

Alpha's Rejected Mate Returns as Queen

Chapter 41 Departure

Selma Payne's POV:

School life was amazing. Honestly, I thought this place was much friendlier than the schools I attended back in the Dark Shadow Pack.

At least no one here would stuff dead rats into my locker because of my unique identity.

"Hey! Selma! There's a rehearsal at the opera club today. We're going to help out. Do you want to come?"

"I saw the poster on the noticeboard. You're going to perform 'the Butterfly Lady'?" I smiled and held their hands. "But it's a pity that I can't go. I have to go for training after school. You know that."

Mara pouted in frustration and shook my arm like a spoiled child. "Didn't you say that you only need to train three times a week? So why don't you free up tonight? I'm begging you, Selma! The props team has made a lot of beautiful costumes and jewelry. It will be a loss for the world if you don't try them on. Come on, come on!"

My heart softened for a moment, but when I saw Aldrich's car parked at the door, I could only say, "I'm really sorry, but I can't tonight."

Avril and Mara could only watch me leave in frustration.

"Hey, Your Excellency!" I quickly got into the back seat and covered Aldrich's eyes. "You were kidnapped! Now, do as I say, quickly drive to a place with no one around. Let me teach you a good lesson, you disobedient wolf!"

Aldrich helplessly raised his hands and made a gesture of surrender. "I'll follow your orders, but can you return me an eye? Otherwise, your humble servant can't drive."

We laughed together, and he easily moved me to the passenger seat like he was holding a doll and affectionately rubbed the tip of my nose.

"But how come you have time to pick me up today?" I asked. The management of the army was very strict, and today was not the training day we had originally agreed on.

"Today is the last Friday of the month. The army has a half-day break." He started the car. "This means I can temporarily take over the driver's role and buy you a large

caramelized biscuit ice cream with pistachios and cranberry on the way back to the palace.”

“Yay!” I cheered. For the sake of the ice cream, I would like to thank the royal doctor Tracy for her kind advice. My parents never allowed me to eat a single bite of highly sugared and fatty desserts.

Holding the ice cream that was hard to come by, I took a big mouthful of it in satisfaction and asked vaguely, “Are we still going to be at the training ground tonight? I somehow feel that training in an open area is a little calmer. Maybe we can change the location and find a breakthrough?”

Aldrich looked at me gently. “Of course, I’m very happy that you’ve started to have your training plan. But I’m sorry, my dear, I can’t help you with extra training tonight.”

“Why not?”

“My father asked me to go home tonight to discuss some things. After that, he might take me on a long trip to another pack.”

“Alright,” I said as I put down the spoon gloomily. The sweet and sour cranberry no longer tasted good. “How long are you going to be gone?”

“I promise it won’t take more than three days, Selma.” Aldrich took advantage of the red light to lean over and kiss my forehead. “My true love, the thought of being away from you for three days is unbearable. I want to turn you into a doll and take you away in my pocket.”

My heart twitched, but I was also a little embarrassed. I could only bluff and stare at him. “Don’t be such a sweet talker.”

We slowly moved closer and exchanged a sweet, pistachios and cranberry-flavored kiss.

We kissed, and our foreheads touched. Then, he whispered in my ear in a low and seductive voice, “My lady, you’re too cute. Perhaps I have to think of a way to keep you with me all the time.”

“I told you not to act like that!” I punched his shoulder angrily. “How ungentlemanly! That was my last piece of the caramelized biscuit!”

Aldrich held the biscuit in his mouth and laughed proudly.

But I was still a little uneasy. Although I’d only met Duke Frank once, I felt he was cunning.

“What’s the matter with Duke Frank?” I couldn’t help but ask Aldrich, “Three days. That doesn’t sound like something small.”

Aldrich shrugged. “Actually, I don’t know either. My father has always been mysterious. If he wanted to hide something from you, then you would not know until the day you die.”

These cheeky words didn’t comfort the unease in my heart, but I knew that as a noble, Duke Frank had the right to keep his secrets or ‘family matters’ to himself. Even my parents couldn’t inquire about it at will, let alone me, who was only a ‘relative of the Queen’.

To be honest, I was getting more and more annoyed at keeping my identity a secret. Lovers shouldn’t lie to each other, right?

“What’s wrong?” Perhaps my gaze was too direct, Aldrich stopped the car by the side of the road and held me in his arms.

I buried my head in his chest and said in a muffled voice, “I don’t want you to go.”

“Oh, my dear.” Aldrich laughed. “Then, I won’t leave.”

“Really?” I straightened my body and saw only deep affection in his silver eyes.

He was serious!

42 An Emergency

Selma Payne’s POV:

“Of course, it’s true!” Aldrich touched my forehead like a child. “Nothing is more important than you, my dear. Even if my father told me to go home and inherit the title, as long as you don’t want to, I would never leave you.”

Alright! Praise the Moon Goddess. Did she make every he-wolf this adorable when she created them?

But...

“Forget it; I was just joking.” I shook my head and suppressed my reluctance. “This is your responsibility. I can’t be willful and drag you down.”

Aldrich wanted to say something, but I interrupted him, “Alright, alright, don’t make it look like a life and death parting. It’s only three days. I’m not so weak that I can’t even look away from you.”

I lied because I really didn't want to leave Aldrich for a second.

Even though I tried my best to keep my emotions in check, my heavy mood still affected the atmosphere between us. All the way, Aldrich tried to make me happy, but I seemed to have forgotten how to speak. Other than a stiff smile, I couldn't say a word.

This caused our parting to be a little unpleasant. However, it was one-sided, and Aldrich wanted to make me happy even at the last moment.

