, and took over the drama club."

I patted her arm and said in relief, "It turns out that you did a good job. Not only did you revive the opera club, but you also made it to the Midnight Opera House. This is something that many commercial opera groups can't do. Everyone is proud of you."

Mara laughed and said, "That's right. There's nothing to be afraid of. After seeing what happened today, I know all my efforts were worth it."



Suddenly, she winked at me mysteriously and said cheekily, "Let me tell you a secret. The Midnight Opera House has already hired me. I'll be officially employed as an intern in the editing team in August."

I cheered softly in surprise, "Congratulations, my god! This is really good news! I'm so proud of you, Mara!"

"Hehe, I'm just an intern. I'm not even sure if I will be a full-time employee in the future." Mara tugged at the corner of her shirt in embarrassment.

"Even if it's just an intern, it's already very impressive. Do you know how many resumes from the media college get rejected yearly? This means that your professionalism is even greater than the drama major students! Besides, your achievements as a student are obvious to all, which shows that you are very talented in opera. With perseverance, hard work, and outstanding talent, it'll be hard for you not to succeed."

"Oh? It's embarrassing to say that... But I'll count on your blessings!"

We talked about our future for a while before Mara asked, "Avril aspires to join the army, Dorothy aims to become a werewolf grandmaster, and I found my direction in life. What about you? Selma, I don't think you've ever mentioned what you want to do in the future."

Me?

After some thought, I smiled. "I've already thought about it. Or rather, the path I've chosen is my natural responsibility."

"What is it?"

"I won't tell you yet. You'll find out eventually!"

"Tsk, you're still deliberately mystifying things. I don't care to know!"

We bickered for a while, then I left the opera club and went to other places to join the fun.

At three o'clock in the afternoon, the number of people wandering around the campus had decreased. Everyone had gone home or to the dormitory to dress up, so it could be imagined that there would be another competition at the graduation ball.

In the dormitory, the girls were noisily dressing up. I was still 'providing' the dress for the graduation party as a graduation gift for the girls.

Avril, who had successfully broken free from being single, couldn't form a team with us. Mara chose Chloe, who was also single, as her dance partner. Dorothy and I naturally formed a team.

The graduation ball at the Sivr Academy had always been held in the open air because there were too many people from all the departments, and the auditorium couldn't fit them all.

That night, we sang and danced to our hearts' content in the open-air venue. The joyful dance music accompanied the steps of youth and played a melodious movement on the campus. The silver moonlight shone upon the boys' and girls' youthful faces, decorating this precious life meeting with gorgeous decorations.

Tonight, the strict school rules were put aside. All we did was sing, dance, and have fun. Even the most serious dean gave the students a gentle smile tonight because he knew that any disappointment would taint the students' good memories.

As the last dance song ended, the graduates gathered together, wearing their disheveled clothes and makeup smudged by sweat, leaving a memento of their youth in front of the camera.

“Crack.”

With the sound of the shutter, my school days officially ended.

June 30th, 8 am.

It would be a lie to say that I wasn't excited sitting in the noisy auditorium.

280 The Graduation Ceremony

Selma Payne's POV:

The school leaders had already taken their seats, but the seat in the middle, which was different from the rest, was still empty. The principal and the others were in a heated discussion. From the smiles on their faces, it was not difficult to tell that they were happy and proud of the arrival of the King.

Today was my graduation day and the day my identity would go public.

From now on, I'd live in this world as 'Princess Madeline'.

What changes had life brought to me this time?

Was this change good or bad?

I was a little nervous. I couldn't lie to myself that I was indifferent to the great changes in my life.

Finally, my parents arrived.

The moment the King and Queen arrived, the entire hall erupted in cheers. The reporters waiting on both sides of the hall immediately raised their cameras to record the two Majesties' every move. They had long heard that there would be big news today, so they didn't want to miss a single detail.

After the important guests were seated, the graduation ceremony officially began.

The principal's speech, the teachers' representative's speech, the outstanding graduates' representative's speech, and the graduation certificate ceremony. When it was my turn to receive my graduation certificate, I didn't leave the stage after completing the process like other students. Instead, I went straight to my parent's side.

The auditorium was in an uproar because of my action. The media smelled the scent of big news and kept shooting with their 'long guns'.

The school leaders quickly maintained order, and the ceremony officially ended.

Next, it was time for my father's speech. After the speech, he'd announce my true identity.

At this moment, my heart was beating at its peak.

After the last sentence of the speech, my father did not leave the podium.

"Today is a day worth celebrating because many young talents have completed their studies and will soon become the new mainstays of the werewolf pack.

"And today is a special day for me.

"Twenty-two years ago, a group of evil wanderers ambushed the Lycan pack in an attempt to hurt the civilians. They also kidnapped my daughter, Princess Madeline, who was only three months old.

"The wanderers were finally exterminated, but my daughter's whereabouts were unknown. I searched for her many times without any results. I fell into endless self-blame and pain because, as a father, I did not protect my daughter well and caused her to be in danger.

"However, the kind Moon Goddess did not abandon me.

“Four years ago, my daughter came back to me by chance. Thanks to the goddess’ blessing, she grew up safely and became a good girl that I’m proud of when I wasn’t around.

“Today is her graduation day. On this day of celebration, it’s time for her to reveal her identity to society.”

