

## Chapter 76

Half an hour ago---

"What should I do, Celine? This pain is too much," Athena whimpered on the ground, and

Celine looked up at her human with a pitiful look.

She wanted to console Athena, but what should she say at a time like this?

That she will get another chance at love? Maybe Simon was just messing with her head? He was just trying to make her jealous because she didn't talk much to him for three days after the war or because he was testing her. What could Celine tell Athena to make her feel any better?

Everything was right in front of their eyes. They were werewolves and not some kind of witches. They would believe the girl seduced the man or got him under her spell.

"I know, Athena. It's too much," Celine sat in the corner, mirroring Athena's expression. "How can someone change so suddenly? Yesterday, back at Andrew's apartment, he

confessed his love to me. That he can't stay away from me. Can a person's thoughts and personality change so suddenly?" Athena looked ahead of her with a dazed look.

It was hard to believe what she saw back at the council. She would've never believed it if someone had told her Simon was trying to be intimate with another girl, but how could she falsify what she saw herself?

Why was history repeating itself? She thought the moon goddess finally took pity on her and decided she deserves some happiness. That's why the moon goddess gifted her with such a loving mate who never let her out of his sight and has eyes only for her. What a joke. Athena scoffed at herself.

She looked down at her dress. She wanted to look like a princess and draw Simon's

attention to her by looking beautiful in this. But maybe, a color like beige would never stand a chance in front of red.

Athena smiled, not referring to the colors but hinting at her current situation.

First, it was Bianca, and then it was Garima. However, can she really blame the girls?

Weren't they subjected to their alpha's love? Athena closed her eyes as they welled with tears that were not falling anymore.

Maybe even the tears thought Athena had fallen so much that it was no use falling for her anymore. She stood before starting to walk again.

"Ouch!" Athena winced when something pierced her shoulder. She pulled out the

wooden nib-like thing from her shoulder before flinching. Even trees are hurting her

today, aren't they?

"You know, Celine, I honestly want to ask the moon goddess, why me? Why is it that these things always happen to me? I was supposed to rule the packs because of my alpha

warrior blood, then how come I can't even come close to an illegitimate daughter of the Alpha or another rate wolf with fire powers?" Athena placed her head on the uprooted

stem before lying on the ground.

She was afraid if she started running again, she might actually persuade herself to run away from here where no one could find her, somewhere that she could live peacefully

among humans with no werewolves around.

"That thought that an Alpha's love is the strongest in the world because of their

heightened senses, protective and obsessive towards their mate and self-dignity. But I got two alphas as my mates, and none stayed true to their words," Athena sniffed silently, and Celine wiped her tears as it was becoming hard to control her emotions.

Celine wanted to scream, run, growl, snarl, see blood and kill right now. She wanted to let loose and take out her anger, but she also knew that her human need her, and if she did

something obscene, Athena would never forgive her.

"I think what Cole did was still worse," Celine commented after a long time, and Athena

chuckled.

"Isn't it funny? We have suffered so much that we are comparing what hurt us the most," Athena hiccupped, trying to contain her cries that wanted to let out to ease some pain.

The constant ache in her heart of betrayal increased with each passing second.

Creek! Creek!

Athena heard a voice near her, and her ears immediately perked, alert.

Who could it be? Were the guards here to take her back to the council? Has she run off too far away? Athena dusted her hands before she stood and started limping away. Her body felt dead, and even walking felt like a task now.

"Mmmm; Athena moaned in slight pain when she felt pain coursing through her legs.

She can't be caught right now. No. She forbids anyone from seeing her like this, in this

situation where she feels lost and dying. She has let everyone mock her pain once, but she won't give this liability to anyone anymore. If they can't be the reason behind her

happiness, she forbids them to see her in pain.

Hearing the sound of someone nearing her with increased speed, Athena looked back in between before she started to run as fast as she could in her condition and dress.

"This won't help. Athena tore the bottom of her dress to run more freely.