The atmosphere in the palace was somber. Even though I was not paying attention, I could feel it. "What's wrong?" I asked a servant. "Where are the Lycan King and Queen?"

"Miss Selma, Her Highness the Queen has ordered you to go to the imperial physician Tracy after you return." The servant said, "His Majesty and Her Majesty are in the town hall. Please have dinner alone tonight."

I frowned. "They are still in town at this time? What happened in the pack?"

"I think it's your school," the servant said. "A witch attacked Sivr Academy, and a group of students are trapped in the school."

What?

I was shocked. Avril and Mala were inside!

I couldn't care about anything else and rushed to the town hall only to see a group of unfamiliar ministers standing inside.

"Good evening, Your Majesties." Fortunately, I didn't forget my image as a 'relative' and bowed obediently to my parents before the outsiders.

"Selma!" When mother saw me, she heaved a sigh of relief and said to my father and the ministers, "Excuse me, my poor niece might have some witch magic left in her. I have to go with her for an examination."

After we left the town hall, my mother hugged me and said while sobbing, "Fortunately, you're fine! I heard that Aldrich went to pick you up from school! I have to thank him properly. If he were a minute late, you would have been implicated."

"Let's put our gratitude aside for now. We're not ready to reveal our sweet little secret. I'm more concerned about the situation at school. Has the academy been attacked by a witch? What happened to the students? My friends are still inside!"

“The situation isn’t clear. The guards have detected magic fluctuations but haven’t seen any witches.” My mother took me to the royal medical hall. “The witch attacked Sivir Academy, but she didn’t make any threats. So we don’t know what her purpose is.

“As for the students, none of the parents has felt their or their children’s mind links severed. So they’re safe for the time being.”

I heaved a sigh of relief when I heard that the students were fine.

Tracy used medicine and powder I didn’t recognize to run a series of tests on me. Then, finally, she said to my worried mother, “Don’t worry, Your Majesty. There’s no magic power on the princess. She’s completely safe.”

“Thank Moon Goddess.” My mother repeated it a few times before saying, “I still have to return to your father’s side. Those ministers are best at blaming each other for things they can’t solve. So you’ll have to have dinner alone tonight, okay?”

I nodded obediently, knowing this was not the time to be willful.

After distractedly finishing my dinner, I went to the training ground alone to train my physical fitness. However, my fatigue couldn’t suppress the worry in my heart. I couldn’t help but imagine what would happen to Avril and Mara. After all, witches had a natural advantage over werewolves regarding mind control.

After thinking of my friends, I began to think of my lover. Would his father send the army to capture the rebellious witches? Would Aldrich be summoned to lead the team? What if the evil witch injured him?

After thinking about the bad things, I thought that it was impossible. Aldrich was so powerful that even a witch would not be his match. If he came back, we would not have to be separated for three days.

I let my thoughts run wild for the entire evening. Then, just as I accidentally ran over seventy laps and was lying on the ground to recover my strength, a servant brought me some exciting news.

“Good news, Your Highness. The chaos in Sivir Academy has been resolved.” Kara, the tall and thin head servant taking care of me, helped me up. “No students or teachers were injured. It was resolved peacefully.”

‘It is good that they’re fine!’ I felt as if a boulder in my heart had been gently lifted.

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Kara helped me to take a bath. I was so tired that I could not open my eyes. “Have they caught the witch? Who was she? Why did they attack the academy? Does she have a grudge against the werewolves? Or does she have a problem with the Lycan pack?”

“Your Highness, don’t worry too much. The lord will take care of everything.” Kara laughed helplessly. “This is a secret, so I don’t know.”

43 The Side Effects

Selma Payne’s POV:

Damn confidentiality regulations! When I become the Queen, I’d first abolish this old rule from thousands of years ago!

I thought before I fell asleep in the bathtub.

I slept until late in the morning. When I opened my eyes, the sky was already bright. Kara and Tracy were standing before my bed. My mother was sitting by my pillow, looking worried. Then, seeing that I was awake, she heaved a sigh of relief. “Thank Moon Goddess. You’re finally awake, baby.”

“What happened?” I was a little confused.

“You’ve slept for almost fifteen hours, Your Highness,” Kara said. “It’s noon now.”

What?

I suddenly sat up and wailed, “So, I’m already late? Oh no, my end-of-term summary will show a few large ‘truant’ stamps!”

“You don’t have to worry about that,” Kara said. “It is Saturday today. The school is off.”

I paused for a few seconds and heaved a sigh of relief. “You’re right. It’s Saturday, Saturday...”

However, since it was Saturday today, it shouldn’t be a problem for me to sleep in, right? I swore I wouldn’t miss tonight’s training, although my dear instructor boyfriend was absent.

My mother pulled me into her arms and asked gently, “Baby, have you been feeling unwell recently? For example, chest tightness, shortness of breath, dizziness, weakness, and so on.”

I enjoyed the warm embrace and lazily shook my head. “No, I’m in good health. I even ran seventy-four laps last night! I’ve broken the record!”

“My little princess, I’m proud of you.” My mother chuckled and kissed me on the cheek. “Are you not feeling well? You’re about to come of age. I only want to ensure everything is well.”

My mother asked again and again. This was very normal. I was the daughter she had lost and found again. She was the mother I had wanted for many years. It was expected that she paid a little too much attention to me. I adapted well to everything.

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However, I didn't know why, but I felt very irritated today.

Just like how I felt toward Aldrich last night.

This unusual emotion was because I realized that something was wrong.

"Actually..." I said hesitantly, "I feel I've been in a bad mood these few days."

My mother asked nervously, "Did something happen at school? A quarrel with friends? Did someone bully you?"

"No." I shook my head. "It's because nothing happened that I feel irritated for no reason. That's why I said it's abnormal."