My father extended his hand to me. With the incredulous gazes of my classmates and teachers, I puffed out my chest and raised my head, proudly and demurely walking to my father’s side.

“Now, I officially announce to my people that this is the legal descendant of Queen Helena and me, the current first princess of the royal family, and the werewolf Crown Princess, Madeline Periana H. Oromalivira!”

As my father announced that, the officials on both sides immediately shouted, “May the goddess bless the princess!”

“May the goddess bless the princess,” the people followed suit subconsciously.

After three cheers, the crowd became restless and cheered spontaneously to celebrate my return.

The werewolves had been waiting for this moment for far too long. The lack of descendants meant that the royal family was unstable, and the instability of the royal family meant that those with ulterior motives would do anything for the position of heir. These ambitious people usually did not care about the interests of the people.

Therefore, even primary school students who did not know anything about politics would act like adults and sigh about the decline of the royal family because the education official in charge of the area where my school was located had surrendered to an ambitious person and moved the education funds to build landmark buildings for the ambitious person to accumulate achievements, the school could not get financial support and repair the damaged field, so it had to stop the students’ football class.

This was only the tip of the iceberg. The ones who paid the price for the ambitious were countless commoners who had no way to seek help. No matter how wise and powerful my father was, he could not forcefully interfere with the internal affairs of every pack. Bertha and her brother, for example, and many more people like them were being oppressed by the name of ‘respecting tradition’ and became tools for the ambitious to exploit.

And now that I was here, once the royal family’s legacy was stable, all the schemes of the ambitious would be destroyed. They no longer had scruples after my father took care of the people. Even if there were any accidents, I would be there to take care of them. I would inherit my father’s will and fight against those who persecute my race.

At this moment, many pairs of eyes were looking at me. They were in the auditorium, in the camera, in the live broadcast, looking at me with excitement, joy, doubt, or viciousness.

Every pair of eyes wanted to see something from me, defining me as a hope or an idiot.

Before I entered the hall, I was nervous about the pressure.

But now, my heart was calm and peaceful.

Facing the excited gazes of the teachers and students, as well as the cold glints of the cameras, I adjusted the microphone and said loudly, "Hello, teachers, students, media, and everyone. I'm Madeline."

281 The Past

Selma Payne's POV:

In just a minute, when the flash went off, when the microphone transformed my voice into an electric current and transmitted it to the world, my life changed in an instant.

The people's gazes changed from surprise to doubt and then to respect and fanaticism. At this moment, the ordinary Selma had disappeared forever. From now on, the one standing on this land would be the princess of the werewolf pack, Madeline.

Just like the cameras in the auditorium today, every detail of my life from now on would be infinitely magnified and studied. My every word and action would affect people's perception and evaluation of me.

I would never have a peaceful and relaxed life again. This was a heavy shackle that was accompanied by glory.

My position was temporarily arranged during the group photo to be in the middle. No one had any objections, including the representatives of the outstanding graduates from various departments who should have stood beside the principal and my father.

However, I took the initiative to move aside and told the boys and girls I was unfamiliar with, "These are the seats that belong to you."

They hurriedly declined my offer, and as I backed down, they trembled as they stood in the center. They couldn't help but smile brightly.

"Crack."

I'd officially graduated.

Sitting in the royal family's carriage, I elegantly waved to the people who had heard the commotion and were coming from both sides of the road. They cheered enthusiastically as if they truly believed I was a worthy successor.

But I knew that most of this was because people loved the house and its crow. People loved my father, so they loved me. If I couldn't be a qualified Crown Princess, this love would instantly turn into a flood that would drown me.

"How do you feel?" My mother asked in a low voice, "Are you nervous?"

"A little," I said honestly. "I feel a little torn. It was still calm when we went to school in the morning, but everything turned upside down in just a few hours. It's so unreal when I think about it."

My mother recalled the past and said with a smile, "We always think that we're ready for the change of identity, but in the end, we're caught off guard. It was the same when I married your father and was crowned the Queen. Everything felt so unreal, like a dream. It took me a few months to realize that I was no longer the little girl in the alpine estate."

Speaking in front of the camera was a skill I had yet to master. It was only when I returned to the palace that I had the time to ask my mother, "The alpine estate? Speaking of which, you haven't told me about your past."

"Me? Before I married your father, my life was very dull. There's nothing much to talk about."

"Tell me about it. Your hometown is also considered my hometown. I've never been there before!"

With my coaxing and pestering, my mother had no choice but to relent.

She was born into a noble family of werewolves with a long history. Her ancestor originated from a royal princess, but it was passed down over a dozen generations. By the time her mother's generation came, the Garcia family had already had a declining population, and she was the only descendant of this generation.

For a long time, the Garcia family had lived the traditional life of a landlord, living in seclusion in their manor in the Alps. Even the most tragic years of the cult's persecution did not have much effect on them.

Just like that, the Garcia family lived in peace until the second half of the 20th century, and a female heir that everyone had been looking forward to was born. However, bad luck also came with the birth of a new life. The weak and sickly female mother died of an amniotic fluid embolism. The husband who married into the family raised his daughter alone until she was six years old and then also passed away.

At this point, the Garcia family only had one member left, the young lady who was my mother.

“So my maternal grandfather and grandmother passed away when you were young?” I was a little sad that I didn’t get to see these family members.