"Where will you run off to, honey? I have seen you already,"

Athena paused when she heard a familiar voice, and dread started clouding her heart. It wasn't the council. It was someone else who was following her.

The pain in her legs was making her move with difficulty as the pain and heartbreak

from Simon's betrayal got mixed with the fear and dread of getting caught by this man

following her.

'Celine! Athena growled, wanting her wolf to take over, but Celine, who was too engrossed in her pain, didn't hear her, and Athena panicked even more as she limped away from the nearing person.

'Celine! Celine! Take over, please. Celine! Athena shouted helplessly, as she stumbled on a pebble and fell face-first on the ground.

Come on, sweetheart. Why are you even making an effort when you know it's useless?"

Someone held her hair from behind, pulling her hair with a jerk, making her scream in pain.

"Aaaaaa! Let go of me! Aaaaa! Andrew! Samuel! Simon!" Athena choked on the last name, struggling through the hold of the person with the familiar voice as more tears welled in her eyes. It felt like this man wanted to rip her scalp out of her head.

"Please, let go of me. I never did anything wrong to you. I am sorry if I offended you in

any way. Please," Athena whimpered, feeling at her wit's end as Celine didn't reply to anything.

It was as if Celine had gone numb.

'Celine! Celine! At least respond, Athena's hands started to tremble around the person's

hold when she realized Celine wasn't responding. She couldn't feel Celine anymore.

"Don't cry, my love. It breaks my heart to see you like this. Do you want to run? Okay.

Let's do it. Run. I allow you to run while I chase you," the man whispered into her ears,

and Athena, who usually was the strongest wolf, stumbled ahead helplessly.

Run? Who should she run for? Her mate was falling for some other woman, her wolf was not answering anymore, and her friends would be better off without her now.

'Run for me. Run for your tribe. You are strong. A voice whispered inside Athena's head. A voice that felt like she was barely hanging on the thin threads, and Athena widened her eyes.

It felt so much like Celine.

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Did someone give her something? What was happening to Celine? Athena felt the loss of her wolf, and her heart ached even more.

Athena turned around and looked at the person one more time before she nodded at

herself and ran.

Athena ran for her life, sweat heads appearing on her forehead as her body started to

become numb. Something was terribly wrong with her. She wasn't this week.

Wait. Was it because of that wooden nib that came out of nowhere? Athena gritted her

teeth.

"I am coming for you, my love. At least be a little faster. I am barely walking," the man

behind Athena said, his soft voice sounding evil now, and she hid behind a tree to catch her breath.

This won't help. She won't be able to run away from this man like this. As much as she

wanted to believe in herself, this was the truth: Athena bit her lips before closing her eyes. -I am sorry, Mom. I am sorry, Dad. Today I let you down by being this week. I let them

play with me. They set a trap for me, and I played right into their rules and got this weak. Please forgive me for being so weak,' Athena whispered before she dashed towards the

lake and jumped into it.

Splash! The sound of a few people jumping behind her resounded, and she tried to swim as fast as she could.

She swam to the other side of the lake and started running away again, but as she turned around a tree, someone held her hand. Aaaaaaa," Athena screamed in horror.

"Gotch, babe. Game over. It's time for you to come to me.," The man said before he placed something over her mouth, and she lost consciousness.

Present time-----

Simon and others spread into the forest like wildfire to search for Athena.

"Athena! Athena Matthews!" Everyone shouted, and Simon (in wolf form) looked around in anguish.

"I will never forgive you if something happened to her, Simon," Onyx said, and Simon let out a low growl.

It wasn't his fault. Simon wanted to say. But was it of any use? Was it really the time to

discuss whether it was his fault?

"Sir, we have nearly found the whole west area. She definitely didn't run there." The

guards reached them, and Simon turned to the council head, who was a few meters away. "Why are we even searching in that direction? We should be looking in the east direction. The guards heard her from there, and even Justin's powers pointed in that direction,"

Simon changed back into his human form, and the council head sighed.