My mother looked at Tracy, hoping that she would give her an answer.

Tracy looked very calm, which greatly soothed everyone present.

"It's completely normal for a werewolf close to the shift to show signs of sleepiness and abnormal emotions," she said calmly.

"Your body needs more energy to handle the shift, so you need more sleep. You're awakening the wolf side of you. This process is silent but has a huge impact. A restless mind is indeed more likely to make you more irritable. Sufficient rest and correct self-venting can solve it easily."

"So it's not a big deal. It's just a necessary process for my wolf to wake up?" I asked.

"Perhaps this is a little too intense," Tracy consoled. "But it's nothing to worry about. Everything is completely under control."

Hearing that I was fine, my mother finally calmed down.

It was only then that I realized she was missing a person inseparable from her – my father.

"Where's Father? Is he still busy?" I felt a little hungry. "Maybe we can have lunch together after he finishes his work?"

My mother smiled apologetically. "Trust me, baby. If your father knew about your abnormality, he would have grown wings and flown to your side. However, there are still

some things to deal with last night's turmoil. As the leader, he has to go to the scene to calm the people personally."

The relationship between the werewolves and the witches was not good, even if they were not as incompatible as fire and water. After such an appalling incident as a witch attacking a school, those old farts who always loved to oppose my father would jump at the chance to cause trouble.

I understood my father's difficulties, so I wasn't angry that he was absent.

"Well then, let's have a candlelight lunch today, okay?" I pounced over and acted coquettishly. "You must always have candlelight lunch with Father, but you've never had it with me. This is not fair!"

My mother caught me, and we fell onto the soft four-pillar bed together. She laughed and said, "Who taught you this? Hurry up and tell me. I'll kick that glib-tongued bad guy out of the pack!"

Aldrich's figure flashed before my eyes. I felt guilty for a second and immediately acted even more coquettish to make my mother forget this little episode.

After a satisfying lunch, I felt sleepy again. My mother said I could skip my training for the next few days. She wanted to be sure that nothing would affect my safe transition.

"There's still a long way to go." I said to her in a daze, "It's just a small incident. You don't have to be so nervous. Tracy also said that it's no issue, right?"

"Of course, sweetheart. Everything will be fine. We promise." My mother caressed the top of my head. "Now, have a good sleep."

Without realizing it, I once again fell asleep.

44 The Self

Dorothy's POV:

That day came without warning.

My mixed bloodline silently and rapidly exploded. Without me knowing it, I became a witch with a wolf.

Or rather, a wolf that could do magic.

I didn't know how to face my grandmother. She had always hated the half of me that was my father's. Caning, burning, silver whips, smuggled 'holy water'... I couldn't even remember how many punishments or 'purification' I'd suffered.

Obviously, all these methods were useless. The witch's blood, which my grandmother denounced as 'trash', finally took root and sprouted in my body.

I was brought to the palace and met with the Lycan King. I believed he was about to execute me like he would kill a mouse found in a granary.

That was good too. I was not afraid of death. Death was my release.

The Lycan King was not as imposing as he was on the television or on the posters. He smiled kindly with a compassionate look in his eyes.

"Aren't you going to kill me?" I asked.

"Why do you think that? Of course not, my child. You are a little werewolf, my people and my responsibility. The King will always love and protect his people."

"But I'm a witch. If you don't kill me, one day I'll destroy your land and kill your people."

"You can't say that. Be it a witch or a werewolf, there's no absolute evil."

"But witches are evil. They are the source of the werewolves' downfall. I have the witch's blood, so sooner or later, your pack will be destroyed."

I heard myself say this, but my heart was so numb I couldn't feel anything.

"Let all of this end immediately. End this life that was a mistake. End this pointless life of mine."

While I waited for my judgment, the King asked, "Do you wish for that to happen?"

"What?"

"Do you wish to become an evil creature and then disappear from the world like a dandelion?"

"It's not the question of whether I want it." I was a little angry, and tears of anguish poured out of my eyes. "I am but a witch! If you don't kill me, I will kill you!"

Just as my grandmother said, this dirty satan's blood would destroy me sooner or later. Then, it would destroy everything!

The Lycan King's face turned somber. His imposing manner was terrifying.

"No, you won't, child. Whether you're a werewolf or a witch, you won't become the kind of person you're talking about."

“I see the pain in your eyes. Sins cause you pain, and your bloodline causes you pain.

“But child, we came to this world not to let anyone manipulate our lives. Be it a werewolf or a witch, they can’t determine a person’s nature.

“The only ones who can decide what we become are ourselves.”

The morning sun glowed softly through the window, gilding the King’s body. His expression was serious, but his eyes were filled with love as if I wasn’t a mixed-blood b*stard, but a little sapling that should be carefully cared for.

Alright. Now I got why so many people supported and loved him.

“Thinking about it now, child.” He touched my head gently. “My niece, Selma, is also studying at Sivr Academy. Do you know her? Maybe you can go and hang out with her for a while. The servant will lead the way for you.”

The majestic and kind King left.

Selma, I knew her. She was my deskmate. She was such a lively, beautiful, and noble girl. Was she also affected by this disaster?

As I thought about this, my guilt magnified infinitely.

Everyone thought I was a freak, and no one was willing to get along with a gloomy mute.

Only Selma never cared about these things. She would always chat with me with a smile and share the snacks she brought with me, even though I would never give her any response.

I didn’t want to be too narcissistic. Maybe her kindness to me was just out of her good upbringing and social etiquette, wasn’t it?

However, anyone who experienced getting along with Selma would understand her sincerity. And how pained and helpless I felt for not being able to respond to this sincerity.