My mother had long since let go of her parents’ deaths. She said softly, “I was still very young when they left, and I don’t have much of an impression of them now. It was the nanny who raised me. She was a mixed-race woman saved by your great-grandmother when she was studying abroad. By the time I turned sixteen, she was already too old and passed away quietly in her sleep.”

At the age of sixteen, my mother began to live alone. Fortunately, the life of disguising her identity to study human society made her mature early and rational, so she was not easily confused by this world. When she was twenty, my mother came to North America to study at a university in a Lycan pack. It was there that she met my father.

Back then, my father was only a Prince, in his twenties, the prime of his youth. My father fell in love with my mother at a university fellowship party at first sight. The wonderful chemistry easily made my father forget the rules of ‘fated mate’, and he started a fierce pursuit of my mother.

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There was nothing much to say about the details. I suspected my mother was too embarrassed to tell me about her love history. When she was twenty-six, she finally agreed to my father’s proposal.

However, before they could officially step into the hall of marriage, the war between the wolves and the witches began. My grandparents passed away in the war, one after another, and my young father had to take on the heavy responsibility. My mother also became the Queen overnight.

282 Wishful Thinking Come True

Selma Payne’s POV:

It was a period of chaos. The newly-wedded couple had no time to be intimate at all. Their time was either spent in the conference room or on the battlefield. During special times, status was not so emphasized. It was until the end of the war that my mother really realized that she had become the Queen of the werewolves from an ordinary student with a doctorate in literature.

That was why I said that plans couldn’t keep up with changes. No matter how well prepared we were, things would still be unreal when it came to it.

My mother thought that her childish self during those extraordinary years was very interesting, and she always smiled when discussing these things.

“To be honest, after I agreed to your father’s marriage proposal, I was worried that the feudal and conservative nobles would oppose my family. Back then, there were signs of such a thing, but before they could argue, an even bigger fire came. When the war was over, everything would be set in stone. It would be useless for them to object. Thus, the thing that I was most worried about did not happen. Now that I think about it, those sleepless nights were all wasted because of my unnecessary worries.”

Later, she was busy dealing with the mess left behind by the war. My mother, who specialized in literature, had forced herself to be a political veteran. My father had also used his war achievements to shut up those ambitious people’s mouths, laying a solid foundation for his rule.

After that, I was born. Before the werewolves could cheer for their long-awaited heir, I went missing in a kidnapping.

After that, many years passed, and I drifted back to parents’ side like a miracle.

This was the story of the past.

“However, after so many years, why didn’t you and father give birth to a few other children?” I didn’t understand.

My mother was stunned by my question and then smiled bitterly. “After you were taken away, I was heartbroken. I would cry for a long time when I saw a baby in swaddling clothes. At that time, the psychiatrist said that I was a little depressed. Your father didn’t even dare to let any children appear before me, let alone give birth to a new heir. After a few more years, when I walked out of my grief, your father and I didn’t bring up this matter again.

“You can call it superstition or wishful thinking, but we always feel that if a new child is born, the position that belongs to you will be replaced, and you will never be able to return to our side. So, even though we were under pressure and doubts, we didn’t want a new heir. We always fantasized that one day you would come back to us.

“Fortunately, my wishful thinking finally came true. Perhaps the goddess couldn’t bear to see us suffer the pain of losing a child and called for the river to send you back to us.”

My mother lowered her head and looked at me. Her gentle eyes were filled with love that was wider than the ocean.

“I’m sorry,” I said softly as I snuggled into her arms. “I’ve made you guys worry.”



“This isn’t your fault, child. On the contrary, everything that happened resulted from us not being competent as parents. If your father had not been taken away by the clumsy plan to lure the tiger out of the mountain, if I had listened to Layla’s suggestion to strengthen the palace’s defense, the kidnapping would not have happened.”

Immersed in the past, my mother’s brows unconsciously furrowed.

I smoothed the small knot between her eyebrows and consoled her, “This wasn’t your fault, Mother. Those ambitious people and the wanderers caused everything. It was their greed and stupidity that caused everything. However, they have long been executed, and the past has been written off and disappeared.

“All debts are written off, vanishing like smoke and clouds.”

My mother laughed in a low voice. “That’s right. Let’s not dwell on the past. There’s no need to worry about it.”

My conferment ceremony was scheduled for August, and all packs would send representatives to attend the ceremony. It could be said to be the grandest event of the werewolves in the past twenty years.

After I was officially crowned, I could no longer ‘use’ myself as I pleased. The royal family’s rules had bound me firmly. Every word and action I made in public had to conform to the princess’s standards. This meant that I couldn’t be Avril’s maid of honor. Fortunately, the wedding was in July, before the coronation. I could attend my friend’s wedding as an individual.

After finding out who I was, Avril and Mara were so surprised that it was as if a watermelon had been stuffed into their mouths. At first, they were a little worried about whether they could get in touch with me again. After all, being friends with ‘the Queen’s distant niece’ and being friends with ‘the princess’ were completely different concepts.

So, they heaved a huge sigh of relief when they were nervously summoned into the palace and saw me in my usual T-shirt and jeans.

Their curtsy wasn’t standard, so I retorted, “Now I know what you’re doing in the etiquette course. It seems that this course is for you to earn academic credits.”

Mara thought I was criticizing her, so she stood rooted to the ground, not knowing what to do.

“Girls?” I sighed exaggeratedly. “There are only four people in the room other than you guys. Which one of them are you new to? Don’t tell me you’ve decided to cut off all ties with me overnight. That’ll make me sad.”