"We were still hoping we would find it. That's why I asked the guards to look everywhere. The guards are looking for her in the east too. We are trying." The council head stopped when he heard his guards.

"Sir! We found something," the guards conveyed through the intercom.

"What is it?" Simon walked to him.

"We have found beige colored frills of a dress like you said Miss Athena was wearing. We are going further towards the lake," The guards said, and Simon looked at Samuel with

narrowed eyes when he saw his face becoming pale.

"What is it? What does it mean? Why do you look like that?" Simon shook Samuel's

shoulder, and Samuel sighed.

"It's nothing. Let's just hope everything is alright and rush there," Samuel said, and Simon looked at him for a few seconds before running to where the guards told them they found the frills.

"Let's spread from here and look further," Simon ordered

"Simon! I found her skirt," Andrew shouted after some time, and Simon's head rang with alarm bells.

What did he mean he found her skirt? His whole demeanor turned cold as he ran toward where Andrew was.

Seeing the torn piece in his hand, he stepped back.

Why would Athena want to tear this large skirt? Simon looked at Samuel, whose face

turned even paler than before.

'Maybe she tore this part because she was irritated by its heaviness? Let's not jump to any useless and baseless conclusions, look for her. Simon, you need to calm down." Samuel said.

The whole forest reeks of the presence of rogues, and you are telling me to calm down?!

can't f\*cking calm down! To hell with your words and security!" Simon growled, and

Samuel thinned his lips as he saw Simon running away towards the lake.

"Don't mess it up. Simon. I am worried about her too. You need to keep your mind clear and not rush into it, or we might lose Athena. Onyx said, and Simon stopped near a tree, catching his breath.

What am I supposed to do? You tell me. Onyx What should I do: This sense of guilt is eating me from the inside. If I hadn't lost control and gotten carried away in that

compulsion. Athena wouldn't have run away heartbroken. I can't even imagine what pain she must be going through after seeing me with another woman, for god's sake!" Simon placed his hand on the tree's trunk before looking down when he saw something shining under the moonlight on the ground.

He bent down and picked up the flashy earring. Was Athena wearing this at the party?

Only those who saw her would be able to tell. Simon gritted his teeth. The fact that he

needed to ask some other man whether his mate was wearing something irritated him. He felt like gagging Garima and drowning her in this very lake.

As Simon clenched his fist around the tree's trunk, his gaze fell onto the rough patch.

Something was written here.

Andrew, who followed Simon, looked at the earring in his hand.

"This is Athena's," Andrew said at once.

"Something is written here," Simon pointed at the tree.

"What does it mean? What am I doing? Maybe someone wrote it for fun. I should be

searching for Athena," Simon groaned helplessly, and he was about to run when Andrew's words stopped him.

"I think Athena deliberately dropped this earring here so we can see this message. Andre said.

"You mean Athena wrote this? But it's- what could it mean?" Simon looked at the simple sentence.

"This means nothing good, Simon," Andrew gazed at the sentence as the council head and Samuel walked to them, wanting to see why they stopped.

"What do you mean? Be clear," Simon said.

"It says, 'Stone is here', Simon, Andrew thinned his lips.

"Back at the mall incident, a guy called Stone saved her, and Athena talked about how it was a little suspicious that she was seeing a lot of him everywhere." Andrew said.

"You mean to say that this guy Stone probably stalked Athena and took her?" Simon

asked, and Andrew sighed.

"Let's hope that's not the case and search the whole forest," Andrew said, but Scarlett, who was also helping them find Athena, walked to them with a fearful look. "Does that Stone you are talking about have blue eyes?" Scarlett asked.

"As far as I remember from what Athena said, yes," Andrew said, and Scarlett

immediately fell to the ground in shock.

"He took her away. He got his hands on her. This is not good," Scarlett said, a tear rolling down her eyes as she shook her head, looking maniacal, and Simon looked at her

confused, not understanding a word.