This annoying bloodline, in addition to making me consigned to eternal damnation, also caused my family and friends to be unable to speak before I was of age. Otherwise, my immature divination ability would bring bad luck to everyone for no reason.

“Elland, are you there?” I contacted my wolf. Her name was Elland, a thin and quiet little wolf like me.

“I’m here,” she replied. “I know what you’re worried about, but compared to letting your imagination run wild, it might be better to just visit Selma.”

With Elland’s encouragement, I called the servant over and asked if I could go to Selma.

“I’m very sorry, Miss Selma is still unconscious. When she wakes up, I will inform you.”

The servant’s answer made me feel like I had fallen into an ice cave.

I’d heard that some witches’ magic awakened so violently that they made people fall into eternal sleep. If something happened to Selma because of me, I didn’t know how I could make it up to the only girl who was kind to me. How could I face the Lycan King, who had been trying his best to comfort me?

45 The Secret

Dorothy’s POV:

‘Selma, Selma! I beg you. Please be okay.’

I couldn’t help but recall every little thing happening while I was with Selma. Without realizing it, I fell into a strange situation.

Time seemed to have stopped. I could see the butterfly’s wings on the flower flapping slowly like an old clockwork toy. The wind and air seemed to have frozen. Some people who shouldn’t have appeared began to appear in reality. They moved forward as if they had 100 times the normal speed, but I strangely observed everything.

I realized that my prophetic ability had appeared for the first time.

Complicated information gushed into my head, making me feel dizzy. I only managed to grasp a few key details before the prophecies disappeared like the wind.

“Selma... I repeated. “And, Sir Aldrich.”

“This is a soul-stirring love story.” I smiled bitterly.

‘It was so shocking that you might lose your lives for it.’

Selma Payne’s POV:

I slept until dusk. It had been a long time since I felt so refreshed, and the fatigue accumulated over the past few days was swept away with my sleep.

“Miss Selma.” A servant came to ask for my permission. “A young lady by the name of Dorothy Hyeres wishes to see you. She says that she’s your classmate at Sivr Academy.”

“Of course. Please take her to the guest room, and tell her to wait for a while. I’ll wash up first.”

From what I knew, Dorothy wasn’t a girl who was very keen on socializing. She was quiet but delicate and sensitive, always isolating herself from the outside world.

I wanted to be friends with her, but it had not been going very well. So why would she suddenly come to me?

I quickly washed my face and gargled, then rushed to the guest room.

Dorothy sat on the sofa uneasily. When she saw me, she whispered, “Good evening, Selma,”

I was surprised as she had never said a word before, at least not in front of me.

“Good evening. I heard that there was an accident at school last night. Are you alright? Did you get affected?”

Dorothy was not very popular in school. Amid the chaos, I wasn’t if anyone had thought of pulling her to safety. I hoped that that night had not traumatized her.

“I’m fine. I’m fine,” Dorothy lowered her head and stammered a few words in response. Suddenly, she said, “I have something I want to talk to you about in private, can I?”

I gladly agreed and asked the servants to leave for the time being.

“What’s so secretive about what you’re about to tell me?” I sat down beside her. “It’s just us now. Don’t worry.”

Dorothy pursed her lips tightly and avoided my gaze as if she was still hesitating on whether she should say what she was about to say.

I wasn’t in a hurry. It was usual for this girl, who had always been silent, to be inarticulate.

Finally, she seemed to have made up her mind and said, “Can you keep what I am about to tell you a secret? Please don’t think that my request is rude. It’s just that... it might be too shocking. ”

I laughed. “How is this a rude request? We’re friends, and friends should keep each other’s secrets.”

After saying that, I asked uncertainly, "We're friends. This isn't one-sided, right?"

Dorothy did not seem to expect me to say that. After a long while, she nodded slightly. "Yes."

"Before we start, I have something to tell you," she said. "In fact, I'm not a pure werewolf. My father is a wizard, and I'm of mixed-blood. I was the one who caused the riot at school last night. The witch's blood and my wolf had a fierce fight. I fainted and caused everything."

Woah!

I didn't expect to this on such a peaceful day.

It was so unbelievable that I took a long time to find my voice. "But, you are in the palace now... Could it be that they...?"

I suddenly came to a realization. Could the elders have ordered Dorothy to be captured and executed in secret?

This was not fair! Even if Dorothy could be considered half a witch, even if the relationship between the werewolves and the witches was tense, Dorothy had not done anything wrong. She should not have suffered this unexpected punishment!

"I'm going to please my father and uncle. They can't treat you like this!"

I stood up indignantly. Dorothy was shocked and quickly pulled me back. "No! Don't go! I'm fine. The Lycan King has been very good to me. He was afraid I'd be exposed, so he brought me to the palace to hide for a few days!"

Realizing that I had mistaken, I sat down in embarrassment.

Dorothy took a few deep breaths and said with great difficulty, "My father's bloodline can predict the future. This means I can also predict the future when I become an adult."

"And my first prophecy happened today. It is about you."

"About me?" Her serious expression caused me to become serious as well. "What is it about?"

"You're dating Sir Aldrich, right?" she asked.

I didn't expect our relationship to be exposed so suddenly, and I panicked for a moment. However, this kind of panic was harmless in the face of friends and not parents. Young people always stood on the side of young people.

“We want to keep it a secret for the time being.” I tugged on her sleeve. “Only you know about this. Please don’t tell anyone else.”

Dorothy nodded. “Of course. We’re friends. Friends should keep each other’s secrets, right?”

46 The Princess And The Queen

Selma Payne’s POV:

We looked at each other and smiled.

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Dorothy quickly became serious again, saying, “My prophecy is about your love with Sir Aldrich. Unfortunately, I can see that you’re about to embark on a path filled with poison and thorns. Love will be extremely difficult and might even get you killed.”