283 Never Lose Contact

Selma Payne's POV:

"But now you're a princess, and we're just civilians," Mara said uncertainly. "We didn't know before, but now you're... Moon Goddess! What am I talking about?"

I pulled them to the sofa and gave them a glass of cold blueberry juice each.

"Drink something to lower your temperature. You look like you're about to faint."

As for our relationship, I'd be frank."There's no need to feel any burden, girls. There's no conflict between Madeline and Selma. I'm not the symbol figure in the mural. I have my own life outside my duties as a Princess, including my friends. Disclosing my identity won't change our friendship. You are my precious friends, so please don't make me lose you."

Seeing their hesitant expressions, I pretended to be pitiful and said, "Of course, if this makes you feel burdened, then forget it. I cherish you, but I don't want to use my power to oppress others. If our relationship is a burden to you, I will respect your decision and promise I will never disturb you again."

Unlike her strong appearance, the soft-hearted Avril was always the first to give in. "Oh, come on... you know that we also cherish you. We need some time to digest this sudden change. Now that you mention it, what should we call you? Selma? Or should I call you Madeline?"

My expression immediately brightened up, and I happily said, "Actually, you can call me whatever you want. Selma and Madeline are both my real names."

"Selma, then," the girls said. "We're used to calling you that."

Mara and Avril were slightly restrained at first, but after we had some fun, as usual, they returned to being the sweet little girls I was familiar with.

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Avril was a little worried about the wedding. "Can you still be my bridesmaid? I heard that there is a clear distinction between the ranks of the royal family and nobles. Nobles can't be guests such as bridesmaids or flower boys and girls for commoners, not to mention that you are a Princess."

"Don't worry." I shook my head. "Before I'm officially crowned, my status as a Princess is partially legal. It's not a problem for me to attend your wedding as a royal family member. Besides, this is my personal schedule. There won't be a bunch of reporters following me, so I can do whatever I want."

Avril and Perrin had already gotten the 'safe' sign from the Intelligence Agency, which meant that there would be no hidden dangers in attending their wedding. My parents would not object.

Time passed by quickly. It was evening, and Mara and Avril were about to leave.

Before they left, they said, "I'm glad you still treat us as friends, Selma. To be honest, we're afraid you'll abandon this friendship. You're a precious friend; losing you will break our hearts."

I hugged them and said, "Don't worry, girls. Didn't we agree never to lose contact? I'm looking forward to seeing you old men in your seventies and eighties with a face full of wrinkles!"

Under the setting sun, they waved at me and left in the car.

"Such sincere girls. I envy you, Your Highness." Looking at the back of the car, Jordin was a little lost. "I've never had such a good friend. The communication between nobles is always inevitably mixed with benefits and calculations. Any truth carries immeasurable risks."

"Don't say that. You already have such a friend." I patted her hand. "Mara and Avril are already your good friends, aren't they? And Dorothy and I, you forgot about us? Oh, I'm so sad..."

Emma also pretended to sneer and said, "Benefits? Schemes? I can't believe you think of me this way, Lady of Mirror Lake. Perhaps I'll have to get out of my family before I can have the honor of continuing to be your acquaintance?"

Facing our 'questioning', Jordin was helpless and explained, "What I mean is, I've never had friends as sincere as you guys... Alright, alright, I was wrong. I didn't choose my words carefully. I beg all the warm-hearted ladies to spare me, this bad person with a clumsy mouth, okay?"

As we laughed and joked around.

A week before the wedding, Avril had sent an invitation, along with one for Aldrich.

She passed the invitation to me mysteriously and asked in a low voice, "That, you and general Aldrich, are you... Hmm?"

"What?"

"I mean, are you two in a relationship?"

"What?" I was shocked. "You're just saying such nonsense."

Avril stopped pretending and vowed, "Don't give me that. I know that you two are hiding something from us. Even though I've only seen Sir Aldrich a few times, the undercurrent between the two of you can't escape my eyes."

"Don't talk nonsense. It's all your wild guess."

"I'm just randomly guessing! Do you remember when we had a dormitory gathering, Perrin sent you and Dorothy off, and Sir Aldrich came to pick you up?"

"I remember, but so what?"

284 Sincerity And Honesty

Selma Payne's POV:

"Don't tell me that's all you did." I said, "I'm a princess and he's a general. Isn't it normal for him to be in charge of escorting me?"

"Alright then," said Avril, pursing her lips. "Looks like we'll have to reveal something big."

"What?"

"A mobile pastry cart."

"What snack cart? Don't use this kind of smoke bomb to get away with it."

"God, you won't shed tears until you see the coffin."

Avril was excited. It seemed like she was determined to hammer my love with Aldrich into reality. This made me regret a little. Why did I dig a hole for myself?

I suddenly lost all thoughts of resisting. Hiding it from my friends made me feel very restless, which was also unfair to Aldrich.

"You're right," I said. "I'm indeed a couple with Aldrich."

Avril didn't expect me to be so honest. She didn't even think that her guess would actually be true.

After a few seconds, she finally screamed, "Really?"

"That's right." Since I had already told him everything, I decided just to go all out. "Aldrich and I were together since our first year, but due to various reasons, we had to hide it."

“I knew it, I should’ve known. Oh my god, when Sir Aldrich came to send you to and from school, I thought it was his Majesty’s order, but now it seems that it’s just a little couple’s fun!”

