

Chapter Twenty-One: Back Home

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Phera POV:

The first rays of sunlight filtered through the curtains, casting a golden glow over the room. I stirred, the weight of the previous day's revelations still pressing on my chest. But this was a new day, a blank canvas on which I could repaint my destiny. My wolf purred in agreement, impatient to move forward. No time for lengthy introspection; there was a whole world waiting.

My phone buzzed on the bedside table, breaking my reverie. Three messages from Axel, Damon, and Zane displayed on the screen: good morning texts complete with heart emojis and the almost ritualistic "can't wait to see you." A low growl from my wolf reminded me of her longing for our mates while another, more cynical part of me metaphorically rolled its eyes. It was as if two versions of me were continuously at war, each pulling me in a different direction. Before I could plunge into that emotional quagmire, my phone buzzed again. Nate was calling.

"Hey, Phera. You good?" His voice reverberated with a mix of enthusiasm and underlying concern.

"I'm hanging in there, Nate. How about you?" I replied, consciously keeping my tone neutral.

Nate was my older brother, but he was also the Beta to the triplets. His loyalties were... complicated.

"I'm excited, Phera. The triplets told me you're considering coming back. That's great news! The pack has been incomplete without you."

I blinked at his words. So, they already considered it a done deal? 1

"Really? Is that what they're saying?"

"Yeah! They're not the same without you, Phera. You should see how amped they are at the mere thought of you coming back. Trust me, whatever is between you and them, you guys should sort it out face-to-face. It's a mate thing, you know?"

Ah, the 'mate thing.' That indescribable, undeniable pull that made rational thought a challenge. A pull that they chose to ignore for years, leaving me to grapple with it alone. Nate's words hung heavily in the air, even after we said our goodbyes and ended the call.

I sighed, pausing to look at myself in the mirror. The woman who stared back was not the same girl who had left Red Moon years ago. She was stronger, more self-assured, yet touched by a vulnerability that she could neither deny nor completely understand. 2

Nate's words and the morning texts had triggered a tempest of emotions: hope, skepticism, and a yearning for something that felt like walking on a tightrope. One wrong move, and everything could come crashing down.

No more doubts, no more second-guessing. If I was to return to Red Moon, it would be on my terms. Terms that they might not like, but that was the point. It was high time I shifted from being an object of concern to a subject of my own life.

I dressed quickly, slinging my bag over my shoulder. Today was not just another day; it was the first step in reclaiming my story. Whatever awaited me, whatever the triplets thought or felt, I was ready.

And with that thought anchoring me, I took a deep breath

Chapter Twenty-One: Back Home

and walked into the new day.

The rumble of an SUV pulling up to the curb tore me away from my thoughts. The vehicle had an undeniable presence, much like the three men who climbed out of it—Axel, Damon, and Zane. I watched as they approached, each step they took stirring something deep inside me. Their eyes locked onto mine, and I felt the gravitational pull, almost like the tide being commanded by the moon.

"Hey, beautiful," Axel greeted, the corner of his lips lifting in a half-smile.

His eyes scanned my face, as though trying to read the thoughts swirling around in my head. Damon came up next, reaching out to lightly touch my arm. The moment his skin made contact, a jolt of electric warmth spread from the point of touch to every nerve ending in my body. I could almost hear my wolf purring, urging me to lean into the sensation.

Zane, ever the silent one, merely nodded but his eyes spoke volumes, dark and unfathomable pools that held promises and apologies.

I shook my head slightly to clear the fog that seemed to be clouding my mind.

"Remember, I'm coming back on my terms," I declared, needing to assert some control, especially now when the invisible threads of our mate bond were pulling so strongly.

"We remember," Damon responded, his voice tinged with gravity.

"We wouldn't have it any other way," Axel added, his eyes still locked onto mine as if daring me to challenge him.

The car ride was eerily quiet, each of us wrapped in our thoughts. As we approached the portal that would

Chapter Twenty-One: Back Home

transport us back to Red Moon, a rush of memories flooded my senses.

I was reminded of the last time I stood near this mystical gateway. It had been with Josh, and we were excited, naive, and ignorant of how drastically life was about to change for us. That day had been a pivotal point, shifting the axis of my world in a way that I was still grappling with.

The air grew thick with tension as we exited the car, the portal glowing softly in the dusk light. It seemed to beckon us towards it, a cosmic call that I could no longer ignore. But as I stood there, a part of me mourned for the girl who had unknowingly crossed this very threshold years ago. She was a ghost now, a faded photograph in the ever-changing album of my life.

My eyes met those of my mates, seeing a reflection of my own myriad emotions in theirs. But for now, words were superfluous. A silent understanding passed between us as we faced the shimmering membrane that separated past, present, and perhaps even our future.

The crowd at the portal entrance thickened, a sea of bodies swarming like bees around a hive. There were guards in the vicinity, their stern faces marking them as diligent sentinels. I instinctively reached for my pack sigil and papers, the necessary items to cross between realms. Just as my fingers grazed the cool metal of the sigil in my pocket, a warm hand enveloped mine.

I glanced up to find Axel's eyes gazing into mine, his face a serene mask. His grip tightened ever so slightly, and without a word, he took the lead. Damon and Zane fell into step on either side of me, their broad frames creating a sort of protective cocoon around me. And just like that, we walked past the huddled crowds, bypassing the queues and the guards.

Chapter Twenty-One: Back Home

My mind barely had time to register what was happening. As we advanced, the guards, who until now had been the epitome of sternness, bowed their heads, their stances respectful but filled with an awe that made my skin tingle.

"Damon, what's going on? Why did we—?"

My question was cut short when Zane chuckled, his laughter a low rumble that made my heart skip a beat.

"Things have changed, Phera," Damon finally said, his words slow and measured as if he were choosing them carefully.

Axel picked up from where Damon left off.

"Red Moon is not what it used to be. People don't just respect us; they fear us. And now that we have you—our queen, our Luna—the circle is complete."

I felt like a deer caught in headlights, trapped by their piercing gazes. What could I even say? Before I could collect my thoughts, we stood before the portal. Its luminescent glow seemed brighter, almost as if recognizing the gravity of the moment. I could feel the energy buzzing in the air, tickling my skin, urging me to step through and embrace whatever awaited on the other side.

In perfect synchronization, as though guided by some unspoken agreement, we stepped through the swirling vortex. A sensation of weightlessness enveloped me, as though we were suspended in time and space, before my feet touched solid ground again. And just like that, we were in the Wolf Multiverse, the dimension that held the Red Moon Pack—a place of familiarity yet tinged with the unknown.



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Chapter Twenty-One: Back Home

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The triplets looked at me, their eyes holding a mixture of hope, yearning, and something far deeper, which I couldn't quite place. For a heartbeat, no one spoke; our silent communication saying more than words ever could.

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