What?

I never thought that a sweet relationship would bring about a fatal disaster. Dorothy would not lie to me; a witch’s prophecy had never been wrong. I could accept that the road of love was full of thorns, but I did not expect it to lead to death.

“That’s impossible... ” I grabbed my hair unconsciously and muttered to myself, “Even if everyone disapproved of us, even if some of us might have a change of heart in the future, how could we be moving toward death? This doesn’t make sense.”

Dorothy looked at me helplessly. I didn’t expect a small prophecy to bring me so much pain.

I hadn’t been in a relationship with Aldrich for long, but I’d fantasized about our beautiful future countless times at night.

The happiness in a dream should be filled with flowers, laughter, blessings, and gentle love, not rough thorns and death.

I couldn’t accept such an outcome. Without realizing it, tears started flowing from my eyes.

Dorothy panicked and took out a handkerchief to wipe my tears. “Don’t worry, Selma. A prophecy is just a prophecy. The future is not fixed. However, perhaps a careless decision we make right now can completely change the future.”

“Really?” My tears blurred my vision, and I could not see her clearly. “Please don’t lie to me or try to comfort me, Dorothy. You don’t know how important Aldrich is to me.”

If I were to return to my rebellious fourteen-year-old self, if someone told me that I would cry for a man one day, I would have refuted and told him that it was impossible.

However, at the darkest and most despairing moment of my life, my fate suddenly took a 180 degrees turn. I received family and love at the same time. How could I not cherish it when I had nothing?

‘Aldrich, my love, if that day comes, I beg Moon Goddess to summon me first, not you.’

After I calmed down, Dorothy said, “From ancient times until now, those famous prophecies seem unbreakable, but those who know the prophecies unconsciously force themselves to walk on the established track.

“In fact, the prophecy is only a reference. It’s based on the current situation and the most likely future, not absolute.

“I can see that the tragedy of fate does not lie with you, and it does not lie with Sir Aldrich.” She said firmly, “It’s just that I’m too weak. The culprit is shrouded in a dark fog. I think he must have used some method to shield himself. I can’t see through him.”

I heaved a sigh of relief upon learning there was still a chance for a turnaround. But, at the same time, I felt ashamed for my childish tears earlier. Was this how the future Queen behave? She was so captivated by a childish romance that she couldn’t even understand the whole story and was already crying out loud in embarrassment.

My blushing was so obvious that Dorothy even awkwardly consoled me, “It’s nothing. When the shift is approaching, our emotions will fluctuate. I’ve been very excited recently. I should’ve noticed the abnormality long ago. If I had prepared earlier, I wouldn’t have dragged down the Academy.”

As she said this, she started to complain to herself.

“How can you say this is your fault?” This time, it was my turn to comfort her. “No one can decide their birth origin. It’s not a mistake to be mixed-blood, and it’s not your fault. To be honest, I think having mixed blood is pretty cool. The love between a werewolf and a wizard is so romantic!”

“Don’t say that... ”

Dorothy did not want to discuss this, so I ended the topic quickly.

We ate some desserts to fill our stomachs. Dorothy seemed to want to say something, but in the end, she said, “Actually, there’s one more thing.”

“What?” I enjoyed the cranberry pastry without looking up.

“You’re not a relative of Her Majesty the Queen, but the real princess, right?”

“What?” I stopped chewing and subconsciously wanted to deny it. “Why do you think so? The Lycan King and the Queen don’t have a daughter. I grew up in Europe, didn’t I?”

Under Dorothy’s ‘I know everything, you don’t have to lie’ gaze, my voice grew softer and softer before finally, I said, “Okay, that’s right. I’m Princess Madeline. For some reason, I have to use a different name.

“And don’t tell anyone about this, okay?” I pleaded, “There are many complicated factors involved in this. I don’t want to cause trouble for my parents. The elders are already enough trouble for them.”

Dorothy swore that she would keep it a secret.

“You will become a great Queen!” She said, “Even greater than your father.”

“Is this what the prophecy said?” I was very curious.

“No.” Dorothy shook her head. “It’s not just a prophecy. I think so too.”

I was a little embarrassed to receive such a direct compliment. “I’m still far from that.”

After we played for a while, my mother came to ask me to go for dinner. After she found out that a classmate was visiting me, she thoughtfully set dinner time for us alone.

“I should go back,” Dorothy said after dinner. “My grandmother is still waiting for me at home.”

47 Father And Son

Selma Payne’s POV:

“You’re leaving?” I was a little reluctant. Perhaps due to the rulers of the palace, no one came to hang out with me. Dorothy was the first.

“Perhaps I can send a message to your grandmother. Can you stay here for a night? We can watch a movie and eat some popcorn.”

Dorothy shook her head. “Thank you, but my grandmother is old. I don’t want her to worry. There are some things I have to tell her.”

“Alright,” I said.

I felt sorry for her but did not force her to stay. Instead, I accompanied her to say goodbye to my parents and asked the chauffeur to send her home.

Lying on the bed and looking at the brilliant night sky outside the window, I thought of the 'death' prophecy.

"If I'm not fated to meet you in this life, let me feel that I've never met you, let me never forget you, and wake up with this sorrowful pain in my dreams..."

I fell into a deep sleep as I recited the poem I had memorized.

Aldrich's POV:

I never understood my father. He was serious, upright, but gentle, like a typical aristocrat from an ancient painting.

He suddenly called me home and didn't give me any reason. But, as usual, he would let me think about it.

"Good evening, Father."

"Good evening. Come and sit down, Son."

We exchanged pleasantries in the vast hall like a pair of strangers we had just met.