“Actually, back then, my parents did not know about our relationship. They thought that it was Aldrich who was loyal to his duty.”

Avril was so mesmerized by this ‘idol drama’. It was like a plot that she almost fainted. She lay on the sofa’s armrest for a long time, unable to return to her senses.

However, when she realized that no one in the room had any change in expression except for her, she immediately understood everything.

“So, I’m the only one kept in the dark about this?”

Before I sensed the crisis of our friendship, I firmly rejected it. “No, mara doesn’t know either. She’s the only one who doesn’t know now.”

There was no need to talk about Dorothy, Jordin, and Emma, who followed me every day and had seen everything.

“I can’t believe it, ” said Avril. “My best friend is in love, but she hid it from me. What’s more, she hid it only from me. Ha, you even said ‘never lose contact’ and ‘look at the wrinkles of the other party’, but they were all just excuses you made up to deceive me, you scum!”

“Mara still doesn’t know.” I tried to put up a final struggle.

“Heavens! Poor mara! Does she know that the woman she’s devoted to has found another man behind her back?”

“Why is it getting weirder and weirder?”

In short, after some jesting, Avril ‘forgave’ me with much difficulty.

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Since it was a working day, Mara had gone to the Midnight Opera House for her internship, so she didn’t come with Avril.

“You’re not going to tell her?” I asked, “Actually, I didn’t want to keep it a secret for a long time.”

“No,” said Avril. “Of course, she has to find out herself.”

There was no need to be so strict.

However, this could not be hidden for long.

The day before the wedding, we went to Avril's bachelorette party. She only invited a few good friends, close classmates, and colleagues, and we had a party in a bar reserved just for us.

"Now that things have come to this, I'm suddenly a little scared." Avril was a little drunk. She sobbed and said, "Perrin is a good man. I believe we will have a happy future. However, when I thought about the sudden change in my identity starting tomorrow, I couldn't help but panic. It's a completely foreign life, and I don't know if I can adapt. "

We consoled her, and I said, "Don't worry. You can do it. The life changes were always fast and sudden. No matter how well prepared we are, we would always have a lack of confidence and panic when things come to a head. Therefore, instead of worrying about the unknown future, letting go and enjoying life is better. Since you believe in Perrin and the future, what is there to be afraid of? Everything will have a perfect ending, so all worries are in vain. Only happiness is real."

"You're just like that little old man from the philosophy elective class," said Avril in a low voice, almost in tears. "Selma, you're right. There's nothing that can't be managed. Since I've chosen to believe, it's time to believe truly."

After the event, we helped Avril send off the guests one after another. Then, I waited for my 'chauffeur' to arrive.

Thanks to New Flow, I'd drunk quite a lot of champagne on behalf of Avril. I was a little tipsy now. Seeing Aldrich leaning on the car door, I ran over and threw myself into his arms.

"Good evening, my dear!"

I kissed him on the cheek and hid in his coat to protect myself from the cool summer night wind.

Mara's jaw dropped at the bar entrance. She sobered up quickly and asked Avril for confirmation, "Did they kiss? Did they just kiss?"

Avril looked at her with pride and pity and nodded. "That's right, silly child. They've been together for a long time. You're the last to know."

285 The Bouquet

Selma Payne's POV:

Two cars came to pick us up. Dorothy, Jordin, and Emma were very observant and got into the car with the chauffeur, leaving me alone as the only passenger in Aldrich's car.

With New Flow, I couldn't stay drunk for long. I woke up after two traffic lights.

"Do you want to drink some water?" While waiting for the traffic light to turn green, Aldrich took out a thermos cup from the bag in the front passenger seat and handed it to me. Kara made some hangover soup. It was still warm.

I took the soup and drank a few mouthfuls. I suddenly laughed. "You're like an old father worried about his daughter."

"What?" Aldrich was stunned.

"I say, the way you brought me home and even brought me some hangover soup was really like a father who was worried that the world of sensual pleasures would deceive his daughter."

"Oh, come on!" he said helplessly. "Do you think I'm that old? It's so sad."

"I'm just joking... ah, the light has turned green."

We were speechless the entire way, and an inexplicable awkwardness slowly spread.

'My god, why did I say that just now? I don't think I'm fully sober yet.'

In silence, I unconsciously slowed down my breathing, closed my eyes, and leaned against the window, pretending to be asleep.

Even though this little trick could not fool Aldrich.

Finally, he couldn't stand the awkward atmosphere and spoke first, "Are we going together tomorrow?"

"What?"

"Are we going to Avril and Perrin's wedding together? Or should we go separately?"

Why did he ask that?

It was a very common question, but I didn't know why I was suddenly so sensitive. There was a deeper meaning behind this sentence.

Did Aldrich not want to go with me?

It was easy to suspect their true relationship when young men and women appeared in pairs at a wedding banquet. Perhaps Aldrich didn't want that? Did my actions at the bar's entrance just now make him angry?

But he often hinted he wanted to make our relationship public. Why did he suddenly refuse?

Was it because I'd been hiding it, so he no longer had confidence in me?

As soon as this thought surfaced, I snuffed it out. It was too stupid. We had already communicated telepathically, and this random guess would only add to our problems.

I tried to answer, "Let's go together. Everyone knows about our relationship, so there's no need to go separately on purpose."