This made me feel awkward as he had always been the type to speak his mind directly. He rarely spoke so politely to me. It was as if he had something to say but could not say it for various reasons.

"Do you have anything to say?" I was the first to break the awkward atmosphere. "You're my father. You don't have to beat around the bush with me."

My father was silent for a few seconds before he smiled helplessly. "You're all grown up. I don't remember the last time we sat by the fireplace and chatted."

I shrugged. "You know, the army is very busy and strict. I can't always take leave to visit you. It's against the rules, and the soldiers will be unhappy."

"I understand, I understand." My father turned his gaze to the burning fire. "I just realized you've grown up, and I'm old. If your mother could see this day, she would be so happy."

At the mention of my mother, I couldn't help but fall silent.

I was just a child who didn't know anything when she passed away. I only knew how to cry. Now that I was all grown up, I still didn't know how my mother died – it was a taboo. Be it in Duke Frank's house or the entire pack, nobody spoke about it.

Her death was related to a political event. Since that event was covered up, her death had to be covered up as if she never existed.

"If there's nothing else, please allow me to return to my room to rest." I didn't want to recall those painful memories.

"Of course, Son." My father nodded.

I walked to the stairs, and he suddenly said, "Perhaps you'd like to have breakfast with this old man tomorrow morning?"

"Of course." I nodded after a pause. "Good night, Father."

The vexed mood made me toss and turn, unable to sleep at night.

I sent Selma a few messages, but she didn't reply. Perhaps she was training. I waited until dawn, and she still ignored me even when I was sleepy.

Recalling her unhappy expression when we parted, I sighed and thought she was really angry.

And I was helpless.

'Forgive your incompetent boyfriend, Selma. I'm so clumsy in relationships that I keep making mistakes, but I can't even find a way to correct them.'

Maybe I should give her a call.

I thought.

Then, I brushed off that thought.

It was already very late. I should not disturb her rest and should talk about it tomorrow morning.

Just like that, I entered dreamland with a frown.

Early the following day, the sun was shining brightly outside the window. As my father strolled back to the courtyard, a light mist shrouded the clouds.

What was he doing?

I thought in a daze and then reacted. He had always had the habit of doing morning exercises, but I hadn't been at home for a long time, so I'd become a stranger to him.

Breakfast was the usual toast, fried eggs, bacon, and vegetable salad. Selma always liked to change the tomatoes into double lettuce when she ate her sandwiches. She did not like the sour taste.

I subconsciously picked the tomato and put it on my plate. Then, just as I was about to hand her the green salad, I remembered that I was at home and had no lover by my side.

So I put down the plate in a daze and started eating breakfast absent-mindedly.

My father didn't seem to notice my strange behavior. Instead, he drank his coffee and read the newspaper .” Did you sleep well last night?”

“Very good, a dreamless night,” I said. Actually, I lied. I dreamed that Selma wanted to break up with me. I'd never been so flustered. Fortunately, it was just a dream.

“Oh, these days aren't peaceful.” My father frowned as he read the newspaper.

“What's wrong?”

“Sivir Academy was attacked last night. Many students who were doing after-class club activities were affected, but fortunately, no one was injured.”

Sivir Academy had been attacked?

I suddenly became nervous, afraid that Selma would be implicated in the slightest.

However, I quickly recalled that I had personally sent her back to the palace, so she should be fine.

“An attack on a school is a terrible and sensational event. Has the King given any instructions?”

My father put down the newspaper. “Of course. Last night, we old bones were called to discuss state affairs. He was outraged.”

“But...” He smiled. “Fortunately, it was just a misunderstanding. The crisis is over.”

...

48 Marriage

Aldrich's POV:

“A misunderstanding?” I didn’t understand.

My father didn’t answer me. He only said, “It’s a confidentiality agreement. This case has been closed, and I can’t tell you. However, this is indeed a misunderstanding. The reason we kept it a secret is to protect the students.”

“Since you wanted to keep it a secret, why did the newspaper expose this?”

“It’s just a side job.” My father smiled disdainfully. “But, son, you’ve been in the army for so long. You should understand the twists and turns of politics.”

He didn’t say it out loud, but I understood that someone among the elders was probably causing trouble for the King.

Sigh, speaking of this, anyone who supported the Lycan King would be angry at such a kind, brave, and wise King like him just because he had no children. He was always attacked by people who tried to dethrone him with all sorts of trivial matters.

The group of old farts among the elders enjoyed the protection of the King while secretly plotting to destroy the hand that fed them.

After two days of awkward interaction, my father finally revealed his purpose on Monday.

“Time flies. In the blink of an eye, you’ve already grown into a man of indomitable spirit.” My father looked at me with relief and occasionally glanced at my arm.

I felt a little uncomfortable being stared at. “Children will always grow up. I still remember when I was young, you always complained that I was a little monkey and hoped I would grow up quickly and leave the family to bother my wife.”

My father laughed out loud. He rarely revealed his emotions like this.

“Yeah, you’re at the age to get married and have children.” He said, “Just out of concern, have you found your mate?”

“What?” I was stunned by the question and quickly shook my head. “No, I’m too busy with the military. I don’t have any thoughts about getting married for now. Maybe I’ll think about it when I make a name for myself.”

My father shook his head in disagreement. “You can’t say that. If every werewolf waited until they were successful before looking for a mate, the law would have said that werewolves would only get married when they are forty.”

“I don’t have to wait until that age.” I thought of Selma’s brilliant smile, and my tone unconsciously softened. “Perhaps when I’m a few years older? I don’t think I can take care of a family now.”

I couldn’t even comfort my girlfriend, let alone be a husband.

I thought desolately. I could almost taste Selma’s frustration.

My father didn’t force me. Instead, he recalled his love story with my mother. “When I was dating your mother, I was only a young boy! Back then, I couldn’t compare to you. I was idle all day long. Fortunately, Moon Goddess’ kindness allowed me to find the love of my life.

“We fell in love, got married, and had you. She was like a strict headmaster, forcing me to improve, or she’d threaten to take you back to her mother’s house. I had no choice but to give in to her wishes. Finally, I became the King’s friend and right-hand man, bringing our family the honor we have now.

“It’s a pity ...” He suddenly became sad again. “Your mother is no longer here. No matter how good I am, who can I share all of this with?”

My father’s sorrow was so genuine that I couldn’t help but shed tears. I suddenly realized that the tall and straight figure in my memory had become slightly hunched.

Sitting in front of the window, he didn’t look like a high-spirited Duke. Instead, he looked like an ordinary old man from the common folk. It looked like he was waiting to wrap a ball of yarn around his wife.

“Child,” he said. “Not everyone can resist the fate that the Moon Goddess has given us. Some people miss out on their true love and never have a chance to turn back in their lifetime.

“Be it a fated mate, a sudden love at first sight one day, or a long-term relationship; love is like a slippery goldfish. If you don’t pay attention, it will slip into the pond and disappear without a trace.”

I was a little moved. I never thought a day would come when my serious father would open his heart to me.

He looked at me with his clear eyes as if they could see through my body and soul.

“Marriage is an important matter. You have to take responsibility for it.”

For a moment, I almost wanted to confess my love for Selma.

But I couldn't. I had to respect Selma's wishes. So before she agreed, I had to hide this sweet secret deep in my heart.

Like my father had said, "You have to take responsibility for yourself."

The sadness came and went quickly. Soon, my father returned to the old nobleman, who was calm and collected, elegantly drinking his coffee and reading his official documents.

"What are you still doing here?" After a while, he looked up at me. "Your vacation is coming to an end, Sir Aldrich. You should pack your luggage as soon as possible so that you don't come back late and cause dissatisfaction among the soldiers, humph!"

I laughed helplessly.

At this moment, I realized that time was changing. From the strict father he was in the past, he had now learned to show his true feelings and become an old urchin who 'held grudges'.

I turned around and wanted to return to my room, but then I turned back and gave my father a solid hug.

"I love you too, Father," I said.

"I'll come back for a visit often." My father was stunned. After a few seconds, I felt him hug me back.

"Little brat," he said. I pretended not to hear the slight tremble. "The army is tough. You have to take care of yourself."

49 A Lie

Aldrich's POV:

When did the estrangement between my father and me start, and why did it deepen? I had no recollection of it at all.

However, to break through the barrier, one only needed true love and to take the initiative to take that step.

I believed love was like this too, right?

[I'm sorry, Selma. I sensed that you were acting strangely, but I still wanted to use that little self-righteous trick to cover up the past. I've never been in love, so I admit I shamelessly ran away when a small obstacle appeared in our relationship. I was afraid you would leave me if I didn't handle it well.

[You should be angry with me. I deserve this.

[If I take the initiative to break the ice, will you forgive me?

[To be honest, I'm not sure. I'm afraid that the nightmare from that night will come true.

[But I've already learned enough lessons from my father. It is useless to escape. It'll only push you further and further away.

[Baby, don't give up on me. I'm begging you. I'm trying my best to make up for my stupid mistake.]

The sports car sped away, and my heart was like an arrow as I headed straight for the palace in the setting sun.

Selma Payne's POV:

Aldrich and I were giving each other cold shoulders.

I didn't know how it happened. Maybe it was a text message that couldn't be read or a call that no one picked up. In short, I cut off all contact with Aldrich.

Without any reason.

Tracy's diagnosis only provided me with a small amount of comfort. I knew that this wasn't due to the abnormal hormones or the self-adjustment of my physiological system. Our conflict had long been showing signs. If we couldn't solve this fundamental problem, it would only be a matter of time before it erupted.

Concealment.

Deception.

My relationship with Aldrich was built on a lie. I hid my identity from him, and we hid it from the people closest to us.

I understood why there would always be a few rookie spies in spy movies who couldn't help but reveal their identities to their friends and family – the taste of lying didn't feel good.

The three days of rest passed quickly. During this period, I was troubled by my stagnant love life and Dorothy's prophecy. As a result, I was absent-minded in everything I did. It was to the point that my mother had worriedly summoned Tracy over several times to examine me.

Tracy was an excellent doctor, but I was not a good patient. I couldn't honestly announce my condition, so naturally, I couldn't receive effective treatment.

On Monday evening, I heard from Kara that Aldrich had returned to the army. My father asked him to stay for a while and asked if I wanted to see my instructor.

Of course, I wanted to! I hadn't seen him for three days, and I'd been thinking about him like crazy.

But when I thought about our awkward 'cold war', I couldn't muster up the courage.

What if Aldrich was angry? If it weren't for my fickleness, there wouldn't have been any conflict.

"I'm a little tired. Let's talk about it tomorrow," I said uninterestedly. "I'm sure Sir Aldrich is also returning to the camp to rest? I'd better not disturb him."

Kara looked at me in surprise. She must have noticed a conflict between Aldrich and me with her attentiveness.

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"I think Sir Aldrich looks quite energetic," Kara said. "He even proposed to His Majesty to continue tonight's training."

"Did Father agree?" I was a little nervous. I wasn't sure if I wanted my father to agree or not.

"His Majesty said that everything is up to you. You've been in low spirits, so you don't have to force yourself."

I felt dejected. Perhaps when one struggled, they would hope someone would decide everything for them.

I hesitated for a long time until the sky turned dark, then I gathered my courage and decided to see Aldrich.