Aldrich nodded and seemed to be relieved.

There was another round of silence.

I didn't know why, but I suddenly thought of the night I had a gathering with the girls. Aldrich also came to pick me up. I also pretended to be drunk, and it was also pitch black, and we didn't speak to each other.

No, I wasn't completely silent. I told Aldrich, "You're the person I want to hold hands with for the rest of my life."

I panicked right after I said that. I pretended to be drunk and crazy, drowsy, and not to remember this.

However, no matter how good the pretense was, how could it deceive him? I was indeed impulsive at the time, but I couldn't lie to myself that I have any regrets. Perhaps I regretted not gathering enough courage to give my heart the final answer.

After that, none of us mentioned what happened that night. Everything was the same as before, but something did change.

I unconsciously became anxious about my relationship with Aldrich and our future.

If I were to go back to my teenage years, I would never have thought I would be so nervous about a relationship at the age of twenty-two. When I was a teenage, I scoffed at all soft love and once firmly believed that I would never become the female lead in a soap opera who was worried about love.

Fate loved to laugh at people.

'Aldrich, Aldrich, should I ask you for your final answer?'

I'd never been a decisive girl. In front of feelings that are softer than a sponge, all hard bravado has turned into sugar water that couldn't withstand a single blow. It was as if I



had become that indecisive little girl again, standing at the fork in the road, not knowing what to do, naively looking forward to the right answer falling from the sky.

The bustling traffic was left behind. The lights in the car were not switched on, and the darkness turned this place into a small independent zone. The silence was the lock of this space. Only when someone gave the right answer would we be allowed to leave.

The palace lights were approaching, and this independent world was about to collapse. Should I seize this opportunity? Should I give up this opportunity? Should I say it? Or should I continue to remain silent?

The soft moonlight illuminated half of the empty carriage. My bridesmaid's dress was lying there, and the tiny rhinestones shone under the moonlight.

It was so beautiful.

If it was embedded in the wedding dress, would it be even more dazzling?

I gently caressed the soft fabric of the bridesmaid's dress as I imagined the prototype of a white dress in my mind.

The snow-like color, the gemstones brighter than the stars, the fine muslin stacked to form the mountain peaks, and the soft flowers woven from silk ribbons.

It was so beautiful.

There was still one last intersection.

This was my last chance.

Under the gaze of the stars, I whispered, "Aldrich, tomorrow is my good friend's wedding... do you think I'll be able to snatch the bouquet?"

286 The Proposal

Selma Payne's POV:

Aldrich paused and suddenly stopped the car by the side of the road.

I didn't expect his reaction. I asked in confusion, "What's wrong? Did you forget something?"

He didn't answer me. After a moment of silence, he suddenly got out of the car and sat in the back seat.

"My bridesmaid's dress..."

I reminded him in a low voice. He picked up the bag and gently put it in the passenger's seat. Then, he looked at me without blinking as if he was going to have a long talk with me.

Seeing Aldrich's serious expression, I couldn't help but sit up straight. It was as if a secret meeting was about to be held in the small back row, and the atmosphere was unusually stagnant.

"What's going on...?"

"Selma." Aldrich suddenly pressed down on my shoulder. "I love you."

"I know that." I nodded, stunned.

"I love you, I swear."

"I really do know, but there's no need to say it so seriously..."

"So, will you marry me?"

"Yes. Why are you so serious-"

Wait a minute.

I suddenly realized what Aldrich had just said.

'Will you marry me?'

Wait a moment.

Wait... wait a moment.

"Why are you suddenly saying this?" I was caught off guard and flustered. "Are you drunk? No, I was the one who drank. Forget it. These are not important. Why are you suddenly saying this? It is too sudden. I didn't hear it clearly... I mean, I heard it, but what do you mean? Is this a joke? I..."

The more I spoke, the more confused I became. Even my hands were trembling.

Aldrich didn't let me finish. He kissed me lightly and interrupted my illogical crazy words.

This unusually gentle kiss swept away the restless passion and frivolous love. It was a simple signal that represented comfort, gentleness, and love.

Aldrich caressed my back, gently yet firmly transmitting his love.

Gradually, I stopped trembling and calmed down.

After the kiss, Aldrich pressed against my forehead and whispered, "I'm not joking, my dear. I swear with my life that all of this comes from my heart. Will you marry me?"

Unknowingly, my eyes were filled with tears. Looking at his face, lit by the moonlight, my heart was filled with mixed thoughts. The answer was hanging by my mouth, but I couldn't say it no matter what.

Yes.

Of course, it was a yes.

But, god, how did all of this happen?

A sudden sense of fear broke through my line of defense. I pushed open the door and ran out of the carriage, gasping for breath on the empty road.

"Selma, what's wrong with you?"

Aldrich followed behind me anxiously. Seeing my red face, he immediately wanted to call the doctor.

"No!" I stopped his hand from making the call. "I'm just... Just a little excited and a little breathless. Give me some time. I'll be fine."

"I'm sorry. I shouldn't have proposed to you so suddenly." Aldrich was like a child who had done something wrong and was at a loss. "You're too nervous, this might cause hyperventilation. We have to hurry back to the palace to find a doctor."

"No, no, no!"

This time, I adamantly refused. A body modified by a god wasn't so weak that I would suffocate myself to death. So, this time, I willfully gave up on all those health and safety warnings.