It was funny, but this was a lesson I learned from Benson. Sometimes, I thought that if I had not fantasized about Benson's attitude, if I had asked him about his thoughts earlier instead of letting myself sink deeper and deeper into the fantasy, wouldn't everything have ended differently?

I didn't learn much in the past, but the most useful one was this: Don't give the conflict a chance to escalate.

I'd hesitated for too long, and now was the time to erase my cowardice.

Just as Aldrich was about to leave, I stopped him at the palace gate.

However, before I could speak, he suddenly pulled me and ran to the training ground with a few people.

“Wait, Aldrich, I have something to say to you!” I wanted to break free from his grasp, but he was too strong.

Aldrich silently led me as we ran. Gradually, I gave up struggling and prepared for the worst.

If he asked to break up with me, I would never agree. We hadn’t reached the end of the line yet, and I wouldn’t make a decision I’d regret for the rest of my life just because of a moment of rashness.

Finally, we stopped in the middle of the training ground.

The moment we looked at each other, I didn’t know what to say. I was like a nervous interviewee who had prepared a stomach full of drafts but forgot everything when I saw the interviewer.

“I’m sorry, Selma.” Aldrich was the first to break the silence.

I didn’t expect him to apologize to me at all. Why? He didn’t do anything wrong, so his apology was unreasonable.

“Don’t say that.” I shook my head. “I should be the one apologizing, Aldrich.

“I don’t know what I was thinking. I ignored your text messages for no reason, hung up on your call, and even thought of breaking up for a moment.”

50 The Moonlight Is So Beautiful

Selma Payne’s POV:

Aldrich immediately became nervous, his breathing became heavy, and he wanted to say something, but I interrupted him.

“The doctor said it’s because I’m transiting soon, and the complicated physiological changes have made me temporarily fluctuate between joy and anger. However, I know that biological changes are not the cause of everything.”

I looked at his handsome face and couldn’t imagine how sad and angry he would be after knowing my lie.

If one party hid their identity, could love still be sincere?

Looking into his deep eyes, I almost revealed the secret of my identity.

However, at the last moment, my rationality woke me up.

Hiding my identity wasn't only my business. As a princess, I had to be responsible for the pack, even if it meant sacrificing my interests.

So, in the end, I just said, "My friend told me a prophecy. It's about us, our relationship, and the death it brings."

"What?" Aldrich looked at me in surprise. "Prophecy... But no werewolf could make prophecies. So how did your friend know?"

His military mindset immediately prevailed. "Are there any witches in the pack? Maybe the riot at Sivr Academy was just a cover-up, and a real witch had replaced your friend! Your friend might be in danger, but so are you!"

"I can guarantee that she is trustworthy." I consoled him, "I promised her to keep it a secret, and the confidentiality agreement sealed all information about her. We can't break it. It's illegal, right?"

Aldrich always trusted me, so he only muttered, "Alright, it's the confidentiality agreement again. It's making us both dishonest."

It was just a joke, but it pierced my heart like a needle.

I forced a smile. "No matter what, the prophecy says our emotional journey will be very bumpy. It might even lead us to death.

"I admit that I'm afraid. But, I'm not afraid of death, Aldrich. No werewolf warrior is afraid of death.

"But I'm afraid you'll get hurt. I have a lover. You're a mighty warrior, but when I think about how our relationship could kill you, I can't help but hold back.

"I'm always letting my thoughts run wild. Why don't we end this now? The future in the prophecy is not set. So if we end it now, nothing bad will happen.

"I've always thought this way, and the more I think about it, the more afraid I get. That's why I've been hiding from you and avoiding communicating with you. I'm afraid that any mistake could lead to your death."

Tears unconsciously gushed out, and I saw Aldrich's deep frown through my tears.

Was he angry because of my estrangement from myself and my spurned cowardice?

At this moment, I realized I had not matured at all. I was still the weak, extreme, and suicidal little girl I used to be. My first reaction when I encountered any setbacks was to run away.

I couldn't stand any longer, and my strength seemed to flow out with my tears.

The moment I fell, a pair of strong arms tightly embraced me.

I looked up in disbelief and found that the always resolute Aldrich was also in tears.

"Don't, Selma. I'm begging you. Don't think of yourself like that." He held me tightly in his arms and said, choking, "You don't understand how good you are."

"You're such a kind and sensitive girl. Unfortunately, you've never seen your good side and always take all the blames yourself."

"You're such a powerful warrior and such a caring lover. How can I agree with any false accusations you have against yourself about cowardice?"

He cupped my face and gently wiped the tears on my face. Then, he said softly, "Believe me, Selma. There will be no one better than you in this world. I've never regretted accepting your love or giving up everything for you."

"It's better to say that I'm the coward. You don't know how much I used to like running away from the shadows of my childhood and the conflict with my father. It was you that changed everything."

"You made me understand what responsibility and love are. I admit that I am clumsy and always try to cover up my abnormality with jokes, so I don't give you enough sense of security."

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"Maybe I realized my mistake a little too late. I can't believe I'm making you suffer like this."

"So, please don't blame yourself, Selma, my true love, my other half. No setback can make me give up on you, even if it means death."

We hugged each other and cried under the moonlight.

It might look like a creepy scene if anyone were to see us.

But who wouldn't be touched by the sincerity of love? Even the moon's bliss forgave us, a new couple. The gentle moonlight allowed us to see the love in each other's eyes more clearly.

Without realizing it, we kissed.

Mixed with bitter tears, this kiss made me unable to care about anything else.

To hell with concealment, deception, my identity, and my lies.

I wouldn't be a coward anymore. Instead, I'd take on the responsibility of a princess and a lover.