After I finally managed to calm my breathing, I asked Aldrich, who wanted to say something but was hesitating, "What did you say? Can you repeat that?"

I knew I didn't look good now. My makeup was messy, my hair was flying everywhere, my sleeveless shirt and jeans were wrinkled, and I reeked of alcohol. The moonlight caused me to be embarrassed to be exposed. This was not a good time to accept the proposal.

However, I didn't want to wait any longer. I didn't care about the flowers, balloons, ribbons, or the projector playing love documentaries.

At this moment, the moon was the vow, the stars were the witness, the breeze was playing music, and the plants were dancing.

Aldrich tidied his shirt that I had messed up and coughed twice. Then, he half kneeled on the ground and removed a velvet jewelry box from his arms.

He opened the box, and inside was a ring embedded with a huge, bright diamond.

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“Under the witness of the moonlight, I swear with my life that my love for you will never change, and my loyalty to you can be seen by heaven and earth.

“Your pity makes me secretly happy, and your favoritism makes me crazy.

“Selma, my lover, my goddess, my heart, and everything.

“Will you marry me?”

When he said the first word, my face was already covered in tears.

“Yes, I will.”

I extended my hand, and Aldrich placed the ring on my finger before giving it a light kiss.

I pulled him up and eagerly offered him a hot kiss.

We hugged, kissed, and whispered our love.

Under the quiet moonlight, the ring glowed, reflecting a warm glow like the moon’s halo. This light wrapped around my ring finger and then onto Aldrich’s. After a few rounds, it entered my skin.

“What’s going on?” I looked at the ring in surprise.

...

Aldrich held my hand and smiled. You should recognize it. This is the ‘oath under the moon’ I once made to the Moon Goddess.

287 The Oath Stone

Selma Payne’s POV:

“A moon oath?” I was shocked. “How does it do that? I thought this was some invisible oath. Does the goddess give a gem to the person who made the oath as a witness?”

Aldrich shook his head. "Of course not. This only appeared after you reconstructed my body. I think it's because I've become your believer that I can't ask the Moon Goddess to be my witness. However, the oath didn't dissipate. It only condensed into this diamond."

"It's so magical..."

I looked at the diamond on the wedding ring, observing the unusual five-colored halo it refracted under the moonlight.

After seeing this diamond, I thought it was a hint, a last gift from the goddess before she left. Recalling the past three years, Aldrich felt a little regretful. "It showed my retreat and hesitation, making me understand that these three years of suffering were my punishment for not being able to express my feelings to you. That's why I set it into a ring to build up my courage, hoping I can one day put it in your hand."

"It's good that fate still takes pity on me, and you still take pity on me. The night you were drunk, you said I was the person you wanted to spend the rest of your life with. I knew that the time I was waiting for had come. However, you didn't say anything about it, as if everything was just a drunken joke. I wasn't sure again."

"I've always had this ring on me. I want to take it out and propose to you every second I see you. But I'm too timid. I'm afraid that you wouldn't say yes. You wouldn't accept the shackles of marriage at such a young age. You wouldn't want to... You wouldn't want to wear my ring."

"That's not true!" I retorted softly. "Speaking of which, I'm the one who's been feeling uneasy. I thought you thought I was joking that night!"

We looked at each other in shock and then laughed simultaneously.

"Well, it seems this is a misunderstanding." Aldrich hugged me tightly. "Fortunately, the ending is good. You accepted my proposal, right? "

"Of course. Look at the ring on my finger, you fool."

"Thank you, Selma."

"What?"

"Thank you for accepting me. Thank you for loving me. "

"... you're saying something nauseating again."

The plants in the green belt danced gently with the evening wind. They covered their eyes with new green leaves and quietly observed the engaged pair hugging in the moonlit night through the gaps between the leaves.

Tonight's moon was like an amber candy, sprinkling the moonlight made of sugar powder on the earth, making everything sweet.

When I returned to the palace, I couldn't wait to announce the good news to my parents.

My mother was so happy that she abandoned a Queen's restraint and etiquette and hugged me excitedly.

"I'm so happy for you, my baby!" She kissed my cheeks excitedly. "You're about to get married and become a real adult. Oh my god!"

My mother cried emotionally. My father held her in his arms and wiped her tears of happiness.

"Congratulations, my daughter." My father's calm tone also revealed an irrepressible joy. "I'm very happy to see your love with Aldrich bearing fruit. As parents, there's nothing happier than their children finding happiness."

He turned around and looked at Aldrich with a serious expression. "Young man, can you promise that you'll always cherish and love my daughter and never let her be hurt in marriage?"

Aldrich immediately puffed out his chest and raised his head, replying seriously, "I will do everything in my power in exchange for Selma's happiness, I promise you, Sir."

My father gratifiedly looked at this adorable young man and said, "I believe in you, child. I wish you happiness."

Regretfully, although he officially became my fiancé, Aldrich still could not stay overnight in the palace. In fact, my parents did not care about these details, but he refused. "From now on, I should be more responsible toward Selma and put an end to all frivolous behavior."

What nonsense was this fool talking about? Was my room the only one in the palace? There were so many rooms, but he couldn't even have a bed. It was strange for him to emphasize this.

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"Perhaps we should follow the ancient tradition and not meet before marriage?" I retorted.

“Oh, I didn’t mean it that way.” Aldrich was a little flustered. This reliable young general could easily throw his troops into chaos when he met me.

“I was just bluffing you!” I kissed him on the cheek. “Good night, my fiancé.”

In front of my parents, Aldrich was a little embarrassed, but he still hugged me. “Good night, my fiancée.”

I was destined to have a sleepless night. I excitedly ran to Dorothy’s room; she was asleep, as expected. Jordin and Mara were there as well, showing Dorothy how to do her hair tomorrow.

The moment I entered, I shouted excitedly, “He proposed to me!”

The girls were stunned by my shout and asked, “Who? What?”

“Aldrich has proposed to me!” My voice could tear the ceiling apart. “Tonight! Just now. Look at my finger!”

I showed the big diamond ring on my hand to the girls. Three seconds later, they burst into excited screams.

## Chapter 288 Bay Leaf And Evening Primrose

Selma Payne’s POV:

Jordin excitedly fanned herself to cool down the excitement. Sir Aldrich proposed to you? Goddess, what happened? Tell us!”

I briefly explained the proposal to the girls and showed off the sparkling ring on my hand. A diamond formed by an oath under the moon. This was more precious than any precious gem in the world!

The girls screamed again, and Emma almost fainted. “I can’t believe there’s such a romantic thing in the world. Oh my god, doesn’t this mean this is the Moon Goddess’ wedding gift to you?”

I didn’t think of that, but it made me even happier.

We gathered on Dorothy’s small bed and chatted until the wee hours before falling asleep, so much so that we almost couldn’t get up the next day.

“My dear ladies, it’s already six o’clock.” Kara gently knocked on the door. “If I remember correctly, you need to attend the wedding as bridesmaids today, right?”

“That’s right... ” I sat in a daze but fell back onto the pillow a second later. “Five minutes more, just five minutes...”

Kara sighed helplessly. “This is already the seventh ‘five minutes’. We agreed to wake up at 5:30.”

As the bridesmaids, we had to accompany Avril to dress up early in the morning, so we set the alarm for 5:30. We were already half an hour late. We could not delay any longer.

Thus, we dragged our tired bodies to wash up, had a simple breakfast, and set off with the grand team of makeup artists.

That was right. I was the one who’s providing the style for this wedding. As a best friend, I had to make sure my girl married beautifully and gloriously. The skillful hands of the royal stylist would make Avril the most beautiful bride in the world.

We arrived at the wedding venue at seven o’clock-a moonlit church with a wide lawn.

Avril was already waiting in the preparation room. I had to say that even without makeup, she was dazzling enough in her wedding dress.

“Good morning, Avril,” we greeted her affectionately. “How do you feel? Are you nervous?”

Avril clutched the white veil tightly. “To be honest, a little... Or rather, very much. I’ve been revising my oath since last night, but I’m still afraid I’ll forget it.”

“There will be a priest who will say it on your behalf. You don’t have to memorize it.”

“I know, but I just want to carry it.” She smiled sweetly. “I want to say it in my heart when the priest recites the oath.”

We looked at each other and smiled.

It was said that the human tradition was to get married in the day, and then the relatives and friends would celebrate at the banquet. The werewolf’s custom was the exact opposite. The relatives and friends of the bride and groom would hold a celebration during the day to pray for the new people, and at night, the marriage would be officially concluded under the witness of the moon.

However, we still woke up early in the morning to prepare. Dressing up as a newbie was an important task, and there were still a few rituals to be carried out in the middle.

According to tradition, we, the bridesmaids, would deliver the wolf tooth necklaces personally made by the bride to the groom as messengers. Then, we would return to



the bride's side and wait for the groomsmen to help the groom deliver the bay leaf tree he cultivated.

The bay leaves would be the most beautiful decoration on the bride's bun.

Looking at the small, healthy bay leaf tree in the pot, Avril couldn't help but cry. "Oh my god, I'm getting married. All of this is like a dream."

"This is a beautiful dream, and it has already come true."

We hurriedly wiped her tears to prevent her makeup from being ruined.

The couple's parents would give them their blessings in the second ceremony.

Avril's parents gave their daughter a bunch of good wishes and even cried tears of joy. Infected by this heartwarming separation, we also couldn't hold back our tears and let them wash away our foundation and blush.

When Avril's parents went to look for Perrin, Perrin's parents came to Avril's side.

"I wish you all the best, my dear children." Perrin's father said, "May you be happy and peaceful forever from the blessing of the Moon Goddess."

Perrin's mother was more emotional. She pulled Avril close and cried again.

After the makeup artist fixed our makeup, the third ceremony came.

According to tradition, the bride and groom were not allowed to appear in front of the guests before night fell, which meant that the food at the celebration had nothing to do with them. During lunch, the bride and groom would send their best men and bridesmaids to deliver the cold food they had prepared in advance.

Although this tradition derived from the rule that men and women were not allowed to meet before marriage in feudal times, it had long since faded from inflexibility in the evolution of history and become a fun way for young couples to pass on their feelings.

No one else was allowed to open the lunch box besides the groom. We were excited and curious as we handed the lunch box to Perrin and immediately urged him to open it.

Perrin laughed helplessly as we kept urging him. He opened the lunchbox gently. There was a small bouquet of sweet and beautiful evening primrose next to the salad and sandwich.

"Oh ..."

The girls cheered!

Perrin's ears turned red from embarrassment, but he carefully put the small bunch of evening primrose in his chest flower.